

## FIRST SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 17

- Vv. 1-11 *Goliath's challenge.* Once again Israel and Philistia were at war. On this occasion, the battle was pitched farther south; and the battlefield was in the land belonging to the tribe of Judah. The conflict reached a stalemate when a champion, Goliath, came out to challenge the best to be found in the armies of Israel. No champion was found at first in the camp of Saul.
- Vv. 12-27 *David hears Goliath's challenge.* When Saul went to battle, David returned to his father's house in Bethlehem. Since Jesse's three oldest sons were in Saul's army, Jesse sent David to the battle to inquire about his sons' well-being. It was while David was on this errand for his father that he heard Goliath's challenge. David was not afraid to answer the challenge.
- Vv. 28-37 *Saul sends David to meet Goliath.* David based his judgment on his past experiences with the power of God. By faith in God he had been able to defend his father's sheep when they were attacked by lions and by bears. This courage impressed Saul, and he sent David out to do battle against the Philistine.
- Vv. 28-54 *David slays Goliath.* David did not use Saul's personal armor with which Saul had clothed him. He took only his tried and trusty sling and five smooth stones for it. He had used this kind of weapon, and he felt confident with it. After he had hit the giant with a stone, he beheaded him with the sword which he had taken out of Goliath's sheath.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

Vv. 55-58 *Saul inquires about David's background.* One of the rewards promised to any who would slay Goliath was the hand of the king's daughter in marriage (v. 25). He had also promised that his father's house would be made free in Israel (v. 25b). Although David had formerly been in Saul's court, the king now made definite inquiry concerning his ancestry and background.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *We should use the equipment we have.* David said that he had not proved Saul's armor (v. 39). They were not his own. He did not know how to use them. We likewise should not try to do things in the same way another might have devised. We should be ourselves and use the talents and abilities which God has given to us.
2. *To do battle in the name of the Lord is to be victorious.* Ultimate victory is promised to those who do battle for God. The gates of Hell will not prevail against the Lord's church (Matthew 16:18).

### *Goliath's Challenge.* 17:1-11

Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.

2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.

3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was* a valley between them.

4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of

the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span.

5 And *he had* a helmet of brass upon his head, and he *was* armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of brass.

6 And *he had* greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.

7 And the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set *your* battle in array? *am* not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.

10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

1. *Where were Shochoh, Azekah, and Ephes-dammim?*  
17:1

These places are in the Valley of Elah, now called *Wady es Sunt*. This valley begins a few miles northwest of Hebron and runs in a northerly direction between the mountains of Judah and the lower hills of the Shephelah forming the border of the Philistine Plain. Shochoh, now called *Suweikeh*, is about nine miles down the valley. This spot was on the Philistine side of the valley, the western side. To meet the description of the Scripture text, modern-day explorers look for a place which has on each side a mountain slope suitable for the camp of an army. It would need to be a valley wide enough to give room for Goliath's daily advance into it with his challenge.

Finally, a brook must flow along the valley where smooth, round stones could be found nearer Saul's side of the valley than the Philistines' side. J. W. McGarvey, in his *Lands of the Bible* (page 260), says that just such a point was found by him. He found it a short distance north of Shochoh. Above the spot, the valley was too narrow and the hills too steep, while the brook was either in the middle or too near the western side. At the point he located, however, the western hills have a moderate slope. They recede to a kind of amphitheater. A sloping ridge stands on the opposite side with a valley on each side of it. No doubt here were stationed the two armies with something more than a quarter of a mile of space between them. The brook, a raging torrent in the winter, but dry in the summer, flows within sixty or seventy yards of the eastern side of the valley. David, in advancing, was compelled to cross it. The bed is full of smooth, round stones from one to six inches in diameter. With scarcely a moment's hesitation David could have picked up five of these stones to suit his purpose. Mr. McGarvey and his companions picked up five apiece, any one of which would be the very thing with which to knock down a giant! The word "Ephes-dammim" comes from the root which means "boundary of blood." It is called Pas-Dammim (I Chronicles 11:13). No doubt the bloody contest between Israel and the Philistines gave the place its name. Probably this was a name for the valley where the battle was pitched. Azekah comes from a root meaning "tilled." It is known as a town in the plain of Judah (Joshua 15:35). It seemed to be a place of considerable strength (Jeremiah 34:7), and it had suburban villages in later times (Nehemiah 11:30). The southern coalition of the Canaanite kings were defeated at this place by Joshua, and their army destroyed by an extraordinary shower of hailstones (Joshua 10:10, 11). This location must have been farther down the valley and to the north of the battle field.

2. *Who was Goliath?* 17:4

Goliath was a survivor of the famous race of Anak (Numbers 13:28). The spies compared them to the Nephilim or "giants" of Genesis 6:4. The home of Goliath is named as being Gath, one of the chief cities of the Philistines. His height was six cubits and a span, which is, according to the calculations made by Thenius, about nine feet and two inches. The armor of Goliath corresponded to his stature, his coat of mail not being made of rings worked together like chains, but a coat made of plates of brass, lying one upon the other like scales. Upon his feet were greaves of brass, slung over his back was a small shield, and carried before him was a huge shield. The object of this description is to show how impregnable the man seemed to be. Added to all this is a description of his offensive weapon, a spear whose shaft was like a weaver's beam and whose head weighed some seventeen pounds.

3. *What challenge did he hurl at the armies of Israel?*  
17:8-10

It was, and is, the Arab custom for a warrior to vaunt his own prowess and to satirize his enemies, as a challenge to single combat. Goliath offers himself as a sample of his nation and bases his challenge upon the uselessness of general engagement when the single combat would settle the whole matter. The whole issue of the war was to be staked on the duel, and the challenge became a taunt, when no one was brave enough to accept it. At his words, all Israel, even Saul, were dismayed and greatly afraid; because not one of them dared to accept the challenge to fight with such a giant.

*David Hears of Goliath's Challenge.* 17:12-27

12 Now David *was* the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-judah, whose name *was* Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul.

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13 And the three eldest son of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle *were* Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

14 And David *was* the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

15 But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren;

18 And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of *their* thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

20 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

22 And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren.

23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard *them*.

24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich

him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

4. *Where was David at the time and what was he doing?*  
17:14, 15

David had been dismissed by Saul at the time; and having returned home, he was feeding his father's sheep once more. At this point, the household of Jesse is again described so far as is necessary to the present purpose. Jesse himself is too old to go to the war (v. 12), and David is regarded as too young. Three of the sons are in the ranks, but what has become of the other four is not told. Since David was too young at this time, we presume that he was not yet twenty years old; for Israel's men of war were to be men who were twenty years old and older (Numbers 1:3).

5. *How did it happen that he was at the battle?* 17:17, 18

His father sent him to see how his brethren fared and to take them some food. The presents sent by Jesse in the hands of David when he first went to Saul's court suggest how simple were the customs of Israel and in the court of Saul at that time. When he went to the camp, David again carried provisions and gifts. The parched corn was ears of wheat or barley plucked just before they were ripe and roasted for provision for travelers or soldiers. The army evidently had no regular commissary. To this provision were added ten of the round flat loaves of the *fellahin*. David was also to take ten cheeses to the captain of the thousand, to ask his brothers of their welfare, and to "take

their pledge." What this means is uncertain, but no corruption of the text is apparent. Possibly some token had been agreed upon which they were to send instead of a letter.

6. *What was the "trench"? 17:20*

The place of the wagons was back from the field of battle. This would be the center of the location of the material for battle. Supplies of various natures would be kept here. Any group of people demands certain provision when they stay for awhile in one place. Saul had hid himself in the baggage when he was first introduced to the people for a public anointing (10:22). The trench mentioned is no doubt a rampart which was thrown up to protect the baggage so that the enemy could not break through and destroy the victuals. The American Standard Version translates this word trench with "place of the wagons." They did not fight battles in the same manner as those fought in World War I, when the foot soldiers were compelled to dig trenches and face the enemy across a no-man's land. Neither was it the kind of trench which would be dug in World War II, as so many of the armies directed their men in the field to dig slit trenches to protect themselves in times of bombings and strafings.

7. *How was the battle put in array? 17:21*

The battle was pitched as described in the first part of the chapter. One army was on the hill to the west of the valley of Elah; the other army was on a hill to the east of the same valley. A brook ran through the midst, but there was an open place where Goliath could come to make his challenge. Probably the men did march towards each other and stand in lines drawn in array, but none dared attack the other because of the challenge that was left unanswered and the impregnable position occupied by the enemy. This stalemate continued for forty days (v. 16).



8. *Where was Gath?* 17:23

Gath is a Philistine town with the name meaning "wine press." The importance of this city is seen in the fact that it makes so many different appearances in the Scripture narrative. David's ultimate conquest of Philistia resulted in his taking control of their leading city of the Philistine pentapolis, and people from the city were prominent even in David's army. One of David's chief military men was Ittai the Gittite (II Samuel 15:19). David also had with him a great number of men among the Cherethites and Pelethites, known as the Gittites. It is expressly stated that these men came from Gath (II Samuel 15:18). Goliath was a Philistine champion from a very important Philistine town.

9. *What rewards were promised to one who would slay Goliath?* 17:25

The men of the army understood that the man who killed Goliath would be enriched with great riches. Saul must have promised that he would give the man his daughter in marriage. As an additional enticement he promised to make his father's house free in Israel. A man's house which was freed would have to pay no taxes. His sons would be freed from military service, and his daughters would not be taken as confectionaries and maids.

10. *What was David's reaction to Goliath's challenge?* 17:26, 27

When David heard the words of Goliath's challenge, he made more minute inquiries from the bystanders about the whole matter and dropped some words which gave rise to the supposition that he wanted to go and fight with the Philistine himself. David was making clear that Goliath had to fight not with men, but with God—and this with a living God, and not with an idol. In other words, David was not afraid; and when he continued speaking to different groups after this manner, he was finally brought into the presence of Saul.

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### *Saul Sends David to Meet Goliath. 17:28-37*

28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

29 And David said, What have I now done? *Is there* not a cause?

30 And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

31 And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed *them* before Saul: and he sent for him.

32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou *art but* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee.

11. *What was the attitude of his brother Eliab?* 17:28-29

David's eldest brother was greatly enraged at his talking courageously among the men, and he reproved David. It was his opinion that David was not contented with his lowly calling, but that he aspired to lofty things and took great delight in watching the bloodshed. The eagerness of a lad to see the battle needs no comment; the boys among Mohammed's followers at Medina wept when they were pronounced too young to go to war. Eliab was charging his brother with the very things of which he was guilty—presumption and wickedness of heart. David showed his purpose all the more by calmly answering his brother as he had formerly answered the other men.

12. *What were David's first words to Saul?* 17:32

When David was brought into the presence of Saul, he said, "Let no man's heart fail on his account: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." To Saul's objection that he was a mere youth and the Philistine was a man of war from his youth up, David replied that as a shepherd he had taken a sheep out of the jaws of a lion and a bear and had also slain them both. David's courage rested upon his confident belief that the living God would not let His people be defied by the heathen with impunity. Saul then desired for him the help of the Lord in carrying out his resolution and commanded him to put on his own armor. David began to accept the proffered equipment, but he was not accustomed to such paraphernalia. He returned the armor to Saul and went forth armed only with his trustworthy sling and his dauntless faith in God.

13. *Why did David call Goliath an "uncircumcised Philistine?"* 17:36

The covenant of circumcision was made with Abraham before Isaac was born. This covenant extended to Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar. It also extended to Abraham's descendants through Keturah, including such people as Midianites. Philistines were descendants of Ham, the

brother of Shem. Shem was the ancestor of Abraham's descendants, but the Hamitic line had received no covenant of circumcision. The Philistines were direct descendants of Cush (Genesis 10:8-14). To call a man an uncircumcised Philistine was to cast reflection upon his heritage. An uncircumcised Philistine was not under the covenant of God. He could not expect the spiritual blessings from God. It was as odious an epithet as David could think of to hurl at Goliath.

14. *What was Saul's final decision?* 17:37

Saul's final decision was that David should challenge Goliath. He raised objections about it, but was finally convinced that in the desperate situation there was no one else to meet the challenge. As he sent David forth, he pronounced a heartfelt blessing upon him: "Go, and the Lord be with thee." No better prayer could be offered for one being sent on a dangerous mission.

*David Slays Goliath.* 17:38-54

38 And Saul armed David with his armor, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them*. And David put them off him.

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

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43 And the Philistine said unto David, *Am* I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

46 This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was* no sword in the hand of David.

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the

valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

*15. Why did David not wear Saul's armor? 17:38, 39*

David did not wear Saul's armor because he had not proved it. Exactly what he meant by saying this is hard to tell, but it certainly would not fit David. Saul stood head and shoulders above anyone else in Israel. David was not fully grown at the time. The helmet of brass and the coat of mail would not be comfortable for David. In the second place, he had not proved that he knew how to use the sword. His weapons had been the weapons of rural use. In the third place, David had not proved himself worthy of wearing a soldier's armor. He was not unworthy, but it is normal for a soldier to earn his stripes and to deserve the privilege of carrying certain weapons. David was quite humble, and he may have meant that he had no right to wear the king's armor.

*16. With what was David equipped? 17:40*

David was equipped with a sling and a shepherd's bag, called a "scrip." In addition, he selected five smooth stones out of the brook as he crossed it. The exact nature of the scrip is not known, but it was probably a pouch which may have been suspended from his girdle or from a strap slung over his shoulder. As David had grown up watching his father's sheep, he had become skilled in the use of a sling. Benjaminites are mentioned in Judges 20:16 as being able to sling a stone at a hair's-breadth and not miss. Moreover they did this with their left hands. Such skill is difficult to obtain, but it is a deadly offensive and defensive weapon.

17. *What did Goliath and David say to each other?*  
17:43-47

The giant looked upon David with disdain and asked if they had sent someone out after him as after a dog with clubs and sticks. Goliath said that he would feed the flesh of David to the birds of the air. David replied that the giant was coming out to meet him with a sword and spear and javelin, but that he came to meet the giant in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom the giant had defied. David also said that Jehovah would deliver the giant into his hands and that he would give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines unto the birds of the heavens, and that all people would know that Jehovah depended not upon spears and swords, but that the battle would be won by His power.

18. *What was the result of the encounter?* 17:49-51

David was confident that the battle would be Jehovah's. He declared that all the earth would know that not by sword and spear doth Jehovah save; for the battle is Jehovah's, to dispose of according to his own sovereign will. When Goliath arose, therefore, and drew near, David ran towards him, took a stone out of his pocket, hurled it, and hit the Philistine in his face so that the stone entered his forehead and the giant fell upon his face to the ground. Goliath was so disdainful of David that he failed to close the visor of his helmet. David then cut off the head of the fallen giant with his own sword. Upon the downfall of their hero the Philistines were terrified and fled; whereupon the Israelites rose up with a cry to pursue the fleeing foe. They pursued them from the valley of the battle to the gates of Ekron, returned to plunder the camp of the enemy, and returned to their homes victorious. David took the head of Goliath and brought it to Jerusalem, and put his armor in his tent. From this place, Goliath's sword was taken to the Tabernacle at Nob. It was deposited

here by David in honor of the Lord and the victory that was granted over Israel's enemies.

19. *How far did the Philistines flee?* 17:52

Shaaraim is from the Hebrew word meaning, "two gates." There are two places by this name. One, a city near Azekah in Judah (Joshua 15:36), the other is a town in Simeon (I Chronicles 4:31), and evidently to be identified with Sharuhén, which is between Gaza and Beersheba. Ekron is one of the Philistine cities where the Ark had been kept. Mention of the fact that the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim even to Gath and Ekron would indicate that the Philistines were driven back into their own territory. The mention of the Valley would indicate that there was another valley near Ekron. Reference could hardly be to the valley Elah where the battle was fought. This was no doubt a turning point in David's life and it was also a turning point in Israel's history. The Philistines are no longer found fighting up in the mountains of Judah and Ephraim. God's people were blessed with a decisive victory over their perennial enemies.

20. *Why did David take Goliath's head to Jerusalem?*  
17:54

The Israelites tired from chasing the Philistines and spoiled their tents. The Philistines had left in such a complete rout that they had not taken their baggage and equipment with them. David himself took the sword of Goliath and put it in the tabernacle at Nob (I Samuel 21:9), but he took the head of Goliath and brought it to Jerusalem. The rest of his armor was kept in David's tent for the time being. Jerusalem was not yet David's capital city. He was evidently not gibbeting Goliath's head on the wall of Jerusalem as the Philistines did the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the wall of Beth-shan (I Samuel 31:11). The Philistines also sent Saul's head



around about in the cities of the Philistines to publish the victory among their people.

David evidently did not pass around Goliath's head to publish the victory, but he may have brought it to Jerusalem to warn the Jebusites, who held the city, not to cause trouble for Saul and the armies of Israel. David was also possibly bringing it to throw it in the valley of Hinnom, which later was used as a place of refuse. If this had been the long-standing practice of casting refuse into this valley, David may have disposed of Goliath's head in this manner to show his utter contempt for anyone who would defy the armies of the living God.

*Saul Inquires About David's Background. 17:55-58*

55 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son *is* this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

56 And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the strippling *is*.

57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 And Saul said to him, Whose son *art* thou, *thou* young man? And David answered, *I am* the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.

*21. Why did Saul seemingly fail to recognize David?*  
*17:55-58*

This does not necessarily mean that Saul did not know David as the young man that played the harp for him when he was under the spell of the evil spirit. The fact that he had asked no questions along this line when David first appeared before him indicates that he knew who he was. Otherwise it would be hard to understand how he was so ready to trust him. What he did not know was

the standing of David's family. It was the story of David concerning his family that seemed to have a strong appeal to Jonathan and led him to make the gift of his armor.

If Saul was going to make Jesse's house free in Israel, he would have to know more about the house. He may have inquired as to the number of sons in the home of Jesse. Furthermore, if David were to become the son-in-law of the king, Saul would want to know his background to make sure that he was of proper Israelite ancestry. It would also be necessary for Saul to find out more about David's family in order to know what kind of gifts to make for this daring deed of patriotism. David did surely more than to answer Saul's question. He must have gone into some little bit of explanation of his humble origins; because when he concluded speaking with Saul, Jonathan's soul was knit to that of David (I Samuel 18:1).

## CHAPTER 17 IN REVIEW

1. Where did the Philistines gather for battle? \_\_\_\_\_
2. To what tribe of Israel did the place belong? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the name of the Philistine champion? \_\_\_\_\_
4. From what Philistine city did he hail? \_\_\_\_\_
5. For how many days did Goliath issue his challenge? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many of David's brothers were in Saul's army? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which of David's brothers rebuked him? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many stones did David take from the brook? \_\_\_\_\_
9. To what Philistine city did Israel pursue the Philistines? \_\_\_\_\_
10. To what Canaanite city did David carry Goliath's head? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Vv. 1- 4 *David's covenant with Jonathan.* David's spirit was of such nature that Jonathan was immediately attracted to him. David made a covenant with Jonathan which was later renewed. The effect of the covenant was that David and Jonathan agreed not to harm each other. In case of the death of either the other agreed not to harm the descendants of the deceased.
- Vv. 5- 9 *Saul's jealousy of David.* David carried out all of his responsibilities with effectiveness. He won such favor in the eyes of the people that he became a national hero. The song which the people sang concerning the exploits of Saul and David aroused the jealousy of Saul because it was more favorable to David than it was to Saul.
- Vv. 10-16 *David driven out of Saul's court.* Saul's jealousy became so intense that he tried to kill David, not once but twice. Finally David was sent from the court to serve with the army in a distant outpost.
- Vv. 17-30 *David, the king's son-in-law.* It was understood by the men in the army that whoever slew Goliath would become the king's son-in-law, but Saul shamed David in the sight of Israel by giving his oldest daughter Merab to another man. When Saul found out that Michal loved David, he attempted to ensnare David by having him kill 100 Philistines as a dowry. When David did twice what was expected of him, Saul could hardly refuse to give Michal to him as his wife. This Saul did

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although he knew that all Israel loved David greatly and he himself feared David more and more.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Kindred spirits are attracted to one another.* Though Saul was afraid of David, Saul's son Jonathan was a good man and found a fast friend in David. David's speech before Saul after David had killed the giant was of such humble nature that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David immediately. Men today often find their closest friends among fellow workers in the church. Such ought to be the case with God's people. Their closest friends ought to be those who are of like precious faith.
2. *Two wrongs do not make a right.* David did what was expected of him even though Saul treated him shamefully. He must have been tempted to retaliate against Saul's injustices, but the idea of gaining revenge never gained the upper hand in David's thinking. It seemed that the more Saul oppressed David the more faithful David was to the tasks assigned him by Saul. David's actions remind us of the injunction of the apostle Paul to "overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

Saul's Reception of David Into His Court, 18:1-30.

#### *David's Covenant With Jonathan.* 18:1-4

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

1. *What took place between David and Jonathan when he told about his family? 18:1-4*

David's victory over Goliath was a turning-point in his life, which opened the way to the throne. This deed brought him out of the rural shepherd life to the scene of Israel's wars. In these wars Jehovah blessed all his undertakings with success. It also brought him, on the other hand, into such a relation to the royal house, which had been rejected by God, though it still continued to reign, as produced lasting and beneficial results in connection with his future calling. In the king himself, from whom the Spirit of God had departed, there was soon stirred up such jealousy of David as his rival to whom the kingdom would one day come, that he attempted at first to get rid of him by stratagem. When this failed, and David's renown steadily increased, he proceeded to open hostility and persecution. Jonathan, however, clung more and more firmly to David with self-effacing love and sacrifice. This friendship on the part of the son of the king not only helped David to bear the more easily all the enmity and persecution of the king but awakened and strengthened in him a pure feeling of unswerving fidelity towards the king himself.

2. *Why did David remain permanently with Saul? 18:2*

When David first came to Saul's court, he went to and fro to feed his father's sheep (17:15). His habit must have been to spend some time with Saul, then as Saul would show improvement, David would be free to go back to his father's house. If Saul's condition deteriorated, David would be called again to the court. After David slew the giant he vaulted into such a prominent place in the life of Israel that Saul kept him with him permanently.

This change of his schedule must not have been because of the worsening of Saul's condition, but rather the fact that his courage had been demonstrated in such a way as to make his services in constant demand.

3. *Why did Jonathan give his armor to David?* 18:4

As a sign and pledge of his friendship, Jonathan gave David his clothes and his armor. This seems to have been a common custom of very ancient times. The manifestation of Jonathan's love is seen in the covenant. Saul had earlier been willing to clothe David in his armor, but his was a temporary measure. Jonathan's gift was a permanent bestowal of honor and favor.

4. *When did David become Saul's armor-bearer?* 18:4

When Absalom was brought back from Gilead, he prepared a chariot of horses and fifty men to run before him (II Samuel 15:1). Saul did not have as much equipage, but he must have had several armor-bearers. When David first came to be with Saul, Saul loved him greatly, and David became his armor-bearer (16:21). Since David came and went and was not constantly at Saul's court, David was probably not his only armor-bearer. After he killed Goliath, it would appear that David was made Saul's personal armor-bearer. Saul set David over his men of war. This prominent position given to David was pleasing in the sight of the people. The servants who were under David's jurisdiction were also pleased with his leadership.

*Saul's Jealousy of David.* 18:5-9

5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, *and* behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

6 And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing,

to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music.

7 And the women answered *one another* as they played, and said,

Saul hath slain his thousands,  
and David his ten thousands.

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but the kingdom?

9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

5. *What caused Saul's anger after David had defeated the Philistines?* 18:7, 8

The eulogies of the women who greeted the returning army roused the jealousy of Saul. He therefore removed David from service near his person and appointed him over a band of soldiers in the field. David's activity and discretion were such that his hold on the people increased, which increased also Saul's jealousy. Michal, the younger daughter of Saul fell in love with David; and Saul made this an occasion for exposing David to new dangers. David's success in this instance added to the king's dislike, which became a settled hatred. At one point we are told of Saul's attempt to murder David. At another point, we are told of Saul's unfulfilled promise to give his older daughter to David. All these are but expressions of Saul's growing hatred.

6. *What is the meaning of Saul's eyeing David?* 18:9

Saul was so jealous of David that he kept him under constant surveillance. He was especially cognizant of all honors bestowed on him and heard with displeasure the songs that the women sang about David. From that day forward, Saul watched David's every move. He was evidently watching to see if he could find some flaw in him. Had David made a wrong step, Saul would have been

quick to condemn him and perhaps dishonor him or even kill him. Each of David's victories must have brought added displeasure and jealousy for Saul. Every favor bestowed on David must have given him acute mental anguish. He was indeed filled with an evil spirit.

*David Driven Out of Saul's Court. 18:10-16*

10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand.

11 And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it*. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

14 And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord *was* with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

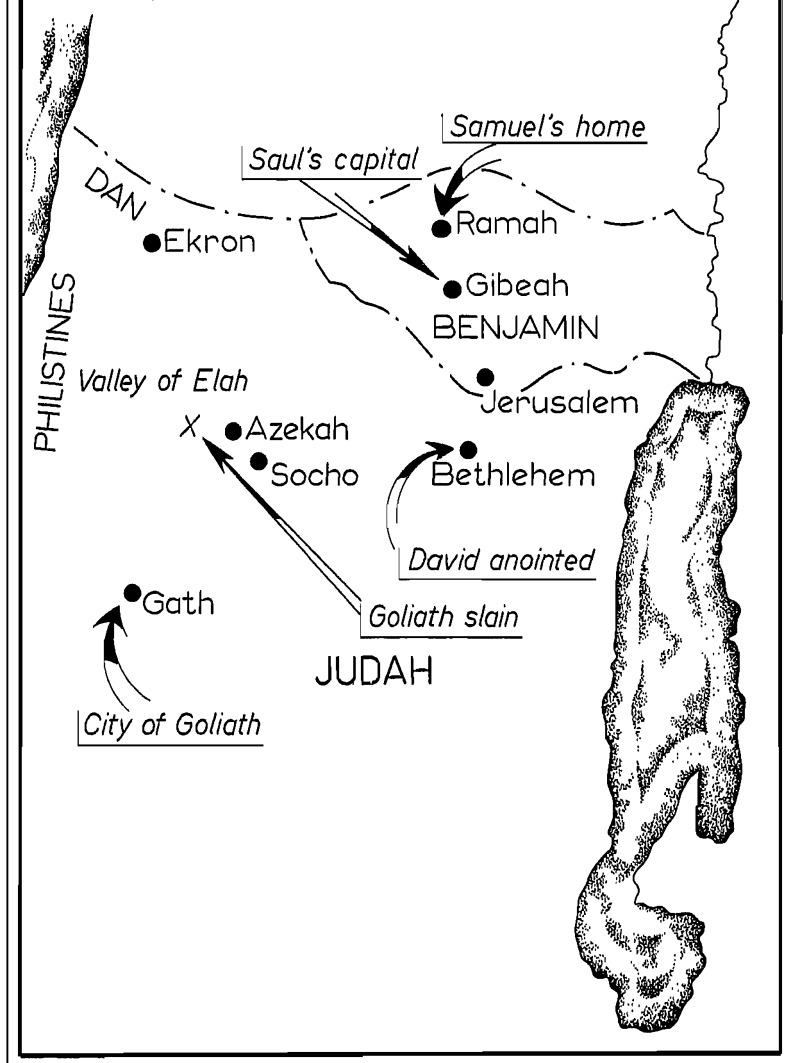
*7. How could Saul prophesy? 18:10*

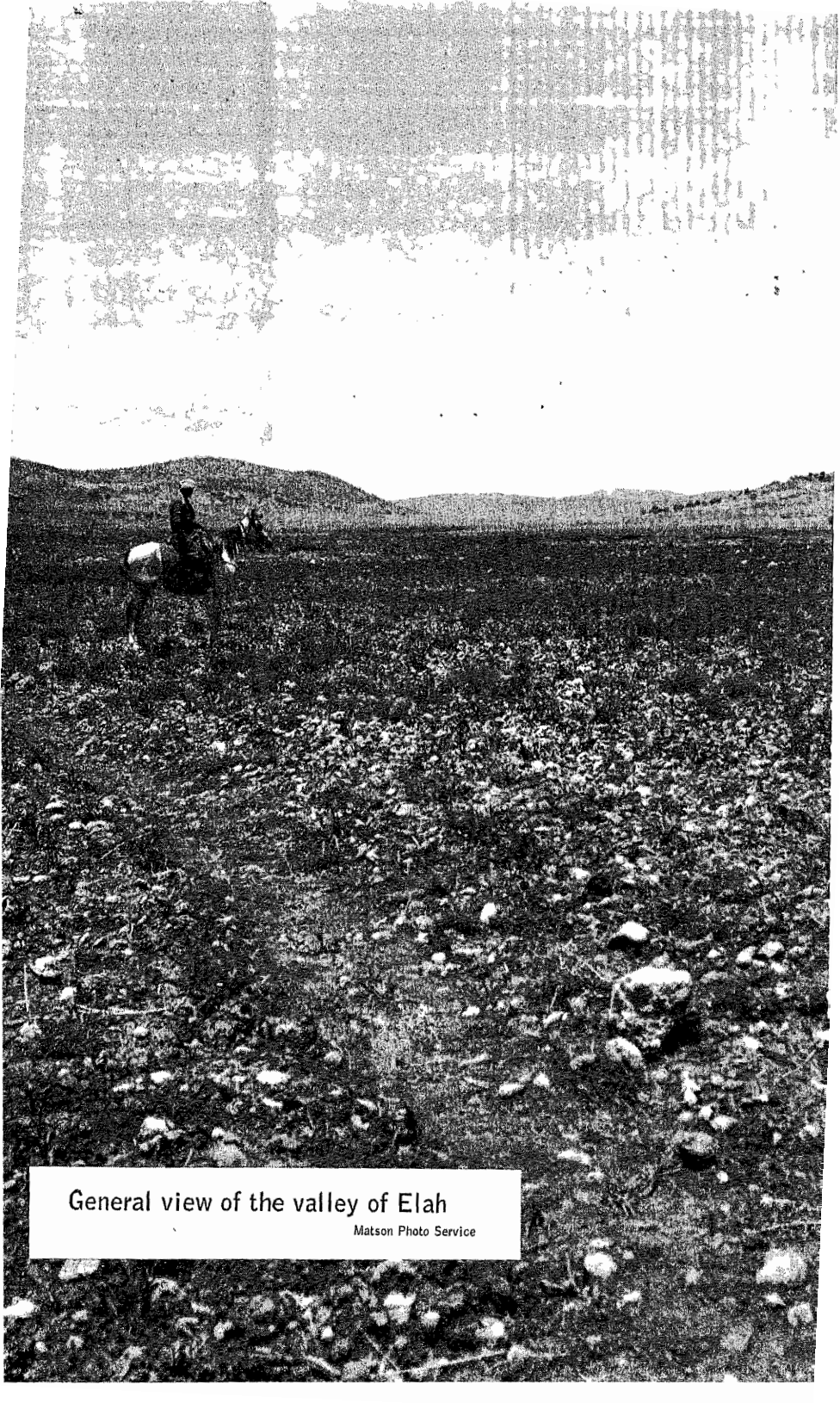
The evil spirit that came upon Saul was a supernatural influence. It was more than jealousy. Saul may have left himself open for the seizure of the evil spirit by falling into moods of melancholia. His condition may have been aggravated by the nearly insane jealousy he felt towards David. His condition was quite unnatural. The spirit of the living God not only filled his servants that they might reveal the truth, but Satan worked with all power and signs and lying wonders among his servants (II Thessalon-



# ANOINTING OF DAVID AND SAUL'S SECOND PHILISTINE WAR

*I Sam. 16-17*





General view of the valley of Elah

Matson Photo Service

ians 2:9). Saul was filled with an evil spirit, and his prophesying was not done in truth.

8. *How did David escape twice?* 18:11

The exact nature of Saul's attack on David is not made clear from this verse. He did have a javelin in his hand as David played before him. Saul threw the javelin, intending to pin David to the wall with it. The fact that David escaped once would be enough, but the statement is made that he escaped twice. Some commentators feel that Saul swung the javelin. If this were the case, David ducked and escaped the blow. Saul may then have swung again, and David dodged again. This kind of action does not fit the description of Saul's intention to pin David to the wall. It would be better to view this as a statement that this kind of an attack was made not only once but twice.

9. *Why did Saul make David captain over a thousand?*  
18:13

Saul's jealousy of David turned into fear. The Lord was with David and blessed him, but an evil spirit was in possession of Saul. Saul removed David from being his armor-bearer, not because he thought David would seek revenge, but because the constant aggravation and irritation of his presence was more than Saul could take. He also felt that David would be in great danger out in the field of battle. He made him a captain over a thousand men (18:16). David never made a wrong step. He behaved himself very wisely. He gave Saul no occasion to find fault in him. David's blameless conduct caused Saul to be more and more afraid of him. For this reason Israel and Judah loved David. Once again a distinction is made between the eleven other tribes and the leading tribe of Judah. Such a reference is not an indication of the books being written after the schism, but rather a manifestation of the fact that God had chosen Judah to be the leading tribe. David's conduct brought him into

such a place of prominence that he was like Joshua, who was chosen to take Moses' place as Israel's leader. As Moses was laying down the reins of government, he prayed that the Lord would set a man over the congregation who would go out before them and come in before them. This man's responsibility was to lead them out and bring them in. As Moses said, he had this responsibility so that the congregation of the Lord "be not as sheep which have no shepherd" (Numbers 27:17). Solomon used this same kind of reference to indicate his place of leadership as their wise king. Solomon said that he did not know how to "go out and come in" (II Chronicles 1:10). David must have had a place of very great prominence as his irreproachable character and wise conduct won much favor for him.

*David the King's Son-in-law. 18:17-30*

17 And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife; only be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord's battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

18 And David said unto Saul, Who *am* I? and what is my life, *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?

19 But it came to pass at the time when Merab Saul's daughter should have been given to David, that she was given unto Adriel the Meholathite to wife.

20 And Michal Saul's daughter loved David. and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.

21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in *the one of* the twain.

22 And Saul commanded his servants, *saying*, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight

in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.

23 And Saul's servants spake these words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you *a light thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I *am* a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner spake David.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law: and the days were not expired.

27 Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

28 And Saul saw and knew that the Lord *was* with David, and *that* Michal Saul's daughter loved him.

29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

30 Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, *that* David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by.

#### 10. Who was Merab? 18:17

Merab was Saul's oldest daughter by Ahinoam, Saul's wife (14:50). Saul's men understood that whoever killed Goliath would become the king's son-in-law. Since Merab was his older daughter and as yet unmarried, he promised

to give her to David as his wife. He asked additional service on David's part as he entered into this covenant. He charged him to be valiant for Saul and to fight the Lord's battles. Saul was not at all anxious for David to continue his valiant service, but he was hoping that if David went into battle against the Philistines, the Philistines might kill him. Saul would thereby be freed from the threat to his throne. David was humbled by this promised honor. He did not count himself worthy of being the king's son-in-law. He did not count his life to be of much effect and evidently fought the Philistines without regard for his own safety.

*11. Why was Saul's promise not kept? 18:19*

Saul showed himself to be a very wicked king. He not only set David in positions where his life would be endangered and threatened his life on a number of occasions, but he failed to keep his word to David. A character study of Saul would reveal that he was jealous, fearful and dishonorable. He became a complexity of evil motives and deeds. When it was time that he should be married to Merab, Saul betrayed him and gave Merab to be the wife of Adriel, a Meholathite.

*12. Who was Michal? 18:20*

Michal was Saul's younger daughter. Her mother was also Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz (14:50). Michal loved David, and this information was brought to Saul. He saw in Michal's association with David an opportunity to lay a snare for David. He proposed that David would be his son-in-law by marrying Michal, but he demanded a dowry of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. The servants of Saul were sent to find out David's reaction to such a proposal. David felt that he was being mocked by the king and said, "seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law" (18:23). He evidently believed that Saul was toying with him, and he did not think it was a laughing matter. In other words, David took the proposal

seriously and was willing to do whatever was honorable to be given the hand of Michal in marriage.

13. *Why did Saul demand the foreskins of David?* 18:25

Jacob worked for seven years in order to receive the hand of Rachel in marriage (Genesis 29:28). Saul demanded a very unusual dowry from David in the form of 100 foreskins of the Philistines. Hardly any personal advantage came to Saul by demanding such a dowry. He was evidently trying to place David in such a dangerous situation that David could not escape. If David went out to kill one hundred Philistines and one of them killed him, then Saul would have removed this constant source of aggravation. Once again David showed himself willing to give more than could be expected of him. He not only killed a hundred Philistines, but doubled the number. He killed two hundred men and brought their foreskins to Saul.

14. *What is the meaning of the phrase, "in full tale"?*  
18:27

There was no lack of any in the total of two hundred foreskins. The number was not one hundred ninety-nine. It was a full two hundred, just twice as many as Saul had demanded. This phrase is an old English phrase from which we sometimes get the expression, "all told." We may make reference to there being two hundred people, "all told," at some kind of meeting. This expression has persisted in our language from the old English way of saying that a number was fully counted.

15. *Why did the princes of the Philistines go forth?* 18:30

The princes of the Philistines probably went out to avenge the killing of two hundred of their men by David as he satisfied the beastly whim of king Saul. They went forth to battle against the Israelites as they probably did on a number of occasions. David behaved himself wisely as ever. His behavior was better than that of any of the other servants of Saul so that his reputation grew better

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

and better. His reputation even spread into Philistia, and all the Israelites came to depend upon him greatly. The Philistines feared him as a mighty man of war, and the Israelites looked to him as a champion of their cause.

### CHAPTER 18 IN REVIEW

1. What was the name of Saul's son? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What items did Saul's son give David? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many slain did the people ascribe to David? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many slain did the people ascribe to Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
5. To whom did Saul give his older daughter in marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the name of the daughter of Saul whom David married? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What rank did David hold in Saul's army? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many men did he have under him? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many foreskins of Philistines did Saul demand of David as a dowry? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How many foreskins did David secure? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 19

Vv. 1- 7 *Jonathan intercedes for David.* Jonathan spoke kindly to Saul on David's behalf. He brought the two together again.



## FIRST SAMUEL

Vv. 8-17 *David driven out a second time.* Now Jonathan's good offices were to no avail. Once again Saul tried to kill David. When David escaped from his flying javelin, Saul sent messages to David's home; and Michal, David's wife and Saul's daughter, helped him to escape.

Vv. 18-24 *David with Samuel.* The old prophet Samuel was David's good friend. Samuel and Saul had parted company long ago. Samuel had gone to anoint David to be king. David knew that he would find a friend in Samuel. He went to him in Ramah.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Some men are determined to do evil.* Some situations are of such an evil nature that no amount of good seems able to prevail. Some men are so filled with evil thoughts that they will not be persuaded by any good reasoning. Such seems to be the case with Saul. Christians will do well to realize this truth and cease to cast their pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).
2. *A man's enemies may be those of his own house* (Matthew 10:36). Even though David was Saul's son-in-law, Saul was determined to kill him. Michal, David's wife, seems to have lied about David's threatening her. David must have wondered if there were any good person to help him since they of this own family were against him.
3. *A friend in need is a friend indeed.* Samuel had brought the call of God to David when he anointed him in Bethlehem. Now the side of events was going against David. David must have sorely needed the asylum afforded him by the man of God in Ramah.

David's Final Flight from Saul's Court, 19:1-24.

*Jonathan Intercedes for David.* 19:1-7

And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

2 But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

4 And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works *have been* to thee-ward very good:

5 For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest *it*, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, *As the Lord liveth*, he shall not be slain.

7 And Jonathan called David and Jonathan showed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.

*1. Who were Saul's servants? 19:1*

Saul's servants would be his courtiers. They were his other armor-bearers, his captains of the army, and all those who had an office in his kingdom. Saul extended his personal scheme to include all those over whom he had any control. He embraced Jonathan, his son, in the order. All were expected to do whatever they could to catch David and kill him. Such a widespread plot made it necessary for David to be always on the defensive. Had it not been for Jonathan, Saul's plot may have been suc-

cessful; but Jonathan told David of this extensive attempt on the part of Saul to kill him.

2. *What was Jonathan's scheme?* 19:3

Jonathan intended to make an opportunity to speak personally to his father about David. He found this opportunity as the two were in a field near the place where David was fighting. Jonathan spoke only good of David. His reasoning was good, and he reminded Saul of the good things David had done for him. Jonathan pointed out that David had not sinned against Saul. His activity had brought honor and glory to Saul and his kingdom. Jonathan reminded his father that David took his own life in his hands as he went out against Goliath. Jonathan believed that the Lord had worked in these instances and had brought about a great salvation for all Israel. Jonathan reminded Saul that he had seen this himself and rejoiced over it. Jonathan could see no reason for Saul's seeking to slay David. To Jonathan the killing of David would be the shedding of innocent blood.

3. *Why did Saul yield to Jonathan's appeal?* 19:6

When Saul was in full possession of his faculties, he must have known that he was wrong in trying to bring harm to David. Much of his fear of David must have come when he was in possession of the evil spirit. If Jonathan caught him at a time when he was rational, he could make his father understand what was right. Such must have been the case for Saul listened to Jonathan.

*David Driven Out a Second Time.* 19:8-17

8 And there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him.

9 And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with *his* hand.

10 And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall

with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

11 Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be slain.

12 So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.

13 And Michal took an image, and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster, and covered *it* with a cloth.

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He *is* sick.

15 And Saul sent the messengers *again* to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, *there was* an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?

#### 4. *Why did Saul have his spear in his hand? 19:9*

Saul probably had the spear as a sceptre. He must have held it in his hand as he presided over his court. This would be in keeping with ancient oriental custom. It is also possible that Saul kept his spear always at hand in order that he might seize upon an opportunity to kill David. The spear that he held was evidently in the form of a javelin which he could throw. On the occasion described in this chapter he threw the javelin, but missed David. The javelin then stuck in the wall as David escaped out of Saul's presence. This is the second incident mentioned in which David escaped from a direct attack

on the part of Saul. Since the other occasion mentioned David's escaping twice, this would make at least three times that David escaped out of Saul's presence (18:10).

5. *Why did Michal have teraphim?* 19:13

Teraphim were little household images. The fact that Michal had these in her house reveals that she was not purely a worshipper of the Lord. Teraphim were found in the house of Laban, and Rachel stole them when she left her father's house (Genesis 31:19). These images were not large, for Rachel was able to hide her father's teraphim in the camel's baggage and sit on them. If Michal had larger images so that only one of the teraphim was put in the bed to look like a human form, they must have been larger than those stolen by Rachel, since it would be hard for Rachel to hide an image of this size. The pillow of goat's hair would resemble human hair quite naturally. It was goat's hair which Jacob put on his hands to feel like the human hair on Esau's hands (Genesis 27:16). Ancient dramatists in Greece and Rome used kid skin for the making of puppets to resemble humans, and they used kid skin with the hair to make wigs and toupees. Kid skin very nearly resembles human skin in its softness and pliability.

6. *Was Michal's answer true?* 19:17

Nothing is said about David's threatening Michal. David may have asked her to let him go and to give him time to escape so that he might protect her. Saul may have been so senseless in his attack on David that he would have killed his own daughter along with David. The inference of her statement is that she could not prevent David's escape. She gives the impression that David forced her to make up the bed so that it appeared that he was in it, even threatening her life if she failed to cooperate with him. If this be the case, there is no reference to it in the narrative. More than likely it is a piece of deceit on the part of Michal, and she is not justified in lying thus about the matter.

*David With Samuel. 19:18-24*

18 So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David *is* at Naioth in Ramah.

20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing *as* appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.

22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that *is* in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where *are* Samuel and David? And *one* said, Behold *they be* at Naioth in Ramah.

23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

7. *What was Naioth of Ramah? 19:19*

Naioth was the communal dwelling place of the company of the prophets found in Ramah. It can hardly be taken as a town for there is no reference of Samuel's moving his residence to a smaller village which would be under the jurisdiction of Ramah. The Naioth would likely be located at the highest point in Ramah. This would make the ideal dwelling place of the prophet.

8. *What was Samuel's position with the prophets? 19:20*

Samuel was called the "head" of the prophets. He had jurisdiction over them and occupied the same place that

Elijah evidently occupied at a later time. When Elijah was about to be taken into heaven, Elisha asked to be given a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elisha was evidently asking to be recognized as Elijah's successor as head of the prophets (II Kings 2:9).

*9. What caused the prophesying? 19:20b*

The Spirit of God came upon the men. The prophets could not work up an ecstatic frame of mind. They were not whirling dervishes and even the use of the musical instruments does not account for the spirit of prophecy coming upon these men. It has well been said that no prophecy is of any private interpretation. Men of God did not speak as it pleased them, "for no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21).

*10. Who were the company of the prophets? 19:20*

The company of the prophets are sometimes known as the "band" of the prophets. On other occasions they are known as the "school of the prophets." Another designation is "sons of the prophets." These were young men that are met in the Scripture all the way from the time of Samuel down to the time of Amos who said that he was not "a son of a prophet" (Amos 7:14). These men were allowed to marry, but they lived in a common dwelling place. They had an older prophet as their leader. On occasions they were sent on such important missions as anointing kings, even in a country like Syria. They were sent on special missions such as that fulfilled by the unnamed prophet who announced judgment on Jeroboam's idolatry (I Kings 13:1).

*11. In what sense was Saul naked? 19:24*

Saul did not have on his usual regal costume. He was probably clad only in his undergarments. This truth is brought out in such instances as the occasion on which David danced before the Ark. On that occasion, he wore a linen ephod (II Samuel 6:14). When David got to his

house, Michal upbraided him because she thought he had shamelessly uncovered himself (II Samuel 6:20). Evidently Michal was incensed that her husband, the king, would dance before the Ark in such an abbreviated costume as a priest's ephod. She must have thought that it was beneath his dignity to be among the common people and not to have on his robe and crown. On another occasion we learn that Peter put on his coat and jumped into the sea because he was "naked" (John 21:7). The American Standard Version contains a footnote indicating that Peter had on his "undergarment only." This must have been the case with Saul's lying on the ground all night and prophesying.

12. *Why is the proverb given twice? 19:24*

When Saul first met a band of prophets after leaving Samuel, he fell in with them and began to prophesy (10:12). People learned of this, and they started the proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" On this occasion at Naioth Saul once again fell among the prophets and prophesied. The occasion received a new exemplification. It also received a new basis and was therefore the cause of the proverb being revived and emphasized.

## CHAPTER 19 IN REVIEW

1. Who interceded with Saul on David's behalf? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What did Saul hurl at David? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What did Michal put in David's bed? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Of what was the pillow made? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did David threaten to kill Michal? \_\_\_\_\_
6. To whom did David flee? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what city did David find refuge? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What group of men were prophesying when Saul's messengers met them? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where did Saul go in search of David? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Quote the proverb which arose from Saul's prophesying. \_\_\_\_\_



## FIRST SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 20

- Vv. 1-10 *David's appeal to Jonathan.* Since Jonathan had helped David to return to Saul's court at one time, David sought him out again. Jonathan was still David's friend and agreed to assist David.
- Vv. 11-23 *Jonathan's plan.* Jonathan renewed his covenant with David and agreed to find out his father's intentions concerning David. He also arranged a plan whereby David would know the outcome of Jonathan's inquiry of his father.
- Vv. 24-34 *Saul's attack on Jonathan and David.* When Saul found out that Jonathan was in touch with David he berated not only Jonathan but also his own wife Ahinoam as well.
- Vv. 35-42 *David's and Jonathan's parting.* When David learned of Saul's implacable anger, he knew that he could not return to the court. He knew that he was doomed to live the life of a fugitive. The parting with Jonathan was sad, but in the best interests of both.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The value of faithful friends.* At the risk of his own life Jonathan was willing to help David. Their friendship is classic in its very nature. The two stand as examples of what friends ought to be to each other.
2. *The vile fruits of jealousy.* Saul became so intense in his hatred, fear and jealousy of David that he attempted to kill his own son. He called his wife a "perverse, rebellious woman" (v. 30). Such is the way of one who is proud and selfish.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

3. *The strengthening of truth in adversity.* The parting of Jonathan and David is filled with heartwarming lessons. The two wept unashamedly, for their souls had been knit inseparably together by their experiencing danger together. Such is the outcome of the fires of testing on friendship that is true.

David's Farewell to Jonathan, 20:1-42.

*David's Appeal to Jonathan.* 20:1-10

And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what *is* mine iniquity? what *is* my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

2 And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will show it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? *it is not so.*

3 And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly *as* the Lord liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, *there is* but a step between me and death.

4 Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do *it* for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow *is* the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even.

6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked *leave* of me that he might run to Beth-lehem his city: for *there is* a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.

7 If he say thus, *it is* well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, *then* be sure that evil is determined by him.

8 Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for

thou has brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what *if* thy father answer thee roughly?

*1. Why did David appeal to Jonathan? 20:1*

Samuel was the man who had anointed David to be king over Israel. In this role, Samuel had showed himself to be a friend of David. David first fled to him. After he had been with Samuel in Ramah, his thoughts must have turned to other friends and supporters. No one had been any closer to David than Jonathan. In addition Jonathan would have full access to the court of Saul. Jonathan would know if there were some possible reasons for Saul's continued animosity. It was for these reasons that David next turned to Jonathan. His question was three-fold: What had he done? What was his iniquity of any kind? What was his sin against Saul? David thought Saul had surely indicated some reason why he was seeking to take his life.

*2. Why did Jonathan deny his father's intentions? 20:2*

Jonathan did not so much deny his father's intention as to utter a prayer that God would spare David's life. It was unthinkable to Jonathan that David should be slain. His continued speech, however, reveals that he evidently thought that his father was not intending to take such drastic action. As heir apparent to the throne, Jonathan would be taken into his father's most intimate confidence. Nothing of any significance would be hidden from Jonathan; and he felt that Saul's intentions towards David were ultimately for good, except when his father was in the throes of the state of depression into which he fell.

3. *Why did David insist that Saul did intend to kill him?*  
20:3

David said that Saul knew that there was a deep friendship between Jonathan and David. On account of this friendship he believed Saul had failed to reveal his full intentions towards David as a part of the information he gave to Jonathan. This was one aspect of the kingdom's business into which Saul had not taken Jonathan into his confidence. David thought that Saul did not want to grieve Jonathan in this matter and had spared him the mental anguish of knowing his father was intending to slay his best friend. David insisted that there was only a very slight chance that he could escape. He was just one step away from death.

4. *What was the plan devised between Jonathan and David?* 20:5

David proposed being absent from the feast of the new moon. He intended to go and hide himself in a field for three days while Jonathan made specific inquiry into the status of Saul's plans. Should Jonathan find out that David could safely come back into the court, he was to come out into the field and get him. If there were no possibility of his being reinstated at the court, Jonathan was to come and inform him so that he could flee from Saul.

5. *Was there a feast at Jesse's house?* 20:6

The feast of the new moon was a very important feast to the Israelites. Every male member was expected to observe the beginning of the new month. It is quite possible that there was a feast being held at Jesse's house in Bethlehem. The Tabernacle in Shiloh had lost its significance to the people since the Ark had been captured by the Philistines. The Ark itself was still in the house of Abinadab on the western border of the tribe of Judah. The faithful people of Israel would continue to hold their feast. Since this is mentioned as an annual feast, it may

have been the first day of the new year, the first day of the month Abib.

6. *How would David's absence indicate Saul's attitude?*  
20:7

David would surely be missed. This may have been the very time at which Saul had laid the plot to catch David. He may have been waiting for this occasion when all his courtiers were expected to be with him. The fact that David was gone would irritate the king. The extent of his irritation would indicate his attitude towards David.

7. *What covenant of the Lord was between David and Jonathan?* 20:8

The covenant of friendship into which David and Jonathan had entered (18:1, 2) was considered a holy covenant by David. It was more than a statement of friendship between two men. David did not take it lightly. He had sworn unto the Lord that he would show kindness to Jonathan. Jonathan had made the same vow to him. This covenant was renewed time and time again throughout the lives of the two men. It bound them together inseparably.

8. *What danger was there in the plan for Jonathan?* 20:10

David foresaw the possibility of Saul's answering Jonathan "roughly." As the matter transpired, Saul did answer Jonathan roughly. He called him the son of a perverse, rebellious woman (v. 30). Saul even cast his javelin at Jonathan to smite him (v. 33). It is hard to imagine any depth to which Saul could have fallen where he would be lower than he was at this time. He had turned upon his armor-bearer and champion, David. He had accused his own daughter of turning against him. He had imagined that his courtiers were all against him. He came to the place where he cast reproach and suspicion upon his own wife and then threw a javelin to kill his heir and prince.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### *Jonathan's Plan: 20:11-23*

11 And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

12 And Jonathan said unto David, O Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about tomorrow any time, *or* the third *day*, and behold, *if there be good* toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and show it thee;

13 The Lord do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father *to do* thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father.

14 And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not:

15 But *also* thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.

16 So Jonathan made *a covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, Let the Lord even require *it* at the hand of David's enemies.

17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

18 Then Jonathan said to David, Tomorrow *is* the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.

19 And *when* thou hast stayed three days, *then* thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was *in hand*, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel.

20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side *thereof*, as though I shot at a mark.

21 And, behold, I will send a lad, *saying*, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows *are* on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for *there* is peace to thee, and not hurt, *as* the Lord liveth.

22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the

arrows *are* beyond thee; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away.

23 And *as touching* the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord *be* between thee and me for ever.

9. *What is the meaning of Jonathan's prayer? 20:12, 13*

As Jonathan and David went into the field, Jonathan prayed to the Lord God of Israel. He asked God to do evil to him if he did not tell David the outcome of the matter. His prayer was really a vow. It was a solemn oath taken before the Lord that he would sound out his father and then tell David. If, for any reason, Jonathan failed to bring word to David, he prayed that God would smite him.

10. *What was the house of David? 20:16*

As yet David had no family. The covenant which Jonathan made with David was looking into the future to a time when David would have heirs. The covenant which Jonathan and David made was not only between themselves personally, but it was to be binding upon their descendants. It was a promise that neither family would turn upon the other. Such a covenant was needed because regal families quite often exterminated each other. One family coming to the throne would customarily seek out all the members of the other royal house and attempt to exterminate them. By doing this they would dispose of any threat which might be made to their claims to the throne.

11. *Where was the stone Ezel? 20:19*

The spot is lost to present-day archaeologists, but it was evidently near Ramah in Benjamin. The stone would have marked the field and spot where David was to hide. This would make it possible for Jonathan to come back to the area and be certain that he was in the vicinity of David's hiding place.

12. *How would the shooting of arrows be a sign to David?*

20:20-23

The signal was arranged so that David would know the outcome of Jonathan's inquiry without any direct conversation. If Jonathan shot arrows into the field, and then said to the lad who was to fetch the arrows that the arrows were beyond the boy, then David would know that he was to get up and flee. If Jonathan shot the arrows and then said to the lad who was fetching them that the arrows were between Jonathan and the lad, David would know that it was safe for him to come out of hiding. David was then to get up from his hiding place and come back with the boy and the arrows to Jonathan. Should Jonathan be followed into the field, there would be no danger to anybody concerned. If Saul were still threatening David's life, the boy would run on and get the arrows. He would bring them back to Jonathan and they would return to Gibeah. After they had gone David would get up and flee. If Saul were favorably inclined towards David, David could listen for the signal and then get up and come back with all in a friendly and amiable atmosphere.

*Saul's Attack on Jonathan and David. 20:24-34*

24 So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, *even* upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.

26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he *is* not clean; surely he *is* not clean.

27 And it came to pass on the morrow, *which was* the second *day* of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor today?



28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked *leave* of me *to go* to Beth-lehem:

29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me *to be there*: and now, if I have found favor in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious *woman*, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send an fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die.

32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?

33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

13. *Where was David's seat?* 20:25

From the arrangement given in the text it appears that Abner sat on one side of Saul and David sat on the other. Mention is made of the fact that Jonathan arose which may be an indication of Jonathan's having given Abner his seat next to Saul. Saul's seat was by the wall, a reference that indicates the use of a room where Saul could come and dine. The feast itself was important to the Israelites and David might well be expected to attend.

14. *Why did Saul think David was unclean?* 20:26

Those who touched dead bodies were not clean and could not attend the feasts. Since David was a man of war and

was sent out to fight Saul's battles, he might be expected to be in this condition. Even some animals were considered unclean to the Israelites, and anyone who touched them was unclean until the end of the day (Leviticus 11:27). When Saul missed David from the feast of the new moon, he was hoping that he was absent for some unavoidable reason, and the most logical explanation would be that he was ceremonially unclean and therefore not eligible to participate in the feast. This would lead Saul to expect that David would be at the feast on the next day. With this thought in mind he dismissed the situation.

15. *Why would David's brother command him to be at home?* 20:29

The elder brother had the right of *prototokia*. This was the same as the Latin *primogeniture*. The firstborn in the family was given a double portion of the father's inheritable goods. He had the responsibility for the younger children and especially for the arranging of marriages for the daughters in the family. If the father left a widow, the older son was also responsible for her welfare. David's father was not yet dead, for we learn that he later joined David in his flight from Saul (22:3). Eliab, David's older brother, may well have been assuming many of the responsibilities of the head of the family during the years of Jesse's later life.

16. *Why would Jonathan's love for David cause confusion?* 20:30

Under normal circumstances Jonathan would have been heir to Saul's throne. The love that Jonathan had for David led him to honor David as the leading man in Israel. By doing this he was taking a second place himself and was not filling the prominent role which Saul thought belonged to the crown prince. Saul evidently believed that Jonathan would rather see David sitting on the throne than to sit on the throne himself. Such a situation would lead to a break in the genealogy of the house of Saul or at

least to a change of dynasties. In this way Ahinoam, Jonathan's mother, would not be the queen mother. This would cause confusion on her part.

17. *Why did Jonathan become angry?* 20:34

Jonathan became so angry that he left the feast. He did not participate in the services of the second day of the feast of the new moon, and he was filled with fierce anger. He had been convinced beyond all question or doubt of the fact that his father was determined to kill David. In addition to this Saul had cast reproach upon Jonathan's mother and even attempted to take Jonathan's life. Although Jonathan appears to be the kind of a person who would give the other fellow every benefit of the doubt, he finally saw the truth of the matter. Such a desperate situation filled him with grief and anger. He was grieved for David's sake. He was filled with fierce anger towards his father.

*David's and Jonathan's Parting.* 20:35-42

35 And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

36 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. *And* as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is not the arrow beyond thee?*

38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

39 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

40 And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41 *And* as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of *a place* toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

42 And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

18. *Why did Jonathan send the lad back to the city? 20:40*

Since no one else had come with Jonathan and the lad who fetched his arrows, Jonathan was safe in sending the lad back to the city so that he could have one more conversation with David. If anyone had come with them, Jonathan would probably have simply given the signal and then gone back to the city with the lad. Moreover, if someone had been watching the events, Jonathan would not have dared to bring David out of hiding. As they were alone except for the lad, Jonathan ordered the lad to leave them. After the lad left, David was free to come out of his hiding place.

19. *In what way did David exceed? 20:41*

The extreme warmth of the friendship of David and Jonathan found its expression on this occasion as they embraced one another and wept. Their weeping must have been filled with uncontrollable sobs. This condition continued for a time until finally David gained control of his emotions and led Jonathan to gain control of himself. The two were then able to talk about their affairs.

20. *What facts show the superiority of Jonathan's friendship with David? 20:42*

Jonathan had much to lose personally by befriending David. Events which were transpiring made it clear that David was the most outstanding citizen in Israel. Although Jonathan was probably unaware of David's being

anointed as king by Samuel, he must have realized that David was destined for a place of leadership in the kingdom. Jonathan did not try to press his claims to the throne but acquiesced to the Lord in the matter. Their friendship was bound by an oath which they swore "in the name of the Lord." Their prayer was that the Lord would be between them and between their houses forever. Their parting prayer is of the same spirit as that of Jacob and Laban as they separated. They gave us the Mizpah saying, "the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another" (Genesis 32:49). As Jonathan and David parted, they prayed that God would watch them while they went their separate ways. When they could no longer be together personally to counsel and aid each other, their prayer was for the Lord's abiding presence.

## CHAPTER 20 IN REVIEW

1. To whom did David go after he left Samuel? \_\_\_\_\_
2. From what feast was David absent? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where did David say he was going? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did Saul think he was not at the feast? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Near what stone was David to hide? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How did Saul describe his wife? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What did Saul hurl at Jonathan? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who sat by Saul's side at the feast? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who went to the field with Jonathan? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What did Jonathan shoot into the field? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 21

- Vv. 1- 9 *David at Nob.* The Ark of the covenant was not yet returned to the tabernacle. The high priest was at Shiloh in the days of Samuel but after the Ark was captured, the Tabernacle was evidently located at Nob. David wanted to worship God and so went to the Tabernacle. He found some help and friendship in the priests that were there.
- Vv. 10-15 *David at Gath.* David's flight to Philistia seems ill advised, but he must have thought that he would find help there. Since Saul was seeking to kill him he might find safety among Saul's Philistine enemies. He fled to the city which had been introduced earlier as the home of Goliath. It was a very important Philistine city and ruled over by Achish, the king.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Let us go into the house of the Lord*" (Psalm 122:1). David sang this song which he taught Israel, but this was evidently the tenor of his life long before he wrote the Psalm. Since he was in dire straits, he not only sought out the priest of God but also went to the house of the Lord where he could worship in an acceptable way. Here he would have opportunity to make a sacrifice unto God and to seek the will of the Lord for his life.
2. *Politics make strange bedfellows.* This old adage has been seen in many different instances. Once David had fought against the Philistines. He slew the champion of their army and caused them to flee from the armies of Israel. Now he sought refuge among them. His reasoning was wise according to the ways of this world, but it fills us with chagrin to see a man of God

## FIRST SAMUEL

brought so low that he must affiliate himself with the enemies of God's people in order to save his own life.

3. *The enemies of God's people watch them closely.* When David got to Achish in Gath, he found that they already knew the song which was sung in Israel crediting David with slaying ten thousands of men whereas Saul had slain only thousands. They also recognized him as being the one who was to become king of Israel. He was thus not able to find safety among them. Christians would be surprised to find out how much non-Christians know about their everyday activities. We ought to realize that non-believers watch the believers very closely.

David's Flight to Gath, 21:1-15.

### *David At Nob. 21:1-9*

Then came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why *art* thou alone, and no man with thee?

2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed *my* servants to such and such a place.

3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give *me* five *loaves* of bread in mine hand, or what there is present.

4 And the priest answered David, and said, *There is* no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.

5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women *have been* kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

6 So the priest gave him hallowed *bread*: for there was no bread there but the shew-bread, that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the Lord; and his name *was* Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.

8 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.

9 And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it *is here* wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it*: for *there is* no other save that here. And David said, *There is* none like that; give it me.

1. *To what place did David first flee? 21:1*

David fled first of all to Nob, to Abimelech the high priest, to inquire the will of God through him concerning his future course and induced him to give him bread and the sword of Goliath also, under the pretext of having to perform a secret commission from the king with greatest speed. The town of Nob, or Nobeh, was at that time a priests' city, in which, according to the following account, the Tabernacle was then standing and the legal worship carried on. According to Isaiah 10:30, 32, it was between Anathoth and Jerusalem: and in all probability it had been preserved in the village of *el-Isawiyeh*, an hour's distance from Jerusalem and the same distance to the southeast of Gibeah of Saul.

2. *Why did David say he was alone? 21:2*

The high priest was surprised to see David, the son-in-law of the king and a chieftain among the soldiers, without



a company of men with him. He asked David about this, and David replied that he had been sent on a certain business that was secret, therefore, he said he was traveling alone. He explained further that he had dispatched his soldiers to other places. He must have had some young men, but not his usual soldiers, with him.

3. *Was it right for him to eat the bread?* 21:3

For David and the young men to eat the shew bread was a departure from the Levitical Law. As is stated in the Law (Leviticus 24:9), the bread was for the priests. According to a higher law of love for a fellow man in need, the high priest may have justified himself in giving this bread to David. Jesus made reference to this incident when the Pharisees found fault with the disciples for being hungry and plucking ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath day. Jesus did not expressly justify David in his taking the shew bread, but He referred to the matter in order to give pause to the Pharisees. Jesus might have expected them to find fault with David rather than with his disciples (Matthew 12:1-4).

4. *Why did the high priest ask if the young men were clean?* 21:4, 5

The high priest was reluctant to give the holy bread to men who were ceremonially unclean. A part of the sanctification of a people for a holy occasion was their refraining from their normal relationships with their wives (Exodus 19:15). If the young men of David were ceremonially clean, the high priest would not feel as reluctant to give them the holy bread.

5. *Who was Doeg?* 21:7

Doeg was an Edomite. The Edomites were descendants of Esau (Genesis 36:1). These people lived in the country south of the Dead Sea. As the brother of Jacob, Esau was given a secondary blessing of Jacob. Esau had many descendants, and they grew into a prosperous nation. They

had kings ruling over them before the monarchy was established in Israel (Genesis 36:31). Doeg the Edomite was a chief herdsman among Saul's servants. He may have come to Israel as a mercenary and been given the responsibility of tending to the king's flocks and herds. If this were the case, he was no doubt grazing the royal herds near Nob and thus in a position to overhear the conversation of David.

6. *Why did the priest have Goliath's sword?* 21:9

After the battle in the valley of Elah David put Goliath's armor in his own tent. At that time he took the head of Goliath and brought it to Jerusalem. Nothing is said at that time about the ultimate destiny of Goliath's armor, but it was customary for a victorious people to bring some spoils of war to their temple as an offering of thanksgiving to the Lord, who had given victory. It was no doubt that spirit which prompted David to leave the disposition of Goliath's armor with Saul. Saul had evidently sent the sword, at least, to the Tabernacle at Nob.

*David At Gath.* 21:10-15

10 And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

11 And the servants of Achish said unto him, *Is not this David king of the land?* did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying,

Saul hath slain his thousands,  
and David his ten thousands?

12 And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

13 And he changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore *then* have ye brought him to me?

15 Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?

7. *Why did David flee to Philistia?* 21:10

David fled to Gath, the home of Goliath, where Achish was king. Achish was Saul's enemy. Saul was David's enemy. Achish and David had a common enemy in Saul. David must have thought that Achish would give him political asylum.

8. *Why did they call David a king?* 21:11

This Achish, king of Gath, is evidently the same one who was overlord of David in his later career. The servants and officers of Achish asked, "Is not this David, king of the land?" They called him king, not because his anointing and divine election were known to them, but on account of his victorious deeds, which had thrown Saul entirely into the shade. Whether they intended by these words to celebrate David as a hero, or to point him out to their prince as a dangerous man is sometimes debated; but David's actions indicate that they were considering doing him harm.

9. *What effect did these questions have on David?*  
21:12, 13

David pretended to be out of his mind. In their presence, he carried out all the acts of a maniac. When they tried to take him captive, he raved in their hands. In their houses, he scribbled on the doorposts. Wherever he was, he let the saliva run out of his mouth. By these acts, David caused Achish to wish to be rid of his company. From the assertion that the king made, some would imply that the members of the king's household were insane; but the obvious meaning is simply that the king did not relish the company of madmen, of whom plenty were to be had in his own land.

STUDIES IN SAMUEL  
CHAPTER 21 IN REVIEW

1. When David finally fled from Saul, to what place did he flee? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was priest there? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What did the priest give David to eat? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What piece of armor did he give to David? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What was the name of Saul's servant who was there? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Of what nationality was the servant? \_\_\_\_\_
7. To what foreign country did David flee? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In what city did he seek refuge? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What was the name of the king to whom David fled? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What title did these foreign people ascribe to David? \_\_\_\_\_

## FIRST SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 22

- Vv. 1- 5 *The prophet Gad and David.* As David left Philistia and moved back through the land of Judah, he was joined by members of his own family. All those who were in distress or in debt also joined David. Altogether he had a company of 400 men. After David fled to Moab, God sent his prophet Gad to be with David and to instruct him not to flee outside the land of Israel.
- Vv. 6-16 *Saul's increasing jealousy.* Saul not only be-  
rated the members of his own family, but he  
loosed a tirade against his officers and soldiers  
accusing them of being in a conspiracy with  
David. This caused Doeg to reveal David's  
brief association with the priests at Nob.
- Vv. 17-23 *Saul's slaughter of the priests.* There was still  
some fear of God among Saul's men. When  
Saul ordered the killing of the priests none  
of his soldiers would obey. Finally, Doeg  
killed all but one of the priests.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God always raises up men to meet the needs of the hour.*  
God has never been without men to meet the needs of  
a particular situation. When David was in need of a  
man of God, God sent Gad his prophet to be with  
David. When God needed a messenger to carry the  
gospel to the Gentiles he called Saul of Tarsus to be  
His chosen vessel. God has worked this way throughout  
human history, and Christians should always be thank-  
ful that there are those who are willing to rise up and  
meet the call of God.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

2. *Man's worst enemy is often his own imagination.* Saul imagined that all of his men were against him. He fell into such a slough of self-pity that he thought there was conspiracy in the ranks of his own soldiers. He thus alienated the affections of many of his leaders. Too often this happens in the ranks of Christian workers today.
3. *Nothing is holy to a man who has sold his soul to Satan.* Most men would stop short of killing God's anointed people. When Saul ordered his men to slay the priests there was none at first to do his infamous will. Finally one who was a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel and evidently a mercenary in Saul's army fulfilled the mad king's order. It is hard to imagine anyone falling lower than Saul fell as he slew the priests, but when man sells his soul to Satan, he falls to unbelievable depths.

Saul's Reprisals Against David and His Friends, 22:1-23.

### *The Prophet Gad and David. 22:1-5*

David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down thither to him.

2 And every one *that was* in distress, and every one that *was* in debt, and every one *that was* discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

3 And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, *and be* with you, till I know what God will do for me.

4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.

5 And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.

1. *Where was Adullam?* 22:1

Adullam is one of the Canaanite towns whose kings are said to have been conquered by Joshua (Joshua 12:15). It is mentioned in the Shephelah, between Jarmuth and Shocoh (Joshua 15:35); in II Chronicles 11:7, it comes in immediate connection with Shocoh; and in Nehemiah 11:3; 11:30, it is one of the towns of Judah. These indications point to a location on the western edge of Judah and favor the identification with the present *Aid-el-ma*, twelve miles west by south from Bethlehem. David probably had friends there, and he was joined by his own clan. With David outlawed, they would not feel safe. At this time also a large number of malcontents gathered around David. These numbered about four hundred men, and David became their leader. Here is evidence that Saul was oppressing his people, causing some of them to sell themselves to others as servants (Leviticus 25:39; II Kings 4:1).

2. *Why did David flee to Moab?* 22:3

His ancestress Ruth was a Moabitess. Mizpeh means literally "a watch-tower" or "mountain height" commanding a very extensive country. It is probably used here in reference to a mountain hideout on the high land which bounded Moab on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. As David came to the king of Moab, the Moabites had probably taken possession of the most southerly portion of the eastern lands of the Israelites. We may also infer this from the fact that Saul had also made war upon Moab.

3. *Who was the prophet Gad?* 22:5

The prophet had probably come to David from Samuel's school of prophets; but whether he remained with David from that time forward to assist him with his counsel in

his undertakings cannot be determined. In I Chronicles 21:9, he is called David's seer. In the last year of David's reign he announced to him the punishment which would fall upon him from God on account of his sin in numbering the people (II Samuel 24:11 ff.); and he also wrote the acts of David (I Chronicles 29:29). In consequence of his admonition, David returned to Judah and went into the wood Hareth, a woody region on the mountains of Judah, which is never mentioned again, and the situation of which is unknown. According to the counsel of God, David was not to seek for refuge outside the land; not only that he might not be estranged from his fatherland and the people of Israel, but also that he might learn to trust entirely in the Lord as his only refuge and fortress. David had said that he would wait until he knew what God would do to him. He was assured of the justice of his cause as contrasted with the insane persecutions of Saul, and he confidently hoped that God would bring his flight to an end. Now he was to trust implicitly in Jehovah.

*Saul's Increasing Jealousy. 22:6-16*

6 When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing about him;)

7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

8 That all of you have conspired against me, and *there is* none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and *there is* none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, which was set over



the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.

10 And he inquired of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

11 Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that *were* in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I *am*, my lord.

13 And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as this day?

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who *is so* faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

15 Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute *any* thing unto his servant, *nor* to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.

16 And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house.

#### 4. *Why was Saul under a tree?* 22:6

The unsophisticated society of the early Israelites did not demand that the king have a palace which was equipped with finery. Saul evidently held court in the open air. This was the custom in the days of Deborah. We read of her that she "dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges 4:5). Conditions had not changed greatly in the days of Saul, and his judgments were passed out to the people under similar circumstances.

5. *What was the meaning of Saul's question?* 22:7, 8

In order to elicit response from his servants, Saul asked them if David was in a position to reward them for their services. David obviously could not make any of them captains of thousands because he had less than a thousand in his band. By accusing his people of conspiring against him, Saul reveals that he is yet not quite rational. The corrupt state of his mind is brought out in his statement that nobody felt sorry for him. He even indicated that he thought Jonathan had stirred up David against him to lie in wait to kill him. Such an evaluation of the situation was a complete reversal of the facts. It was Saul who was lying in wait for David. David was not lying in wait for Saul. Saul must have learned of Jonathan's final covenant with David; for he asked why nobody had told him that his son had made a league with David, the son of Jesse.

6. *Who reported the action of Ahimelech to Saul?*  
22:9, 10

Doeg, the Edomite, told Saul of David's coming to Nob. He did not tell all the facts. He did not tell Saul that David had told Ahimelech that he was on a secret and hurried mission for the king. For his part in the transaction, Saul afterwards took fearful vengeance upon the priest and his associates at Nob. The verse prepares us for the account of Doeg's betrayal of David. Some have therefore supposed the earlier verse to be an interpolation, but the later passage seems to presuppose the earlier. Doeg, the Edomite, who is described as Saul's muleherd, was kept at the sanctuary by some ceremonial obligation.

7. *Who was Ahimelech?* 22:11

Ahimelech was the high priest and successor of Eli, although of a different line. He was the son of Ahitub and not the son of Hophni or Phinehas, the sons of Eli. His name is a good Hebrew word signifying that his father was king. His father was probably not really king, but

the name has this meaning. His father was the leading priest, and in the position of ruling over the other priests.

8. *Had Ahimelech inquired of God for David?* 22:13

The scripture contains no reference to Ahimelech's making any sacrifice for David. There is no statement of his having used the Urim or Thummim to find out the Lord's will for David's life. The only benefits bestowed on David by Ahimelech were his giving him some of the shewbread and the sword of Goliath. These two items are mentioned by Saul, but he was evidently more concerned about the possibility of David's having secured the blessing of God at the hands of the high priest. If Saul thought that this had been done, he would have felt that not only men but God himself were surely against him. Indeed God was against him for Saul had failed to obey God.

9. *What was Ahimelech's reply to the king?* 22:14, 15

Ahimelech took the same position that Jonathan had taken. He reasoned with the king that there was nobody in all of Israel more faithful to Saul than David. The high priest also assured Saul that he had not transferred his allegiance to David. He was not serving as David's high priest. He denied that he had inquired of God for him. What Ahimelech had done he had done in integrity.

*Saul's Slaughter of the Priests.* 22:17-23

17 And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord.

18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that wear a linen ephod..

19 And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

20 And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

21 And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests.

22 And David said unto Abiathar, I knew *it* that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned *the death* of all the persons of thy father's house.

23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou *shalt be* in safeguard.

10. *What vengeance did Saul execute on Ahimelech?*  
22:17, 19

Upon being informed by Doeg concerning David's flight to the priest at Nob, Saul summoned the priest and all his father's house, the entire priesthood, to answer for what they had done. Ahimelech was not conscious of any crime, since David had come to him with a false pretext; and probably knowing little of what transpired at the court, he answered calmly and worthily. In his consciousness of innocence, he prayed that no guilt be laid to the charge of himself or the priests. That they were under suspicion is manifest from their being summoned before the king. To this protestation of ignorance and innocence, Saul replied only with a sentence of death on him and his whole clan. He commanded the runners, his body guard, to act as executioners; but they refused to carry out the command, owing to the sacred character of the accused. Doeg was less scrupulous, and at the king's command he turned about and slew the priests. When Abiathar told David of what had happened, David accused himself as an

accessory, since his visit had precipitated the whole affair. Abiathar found refuge with David, and David's exile continued.

11. *Who escaped from Saul's slaughter? 22:20, 23*

Only one son of Ahimelech escaped, and his only refuge was with David. David assured the young priest that he would protect him as one of his own men. It was in this manner that David secured not only the services of Gad, the prophet, but also the services of Abiathar, the priest. One by one the leading citizens of Israel were coming over to David's side.

## CHAPTER 22 IN REVIEW

1. To what point in Israel did David return? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what tribe was the place located? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many men did David have with him? \_\_\_\_\_
4. To what point in Moab did David flee? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Which of David's ancestors was from Moab? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the name of the prophet who came to David? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How does Saul refer to David? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Whom did Saul order to kill the priests? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who did kill the priests? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which priest escaped? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 23

- Vv. 1- 6 *Abiathar, the priest, with David.* Escaping from the slaughter at Nob, Abiathar joined David in his hideout in Keilah. Abiathar had a linen ephod, a distinctive garment of the priests and evidently served as the priest for David and his men while they fled from Saul.
- Vv. 7-18 *David's and Jonathan's meeting.* Saul learned that David was hiding in Keilah and went out to get him. Jonathan, Saul's son arose and went to David into the forest around Keilah. The two met again and confirmed a covenant which they had made earlier. Jonathan returned to his home but David remained in hiding in Keilah.
- Vv. 19-29 *Saul's pursuit of David.* The Ziphites came to Saul in Gibeah and told him where David was hiding. With this information Saul made a bold attempt to capture David. He very nearly accomplished this. On one occasion Saul went on one side of the mountain and David and his men were on the other side. David got away and continued his flight out of Saul's presence. He then moved his hiding place to the caves on the west shore of the Dead Sea near En-gedi.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's abundant provision for our needs.* God not only sent a prophet to be with David but he also made it possible for a priest to join David's company. God always does more than we would expect.
2. *The blessing of steadfast friends.* David must have longed to see Jonathan. Jonathan must have known this. He came to David and the two were able to

renew their covenant and David received strength to go on in his life as a fugitive.

3. *God's good providences.* Things happen in life that cannot be explained except that they are directed by the hand of almighty God. When Saul went around one side of the mountain David was on the other. God must have been with David.

Saul's Pursuit of David to Keilah, 23:1-29.

*Abiathar, the Priest, With David.* 23:1-6

Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors.

2 Therefore David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.

3 And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

4 Then David enquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, *that* he came down *with* an ephod in his hand.

1. *Why did David save Keilah?* 23:1

Keilah is a city in the Plains of Judah now identified with *Khirbet Kila*. The location is some nine miles northwest of Hebron. The city was on the Philistine border, but the inhabitants were evidently Israelites of the tribe of Judah. David himself was of that tribe; and although

the people of the community later betrayed David, his deliverance of them would have endeared him to the upright men of the place. Such activity on the part of David demonstrates that he was still behaving himself wisely, even while fleeing for his life from the king. He had the best interests of the people at heart.

2. *How did David enquire of the Lord? 23:2*

As Moses appointed Joshua to be his successor, the Lord told Moses that Joshua would stand before Eleazar who was to ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord (Numbers 27:21). It was at the word of the priest as given to him by the Lord that Joshua was to lead the people out to battle and to bring them back in again when it was over. Of Moses himself it was said that "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10). Both Gad and Abiathar, the prophet and the priest, were with David. More than likely David used the Urim and the Thummim, God's appointed means for revealing His will. The inspired prophet could also receive the Lord's message and deliver it. In either way David moved only at the Lord's directive. He did this regardless of the fear which gripped men. Naturally they were afraid to take the offensive against the Philistines by themselves since they were on the defensive against any attack Saul might make. Such activity seemed foolhardy to them. They were in enough trouble on their own without stirring up the opposition of the Philistines.

3. *Why did Abiathar bring an ephod with him? 23:6*

The ephod was the distinctive garment of the high priest's clothing. Such wearing apparel would identify Abiathar as the priest with David's men. It would signify that he was an heir of the priests who were slain at Nob and would indicate orderly procedure on the part of David in appointing him as his priest. There is no indication that the ephod mentioned here was in any way a fetish



such as was made of the spoils of war taken by Gideon after he defeated the Midianites. The idolatry practiced with regard to the ephod in Gideon's day is soundly condemned (Judges 8:27), and if there had been anything wrong with Abiathar's having an ephod, it would more than likely be mentioned.

*David's and Jonathan's Meeting. 23:7-18*

7 And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.

8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

9 And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.

10 Then said David, O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake.

11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down.

12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver *thee* up.

13 Then David and his men, *which were* about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth.

14 And David abode in the wilderness in strongholds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.

15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David *was* in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

16 And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.

17 And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth.

18 And they two made a covenant before the Lord: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

4. *Why did Saul think he could catch David in Keilah?*  
23:7

A man is hard to catch in the open fields. Those who are skilled in guerrilla tactics can slip off into the woods, hide in caves, or literally blend into the landscape. A group of men in a city are easier to catch. Saul evidently thought David had made a tactical mistake in going into a city which had gates and bars. If Saul could only besiege the city, set watchmen at the walls, and block the gates, then it would be impossible for David to escape. Even if Saul could not fight his way into the city, he could lay a siege and starve David and his men until they were forced to surrender.

5. *Why did David call for the ephod?* 23:9

If Abiathar brought an ephod to David, he more than likely brought the rest of a high priest's wearing apparel. God commanded Moses that he should make a breastplate for the high priest and here were placed the "urim and thummim" (Exodus 28:30). These items formed the media through which the high priest learned the will of the Lord in regard to any important matters. Josephus identifies the Urim and the Thummim with the sardonyxes on the shoulders of the ephod (*Antiquities* III, iii, 5). The rabbins indicated that these stones would glow with an unnatural iridescence to indicate the Lord's will. If the Lord's answer was negative, they would remain dull and dark. Other suggestions are made indicating that

there was a golden plate within the folds of the ephod. On this plate were engraved the letters of the sacred name of God. It is suggested that by fixing his gaze on these letters, the priest became capable of prophesying, hearing the divine voice within or listening to it as it proceeded from God. The former suggestion seems more likely, and it was on this account that David called for the ephod. God would give him guidance through the services of the priest.

6. *Did the oracle come true?* 23:12

David asked the Lord if the men of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul's hand. God said that they would. He also asked if Saul would come down to fight with him, and the Lord responded that Saul would come down to fight with him. David and his men left Keilah after he made this inquiry of the Lord. There is no record of the men of Keilah delivering David into the hands of Saul for this reason. Some would feel, therefore, that the oracle of the Lord was thwarted by David's actions. If we understand David's question to be a conditional question, we would not deny that the oracle came true. David's question should be understood more as an enquiry as to whether the men of Keilah would deliver him if he stayed there. Of course, if he left then they would not have this opportunity. David was trying to find out if they were grateful for the way in which he had saved them out of the hands of the Philistines. He was making inquiry about their loyalty to him. When he found that their loyalty could not be trusted, he left their area. Furthermore, if the men of Keilah are considered to be a part of the people known as the Ziphites, we learn from the Scripture that these men twice revealed to Saul the hiding place of David in their vicinity. The land of Ziph extended between Carmel and Juttah and included the inhabitants of the highland of Judah. The men of Keilah might well be described as Ziphites. These men did deliver up David.

7. *Why did David's band increase? 23:13*

More and more people were placing their confidence in David. Gad, the prophet, had been sent of God to be with David. Abiathar, the priest, had fled to David after the priests were slaughtered by Saul. In the beginning every one that was distressed, every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented gathered themselves to David. The fact that his band was increasing would indicate that more people were plunging into debt on account of the taxation levied upon them to support the monarchy. More and more people were growing discontented with Saul and his policies. An increasing number of people were distressed over the way in which Saul was pursuing David. All of these joined themselves to David.

8. *Where was Ziph? 23:14*

There is a town in the desert or wilderness of Ziph to which David fled. It was a place fortified by Rehoboam at a later date. The location has been preserved in the ruins of *Tell Zif*, four miles southeast of Hebron. The wilderness of Ziph was that portion of the desert of Judah which was near to and surrounded the town. Generally speaking, it was the highland district of Judah, and would be extending from Carmel on the east to Juttah on the west.

9. *How did Jonathan strengthen David's band? 23:16*

Jonathan's coming to David would in itself encourage him greatly. To see an old friend was a real privilege for a fugitive. Jonathan's strengthening of David was primarily "in God." One might expect such encouragement to be the function of the prophet or the priest, but the covenant between Jonathan and David had been a sacred vow. The flight of David was even worse than he had anticipated, and Jonathan's coming to him gave him a great deal of reassurance. He was strengthened to know that Jonathan had not forgotten. This knowledge would be an immense boost to David's morale.

10. *How did Jonathan know that David had been anointed king?* 23:17

David delivered the men of Keilah (eight and one-half miles northwest of Hebron, *Kbirbet Kila*) from the hands of the Philistines. Saul had proposed to come against the city while David was enclosed therein; but David, led of the Lord, departed and hid in the wilderness of Ziph. To his wilderness retreat came Jonathan. Here he told David that he knew that he was to be king, and he asked only that he himself might have the second place. It by no means follows from the words "my father knoweth" that Saul knew of David's being anointed; nor does it follow that Jonathan knew of David's calling to be king. Jonathan could learn from David's course this far, and from his father's own conduct, that David would not be overcome, but would possess the throne after the death of Saul.

*Saul's Pursuit of David. 23:19-29*

19 Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* on the south of Jeshimon?

20 Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part *shall be* to deliver him into the king's hand.

21 And Saul said, Blessed *be* ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me.

22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his haunt is, *and* who hath seen him there: for it is told me *that* he dealeth very subtilly.

23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.

24 And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men *were* in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.

25 Saul also and his men went to seek *him*. And they told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard *that*, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon.

26 And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.

27 But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land.

28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth.

29 And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strongholds at En-gedi.

*11. Why did the Ziphites aid Saul? 23:19*

Saul had repeatedly scolded his courtiers and every other member of his kingdom. He charged them with being in league with David and aiding and abetting him in an attempt to usurp the throne. He charged them with failing to understand his position and to sympathize with him in his plight. He had slain the priests under the false charge of their being on David's side. Such activities on the part of the king would strike terror in the hearts of the weak and vacillating members of the kingdom of Israel. Some of these may have been rewarded for information which they brought to Saul. Others, who had knowledge of David's whereabouts, may have been afraid to conceal it lest they be charged with failing to support Saul. These people are especially despicable because of their repeated spying on David and reporting to Saul.

*Tell Zif* itself is a conical hill. It stands above rich and beautiful valleys which surround it on every side. The base is terraced, and its light, rich soil produces a full harvest of grain. The summit is leveled and circular, being about one hundred yards in diameter. Nothing is left of the town, however, except a few cisterns, sepulchres, and pieces of pottery that are thickly intermixed with the soil. The view to the southeast is extensive and reaches out over a rich and beautiful country. Barren hills of the desert span the horizon (J. W. McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, p. 255).

12. *Where was Hachilah?* 23:19b

Hachilah appears to be the long ridge now known as *El Koleh*. On this high hill is a ruin called *Yukin*. David's hiding here is apparently the only significant event which transpired at this place throughout the Bible history. The Ziphites betrayed him again when he was here later (26:1).

13. *What was the meaning of Saul's benediction?* 23:21

Saul was very appreciative of the fact that the Ziphites had brought him information about David's hiding place. In his nearly ecstatic condition he pronounced a benediction upon these people. He was grateful that they had compassion on him and helped him. He prayed that they might be blessed of the Lord for what they had done. The benediction would be a lot of empty words to anybody who knew Saul's real character. Since Saul had turned his back on God and was forsaken of God, one could hardly expect that God would hear his prayer for a blessing to be upon anybody. Here is an instance of a pitiable reference to God by one who had essentially abandoned God and thereby had been left desolate by God.

14. *What is the meaning of the "thousands of Judah"?* 23:23

Judah had always been the most numerous of all the Israelite tribes. At the first numbering, while they were still at Sinai, Judah numbered 74,600 (Numbers 1:27).

At the second numbering, just before the Israelites entered Canaan, Judah was still the largest and at that time she numbered 76,500 (Numbers 26:22). Those who were numbered were men twenty years of age and older. No doubt there were as many women of this same age as men. In addition there would be an equal number of boys as well as an equal number of girls under these ages. Judah may have had as many as 300,000 inhabitants. Saul faced an enormous task as he boasted that he would search David out throughout all the thousands of Judah.

15. *Where was Maon?* 23:24

Maon was a town on a high hill in the tribe of Judah, and located some seven miles to the south of Hebron. David hid himself here and later found many of Nabal's possessions nearby (25:2). *Tell Main*, a rather small mound of ruins, has been taken to be the modern-day remnants of the location. The Scripture located Maon south of Jeshimon. Jeshimon is a word signifying a waste or desolation. This is a title given to the area north of the Dead Sea (Numbers 21:20; 23:28). At times this title is given to the desert area of Judea. The American Standard Version gives it the title of Arabah. This title is usually applied to the deep valley running between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akabah. David's wandering must have taken him into an area that was sparsely inhabited and where little vegetation marked the landscape. It is little wonder that he referred to himself as a flea (24:13).

16. *What was the rock?* 23:25

The rock is undoubtedly the cone-shaped height of Maon. The top of the height is covered with ruins, and there are some indications that these may be the remains of a tower. No reason is given for David's descending from the height of the mound, and he chose to remain in the desert of Maon. Perhaps this mound was more visible to an approaching army and David decided that he would



be safer hiding behind it than staying on top of it. He did escape from Saul by going around one side of the hill while Saul was on the other.

17. *Was David's escape providential?* 23:27

The fact that a messenger came to Saul just at the time when he was about to take David and his men appears to be an act of providence. Certainly David could hardly have sent word to the Philistines and urged them to attack Saul while he was in the south part of his country. Probably the Philistines did keep an eye on Saul and knew where he was. They did, no doubt, take advantage of the opportunity to "spread themselves over the land" (marginal reading A.V.). Their attack must have been more than a skirmish or a small raid. Such a light attack would hardly have caused Saul to give up on his pursuit of David just at the time when he had him in his clutches.

18. *What is Sela-Hammablekoth?* 23:28

The spot cannot be identified definitely, but the word is a compound indicating "the rock of divisions." This was the scene of one of David's most remarkable escapes from Saul. David must have given the spot this name in commemoration of his providential deliverance from the armies of Saul, just as Jacob gave the name "House of God," to Luz when God revealed Himself there (Genesis 28:19) and Abraham gave the name Jehovah-jireh to Mount Moriah when God provided a ram to take the place of Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:14).

19. *Where was En-gedi?* 23:29

En-gedi is along the west shore of the Dead Sea. The Arabs call it "Ain Jiddy." Travelers in this area say that nothing can surpass the gloomy grandeur of the mountain walls of this vicinity. The mountain-sides have turned brown and, in places, almost black by their long exposure to the elements. They are rendered still more gloomy by contrast with the rich green and the sparkling water of the oasis in the wilderness. The spot is frequently men-

tioned in the Old Testament, but not enough is said to give a very definite concept of it as it then existed. At En-gedi one is about halfway down the west side of the Dead Sea and at a point to look out over the Dead Sea to the eastern shore.

20. *What reference did David make to these events in the Psalms? Psalm 54:1-7*

Many of the Psalms seem to arise out of particular instances in the life of David. The Shepherd Psalm, the Twenty-third Psalm, for example, must have been written in recollection of David's early life as a shepherd. No doubt God's spirit guided him to leave this treasure of devotion as a testimony of the way in which David had known God through his experiences as a humble shepherd boy. Many of the other Psalms carry headings which indicate the particular event in David's life out of which the Holy Spirit through David gave to us lasting testimony of God's providence. The Fifty-fourth Psalm is attributed to David and was written when the Ziphim, or the Ziphites, came and said to Saul, "Doth not David hide himself with us?" Certainly the sentiments are appropriate as David says, "For he hath delivered me out of all trouble, and mine eyes have seen his desire upon my enemies" (Psalm 54:7).

## CHAPTER 23 IN REVIEW

1. What city did David protect from the Philistines? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What did Abiathar have when he fled to David? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many men were with David? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In what wilderness did David hide? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who came down to see David in the wilderness? \_\_\_\_\_
6. In what hill did the Ziphites tell Saul that David was hiding? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Where was Saul when the Ziphites went to him? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In what wilderness was David hiding when the Ziphites returned? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What name was given to the place where David escaped? \_\_\_\_\_
10. To what place did David finally flee? \_\_\_\_\_

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 24

- Vv. 1- 7 *David spares Saul's life.* David was hiding in a cave in En-gedi when Saul came to rest in the open mouth of the cave. As Saul slept, David crept forward and cut off the bottom of his robe. When Saul left the cave, David ran after him to identify himself and to show him how he could have killed him if he had so desired.
- Vv. 9-15 *David pleads for his life.* David rightfully judged that many men had spoken false words about him and his relationship to Saul. He therefore asked Saul to listen to him and not to the false reports. He also asked that the Lord judge between Saul and himself.
- Vv. 16-22 *Saul accepts David's plea.* Saul knew that what David said was true. He admitted that David was more righteous than he and assured David that he would no longer pursue him. Saul then went home, but David and his men stayed in the stronghold of Judah.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Let God lead.* David was not willing to take matters into his own hands to get rid of Saul. He knew, of

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course, that if he killed Saul that he would himself become king. He would come to the throne under these circumstances with a shadow of guilt over him. He therefore was willing to wait until in God's providence Saul's reign would end. We need to learn this lesson of patiently following the Lord in all of our endeavors.

2. *Let the Lord judge.* David asked Saul to let God judge between the two of them. David knew that the Lord's judgment would be right. This is where all our judgment should originate.
3. *"Overcome evil with good"* (Romans 12:21b). David's goodness in sparing Saul's life overwhelmed Saul and caused him to realize that he had been wrong in trying to take his life. He therefore assured David that he would no longer pursue him. He also asked David to make a covenant that David would not kill Saul's descendants. David was willing to make this covenant, and the pursuit was over for the time being.

Saul's Life Spared by David, 24:1-22.

### *David Spares Saul's Life. 24:1-7*

And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David *is* in the wilderness of En-gedi.

2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him

as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the Lord.

7 So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

*1. Who told Saul where to find David? 24:1*

No mention is made of the party or parties who told Saul that David was over in En-gedi. Since the Ziphites had informed Saul on previous occasions, they were probably the ones who gave this information to Saul. Again Saul may have left certain of his servants in the land of Judah to keep him informed of David's whereabouts. Although Saul was forced to leave the area himself in order to drive out the invading Philistines, he did not want to lose contact with David.

*2. What were the "rocks of the wild goats? 24:2*

Wild goats ran on the sides of the cliffs which dropped down to the Dead Sea from the mountain of Judah in the vicinity of En-gedi. It was in one of these caves on the west side of the Dead Sea just a little farther to the north that the Dead Sea Scrolls were found by a goat-herd. The man was looking for some of his lost animals when he came upon the mouth of one of these caves. Thinking that perhaps his animals were down in the cave, he himself entered it and found the sealed earthen vessels which contained the fabulous scrolls which have been acclaimed as the most important archaeological discovery of recent times. As far as Bible lands are concerned, wild goats made many tracks only a foot wide all through this area. This expres-

sion should not be taken as a proper name for some particular rocks, but as a general term applied to the rocks of the location on account of the number of goats which are to be found in the region.

3. *Why was David in a cave?* 24:3

Since caves were throughout the length and breadth of the area, they afforded a natural hiding place for David and his band of 600 men. The men of Israel hid themselves in the caves earlier when the Philistines attacked their land (I Samuel 13:6). Lot had asked permission to hide in a cave when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed (Genesis 19:30). Probably David and his men went into the caves to sleep, finding this to be a more secure place to hide than out in the open field.

4. *Why did Saul come into the cave?* 24:3

It is said that Saul went into the cave "to cover his feet." The exact meaning of this expression is debated, and some take it to be a euphemism. The expression occurs also in Judges 3:24 when Eglon's servants were afraid to disturb him as they thought he had gone into his chamber "to cover his feet." Those who understand this as a euphemism believe that it describes Saul's performing the necessities of nature, since it was a custom in the East to cover the feet at such a time. The Peshitta, an ancient version of the Bible, translates this Hebrew phrase as meaning "to sleep." What follows seems to favor this. David must have gone into the cave to rest, and Saul found the spot to be suitable to his needs as well.

5. *How did David's men view the situation?* 24:4

David's men thought that this was an opportune time for David to kill Saul. They said, "Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee . . ." No record is made of David's ever having received a prophecy that God would deliver Saul into his hand. David was not out to kill Saul, although Saul accused him of lying in wait for him (I Samuel 22:8, 13). Gad, the prophet, was with David,

but there is no record of his having brought such an announcement to David. David's men must have therefore been referring to their interpretation of God's providences. It appeared to them that God had been saying through the transpiring events that eventually David would prevail over Saul. They could see no outcome of the situation except that David would overcome Saul and succeed him on the throne.

6. *What was David's view? 24:5*

David did nothing more than to arise and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe while he was sleeping. Afterward his conscience hurt him about this. He looked upon Saul as God's anointed. David had great respect for God's anointed leaders, and he was ashamed of the fact that he had humiliated Saul by marring his robe.

*David Pleads for His Life. 24:8-15*

8 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave: and *some* bade *me* kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* the Lord's anointed.

11 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that *there is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

12 The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness pro-

ceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

14 After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.

15 The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

7. *Why did David dare to show himself?* 24:8

David trusted God to protect him, but he did not want to take foolish risks. Still he felt the circumstances favored his speaking to Saul directly. He could demonstrate the fact that he had not been lying in wait for Saul. In his hand he had a piece of Saul's robe which he had cut off, and this would be evidence of the fact that he could have killed Saul if he had wanted to do so. Armed with this bit of evidence, David thought that he could prevail upon Saul to listen to reason and to leave the area and stop his attempt to kill David.

8. *Why did David ask that God judge between them?*  
24:12

David did not want to condemn his king and pass judgment upon him. He simply explained to Saul that he had cut off his skirt and did not kill him. This was a demonstration of the fact that there was neither evil or transgression in David's hand. He explained that he had not sinned against Saul. On the other hand he said that Saul was hunting him to kill him. David also was expressing his avowed purpose of letting God work out the difficult situation. David would not lift up his own hand to harm Saul. He was waiting for the Lord to avenge him of the evil which had been done to him.

9. *What ancients had given this proverb?* 24:13

The Hebrew word behind our word *ancients* signifies those who are from the east country. The word appears in Ezekiel 47:8 and must be a reference to the forefathers



who had originated in the Mesopotamian valley. In later Israelite history, Solomon is compared to the wise men of the East. At that time it was said that Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east country (I Kings 4:30). The saying which David quoted must have been well known, and it is reminiscent of Jesus' statement that we shall know men by their fruits. Jesus said, "A corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matthew 6:17). David knew that if he performed the wicked deed he would be considered a wicked man. He did not want to be in this class.

*10. Why did David call himself a dead dog? 24:14*

David was referring to himself as being one of no account. He was from the lowly shepherd's home in Bethlehem of Judah. His father was not a very important man in Israel. David's reference to himself in this lowly figure was similar to Saul's humility as he was introduced to Samuel. Saul had said that he was a member of the smallest tribe of Israel and that his father was the least of all the families of the tribe (I Samuel 9:21). Such language is customary among Orientals. Usually they are a very humble people, and we take David's expression to be a sincere effort to subject himself to the rightful claims of his king.

*Saul Accepts David's Plea. 24:16-22*

16 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, *Is this thy voice, my son David?* And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

17 And he said to David, Thou *art* more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

18 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

19 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

20 And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

21 Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

22 And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

*11. Why did Saul weep? 24:16*

Saul was ashamed of himself. He could hardly believe that it was David speaking to him. He had to ask him if it were really his voice that he was hearing. Saul admitted that David was more righteous than himself. He realized that David had rewarded good for evil. David's judgment of the situation was correct. He really did not need to wait for a further indication from God of His judgment in the matter. Saul knew what the judgment would be.

*12. Why did Saul conclude that David would be king? 24:20*

As events were transpiring, it was quite evident that Saul could not prevail over David. It was therefore evident to Saul as well as to many others that David was destined to be the sole leader of the people of Israel. It is doubtful that Saul knew that Samuel had anointed David to be king. Jonathan had reached the conclusion earlier (I Samuel 23:16). Even the Philistines had greeted David with a reference to their belief that he was king of Israel. The servants of Achish asked him, "Is not this David, the king of the land?" (I Samuel 21:11). These people surely would have no knowledge of the anointing at Bethlehem at the hands of Samuel the prophet. They must have

reached this conclusion from the song that they had heard the people singing one to another in their dances as they said, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (I Samuel 21:11b).

13. *What favor did Saul ask of David?* 24:21

Saul asked David to enter into a covenant with him that was similar to the covenant existing between Jonathan and David. He asked David to swear to him that he would not kill his heirs. He prayed that David would not blot his name out of the national records of Israel and from his father's line. The Gibeonites asked for such vengeance to be reeked upon the house of Saul because Saul had tried to exterminate them. Their vengeance was only a partial extermination, but they did ask that seven of Saul's sons be delivered to them in order that they might hang them up in Gibeon (II Samuel 21:6). Egyptian kings quite often treated their successors in this way. They defaced the monuments so that there would be no permanent record left of their predecessors, and killed all the family of the former king to prevent any future glory from accruing to the house. David entered into this agreement with Saul. He had no evil intentions towards him.

14. *Where was the hold?* 24:22

David must have returned to the mountain heights. A different Hebrew word is used in I Samuel 22:5 to signify a stronghold. At that time David was seeking refuge in Mizpeh of Moab. Since Moab was outside the borders of Israel, Gad brought God's directive to David and told him to spend his time in the land of Israel. By staying inside the borders of the country, he would not only demonstrate to his people that he was upright in his actions, but he would also be afforded what protection they could give him. David's returning to the stronghold in Judah is indicative of the fact that he did not think that Saul's good intentions towards him would be long-lasting. Had he

thought that Saul would be favorably inclined towards him over a long period of time, he might have returned with him to Gibeah.

15. *On what two occasions did David spare Saul's life?*

24:26

Saul was called from his pursuit of David to drive the Philistines from the border of Israel. When Saul returned from this expedition, he again hunted for David, this time in the wilderness of En-gedi. It so happened that David and his men were hiding in a cave. Saul entered the mouth of that cave, and slept there. David's men were elated, because it appeared that Jehovah had delivered David's enemy into his hand. All David would do, however, was to cut the skirt from Saul's robe, privily. Even this small act weighed upon David's conscience. When Saul arose and left the cave, David kept his men from harming him, and asserted that he was loyal to the king, Jehovah's anointed. This touched even Saul's heart; and he repented over the evil that he had plotted against David, swearing that he would not do so any more. Saul then returned to his capital, but David and his men went up into a stronghold.

On another occasion, David sent spies and found out Saul's camp. This was after Saul had promised not to pursue David. David found the camp sleeping. He asked who would go over into Saul's camp. Abishai wanted to kill Saul while he was sleeping, saying that he would not need the second thrust of his spear. David again spared Saul's life, however, and took only his spear and a cruse of water, both of which were at the head of the sleeping Saul. Then, David went to a high hill a little distance off and shouted to the sleeping pursuers. He chided Abner for not having kept more careful watch over Saul, Jehovah's anointed. Saul recognized David's loyalty to the king and promised the second time not to pursue David any longer. Each of the two men then went his way.

## FIRST SAMUEL

### CHAPTER 24 IN REVIEW

1. How many men did Saul take to catch David? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What name was given to the area where Saul went? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where was David hiding? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What did David's men urge him to do to Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What part of Saul's clothing did David cut? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What ancient proverb did David quote? \_\_\_\_\_
7. By what figures did David allude to himself? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What did Saul do when he recognized David? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where did Saul go after leaving David? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Where did David go after Saul left? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 25

- V. 1 *The death of Samuel.* The grand prophet of God finally reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage. He was buried in his home at Ramah. Although mention is made of David's activities, it is not specified that he was able to be in Ramah at the time of Samuel's burial. Since he went farther south after Samuel died, he probably felt he had lost a great friend and that he should get farther away from Saul.
- Vv. 2-13 *Nabal's shameful treatment of David.* David had befriended Nabal by protecting his flocks from time to time. He therefore felt that he had a right to ask for some consideration at the time of the shearing. Nabal was churlish, however, and refused to send any provisions to David. David thus determined to fight against Nabal.

- Vv. 14-38 *Abigail appeals to David.* Abigail was Nabal's wife and when she heard of her husband's unfair treatment of David she went to meet David and asked him to spare her husband. Her words were wise and David listened to her appeal. Although David did not attack Nabal, Nabal was overcome with fear when he heard how close to feeling David's wrath he had come. The Lord then smote him and he died.
- Vv. 39-44 *David's wives.* David married Abigail after Nabal died. He also married Ahinoam of Jezreel. Michal, David's wife, had been given to another man by Saul.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*" (Psalm 116:15). Verse one of this chapter should stand alone. It records the death of a valiant soldier of the cross. Special notice should be taken of this event. God's followers should always mark well the fall of His valiant leaders.
2. "*Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold*" (Proverbs 25:11). Abigail's words to David were words of wisdom. He did well to heed them. Wherever Christian people find words of wisdom, they should give full attention to them. They are indeed like apples of gold.

David's Continued Flight, 25:1—26:25.

### *The Death of Samuel. 25:1*

And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

1. *Why was all Israel gathered together?* 25:1

All Israel was gathered together because Samuel had died. They came to Ramah to lament him and to bury him. The fact that he was buried in his house is a reference to a custom of the day for a man to be buried on his own property. The Hebrew word might have better been translated "a sepulchre," especially one that is much adorned. Such a reference is made in Isaiah 14:18 and also in Ecclesiastes 12:5. Samuel was buried in his own private tomb on his own property.

2. *Where was the wilderness of Paran?* 25:1 b

The wilderness of Paran was in the Negeb, the southern part of the land of Palestine. Several main divisions are made in the Promised Land. The Hill Country was the center of the land and sloped down to the west to the Mediterranean Sea. From the Hill Country another slope went east to the Jordan Valley. This mountainous region is often referred to simply as the Hill Country. The Philistine Plain was occupied by the enemies who were constant in their opposition to the people of God. The Valley was the territory of the Jordan which ran the full length of Canaan, beginning in the foothills of Mt. Hermon on the north and ending at the Gulf of Akabah on the south. The South was the land below Beersheba. This wilderness area was very sparsely populated, and some have concluded that it has always been an uninhabited and uninhabitable place. Recent studies made in the area have shown that there were many settlements here in ancient times, some of them dating back to the days of Abraham. Moses and the people of Israel wandered for forty years in the Wilderness of Paran (Numbers 13:3). Much of this time was spent in and around Kadesh-Barnea. David went to this extreme southern border of the land of Israel in order to escape the wrath of the demented king.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### *Nabal's Shameful Treatment of David. 25:2-13*

2 And *there was* a man in Maon, whose possessions *were* in Carmel; and the man *was* very great, and he had three thousand sheep; and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man *was* Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and *she was* a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man *was* churlish and evil in his doings: and he *was* of the house of Caleb.

4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth *in prosperity*, Peace *be* both to thee, and peace *be* to thine house, and peace *be* unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee, Wherefore let the young men find favor in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

9 And when David's young men came they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.

10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who *is* David? and who *is* the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master.

11 Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give *it* unto men, whom I know not whence they *be*?

12 So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.



13 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

3. *Who were Nabal and Abigail?* 25:2, 3

David had protected the shepherds and the sheep of Nabal while they were in Carmel. Consequently, when David heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep, he sent his young men to Nabal that Nabal might give to David and to his men some food and provisions in return for their protection. Nabal railed at the servants of David and sent them away empty-handed. One of Nabal's servants told this to Abigail, who saw the injustice of Nabal's action, and as a result, secretly took provisions to David. When Abigail returned to her husband, she found him in the midst of a drunken feast, so she told him nothing until the morning. When Nabal knew how close he had come to being wiped out and that his wife had saved him by her kindness, his heart died within him; and ten days later he died. David loved Abigail. When the news of Nabal's death was told to David, he sent to Abigail to ask her to become his wife. She consented, and they were married.

4. *What was the basis of David's request?* 25:7

While David was in and around Maon and Carmel, he had protected Nabal's shepherds and their flocks. Nabal may have been one of those who profited greatly from David's driving the Philistines away from Keilah. Whether David had protected Nabal's flocks from wolves or human predators, David felt that Nabal should be grateful for what he had done. He asked Nabal to check among his own young men to find out the truth of the matter. The occasion of sheep-shearing was also a joyous occasion when a man's heart should be opened to his friends and benefac-

tors. The sheep had been sheared and the profit from the sale of the wool would have brought prosperity to the owner. For all these reasons David asked for any token of Nabal's good pleasure which might have been convenient for him.

5. *What was Nabal's attitude towards David? 25:10*

Nabal sneered at David. He asked who David was, although he knew him. He cast reflection upon his ancestry by asking what benefit there was in being a descendant of Jesse. He also evaluated the situation by saying that David was simply a renegade deserter from Saul's army. He classed him with many servants of the time who had broken away from their masters without fulfilling their obligations to them. Nabal utterly despised David and turned a deaf ear to David's request.

6. *What was David's reaction? 25:13*

David armed himself for war. He commanded his men to prepare for battle. Two hundred men were left with the women and children to guard their homes and supplies. David took 400 men with him and was preparing to attack Nabal. He not only intended to take some of the food and supplies provided for the festive occasion but he also intended to kill Nabal. Such drastic action is not typical of David, who usually inquired of the Lord before he went into battle. This incident reveals an occasion when David allowed his quick temper to get the better of him and overrule a decision he would have made had he given more thought to it.

*Abigail Appeals to David. 25:14-38*

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

15 But the men *were* very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:

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16 They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he *is such* a son of Belial, that *a man* cannot speak to him.

18 Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched *corn*, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on asses.

19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.

20 And it was *so, as* she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold David and his men came down against her; and she met them.

21 Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fellow* hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *pertained* unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good.

22 So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that *pertain* to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, *upon me let this* iniquity *be*: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, *even* Nabal: for as his name *is*, so *is* he; Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

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26 Now therefore, my lord, *as* the Lord liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to *shed* blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

27 And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.

28 I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, *as out* of the middle of a sling.

30 And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

32 And David said to Abigail, Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

33 And blessed *be* thy advice, and blessed *be* thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to *shed* blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

34 For in very deed, *as* the Lord God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

35 So David received of her hand *that* which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

36 And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart *was* merry within him for he *was* very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.

38 And it came to pass about ten days *after*, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died.

#### 7. *How did Nabal escape? 25:14*

Some young man told Abigail, Nabal's wife, how her husband had railed on David's men. The young man was evidently one of Nabal's servants who was ashamed of his master's actions. He was one of the men of whom David suggested Nabal make inquiry and must have known that David had a right to request a token of appreciation from Nabal. Nabal's actions must have been of such nature as to make it almost a matter of honor for David to avenge himself. The young man affirmed all that David had said. None of Nabal's flocks were missing while they were under David's protection. None of their equipment was missing as long as they were in contact with them. David had saved Nabal from very many losses. As a matter of fact a young man said that they felt as safe as if they had been behind a city wall.

#### 8. *What was the young man's estimation of his master?* 25:17

The young man was so ashamed of his master's action that he terminated his discourse with his master's wife by

referring to Nabal as the son of Belial. This epithet was one which was hurled to any man who was of bestial character. He viewed Nabal as a son of Satan, a worthless man. He was ashamed of him, and had gone to his wife to see if some action might be taken to rectify the situation.

9. *What did Abigail do?* 25:18

Abigail took matters into her own hand. She took provisions for David and his men. Without telling her husband, she loaded beasts of burden with 200 loaves of bread, two wineskins full of wine, five sheep already dressed, five measures of parched corn, and 100 clusters of raisins, in addition to 200 cakes of figs. She organized a company of servants to lead the asses and urged them to go on before her. She may have been afraid that if she were in the first contingent she would be attacked by David who was evidently going to take the spoils from Nabal by force. She also knew that the situation demanded speed and she did not want the servants to wait for her.

10. *What were David's intentions?* 25:21

David was not only out to get some provisions from Nabal, but he was also bent upon the utter destruction of the man and his family. He vowed a vow to God that he hoped God would wipe him out if he did not destroy Nabal from the face of the earth. As the American Standard Version expressed it, he said that he would not leave "by the morning light so much as one man child" (25:22b).

11. *How did Abigail stop David?* 25:23

Abigail took the initiative when she came within sight of David. She did not wait to see if he would attack her; but she approached him, got down off her donkey, and fell on her face to the ground before David. She must have known that David would not attack a woman, and yet she asked that all the iniquity of her husband be

laid upon her. She was willing to take the responsibility for what had happened although she had evidently had nothing to do with it. She asked David to let her speak to him about the matter.

12. *What is the meaning of the word Nabal?* 25:25

The word *Nabal* is a word from the original which means "fool." She also describes her husband as a worthless fellow, a son of Satan, a "man of Belial." She went on to say that she had not seen the young men whom David had sent to Nabal. Had she seen them, she would have attempted to give them these tokens of their appreciation of what they had done for them. Abigail then thanked God that David had been stopped from going out to shed innocent blood. David really had no right to take Nabal's life, although he was treated shamefully. Finally Abigail called attention to the provisions which she had brought. She called the present a blessing (25:27a).

13. *What was Abigail's estimation of David?* 25:28

Nabal had referred to David as a worthless servant who had broken away from his master. He had classed him with runaway slaves, but Abigail saw through the transpiring events that God was building a sure house for David. This meant that she viewed David as one to become the father of a great family in Israel. She believed that this was true because David was fighting the battles of the Lord. He was not fighting for himself, but he was putting down injustices and championing the cause of the righteous.

14. *What is the meaning of the phrase "the bundle of life?"* 25:29

If an object were in the midst of a lump of clay in a sling, it would not fall out. Any separated object would fall away. Abigail may have known of David's great victory over Goliath as David used his sling to kill the giant. She knew that David would appreciate this figure of speech and hoped that this would convince him of her good intentions towards him. Abigail went on to say that

she foresaw the time when David would be appointed ruler of Israel (25:30). She asked David to think of how he would feel about this after he became ruler. Since he had withdrawn his hand from harming Saul, she knew that he must not have any intention of offending. If he had been over anxious in avenging himself in the case of Nabal, he would regret this later.

15. *What was David's final decision? 25:32*

David knew that Abigail was speaking the truth. He prayed that God would bless Abigail for what she had done. He viewed this intercession on the part of Abigail as providential. He believed that God had sent her to him to stop him from shedding innocent blood. He admitted that if she had not come, he would have utterly destroyed Nabal and all his descendants before morning (25:34). David then received the gift which Abigail had brought him and sent her away in peace. He promised her that he would not attack her or her husband.

16. *What happened to Nabal? 25:37*

Nabal was full of wine when his wife returned to their home, and she did not mention her trip to meet David. When he was sober in the morning, she told him what had happened, and "his heart died within him" (25:37). He became as stone. The affliction which came upon Nabal was sent from the Lord, and ten days later he died.

*David's Wives. 25:39-44*

39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed *be* the Lord that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and commended with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.



41 And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* thine handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

42 And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were also both of them his wives.

44 But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of Gallim.

17. *Was David's marriage to Abigail an honorable one?*  
25:39

From the beginning it was not God's intention that man should have more than one wife. The Law was given at a time when men were practicing polygamy, and God did not reveal the full Christian standard at that time. He did give legislation to regulate polygamy, and this led men to the place where they could receive Christ's full revelation. In the light of the dispensation it was perfectly permissible for David to marry Abigail. Her husband was dead, and she was free from her obligations to him. Abigail was a very wise woman, viewing herself as unworthy of the love of David (25:41).

18. *What kind of woman was Abigail?* 25:42

Abigail was an honorable person and made a good wife for David. She was the mother of Chileab, David's son, of whom little is known (II Samuel 3:3). Her conduct showed her to be discrete in that she did not reveal her actions to her husband when he could have stopped her. She was humble (v. 23), generous (v. 27), god-fearing (v. 29), knowledgeable (v. 30), and affluent (v. 42).

19. *Who was David's other wife?* 25:43

David's other wife was Ahinoam (25:43). Ahinoam is introduced only as the Jezreelitess. Jezreel must have been a town in the mountains of Judah (Joshua 15:56), and

not the city of that same name in the tribe of Issachar (Joshua 19:18). The place in Issachar is so far north that it would seem improbable that David would have been in that area.

20. *What had happened to Michal? 25:44*

Michal was David's first wife. She had lied about his threat to her when David fled from their home as Saul came to kill him. Saul had then given Michal to Phalti, the son of Laish of Gallim. Phalti is called Paltiel in II Samuel 3:15. Gallim was a place between Gibeah of Saul and Jerusalem. David later persuaded Ish-bosheth and Abner to bring Michal back to him (II Samuel 3:14).

## CHAPTER 25 IN REVIEW

1. Where was Samuel buried? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what wilderness was David hiding? \_\_\_\_\_
3. To what man did David send for supplies at the time of shearing? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where was the man's home? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What was his wife's name? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many men did David take to fight Nabal? \_\_\_\_\_
7. By what title did Nabal's servant refer to him? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the meaning of Nabal's name? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What other woman did David marry? \_\_\_\_\_
10. To what man had Saul given Michal? \_\_\_\_\_

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 26

- Vv. 1- 5 *Saul pursues David again.* Saul had once said that he would leave David alone, but he could not resist the temptation to try to kill the man who threatened his position as king. The Ziphites came to Saul in Gibeah and told him that David was hiding in the hill of Hachilah. Saul then pursued David again.

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Vv. 6-20 *David again spares Saul.* Once more David had an opportunity to kill Saul as Saul lay sleeping. Some of David's men wanted him to slay the king, but David was unwilling to lift up his hand personally against God's anointed, the ruler of Israel. He did take his spear and cruse of water. He then awakened Saul and showed him that he could have killed him when he stole into his camp and took his spear.

Vv. 21-25 *Saul again repents.* Saul knew that he had done wrong in breaking his oath. He also knew that David was more righteous than he himself. When he was confronted with this truth, he repented again. Once more he said that he would not try to kill David. He blessed David and returned to his place.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Man should respect the things of God.* David demonstrated over and over again that he respected God's anointed leader. Saul was quite unrighteous but David knew that he was still God's anointed king. He was unwilling himself to take Saul's life even though he did have the opportunity more than once.
2. *Men today do well to respect God's appointments.* "How oft shall my brother sin against me"? (Matthew 18:21). Peter once asked Jesus how often his brother should sin against him and yet be forgiven by him. Peter thought that seven times were sufficient, but Jesus taught Peter that we should forgive a repentant brother an unlimited number of times. David demonstrated this very well in his life. Over and over again he forgave Saul and tried to live peaceably with him.

*Saul Pursues David Again. 26:1-5*

And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon?

2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

*1. Did the Ziphites betray David again? 26:1*

The repetition not only of the treachery of the Ziphites, but also of the sparing of Saul by David, furnished no proof in itself that the account contained in chapter twenty-six is only another legend of the occurrences already related in chapter twenty-four. As the pursuit of David by Saul lasted for several years, in so small a district as the desert of Judah, there is nothing strange in the repetition of these similar scenes. The agreement between the two accounts reduces it entirely to outward and unessential things. On the other hand, all the details, as well as the final results of the two occurrences, differ entirely from one another. These decided differences prove clearly enough that the incident described in the second instance is not the same as the similar one mentioned earlier.

*2. Why did Saul have only 3,000 men with him? 26:2*

The men of Israel numbered 300,000 and the men of Judah were 30,000 in number when the combined armies

went out to fight Nahash, the Ammonite, in (11:8). Later there were only 2,000 men with Saul and 1,000 men with Jonathan (13:1) when Saul and Jonathan were fighting the Philistine garrisons. The fact that there were 3,000 men with Saul when he went out against David would indicate that this was the size of the standing army which Saul kept. Israel could have mustered 1,300,000 men in the closing days of David's reign (II Samuel 24:9). Saul must have felt that he did not need a huge army to fight David's small band of 600 men.

3. *Where were the two armies?* 26:3

Saul was in the hill of Hachilah in the center of the territory of Judah. This hill is described as being "before Jeshimon." It was on the edge of the hill country which rose out of the Arabah, the deep valley which ran along the eastern border of Palestine. David was "in the wilderness." Whether he was in the wilderness of Ziph near the center of Judah or in the wilderness of Paran (25:1) cannot be determined. Since Saul had come to seek him in the wilderness of Ziph, it seems better to think of him as being located there at the time of this battle.

4. *Why did David send out spies?* 26:4

Ordinary precautions would dictate that a band of soldiers the size of David's army have some men serving as scouts. They would need to determine the location and strength of the enemy. Although this is the first time we find David using spies, it must have been Saul's usual practice for he seemed to be able to keep close watch on David's movements.

5. *What kind of trench was in Saul's camp?* 26:5

The American Standard Version translates this word with the phrase, "place of the wagons." Once again we find a reference to the custom of ancient armies to throw up a rampart around their supplies (I Samuel 17:20). It was around these supplies that the main body of the army had pitched its tents. Saul and Abner were in the place

of the wagons. They must have been behind the rampart and in the center of the army where they would enjoy utmost protection.

*David Again Spares Saul. 26:6-20*

6 Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

8 Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not *smite* him the second time.

9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?

10 David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

11 The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that *is* at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked: for they *were* all asleep; because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.

13 Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off; a great space *being* between them:

14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner

answered and said, Who *art* thou *that* criest to the king?

15 And David said to Abner, *Art* not thou a *valiant* man? and who *is* like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

16 This thing *is* not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye *are* worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is*, and the cruse of water that *was* at his bolster.

17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, *Is* this thy voice, my son David? And David said, *It is* my voice, my lord, O king.

18 And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil *is* in mine hand?

19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if *they be* the children of men, cursed *be* they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods.

20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

6. *Why did David propose to go into the camp?* 26:6

For a moment David may have weakened and thought that he might do some personal harm to Saul. Since he had refused to do this before, he may have had other objectives in mind. He had sent out spies to find out as much as he could about Saul's army and its movements. It may have been his own purpose to go into the camp to learn as much as he could about Saul's army for himself. He found out that Saul was there lying within the trench.

He saw his spear stuck in the ground at the head of his bedroll. He saw that Abner was there also as well as many of the other captains of thousands and soldiers whom David had fought with on previous occasions.

7. *What was Abishai's proposal?* 26:8

Abishai, the son of David's sister, Zeruiah, and brother of Joab, proposed that they slay Saul while he lay sleeping. Abishai seems ever ready to take immediate action against David's enemies. He made this same proposal when Shimei cursed David as David fled from Jerusalem during the revolt of Absalom (II Samuel 16:9). Abishai seemed sure of his prowess for he said that he would smite him but once and that he would not need to smite him the second time. He felt that he could kill Saul with one stroke.

8. *What was David's reaction?* 26:10

Once again David said that he would not lift up his own hand against the Lord's anointed. He predicted that Saul would go down into battle and be killed. If this were not his end, he would die sometime of old age. At any rate David himself was not going to be a party to the slaying of Saul. He did take evidence from his visit to Saul's camp and returned to his own men. The evidence which he took was the spear and the cruse of water. The spear evidently had a sharp point on the butt end of it so that it could be stuck down in the ground without dulling the sharp point on the other end of the shaft. The cruse of water was the personal jar or cup which would be recognized as Saul's own.

9. *Why did David rebuke Abner?* 26:15

After David got back to his own men, he cried out to Abner and asked him if he did not consider himself to be a valiant man. He chided him by asking if there were any man in his field to equal him. He then asked why he had not kept better watch over the king. He then announced that there had been those in the camp who intended to kill Saul. David's rebuke was stinging as he



judged that Abner was worthy of death because he had not guarded the king more carefully. He asked him to go out to see if he could find the king's spear or the water jar which had been kept at his pillow. Abner's search must have revealed that these items were gone. He knew that David had passed up an opportunity to kill Saul.

*10. Why did Saul call David his son? 26:17*

David was Saul's son-in-law. He had just been awakened out of his sleep, and he may have been very kindly disposed towards David. Saul loved David when he first met him; and since he was old enough to be his father, he may have looked on him as he did the members of his own family. Certainly this kind of address does not reveal any real feeling of animosity towards David on the part of Saul. It must have been largely when he was possessed of the evil spirit that Saul sought to kill David.

*11. What was David's proposal? 26:19*

David proposed that he make an offering to God, if God was stirring up Saul's hatred for him. A sinner was to be punished. If the king knew of his sin, his duty was to execute judgment. For example, one of God's laws through the ages has been that a man who killed another man should be put to death (Genesis 9:6). David was saying that if he were guilty of some crime for which the punishment was less than death, perhaps he could make a sin offering to the Lord and be forgiven of his sin. Thus Saul would not need to continue to search for him. On the other hand, if wicked men were making false accusations against David, he prayed that they might be cursed before the Lord because they were keeping him out of the presence of the king and making him to live on the borders of the promised land. In the areas outside of the borders of Israel David would be in pagan territory. These people worshipped other gods. The net result of his exile was that he could not go to the Tabernacle or to the priests of God and was in effect being told to go and serve other

gods. David was willing therefore that his blood might be shed if there were just cause: but if there were no real reason for his being killed, he prayed that his blood would not be shed in vain.

12. *What figures did David use to describe his plight?*  
26:20

David said he was like a flea or a partridge. He was being forced to move about from place to place. He was like a bird being hunted in the forest. He was forced to make himself as inconspicuous as a pesky insect. These were humble figures, but they described his condition very well.

*Saul Again Repents. 26:21-25*

21 Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

23 The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee into *my* hand today, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed.

24 And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed *be* thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great *things*, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

13. *What was Saul's decision? 26:21*

Once again Saul said that he had sinned. He gave permission for David to return to his place unmolested. He

promised him that he would do him no harm. Saul admitted that he had acted like a fool. He had made a grave mistake. Saul parted from David after pronouncing a benediction upon him (v. 25). He predicted that David would go on to accomplish outstanding feats and that he would eventually prevail over him. David was allowed to go on his way unmolested and Saul went back to his home in Gibeah.

## CHAPTER 26 IN REVIEW

1. Who told Saul where David was hiding? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what hill was David hiding? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many men did Saul take to find David? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who went with David into Saul's camp? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was Saul's captain? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What items did David take from Saul's camp? \_\_\_\_\_
7. By what title did Saul address David? \_\_\_\_\_
8. By what figures did David refer to himself? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What part did Saul say he had played? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What part of Saul's armor did David show to Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 27

- Vv. 1- 7 *David again in Gath.* David's return to Philistia has been called a lapse of faith. He had been told by the prophet Gad not to flee outside the borders of Israel. David must have given up hope of living safely in Israel. He disobeyed God's commandment and returned to Achish, the king of Gath.
- Vv. 8-12 *David's pretended campaign against Judah.* The king of Gath gave the city of Ziklag to David for his residence. David and his men dwelt there for sixteen months. On a number of occasions he invaded the Geshurites and other foreigners to the south of Judah. He reported to Achish the king of Gath that he had been making attacks against Judah itself. He was trying to curry favor with Achish by pretending to attack his own people.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The weakness of the flesh.* David had demonstrated many times that he was a man of great faith. He finally weakened and went against the instructions of God. We look to David as a hero but we realize that he was human. He reached the end of his endurance and gave in to the wisdom of the world which was not the wisdom of God.
2. *A lie is never justifiable.* David lied to Achish when he said that he had attacked the south of Judah (v. 10). He was forced to slay all the inhabitants of the cities which he attacked lest some would report that he was not actually fighting against Judah. One sin led to another. When he lied about where he was fighting, he also had to kill any who might tell the truth. God

cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18) and He does not expect His servants to lie, even to save their own lives.

David's Second Flight to Gath, 27:1-12.

*David Again in Gath. 27:1-7*

And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: *there is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

2 And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that *were* with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.

3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even* David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

6 Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

7 And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

*1. Why was David safer among the Philistines? 27:1*

David felt that Saul would not pursue him into the Philistine territory. His belief was justified from what is recorded in verse four. When Saul heard that David was in Philistia, he did not seek for him anymore. At the same time David was going against the commandments of God. Gad the prophet had told David not to flee outside the territory of Israel (22:5). At this point in his career

David was despairing of his life. He gave up and did what seemed best to him, but he was turning against the directions of God.

2. *What was David's position in Gath? 27:3*

David was still considered the leader of his 600 men. They evidently asked for political asylum with the king of Gath. This same king had not received David well when David came to him at the beginning of his flight. At that time his servants had reminded him that David was a very popular hero in Israel. David felt it to his advantage at that time to act as if he were a maniac. In this way he escaped any interrogation or imprisonment. As David returned at a later time Achish must have been convinced that Saul was definitely trying to kill David. This must have convinced him that it was all right for David to stay in Gath. The situation of David and his men was such that they could now enjoy a more normal life. Mention is made that each of David's 600 men went over with their households. David had his two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail.

3. *Why did David ask for a town? 27:5*

The families of the 600 men would be large enough to settle a town. If they had a place of their own they would have more freedom. David was able to direct the affairs of a group of people. His abilities to lead were evident as he rose to prominence in Israel. If Achish trusted him and gave him a town, David could serve him well as one of the fortified cities giving protection to Gath. David also felt that he was not worthy of living in the royal city with the king. His presence there might have caused him some embarrassment among the other Philistine lords. All of these reasons seemed sufficient for David's having a separate town.

4. *Where was Ziklag? 27:1*

This town was given to the Simeonites in the time of Joshua (Joshua 19:5); but was afterwards taken by the

Philistines, probably not long before the time of David, and appears to have been left without inhabitants in consequence of this conquest. The exact situation has not been clearly ascertained; but it was evidently close to the southwestern border of Judah because David was able to represent his expeditions against the Geshurites, Gezrites and Amalekites as having been against the men of Judah. The statement that David remained there a year and four months is a proof of the historical character of the whole narrative.

*David's Pretended Campaign Against Judah. 27:8-12*

8 And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road today? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring *tidings* to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so *will* be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

*5. Who were the people whom David attacked? 27:8*

The Geshurites, the Gezrites and the Amalekites were nomadic people who lived on the southwest border of Palestine. Their territory is described as being that land

along the route to Shur. This was the wilderness where Hagar lived after she was driven out from Abraham's household (Genesis 16:7). Geshurites are noted in Joshua 13:2 as south of Palestine. Gesenius connects the Gezrites with Mt. Gerizim, but this is very doubtful. They, too, must have been south of Palestine proper.

6. *What was David's purpose in his campaigns?* 27:9

David attacked the non-Israelitish people and utterly destroyed them so that there would be no living witnesses of his attacks. He did this and then told Achish that he had been fighting his own people. In this way he hoped to convince Achish that he was completely divorced from his former allegiance to Saul. If Achish believed that David was fighting against the people of Judah, he would believe that David would support the Philistines in their wars against the Israelites.

7. *Against whom did David say he was fighting?* 27:9

David said he had been fighting against the south of Judah, the Jerahmeelites, and the Kenites. The Jerahmeelites were the inhabitants of Jerahmeel. This was a city in Judah southwest of Hebron. The Kenites were the descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law (Numbers 10:29). These people were ordered to get out of the area when Saul was told to wipe out the Amalekites (I Samuel 15:6).

8. *Why did David use this deception?* 27:12

David was beginning to weaken in his honest purposes. He had left Israel against the commandments of God. He found himself in a position where he had to convince Achish that he was loyal to him. He saw no other way to insure his safety. Some of his own people had betrayed him and he was not safe to live among the people of his own tribe, the tribe of Judah. Had he only trusted in the Lord he would not have been forced to come to the place where he lived by deception.



## FIRST SAMUEL

### CHAPTER 27 IN REVIEW

1. To what foreign country did David finally flee? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many men did David have with him? \_\_\_\_\_
3. To what city did he flee? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What wives of David were with him? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was king of the country? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What city was given to David and his men? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How long did David stay in the city? \_\_\_\_\_
8. To whom did the city later belong? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Against what people did David make raids? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Against whom did David say he made raids? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 28

- Vv. 1- 2 *David with Achish in battle.* The Philistines began a campaign against Israel; and David was forced to go along with his benefactor, the king of Gath.
- Vv. 3- 6 *Saul forsaken by God.* Samuel was dead. Those that had familiar spirits had been put away out of the land. Saul had no one to give him guidance. The Lord did not answer him because Saul had disobeyed the Lord. The priests were not able to get an answer by Urim or Thummim. Since Saul had slain most of the priests there were none of these to help him. The only other prophet of whom we have knowledge was Gad, and he was with David. Saul was utterly abandoned.
- Vv. 7-14 *Saul seeks the witch of En-dor.* The law of Moses had commanded the people of Israel not to allow a witch to live in their midst. Saul

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

had put out of his country most of those necromancers, wizards, and witches. Some of his soldiers knew of the home of the witch in En-dor, and he disguised himself and went to her.

Vv. 15-25 *Samuel's appearance.* The Lord raised Samuel and allowed him to make a posthumous appearance to Saul. This appearance frightened the witch and greatly distressed Saul.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *A man forsaken of God is really all alone.* Saul makes a pitiable picture as there was no prophet, priest, or any other servant of God to advise him. We should learn from this occurrence that it is a terrible thing to turn one's back on God. We should remember that God is near to those who draw near to Him.
2. *There is life after death.* The witch of En-dor was not able to raise Samuel. She was frightened and cried out when Samuel was raised by the Lord. Samuel's appearance gives us evidence of life after death. We should all look forward when we will be raised to live a life everlasting.

Preparations for Saul's Last Battle, 28:1—29:11.

*David With Achish in Battle.* 28:1, 2

And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

1. *What was the demand of Achish on David?* 28:1

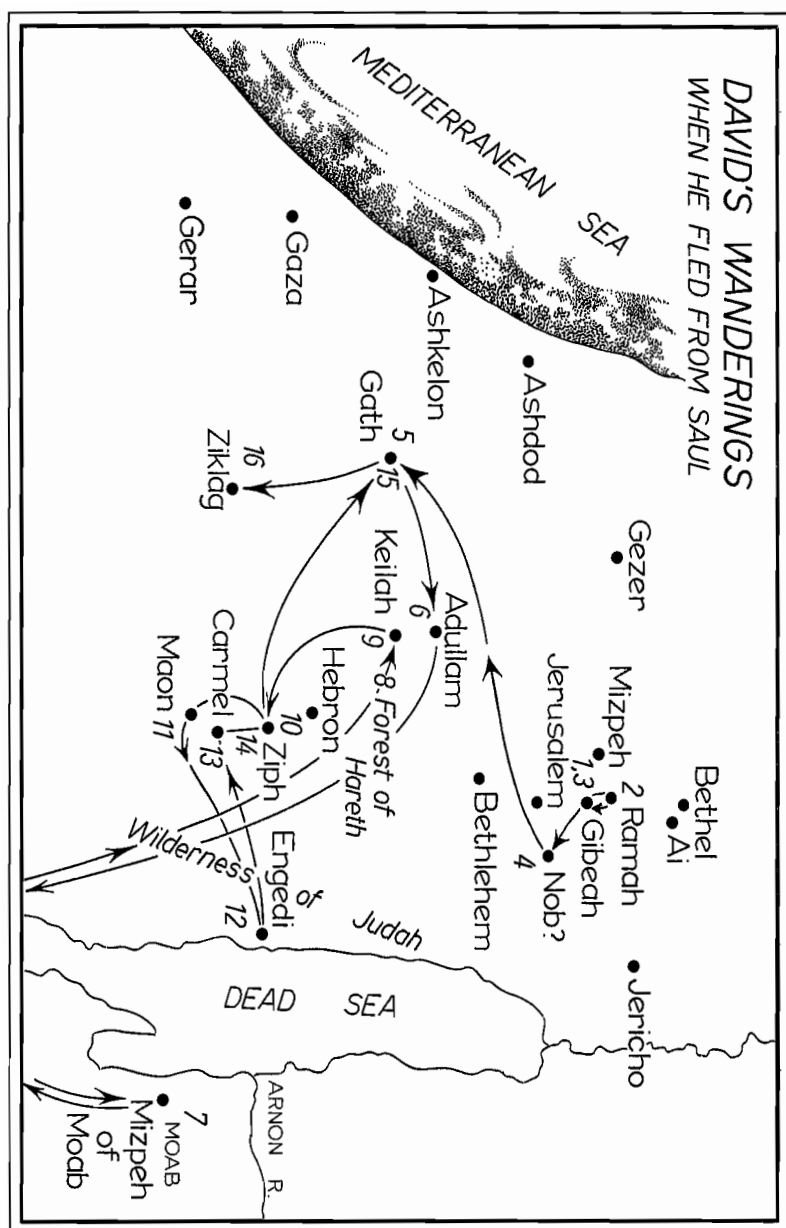
In exchange for the protection which David had received from Achish, David was expected to serve as a soldier with the Philistines. This was a high price to pay for the little bit of security which the Philistines afforded David. It has well been said that he who gives up a bit of his liberty in order to insure some security is worthy neither of liberty or security. David found himself in a position where he was expected to fight with the Philistines against his own people.

2. *Did David intend to fight against Saul?* 28:1, 2

While David was living in Philistia, the Philistines gathered their armies together for a campaign against Israel. Achish sent word to David that he was to go with him in his army along with his own men. David answered ambiguously. His words contained no distinct promise of faithful assistance in the war against the Israelites. There are no grounds for inferring that David was disposed to help the Philistines against Saul and the Israelites. Judging from his previous acts, it would necessarily have been against his principles for him to fight against his own people. Nevertheless, in the situation in which he was placed he did not venture to give a distinct refusal to the summons of the king. He was undoubtedly hoping that God would show him a way out of the conflict between his conviction and his duty to obey the Philistine king. He had no doubt prayed earnestly about it; and the faithful God helped his servant; first of all, by the fact that Achish accepted his indefinite declaration as a promise of unconditional fidelity and still more by the fact that the princes of the Philistines overrode the king.

*Saul Forsaken by God.* 28:3-6

3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city.



## DAVID'S WANDERINGS

### WHEN HE FLED FROM SAUL

(The places listed are shown on the map.)

1. *Gibeah*; I Sam. 19:1-17.
  - a. Jonathan intercedes for David; 19:1-7.
  - b. Saul tries to spear David; 19:8-10.
  - c. Michal helps David escape; 19:11-17.
2. *Ramah*; I Sam. 19:18-24; Ps. 59 (?).
  - a. David visits Samuel; 19:18-19.
  - b. Saul and his messengers prophesy; 19:20-24.
3. *Gibeah*; I Sam. 20.
  - a. David absent from feast of new moon; 20:1-34.
  - b. Jonathan warns David with arrows; 20:35-42.
4. *Nob*;<sup>1</sup> I Sam. 21:1-9.
  - a. Ahimelech gives David food and weapons; 21:1-6, 8-9.
  - b. Doeg the Edomite witnesses Ahimelech's act; 21:7.
5. *Gath*; I Sam. 21:10-15; Ps. 34, 56.
  - a. David feigns madness.
6. *Adullam*; I Sam. 22:1-2; Ps. 142.
  - a. David gathers 400 followers.
7. *Mizpeh of Moab*; I Sam. 22:3-5.
  - a. David leaves his parents here for safety.
8. *Forest of Hareth*; I Sam. 22:5-23; Ps. 52.
  - a. Saul slays priests at Nob; 22:5-19.
  - b. Abiathar comes to David; 22:20-23.
9. *Keilah*; I Sam. 23:1-12.
  - a. David saves Keilah from Philistines; 23:1-6.
  - b. Saul pursues David; 23:7-12.
10. *Ziph*; I Sam. 23:13-23.
  - a. David escapes to the wilderness; 23:13-14.
  - b. Jonathan's last visit with David; 23:15-18.
  - c. Ziphites reveal David's hiding place to Saul; 23:19-23.
11. *Maon*; I Sam. 23:24-28.
  - a. David narrowly escapes Saul.
12. *Engedi*; I Sam. 23:29—24:22.
  - a. David spares Saul.
13. *Carmel*; I Sam. 25:1-44.
  - a. Samuel's death; 25:1.
  - b. Nabal refuses food for David's men; 25:2-13.
  - c. Abigail's intercession; 25:14-35.
  - d. Death of Nabal; 25:36-38.
  - e. David marries Abigail; 25:39-44.
14. *Ziph*; I Sam. 26:1-25.
  - a. Ziphites reveal David's hiding-place again; 26:1-3.
  - b. David spares Saul; 26:4-25.
15. *Gath*; I Sam. 27:1-4.
  - a. David dwells with Achish.
16. *Ziklag*; I Sam. 27:3-12.
  - a. David receives Ziklag from Achish; 27:5-7.
  - b. David raids southern tribes; 27:8-12.

<sup>1</sup> The location of Nob is uncertain. It is thought to be near the Mt. of Olives near Jerusalem.

And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

3. *Why had Saul put away the witches?* 28:3

Saul had kept the Law as recorded in Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; and Deuteronomy 18:10. Since Samuel was dead, Saul had no prophet to whom he could turn. He had chased out the people with familiar spirits and the wizards. He could not go to a false prophet. He could find no spiritual assistance of any kind, good or bad, valid or invalid.

4. *Where was Shunem?* 28:4

Shunem was a little town in the valley of Jezreel. The Philistines had marched to this far point between Mount Carmel on the west and Mt. Gilboa on the east. This was a famous battlefield, being the scene of the battle against Sisera in the days of Deborah (Judges 4:7). Gilboa was the mountain on the northeastern edge of the plain of Jezreel. Shunem was the modern Shulem or Solam, some eight miles away from Mt. Gilboa.

5. *Why was Saul so alarmed?* 28:5

Since he had met and defeated the Philistines in earlier battles, Saul's great alarm can be attributed only to the feeling that the Lord had forsaken him. No doubt the Philistine army was formidable, but he had met the armies of the Ammonites soon after he became king. He mustered 330,000 warriors out of Israel on that occasion. Using good military strategy and completely trusting in

God, Saul had been victorious against these eastern enemies (I Samuel 11:11). Throughout his career he had fought many battles against the Philistines, but his falling into the clutches of the evil spirit repeatedly must have enervated Israel's first king. He had been unsuccessful in his wicked attempt to kill David and David's continued wise behavior had convinced Saul that God was with David and not with him. All of these things combined left Saul a cringing coward.

6. *What were God's ways of revealing His will?* 28:6

Three of the various ways in which God revealed himself in ancient times are mentioned in connection with Saul's vain attempt to learn the will of God. God often spoke to people in dreams. This had been His way of indicating His will to Joseph (Genesis 37:5). The Urim was a part of the high priest's wearing apparel, and it was used to find out the Lord's will as the priests made inquiry of Him (Exodus 28:30). Prophets were active throughout most of Israel's history. There were bands of prophets in the days of Samuel, and God revealed His will through these men (I Kings 13:1). We need to remember that God "who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Saul's desolate condition is emphasized by the statement of the fact that God did not answer Saul by any of these means.

*Saul Seeks the Witch of En-dor.* 28:7-14

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto

me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up, whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou *art* Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.

7. *Why did Saul go to the witch of En-dor? 28:7*

The Philistines had collected their forces in the plain near Shunem. Saul's army was encamped on the slopes of Mt. Gilboa, some two miles away but plainly within sight of the enemy. The very sight of the enemy had thrown Saul into dread terror. He was greatly anxious about the outcome of the battle and inquired of the Lord what might be the results of the coming conflict. The Lord had left Saul as He had withdrawn His spirit from Samson during the time of the Judges; and He did not answer Saul, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Instead of repenting and humbling himself before Jehovah, Saul plunged stubbornly forward in an



attempt of his own invention to find the verdict of the future. When living prophets gave no answer, he thought that a dead one might be called up, as if a dead one were less dependent upon God than the living, or that, even in opposition to the will of God, he might reply through the arts of a conjuring woman. Truly, if he perceived that God was hostile to him, he ought to have been all the more afraid, lest his enmity should be increased by his breach of His laws. But fear and superstition never reason.

8. *Where is En-dor? 28:7b*

En-dor still exists in a village under the ancient name on the Shoulder of *Duby* or Little Hermon about two miles from Saul's camp. Saul must have made a pitiable sight as he disguised himself and left the security of his camp to go down into the valley to find the home of the outlawed witch. Perhaps he had to slip along through the night past the Philistine outposts in order to reach this eerie home. His ill-fated journey is a sad commentary on the lot of a man who disobeys God.

9. *Why did Saul disguise himself? 28:8*

Saul would not want to be recognized by any Philistine scout whom he might meet. Most of all he knew that the woman would not practice her illegal art if she recognized him as king. He must have been ashamed to wear his kingly robes and make such a pitiable request of a spiritualist. His disguise would not be able to hide his stature, however; and this outstanding feature of Saul's person may have helped the witch to unmask Saul when Samuel did come back from the grave.

10. *Why had witches been banned? 28:9*

When Israel came into the promised land, they were "not to learn to do like the abominations of these nations." There was not to be found in the land any who caused his son or his daughter to pass through the fire (in other words, a worshipper of Moloch). Neither were there to be any who practiced sooth-saying, or a wizard, or a

snake-charmer, or a conjurer, or one who pronounced a ban, a necromancer and wise man, or one who asked the dead to be brought up. Moses was given this in the Law, and he grouped all the words which the language contained for the different modes of exploring the future and discovering the will of God, for the purpose of forbidding every description of soothsaying. At the head of the list was placed the prohibition of Moloch-worship, to show the connection between soothsaying and idolatry. Saul had acted in accordance with God's law when he banned all these from the kingdom (See Numbers 23:23 and Deuteronomy 18:9 ff.).

*11. Why was the woman suspicious? 28:9*

The witch of En-dor was afraid that her visitor was laying a snare for her. She was afraid that she would be reported to the king and eventually be killed. She knew that the Law said, "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus 22:18). She knew that God had ordained that there should not be found among the Israelites any "that use divination or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer" (Deuteronomy 18:10, 11). She had to be cautious in order to practice her illicit profession. When Saul gave her his word that she would not be punished, she was willing to go ahead.

*12. Did Samuel appear to the witch? 28:12*

The early Christian writers, the Protestant reformers, and many later Christian theologians assumed that there was no real appearance of Samuel, but only an imaginary one. More lately the opinion has been expressed that the apparition of Samuel was merely a delusion produced by the witch without any background at all. More recently orthodox commentators have been almost unanimous in the opinion that the departed prophet did really appear and announce the destruction; not, however, in consequence of the magical arts of the witch, but through a miracle

wrought by the omnipotence of God. This is favored by the narrator who speaks throughout of the appearance not of a ghost, but of Samuel himself. It is also sustained by the circumstance, that not only do the words of Samuel to Saul create the impression that it is Samuel himself who is speaking, but his announcement contains so distinct a prophecy of the death of Saul and his sons, that it is impossible to imagine it can have proceeded from the mouth of an imposter, or have come from Satan.

*13. How did the witch recognize Saul? 28:12*

The woman must have concluded that she was in the presence of Saul because he had asked to have a seance with Samuel. Samuel and Saul had been rather closely associated in the political and religious activities of the kingdom of Israel. The woman must have known about Samuel's death and Saul's desperate effort to find out the will of God. The very fact that Saul had asked for Samuel to be brought back from the dead probably raised a question in the woman's mind from the very beginning of the interview. As Samuel was raised from the dead by the power of God and the woman was frightened by this miraculous event, she undoubtedly was then not afraid to express her conviction. Saul's stature would have been a feature that he could not disguise. There was none other in Israel as tall as he. He stood head and shoulders above all the others. This imposing stature coupled with the strange request for Samuel's being brought back from the dead would have convinced the woman of the identity of her strange visitor.

*14. In what form did Samuel appear? 28:14*

Samuel's appearance is not to be regarded as the appearance of one who had risen in a glorified body; but though somewhat spirit-like in its external manifestation, so that it was only to the witch that he was visible, and not to Saul. It was merely an appearance of the soul of Samuel, which had been at rest, in the clothing of the

earthly body and dress of the prophet, which were assumed for the purpose of rendering it visible. In this respect, the appearance of Samuel, rather resembled the appearances of the angels in human form and dress, such as the three angels who came to Abraham in the grove at Mamre, and the angel who appeared to Manoah, with this exception, however, that these angels manifested themselves in a human form, which was visible to the ordinary bodily eye, whereas Samuel appeared in a spirit-like form. In all these cases the bodily form and clothing were only a dress assumed for the soul or spirit, and intended to facilitate perception, so that such appearances furnish no proof that the souls of departed men possess material corporeality.

*15. How did Saul know that it was Samuel? 28:14*

The apparition was clothed in the prophet's mantle such as Samuel was accustomed to wearing. Saul asked the woman to describe the apparition and she said that it was an old man. Samuel had died after several years of work among the people of Israel. Since Saul had asked for Samuel in the first place, he must have realized that God had granted his request.

*Samuel's Appearance. 28:15-25*

15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

17 And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, *even* to David:

18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor

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executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto this day.

19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and tomorrow *shalt* thou and thy sons *be* with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded *it*, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:

25 And she brought *it* before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

*16. In what way was Samuel disquieted? 28:15*

The actions of the woman imply most unquestionably that she saw an apparition which she did not anticipate. This leads us to believe that she was not really able to conjure up departed spirits or persons who had died, but that she might merely pretend to do so. Even if it is

concluded that the woman had a certain demoniacal background, the appearance of Samuel differed essentially from everything that she had experienced and effected before, and therefore filled her with alarm and horror. The very fact, however, that she recognized Saul as soon as Samuel appeared, precludes us from declaring that all this was nothing more than jugglery and deception. Her recognition of Saul when Samuel appeared may be explained from their close association during Samuel's lifetime and the woman's knowledge of this, or from God's granting her clairvoyant power even as He had granted the appearance of Samuel himself.

*17. Why did Samuel reveal David as the next king? 28:17*

The purpose of God had already been formed and was about to be fulfilled. Samuel thus announced it definitely to Saul. Saul had taken very extreme measures. Although he explained that he was sore distressed, he did not have reason to ask God to disquiet Samuel. The Philistines were oppressing Israel. God had indeed departed from Saul. Saul was unable to get any revelation of the will of God from the prophets or by dreams. All of this was not reason enough to resort to illegal measures. Saul should have known that if the Lord was departed from him, he was helpless. This final and irrevocable revelation of God's utter rejection of Saul was in keeping with the drastic steps which Saul had taken. If Saul had any doubt about the outcome of his own kingdom it was removed by this revelation from the prophet who had been returned from the dead.

*18. What was the basic reason for Saul's being rejected?  
28:18*

A two-fold reason is given for Saul's being rejected. Samuel said it was because he had not obeyed the voice of the Lord. This was probably a reference to his failing to wait for seven days as he was ordered by Samuel before the two were to sacrifice. Samuel also said that it was

because he had not executed God's fierce wrath on Amalek. On both these occasions Samuel had rebuked Saul while he was alive. Coming back from the dead he summarized the rejection of Saul as being on account of these two failures.

19. *How would Saul be with Samuel?* 28:19

Samuel told Saul that he would die in the battle the next day. The two men would thus be together in the world of the departed spirits. Here is another indication of the deep conviction held by the Old Testament people with regard to life after death. Such expressions as one's being "gathered to his people" (Genesis 25:8), this statement of Samuel's with regard to Saul, and David's statement that his dead boy could not be brought back but that he would go to him (II Samuel 12:23) all verify the faith of the Israelite people in life after death.

20. *Why did Saul fast?* 28:20

Saul was mentally perturbed and excited of body and soul. His deep mental anguish left him without appetite. Hannah's deep distress left her in a similar condition (I Samuel 1:7) as did the apostle Paul's repentant spirit (Acts 9:9). In addition, he may have fasted as an outward sign of his attempt to be holy, hoping in this way to win favor with God.

21. *Why was the woman concerned for Saul?* 20:21

The witch had a sincere respect for her sovereign, and she did not want to see him expire because of lack of nourishment. She also knew that he would need every ounce of his strength as he made his way back to his camp and entered into the final battle with the Philistines. Her reasoning was good. She reminded Saul that she had listened to his request and cooperated with him in the practice of her necromancy, and she felt that it was only fair that Saul in turn listen to her appeal on his behalf. The woman's request was not enough in itself: but as his servants continued to insist that he eat something, he finally

arose from lying prone on the ground and did eat as he sat on the edge of the bed. This final ministration to Saul's physical needs on behalf of his loyal subject is a touching picture of life in Palestine in the eleventh century before Christ. She performed all the menial tasks necessary in the preparation of the meal and served it with loyal devotion. Thus strengthened, Saul and his servants returned to their camp and prepared for the final battle.

## CHAPTER 28 IN REVIEW

1. What kind of people had Saul banned from Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where were the Philistines encamped? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where was Israel's camp? \_\_\_\_\_
4. By what means had Saul inquired of God? \_\_\_\_\_
5. For what kind of woman did Saul seek? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where did the woman live to whom Saul went? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Whom did Saul ask the woman to disquiet? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In what garment was Samuel arrayed? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Did Saul see Samuel? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did Saul hear Samuel's voice? \_\_\_\_\_



## FIRST SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 29

- Vv. 1-7 *David challenged by the lords of the Philistines.* The lords of the other cities of the Philistines doubted that David would fight against his own people when they actually went into battle. These men requested that Achish, the king of Gath, send David back and not allow him to go into the conflict. Achish was not convinced that David would betray him in the heat of battle, but he yielded to the will of the other Philistine leaders and sent David back from the battlefield.
- Vv. 8-11 *David departs from Achish.* The Philistine lords of such towns as Ekron, Lachish, Gaza and Gath had met at Aphek along the Mediterranean coast as they prepared to go into battle. David departed from this point and returned toward Ziklag. The Philistines went on to battle near Jezreel.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*All things work together for good to those who love God*" (Romans 8:28). David must have been in great mental anguish as he found himself in a position where he might be forced to fight against his own people. He had pretended to wage little skirmishes against the south of Judah, but he had not actually done this. He had indicated that he would be loyal to Achish, the king of Gath, who had befriended him and allowed him to dwell in the Philistine city of Ziklag. It is hard for us to believe that David would actually fight against his people and he must have been glad when the Philistine lords insisted that he be sent back from the battlefield. This is apparently the good providence of God that

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keeps His chosen servants from going too far in the wrong direction.

2. "*Lest haply we be found even to fight against God*" (Acts 5:39 b). In the days when the apostles were threatened by the Jewish leaders one of them had the good common sense to urge his colleagues not to go too far in persecuting Christians lest they themselves be found to fight against God. When we fight against God's people, we fight against God. We are glad that David did not have to fight against his own people. We should be careful that we do not put ourselves in a position where we fight against God's chosen men.

### *David Challenged by the Lords of the Philistines. 29:1-7*

Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rearward with Achish.

3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here*? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it* not *be* with the heads of these men?

5 *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host *is* good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favor thee not.

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

1. *Where was Aphek?* 29:1

At least four different locations bear the name of Aphek. One is a city mentioned in Joshua 13:4. The context indicates that this was north of Sidon, and is often identified as *Asqa*, the ancient *Aphaca*, some twenty-three miles on beyond Beirut. Another is a town in the tribe of Asher, which the Israelites failed to occupy (Joshua 19:30; Judges 1:31). This Aphek has been identified with Tell Kurdaneh, some six miles southeast of Accho. A third location is a town in the Plain of Sharon, about eleven miles northeast of Joppa. This is the present *Ras-el-'Ain*. The Philistines were camped here on their way to Shiloh to attack Israel at Ebenezer (I Samuel 4:1-12). A fourth location is a spot about four miles east of the Sea of Galilee in the land of Manasseh east. This spot is on the highway between Damascus and a plain of Esdraelon and is known as the present-day *Afik* (I Kings 20:26; II Kings 13:17). Still another site is posited as not only possible but probable from the reference of the location of the armies in Shunem and Jezreel (I Samuel 28:4; 29:1, 11; 31:3). It seems doubtful that the Philistines would be assembling their troops at this far northern point. The Aphek described here must be the town in the Plain of Sharon. To place it farther north would make it too far away for David and his men to reach Ziklag on the third day after he was discharged from Achish's service (I Samuel 30:1).

*2. Why did the Philistines send David away? 29:3*

All the various armies of the Philistine governors were being assembled at Aphek for the great push against Saul, when the rulers of the Philistines spied David and his army in the company of Achish. Having recognized him as David, the servant of Saul, they demanded that he not be allowed to go into the battle with the Philistine armies. Achish regretfully informed David of this decision; and in accordance with Achish's admonition, David returned the next morning to Ziklag. No doubt he was very light of heart praising God for having so graciously rescued him out of the disastrous situation into which he had been brought and that not altogether without some fault of his own.

*3. How did the Philistines know Israel's songs? 29:5*

The song that the women sang as David came back from battle was a very popular song. It is first mentioned in the period following David's victory over Goliath (I Samuel 18:7). This was the song which had stirred Saul's jealousy because the song ascribed but thousands to him while ascribing ten thousands to David. The Philistines had heard it before the time when David fled from Saul and went to Achish at Gath (I Samuel 21:11). Evidently these songs were sung on a number of occasions and the Philistines may have been present to hear it. If they had not heard it in a time of peace, they may have heard it as their armies were encamped close enough together for sounds to carry back and forth.

*4. Why did Achish regret discharging David? 29:6*

Achish had not realized the truth of the activity of David. He thought he had been making attacks on the south of Judah and took this as evidence of his complete severance from the tribes of Israel (27:12). Achish was forced to discharge David because this was the majority decision of the lords of the Philistines—the king of Ekron, Lachish, Gaza, Ashdod, and others nearby. Achish thought

that David would be a valiant soldier, for indeed he had a reputation of being a capable military man. It is quite doubtful that David would have fought against Saul. He had refused to harm him on a number of occasions, and he would certainly have rebelled against any personal combat between Saul and himself.

*David Departs from Achish. 29:8-11*

8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, as an angel of God; notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

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

*5. Why did David protest? 29:8*

David was playing the part to the hilt. His words are ambiguous, and he does not expect that Achish will be able to make any charge against him. As he said that he would go and fight against the enemies of his lord the king, he does not make the reference personal. He could have been saying that he would fight against the Philistines, since he was really still loyal to Saul. Achish in his gullibility, took the statement of David to be a declaration of allegiance to him and assured David still more earnestly that he was firmly convinced of his honesty and integrity.

6. *Why did Achish compare David to an angel of God?*  
29:9

This idiom is used quite often by people who want to show their deep respect for others. The comparison of the king to an angel of God was made by the woman of Tekoah, who came up to see David at the invitation of Joab (II Samuel 14:17 and 20). In the case of the Israelites they would look to their monarch as God's vice-regent; but in the case of Achish, the idiom is probably no more than a way for him to say that he had the strongest conviction that David had behaved himself well. He was as faultless as an angel in the sight of Achish.

## CHAPTER 29 IN REVIEW

1. Where were the Philistines gathering together? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where were the Israelites encamped? \_\_\_\_\_
3. With whom was David going into battle? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who objected to David's presence? \_\_\_\_\_
5. By what name did the Philistines describe David and his men? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What title did the Philistines use to describe David's relationship to Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Quote the song which the Philistines knew which referred to Saul and David. \_\_\_\_\_
8. To what heavenly being did Achish compare David? \_\_\_\_\_
9. When did David leave the Philistine camp? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Towards what place did the Philistines go? \_\_\_\_\_

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### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 30

- Vv. 1- 6 *David's camp looted.* David and his men marched for three days from Aphek and came to Ziklag. They arrived only to find that their camp had been attacked, the city had been burned with fire, and the men's wives and sons and daughters had been taken captives.
- Vv. 7-20 *David's pursuit of his enemies.* David made inquiry of Abiathar, the priest, to find out the Lord's will. The Lord informed him that he should pursue those who had destroyed his camp. David found a straggler from the enemy's forces, and the straggler helped David to take the enemy's camp by surprise.
- Vv. 21-31 *David's good will towards Judah.* David took considerable spoil from the Amalekites, who had attacked the camp. He did not keep all of it himself. He ordered that all his men should share equally in the spoils, and he then sent some of the spoils to the cities of Judah. He especially made sure that spoils were sent to Hebron and to all the places where he and his men had been protected when they fled from Saul.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *There is strength in the Lord.* David's men were so distressed when they saw that their wives and children had been taken captive that they threatened to stone David. David himself was really distressed, but we read this significant statement of David: "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (v. 6 b). When there is none other to give help, God is always close at hand.

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2. *Victory belongs to the soldiers of the Lord.* A weaker man than David might have given up in despair when he returned to find that his own city had been pillaged and burned. He continued his march against the enemy and by the strength of the Lord was victorious. We need to remember that often victory is just around the corner. Sometimes we give up just on the brink of ultimate victory, but thus we know only defeat.
3. *Blessings are to be shared.* David was very unselfish in not keeping all the spoils for himself. He would not allow the selfish men in his army to keep those who had watched the baggage from sharing the spoils. He made it an ordinance in Israel that those who went to battle and those who watched the baggage were to share and share alike in the spoils of war. He also shared the spoils with those who had befriended him in earlier days. This is the magnanimous spirit needed by all of God's people.

### David's Return to Ziklag, 30:1-31.

#### *David's Camp Looted.* 30:1-6

And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

2 And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way.

3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, *it was* burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

4 Then David and the people that *were* with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.



5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

*1. Why had the Amalekites sacked Ziklag? 30:1*

David and his men had made expeditions against these people when David wanted to impress Achish (I Samuel 27:9-12). These Bedouin peoples had probably watched the departure of David and his men and had taken advantage of the opportunity to capture their women, children, and possessions. It is ironical that the people who led this expedition against David were the people whom Saul had been sent to destroy. Evidently Saul had not only spared the king, but had allowed some of the men to escape. These people then rose up to cause trouble for David.

*2. Why had they not slain any? 30:2*

They had not followed David's method of warfare. David had the extreme need for ridding himself of any witnesses and had entered into campaigns of total extermination. The captives taken by the Amalekites were probably destined to the Egyptian slave market. This was the way in which the Midianites were introduced in the days of Joseph. They bought him for twenty pieces of silver and took him to Egypt, where he was sold (Genesis 37:36).

*3. What caused David's excessive grief? 30:4*

David and his men had marched with the rearward of the Philistine armies as far as Aphek. There they were halted by the lords of the Philistines who were making the final assignments for the battle in the north. After they were discharged, they made a forced march for three days

and had arrived in their home only to find it pillaged and burned. They wept until they had no more tears and no more mental, physical, or nervous energy to expend in their grief.

4. *Why did the men blame David?* 30:6

The men felt that their association with David would ultimately bring them only misfortune. The men are described as being "bitter of soul." This description fits angry men as is evidenced by Judges 18:25 and II Samuel 17:8. The Shunamite woman whose son had died is described in this same way as she fell at Elisha's feet (II Samuel 4:27). The same idea is expressed in an attempt to describe Jacob's fear and distress as he was about to return to meet Esau (Genesis 32:7, 8) and also the people of Israel as the Canaanite peoples whom they had left in the land distressed them (Judges 2:15). These men were at their wits' end. Since David was their captain and ultimately responsible for the major decisions, they blamed him for all that had befallen them. They even considered seriously the actual stoning of David.

5. *How was David sustained in the day of peril?* 30:6b

Hardly any stranger circumstances can be imagined than those which confronted David upon his return to Ziklag. He and his men had hurriedly returned from Aphek to Ziklag by a forced march of three days' duration. Their welcome consisted of charred remains of what had been their homes and the knowledge that their women, children, and cattle had been driven away as spoil by the plundering Amalekites. Their grief was such that they wept until the fountains of weeping were run dry, and then the men turned and vented their grief by anger at David. There were conversations directed towards stirring up the men to stone David. In all this, we read, "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." By such faith David was sustained even in days of greatest peril.

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*David's Pursuit of His Enemies.* 30:7-20

7 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

8 And David enquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

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

10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

11 And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights.

13 And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? And he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.

14 We made an invasion *upon* the south of the Cherethites, and upon *the coast* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.

15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

16 And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had

taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

19 And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them. David recovered all.

20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drove before those *other* cattle, and said, This *is* David's spoil.

6. *How were the captives of Ziklag recovered? 30:7 ff.*  
David inquired of the Lord concerning the advisability of going out against the Amalekites. God answered him by telling him that he should go out in pursuit of the enemy and added the promise that he would be blessed in the endeavor. An Egyptian, a slave of one of the plundering Amalekites, had grown faint while the plunderers were returning from Ziklag; and when he was unable to proceed with the army his master left him by the highway to die. This man was found by David, and his spirits were revived by their kind ministrations. He said that he would guide them to the camp of the pillagers if only David would promise not to take his life nor deliver him again into the hands of his master. Led by the slave, the men came upon the Amalekites as they were spread upon the ground eating and drinking, all of which was probably some sort of religious festival celebrating their successful plundering of Ziklag. The attack was sudden and soon decided, and the success was complete. David rescued all that had been carried away. Nothing was missing; and in

addition to recovering his own, David captured a large amount of other property.

7. *What was the nature of David's inquiry?* 30:8

David asked the Lord if he should pursue after the Amalekites. He puts it in the form of a question that could be answered by a full statement from the Lord. It would be better not to consider this as a question to be answered with a *yes* or a *no*. He was asking the Lord what would happen if he did pursue. The Lord answered his question. As he continued to be more specific, he asked if he could overtake the enemy. The Lord revealed to him that he would not only catch up with the Amalekites but he would recover everything he had lost.

8. *Where was the brook Besor?* 30:9

This brook is mentioned only at this point. It must have been south of Ziklag on the road to Egypt. Wady Gazze or Wady Sheria would fit a description of the events which transpired. Probably it was near Ziklag, because the men who stayed behind knew they would have to cross it in order to pursue the enemy.

9. *Why were the 200 so faint?* 30:10

David's men had been on a forced march from the rallying point at Aphek before they pursued their enemies from Ziklag. In addition, they had been under a great deal of mental strain as they had posed as friendly towards the Philistines. The final blow to their stamina came as they returned to find their wives, children, and supplies, carried away by marauders. Two hundred evidently stayed at Ziklag to protect the site. They knew that they would have to cross this valley and were not even able to begin the campaign.

10. *Who was the straggler?* 30:13

The young man whom David's men found in the field was an Egyptian. He was so faint that he was like a corpse according to the original text. After he had been given something to eat and drink, his spirit came again to

him. When he was asked about his background, he explained that he was an Egyptian but was a servant to an Amalekite. He had been left behind because he was sick and unable to keep up with the rest of the company.

11. *Who were the Cherethites?* 30:14

The Cherethites were tribes of the Philistines who lived in the southwest part of Canaan. Ezekiel mentioned them (Ezekiel 25:16) as did Zephaniah (Zephaniah 2:5). In these references they are synonymous with the Philistines. The Greek version called these people "Cretans." It is now understood that the Philistines originally came from Crete. David had Cherethites and Pelethites as body guards (II Samuel 8:18; 15:18; 20:7, 23; I Kings 1:38, 44; I Chronicles 18:17). Later on these men were called captains and the guard (II Kings 11:4, 19).

12. *Why did David overcome the Amalekites with ease?*  
30:16-20

When David came on the campsite of the Amalekites, they were spread all around over the ground eating and drinking and dancing. They were celebrating the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines and out of the land of Judah. Just how long David smote them is not clear, but it must have been only one evening. It was the next day after they had left Ziklag that he began the attack at twilight. He continued the attack after dark and recovered everything.

*David's Goodwill Toward Judah.* 30:21-31

21 And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them.

22 Then answered all the wicked men and *men* of Be-lial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they

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went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.

25 And it was *so* from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord;

27 To *them* which *were* in Beth-el, and to *them* which *were* in south Ramoth, and to *them* which *were* in Jattir,

28 And to *them* which *were* in Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in Eshtemoa,

29 And to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Kenites,

30 And to *them* which *were* in Hormah, and to *them* which *were* in Chorashan, and to *them* which *were* in Athach,

31 And to *them* which *were* in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

13. *What military law was based on these events? 30:22-25*

Two hundred men had been too worn out by the events of the return from Aphek and all that transpired to cross over the Brook Besor as the men of David pursued the Amalekites. As a result, they had stayed behind with

some of the equipment. When the victorious men returned, they met these two hundred men; and the baser of their number were of a mind to refuse to divide the spoil with the two hundred. All that was to be given to these men were their wives and children. David immediately vetoed the proposition. His language is contained in this couplet:

"As the portion of the one who goes down into battle, So is the portion of the one who remains with the baggage."

To this he added these words: "They shall all share alike." David's decision in the matter became a precedent for what was done in Israel from that time forward.

14. *To who did David send presents of the spoil?* 30:26-31

David used the booty at his disposal to win the hearts of the men of Judah. He sent portions to the elders of Judah, to his friends, and to his kinsmen with the note that the spoil was taken for a blessing for them from the possessions of the enemies of Jehovah. The listing of the cities indicates that they were all in the South of the land. In these cities and among these people David had wandered when he was a fugitive from the wrath of Saul. Many of them had no doubt rendered valuable assistance to David and his party. Sending these gifts could not fail to make the elders of these cities well disposed towards David; and so to facilitate his recognition as king after the death of Saul, David acted wisely. Moreover, some of these places may have been invaded and plundered by the Amalekites, since they had pillaged the Negeb of Judah.

## CHAPTER 30 IN REVIEW

1. Who had attacked Ziklag? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long had David taken to reach Ziklag? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which wives of David were captured? \_\_\_\_\_



## FIRST SAMUEL

4. What did David's men propose to do to him? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What did the priest bring to David? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the priest's name? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many men went with David? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many stayed behind? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Whom did David's men find in a field? \_\_\_\_\_
10. To whom did David send some of the spoil he took? \_\_\_\_\_

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 31

- Vv. 1-6 *Saul's death.* Samuel had told Saul that he would die in battle. This came to pass as the armies of Israel and Philistia met in battle on Mt. Gilboa. Saul fell on his sword and killed himself. His sons were killed with him in this fatal battle.
- Vv. 7-13 *Saul's burial.* The Philistines cut off Saul's head and stripped off his armor. They put his armor in the house of their gods the Ash-taroath. They fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. The men of Jabesh-Gilead heard that Saul's body was hanging on Beth-shan. They came by night and took the body and gave it a decent burial.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The word of God is sure.* Saul had done everything he could to try to thwart God's will. Even though he had disobeyed God on at least two outstanding occasions, he evidently thought he could escape the ultimate punish-

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

ment which was pronounced against him. Samuel had predicted that Saul would die in battle. Saul did die as Samuel said. We may rest well assured that the Word of God cannot be broken. The prophecies of God are sure to be fulfilled.

2. *Faithful friends are priceless.* Saul had befriended the men of Jabesh-Gilead by rescuing them out of the hands of Nahash, the king of the Ammonites. The men of Jabesh-Gilead did not forget that Saul had helped them in the early days of his kingship. They did what they could to see that Saul's body was given a fitting burial. At the risk of their own lives they crossed the Jordan river. Traveling by night they came to the wall of Beth-shan and took down the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons. They took these bones back to their town and gave them an honorable burial.

### Saul's Last Battle, 31:1-13.

#### *Saul's Death.* 31:1-6

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

4 Then said Saul to his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

*1. Why did Israel fight in the mountains? 31:1*

The Israelites seemed to prefer the hill country for their battlefield. They were forced to fight Jaban, the king of Hazor, in the lowlands in the days of Joshua (Joshua 11:1). At that time the Canaanites fought with horses and chariots (Joshua 11:4), equipment which the Israelites did not appear to use in the battle until the later days of the kings of Israel (I Kings 20:25; II Kings 9:16; et al.). Israel evidently held a good reputation for fighting in the hill country, and their enemies thought that they were not able to fight in the valleys (I Kings 20:23). The chariots of their enemies would be able to roll more freely in the plains and the valleys, so Israel would have every advantage as they went into this final battle under Saul. They would have the physical advantage of the terrain as they went into this final battle against the Philistines. The most important advantage was not theirs. They did not have the blessings of God.

*2. Why were Saul's sons with him? 31:2*

In earlier battles Jonathan was the leader of the sons of Saul. On occasions he had been in charge of at least one thousand men. It was his bravery that brought an initial victory as he and his armor-bearers surprised the Philistine garrison. Abinadab and Melchishua may also have been in charge of a detachment of soldiers. Israel needed all her men in this great battle. Her kings' sons were not exempt from military duty.

*3. How badly was Saul wounded? 31:3*

The Philistines were better equipped in many ways than the Israelites. They used their bowmen with great advantage in the fighting on the mountain slopes. It was these men who finally caught up with Saul and his three sons. Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchishua were evidently

mortally wounded by the Philistines themselves. Saul's wounds left him able to converse with his armor-bearers and finally to fall on his own sword, though dying. The Greek translation of the Bible, made some two hundred years before Christ, viewed this situation as one depicting Saul being wounded in the abdomen. He might have expected this wound to be fatal, and it certainly kept him from engaging in further battle. He was not so severely wounded that he could not kill himself. He was wounded so badly that he despaired of living, or else he would have not asked his armor-bearer to slay him. The words used in the various translations as well as in the original text point to his being wounded under the breast cartilage. This would put the wound in his abdomen and bowels and probably would have resulted in his ultimate death.

4. *Why did the armor-bearer refuse to kill Saul?* 31:4

Saul wanted his armor-bearer to kill him so that the Philistines could not make sport of him (Judges 19:25). Cases such as his and that of Abimelech (Judges 9:54) indicate that enemies of the day quite often amused themselves with the helpless but conscious warriors whom they found. Whether the armor-bearer was in a too-distressed state of mind or had too much reverence for his lord cannot be made out with certainty. The latter seems more probable. When the armor-bearer refused to kill Saul, Saul fell on his own sword and died. When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell on his own sword and died with him.

5. *How did Saul die?* 31:6

The archers of the Philistines overtook him; and when they got him in range, they wounded him. Saul then called upon his armor-bearer to run him through with his sword, but the armor-bearer would not do this. Saul wanted to die at the hands of a friend rather than at the hands of the Philistines who would cool their courage by maltreating him; but the armor-bearer was afraid, since he was

supposed to be answerable for the king's life. Saul then inflicted death upon himself with his sword, and the armor-bearer also fell upon his own sword and died with his king. On that day then Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer all died. It is said that all his house, or all the warriors who went out with him as a part of his house or his household, were slain in this battle. Neither Abner nor Saul's son, Ish-botheth, was included: for the latter did not go out to battle, and although the former was Saul's cousin and commander-in-chief, he did not belong to his house nor was he considered his servant. Saul's taking his own sword and falling upon it is one of the very rare instances of suicide in the Old Testament. In view of it, the older commentators discuss the question of Saul's final salvation, generally with an unfavorable verdict.

*Saul's Burial.* 31:7-13

7 And when the men of Israel that *were* on the other side of the valley, and *they* that *were* on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish *it in* the house of their idols, and among the people.

10 And they put his armor in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

11 And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul;

12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the

wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.

13 And they took their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

6. *What was the outcome of the battle of Mt. Gilboa?*  
31:7

The principal engagement of the war took place in the plain of Jezreel. When the Israelites were obliged to yield, they fled up the mountains of Gilboa and were pursued and slain there. The Philistines followed Saul, smote his three sons, and fought fiercely against Saul himself. When the men of Israel upon the hillsides that were opposite to the valley of Jezreel and the Jordan saw that the troops fled and Saul and his sons were dead, they took flight out of the cities; whereupon the Philistines nailed the bodies of Saul and his sons to the wall of Beth-shean. This presupposes the capture of that city, from which it is evident that they had occupied the land as far as the Jordan. All the northern part of the land of Israel, in other words, the whole land with the exception of Perea and the land of Judah, came into the hands of the Philistines when Saul was slain.

7. *Where was Saul's corpse gibbeted?* 31:10

On the following day, when the Philistines stripped the slain, they found Saul and his three sons lying upon Gilboa. Having cut off their heads and plundered their weapons, they sent them as trophies into the land of the Philistines, passing them round about among the different towns and hamlets of their land to announce the joyful news in the idol-temples and to the people. The corpses they fastened to the town-wall of Beth-shean, a city in the valley of the Jordan (see Joshua 17:11). It is not stated that the Philistines plundered the bodies of Saul's sons and mutilated them by cutting off their heads; but it is evident from verse twelve, where the Jabesh-gileadites are said to

have taken down from the wall of Beth-shean not Saul's body only, but the bodies of his sons also, that the Philistines had treated the corpses of Saul's sons in just the same manner as that of Saul himself. The writer speaks distinctly of the abuse of Saul's body, because it was his death that he had chiefly in mind at the time.

8. *Was Saul's body burned?* 31:11-13

The men of Jabesh in Gilead had special reason to remember Saul with gratitude (see I Samuel 11:1-11); and they undertook to remove the disgrace that had been heaped upon Israel by the gibbeting of the king's corpse. All the brave men of the town set out to Beth-shean, took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall, brought them to Jabesh and burned them there. It was not the custom in Israel to burn the corpse, but to bury it in the ground. The former treatment was restricted to the worst criminals (see Leviticus 20:14). Consequently the Chaldees interpreted the word "burned" as relating to the burning of spices, a custom which is met afterwards as a special honor shown to certain of the kings of Judah on the occasion of their burial (II Chronicles 16:14; 21:19; Jeremiah 34:5). In these later instances, however, it is written that the men did "make a burning for him"; whereas here it is stated distinctly that "they burned them." The reason for the burning of the bodies in the case of Saul and his sons is seen in the peculiarity of the circumstances. The bodies were mutilated by the removal of the heads, and therefore a regular burial of the dead was impossible. Moreover these men were anxious lest the Philistines follow up their victory, come to Jabesh, and desecrate the bodies still further. Then, too, this burning was not a complete burning to ashes, but merely a burning of the skin and flesh; so that the bones still remained; were buried in the ground under a shady tree; and were later fetched away and buried in Saul's family

grave at Zela, in the land of Benjamin (II Samuel 21:11 ff), as an act of kindness on the part of David.

9. *What judgment of God is seen in Saul's death?*

In the ignominious fate of Saul there was manifested the righteous judgment of God in consequence of the hardening of his heart. The love which the citizens of Jabesh displayed in their treatment of the corpses of Saul and his sons, had reference not to the king as rejected by God, but to the king as anointed of Jehovah, and was a practical condemnation, not of the divine judgment which had fallen upon Saul, but of the cruelty of the enemies of Israel and its anointed. For although Saul had waged war almost incessantly against the Philistines, it is not known that in any one of his victories he had ever been guilty of such cruelties towards the conquered and slaughtered foe as could justify this barbarous revenge on the part of the uncircumcised upon his lifeless corpse. Throughout the whole narrative one can almost hear the words of the prophet of God who had tried to admonish the king and had declared, "Behold, to hearken is better than sacrifice; and to obey is better than the fat of rams."

## CHAPTER 31 IN REVIEW

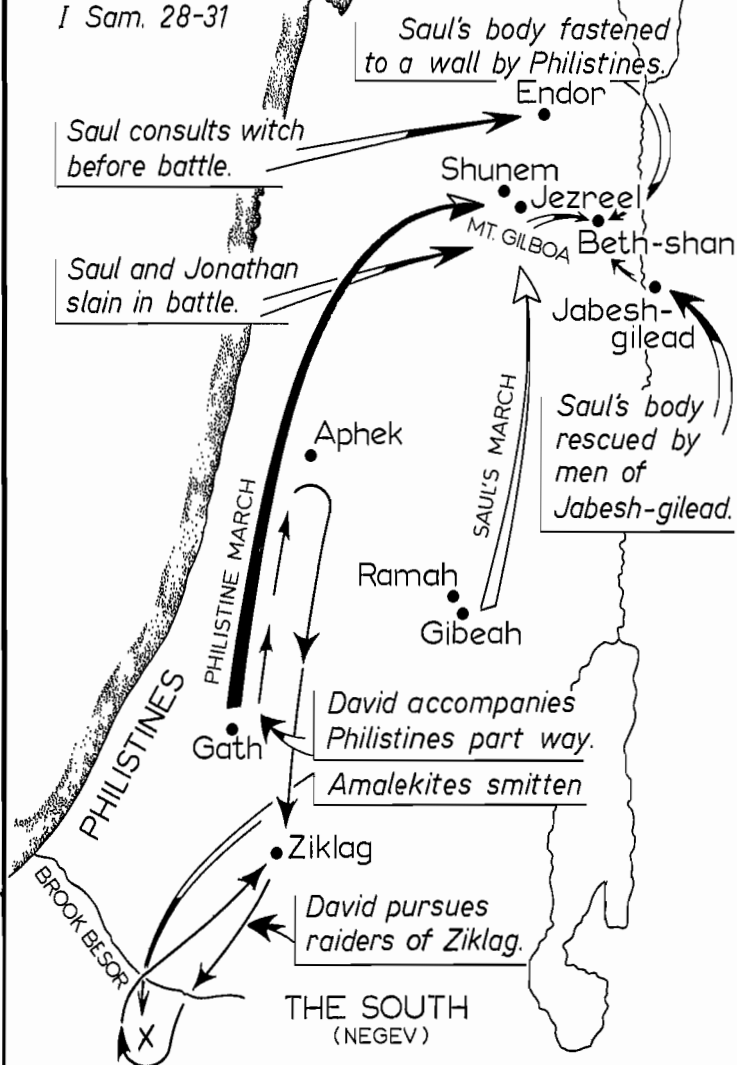
1. On what mountain did Israel fight the Philistines? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What sons of Saul were slain? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who wounded Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Whom did Saul ask to slay him? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How did Saul die? \_\_\_\_\_
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7. Where was Saul's body hanged? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What men took down his body? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What did the rescuers do with Saul's body? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How long did they mourn for Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

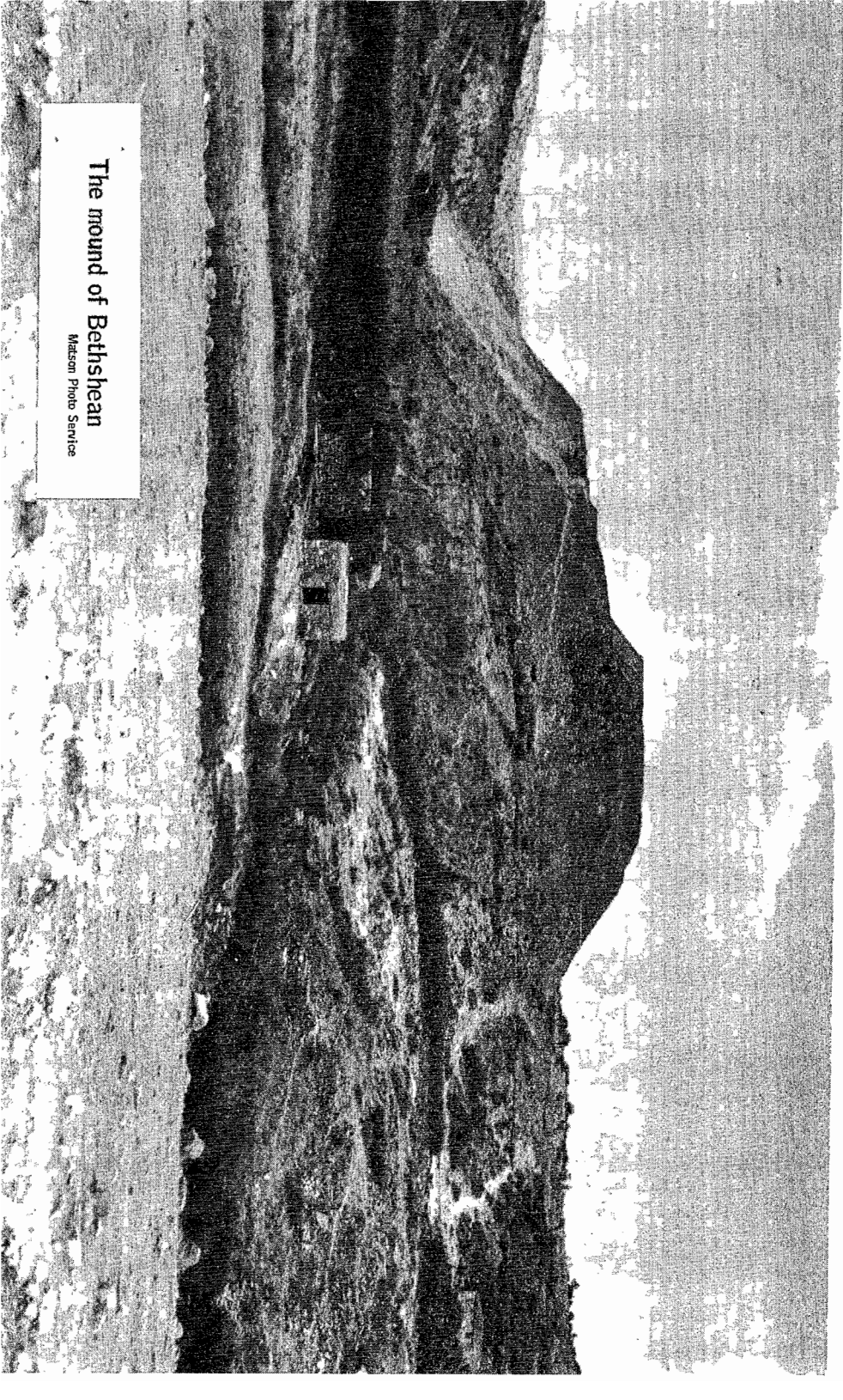




## SAUL'S THIRD PHILISTINE WAR

*I Sam. 28-31*





## The mound of Bethshean

Matson Photo Service

THE  
SECOND BOOK  
OF SAMUEL



## The cave of Adullam

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# STUDIES IN SAMUEL

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PART ONE

DAVID  
MADE KING  
OF ISRAEL

1:1—5:25



## SECOND SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 1

- Vv. 1-12 *The Amalekite's account of Saul's death.* David was in Ziklag when he heard of Saul's death. An Amalekite came to him saying that he had fled from the field of battle. He told David that he had seen Saul lying mortally wounded and that Saul had asked him to kill him. The Amalekite said that he had actually slain Saul.
- Vv. 13-16 *David's punishment of the Amalekite.* David was not willing himself to lay a hand on God's anointed. He had no respect for anyone else who would destroy God's chosen servant. He ordered one of his men to fall upon the Amalekite and kill him.
- Vv. 17-27 *The Song of the Bow.* David mourned greatly over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. He wrote a lamentation that came to be known as the Song of the Bow. He taught it to the people of Israel, and they used this in their lamentation over Saul.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*" (I Thessalonians 5:22). God's men must be honorable. David's hands were entirely clean of the blood of Saul. He had much to gain by taking Saul's life, but on a number of occasions he had refused to lift up his hand against this king. He came to the throne in God's own good providence. It was in God's good time and was accomplished as the will of God had decreed. It is necessary for Christians to live in such a way that they cannot be accused of evil deeds. They must be men and women of good report among all.
2. *There is some good in all men.* Someone has said that there is enough good in the worst of us and enough

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

bad in the best of us that none of us can condemn the rest of us. Saul had been a very wicked man, but there were good things about him. These were the things that David praised in his Song of the Bow. We should shun the evil in others, but we should also praise and copy the good we see in them.

### I. DAVID MADE KING OF ISRAEL, 1:1—5:25.

#### 1. David Receives News of Saul's Death, 1:1-27.

##### *The Amalekite's account of Saul's Death, 1:1-12*

Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;

2 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here *am* I.

8 And he said unto me, Who *art* thou? And I answered him, I *am* an Amalekite.

9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.

10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that *were* with him:

12 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

*1. How long after the battle before David heard the news? 1:1*

David had abode in Ziklag for two days before he heard the news from the battlefield. This gave him time to return from his slaughter of the Amalekites and to establish his residence again in the Philistine city which had been given him by Achish. On the third day a man came from the camp and brought the news to David. It had taken a similar amount of time for David's men to move from Aphek to Ziklag when the Philistine lords insisted that he not go to battle with them.

*2. In what condition was the bearer of the news? 1:2*

The man had his clothes rent. He had earth upon his head indicating that he had not taken time to clean up after the battle. When he came to David he fell on his face to the ground and did obeisance. When he was asked about his activities he said that he had come out of the camp of Israel. Whether this was a disguise or the actual condition the man found himself in after the battle cannot be determined at this point.

*3. Did David believe the man? 1:5*

David asked him about the outcome of the battle. The man told him that the people of Israel had fled from the battle. He also announced that many of the people were killed. He especially noticed that Saul and Jonathan were dead. The man does not mention Malchishua or Abinadab. David evidently doubted the veracity of the man's account because he asked him how he knew that Saul and Jonathan were dead.

*4. How did an Amalekite get in Saul's army? 1:8*

Mercenaries were allowed to join in a campaign, especially if it were an unholy war in which the citizens had no interest. It is rather ironic that the man was a member of the tribe whom Saul was sent to exterminate. It was God's intention that these people be driven out of the land of Canaan, but Saul had failed to do his work thoroughly. His lack of thoroughness had brought about his downfall and rejection. At this point an Amalekite takes credit for having killed Saul.

*5. Where did the Amalekite get Saul's crown? 1:10*

An Amalekite came out of the midst of the battle and brought David the news. It was a common thing for foreigners to join with the armies of the Israelites. David had been back at Ziklag for two days when he received this word. Nothing is said in the account as to how long after the battle it was when David received the announcement. Very evidently the foreigner did not tell the truth about the death of Saul. More than likely he had obtained the bracelet and the crown by coming upon the body before the Philistines did.

*6. Why did the Amalekite bring the report to David?  
1:10*

The Amalekite called David his lord. He took the crown that was on Saul's head and the bracelet that was on his arm and brought them to David. He said that he had killed Saul. He said that anguish had taken hold

on him so he could not live. Evidently the Amalekite thought that David would appreciate his killing Saul. He also must have thought that David was to be the next king. It was for these reasons that he brought the evidence of Saul's death to David and made the report to him.

7. *How did Saul die? 1:10*

David was removed from the field of battle by at least a three-day journey. He had no way of knowing exactly how Saul had died, but he had heard the testimony of the Amalekite who said he had killed Saul. He certainly did not want anyone to say that he had been involved in planning or executing Saul's murder. The Amalekite evidently had not told the truth. The account of Saul's death in I Samuel 31 is an inspired account. The Amalekite's version varies in several significant details leading us to conclude that he did not tell the truth.

8. *What was David's reaction to the news? 1:11, 12*

David took hold on his clothes and rent them. This was the customary Jewish way of expressing deep emotions. David wept and fasted throughout the rest of the day. The men that were with him also mourned and wept and fasted. Their lament was for Saul, the fallen king, and his good son Jonathan. They were also weeping because hard times had befallen the people of Israel. The Philistines had beaten them in battle, and they were in a position similar to that in the days of Eli when the Philistines had captured the Ark.

*David's punishment of the Amalekite. 1:13-16*

13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence *art* thou? And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

14 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?

15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.

16 And David said unto him, Thy blood *be* upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.

9. *Why did David ask the Amalekite who he was? 1:13*

The man had already told him that he was an Amalekite. He had said that Saul asked him who he was and he had replied that he was an Amalekite. David evidently interrogated the young man thoroughly after he and his men had recovered from their shock and grief. As he made inquiry, he asked the man who he was. The young man told him that he was the son of a stranger. This was another way of his saying that he was not a member of the commonwealth of Israel. He identified himself as an Amalekite.

10. *Why did David slay the bearer of the news? 1:15*

The Amalekite had come to tell the news of the death of Saul with the expectation of a reward from the hand of David. David slew the newsbearer. David felt that if he did not slay the Amalekite that the blood of Saul would be required of his hands. Such an occurrence as this shows that David still had a very, very deep regard for Saul.

*The Song of the Bow. 1:17-27*

17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son:

18 (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah *the use of* the bow: behold, *it is* written in the book of Jasher:)

19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places:  
how are the mighty fallen!

20 Tell *it* not in Gath,  
publish *it* not in the streets of Askelon;  
lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,  
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph

21 Ye mountains of Gilboa,  
*let there be* no dew, neither *let there be* rain, upon you,  
nor fields of offerings:

for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,  
the shield of Saul, *as though he had not been*  
anointed with oil.

- 22 From the blood of the slain,  
from the fat of the mighty,  
the bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
and the sword of Saul returned not empty.
- 23 Saul and Jonathan *were* lovely and pleasant in their lives,  
and in their death they were not divided:  
they were swifter than eagles,  
they were stronger than lions.
- 24 Ye daughters of Israel,  
weep over Saul,  
who clothed you in scarlet, with *other* delights;  
who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
- 25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!  
O Jonathan, *thou wast* slain in thine high places.
- 26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:  
very pleasant hast thou been unto me:  
thy love to me was wonderful,  
passing the love of women.
- 27 How are the mighty fallen,  
and the weapons of war perished!

11. *What was the "Song of the Bow?" 1:18*

The Song of the Bow is the name given to lamentation that David wrote at the time of the death of Saul and Jonathan. Why this title is given to this particular passage is not known. There is a mention of the bow in verse 22. It seems better to regard this verse as a notice of the fact that David commanded that the children of Judah learn this song than that he ordered all of them to have training in the actual use of the bow.

12. *What was the book of Jasher? 1:18b*

The book of Jasher was evidently a non-canonical book kept by the Israelites to record the outstanding exploits

of their national heroes. This book is mentioned also in Joshua 10:13. The word *Jasher* comes from a Hebrew root which signifies "the upright" or "the righteous." This is evidently another way of referring to the Israelites by calling them the righteous or upright people.

13. *In whom was the "beauty of Israel?" 1:19*

Later on in the song David refers to Saul and Jonathan being lovely and pleasant in their lives (verse 23). He may have been referring to the king of Israel who was indeed a handsome man. He stood head and shoulders above all the other Israelites. More than this David was lamenting the fact that the best young men of all Israel had fallen in battle.

14. *Why did he not want it told in Gath? 1:20*

The Philistines had taken Saul's head and sent it around to the various cities of Philistia (31:9). They published it in the house of their idols and among the people. David regretted this and he did not want it told. He was praying that they might not have reason to rejoice in Philistia. He did not want it told in Ashkelon or to see the daughters of Philistines rejoice.

15. *Why did he speak about the mountains of Gilboa? 1:21*

The mountain of Gilboa would stand for defeat to the people of Israel from this day forward. It was the place where their first king had fallen in battle. David prayed that there might not be dew or rain upon the mountains. He prayed that there might not be fields of offerings. Evidently he meant that he hoped that there would not be grain to grow, a portion of which might be used for an offering. This was David's way of saying that the mountain of Gilboa would stand for defeat as Waterloo did for Napoleon.

16. *Did David praise Saul? 1:22*

David did praise Saul. David had always praised Saul. He would not condone Saul's sin; he would praise those things worthwhile in the character of Saul. Saul's charac-



ter, up until the time that he became unmindful of the commandments of God, was worth praising. David said that Saul and Jonathan had been victorious in many battles. They had not come back empty from their campaigns. The bow of Jonathan had turned not back from the blood of the slain or from the fat of the mighty.

*17. What benefits had Israel received from Saul? 1:24*

David's mentioning of the women being clothed in scarlet and other delights indicates that some prosperity had come to Israel because of Saul's reign. David said that he had put on them ornaments of gold which would point to considerable prosperity. Many of Samuel's predictions of the nature of the kingdom must have come true. Samuel had said that if Israel had a king they would have to pay taxes (I Samuel 8:10-18). Samuel indicated that a king would become so oppressive that they would cry out for relief. This certainly came true in the days of Rehoboam (I Kings 12:1-4) when the people of Israel asked for relief from their taxes. Some indication of their chafing under the yoke of the king is seen from the fact that people who were distressed or in debt came to follow David (I Samuel 22:2). These people had to pay for some of the blessings which they had received, but they should have been thankful for the leadership which Saul gave to them.

*18. Why did David speak of Jonathan's love? 1:26*

Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David from the time of David's introduction to Saul after David had killed Goliath (I Samuel 18:1). At that time we read "Jonathan loved him as his own soul." Jonathan and David entered into a covenant which was renewed on a number of occasions. They pledged themselves to lifelong loyalty to each other and they also promised that they would not do harm to each other's descendants. It was for this reason that David spoke of Jonathan's love.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### CHAPTER 1 IN REVIEW

1. How long was it after the battle when David heard of Saul's death? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where was David when he heard the news? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Of what nationality was the bearer of the news? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What possessions of Saul's did the man have? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How did David punish the bearer of the news? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the name of the song with which David lamented Saul's death? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what other book was it recorded? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What Philistine cities are mentioned in the song? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What weapons of Saul and Jonathan did David mention? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What mountain did David curse in the song? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 2

- Vv. 1- 7 *David, king in Hebron.* David inquired of the Lord concerning his every move. He asked him where he should go after Saul had been killed. The Lord told him to go up to Hebron. Hebron was one of the important cities of Judah, David's own tribe. David went up to this important city, and all the men of Judah came there to make him king over them.
- Vv. 8-11 *Saul's son, king in Gilead.* Abner, the son of Ner and captain of Saul's hosts, took Ishbosheth, Saul's son, and made him king in Gilead. Gilead was the land east of the Jordan river. There were thus two rival kings in Israel.
- Vv. 12-16 *The contest at Gibeon.* Abner was the captain of the Ish-bosheth's army, and Joab was the captain of David's army. The two armies met in a battle near Gibeon. A contest was suggested, and twelve men from each side went out

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to engage in the battle. All these men fell mortally wounded, and nothing was decided by the contest. The two main armies then joined in battle.

- Vv. 17-32 *Asahel slain.* Asahel was the younger brother of Joab. He decided to pursue Abner from the field of battle. Abner did not wish to engage in hand-to-hand combat with Asahel. Asahel was a young man, and Abner was an experienced man of war. When Asahel continued to pursue Abner, Abner put out the back part of his spear. Asahel was running at full speed and ran against the sharpened end of Abner's spear. Asahel thus fell mortally wounded.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*With patience wait for it*" (Romans 8:25). David must have spent many years as a fugitive. He was anointed king over Israel while still a young man and living in his father's home in Bethlehem. He had gained rather immediate success as the slayer of Goliath. He was also prominent in Saul's court as a talented musician. Nonetheless he was forced to wander for years until finally the time was right for him to become king. All of us can learn a lesson of patience from this experience with David. We should not take things in our own hands but let God in His own good providence lead us step by step.
2. "*Be sober, be vigilant*" (I Peter 5:8). David had little time to rest on his laurels. A rival king was ruling in Gilead. It is ever thus with Christians. There never seems to be any time when they can let down their guard. Our adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walks about continually seeking whom he might devour.

## 2. David's Reign begun in Hebron, 2:1-32.

*David, King in Hebron. 2:1-7*

And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.

2. So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

3 And his men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.

4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* the men of Jabesh-gilead *were they* that buried Saul.

5 And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed *be* ye of the Lord, that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him.

6 And now the Lord show kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

*1. Why did David go up to Hebron? 2:1*

Hebron was the principal city of a coalition of surrounding cities in Judah. Caleb took Debir (Judges 1:11; cf. Joshua 14:13) and settled in this area. Abraham had made his home near Hebron. It was near Hebron that Abraham bought the cave of Macpelah for a burial place for Sarah when she died (Genesis 23:1-20). Hebron was about half-way down the length of the Dead Sea and some

ten miles west of its western shore. It was central in Judah and far enough away from the home of Saul to make it safe from any who might support a Benjamite as a king to succeed Saul.

2. *What is the meaning of the word "Hebron"? 2:3*

The word "Hebron" means a "strong fortified city." There were little cities grouped around the larger city. We read of the "cities of Hebron." The city itself was the strongest and oldest city in Judah at this time. It was something of a sacred city. Although the fact that the name was appropriate did not make necessary the selection of this particular city, the position of the city, which no doubt influenced its naming, also made it the logical place for such a service as was held in it at the anointing of David.

3. *Why did Judah first anoint David? 2:4*

David belonged to the tribe of Judah. He had been in the midst of the tribe of Judah while he was in exile. The gifts that David had bestowed upon the tribe alone would have been enough to cause this particular tribe to want to be first to anoint David as their king. All of these reasons would contribute to this desire.

4. *What did David mean when he said, "I also will requite you." 2:6*

David was a diplomat. At the time he commended the men of Jabesh-gilead for their kindness toward Saul, he also announced to them that he was King of Judah. By promising these men of Jabesh-gilead that he would "requite" them (give them a reward) and by showing a regard for Saul, David hoped to win these men over to his side. These men had taken Saul's body from the walls of Beth-shan and buried it (I Samuel 31:13).

*Saul's son, King in Gilead. 2:8-11*

8 But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim;

9 And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin and over all Israel.

10 Ish-bosheth Saul's son *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

11 And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

5. *What was Abner's motive in proclaiming Ish-bosheth king? 2:8*

Abner was the son of Saul's uncle. A number of things contributed to his proclaiming Ish-bosheth king. In the first place, (1) he would want to defend the family's pride and interests. In the second place, (2) there were Abner's own personal ambitions. These could be more probably justified if Ish-bosheth ruled. Ish-bosheth was weak; Abner was strong. Abner might easily persuade Ish-bosheth to follow his own directives. In the third place, (3) Abner had a natural interest in the tribe of Ish-bosheth.

6. *Is there a previous mention of Ish-bosheth? 2:8b*

There is no previous mention of Ish-bosheth before the time that Abner had him proclaimed king. Ish-bosheth was quite young when Saul became king. This may account for the fact that he is not mentioned. He was weak; he may have been an illegitimate son. All of these things would account for the fact that his name had not been previously mentioned. He is listed as the fourth and last of Saul's sons in I Chronicles 8:33 and 9:39.

7. *Where was Mahanaim? 2:8c*

Somewhere east of the Jordan River near the Jabbok River would be the proper location of Mahanaim. At the time of Ish-bosheth's coronation, the kingdom was disunited. This was a small beginning for a king, but about all that could be had during that time. Jacob had camped

at this place which means "two companies" (Genesis 32:1). David fled to Mahanaim when he tried to get away from his rebellious son Absalom (II Samuel 17:27).

8. *Over what territory did Ish-bosheth rule?* 2:9

Ish-bosheth ruled over Gilead. He also ruled over the Ashurites. Gilead would indicate all of the land east of the Jordan river. The mention of the Ashurites causes some question. This may have been a reference to the house of Asher which was in Galilee on the west side of the Sea of Galilee (Judges 1:32). There is a city of Asher (Joshua 17:7). It was southwest of Jezreel. Ish-bosheth also ruled over Jezreel, that land between Mount Gilboa and Mount Carmel. His main jurisdiction was over Ephraim, the tribe formed from the descendants of the son of Joseph. He also ruled over Benjamin, his own tribe. This wide domain would mean that Ish-bosheth had jurisdiction over most of the northern part of Palestine on both sides of the Jordan river.

9. *How long did Ish-bosheth rule over Israel?* 2:10

Ish-bosheth was forty years old when he began to rule. He reigned but two years. David, however, ruled over the house of Judah for seven years and six months. David must have reigned in Judah for five years and one-half, after Ish-bosheth was slain. This difference in the length of David's reign over Judah alone and the reign of Ish-bosheth over the rest of Israel can only be accounted for by supposing that David was not anointed king over all Israel immediately after Ish-bosheth's death.

10. *What is the meaning of the name Ish-bosheth?* 2:10

The word "Ish-bosheth" means "man of shame." In I Chronicles 8:33 this man is called Esh-baal. This word Esh-baal would mean man of Baal. Baal is a name for a false god. One would hardly expect that the Israelites would put a man on the throne who had a name of Esh-baal. Abner may have changed his name to Ish-bosheth when he put him on the throne. Even so his name is not

at all flattering, and we are left to wonder if this man was of rather bad reputation. Perhaps his weakness or folly had been the reason for his not being in the army. These factors might explain his name.

*The Contest at Gibeon. 2:12-16*

12 And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

13 And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.

15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and *thrust* his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which *is* in Gibeon.

*11. Who brought on the fighting at Gibeon? 2:12*

Gibeon was five or six miles north of Jerusalem and a small distance to the west. It is situated on a knoll with terraced slopes. The village itself stands among striking remains of antiquity. Some hundred paces from the village to the east is a large reservoir with a spring. Further down and among the olive trees are the remains of another and larger reservoir, which collected the overflow water from the first reservoir. More than likely this farther reservoir is the "pool" mentioned in verse thirteen. Thus Joab was in Abner's territory. Joab was the aggressor. Later incidents would also cause a judge to point the finger of accusation at Joab. Were he introduced a bit differently, none would have difficulty in deciding who brought on



the fighting. The way in which Joab was introduced into the narrative was common of the time; nothing different should be expected.

12. *What was the "play"?* 2:14

The "play" mentioned was nothing more than the customary round of individual contests held before a battle. To speak of what occurred at this time as "play" is most certainly sarcastic. The word "Helkath-Hazzurim" as it stands means "field of the sword edges." It is appropriate that this name is applied to the scene of the conflict in which twelve champions from the army of Joab and twelve champions from the army of Abner perished together, each slaying his fellow. Variations of this word have come to mean "field of the crafty," "field of the ambush," and "field of the adversaries." The form of the word together with its meaning as it now stands in the text of the Bible is probably correct.

*Asahel Slain.* 2:17-32

17 And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

18 And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel *was as* light of foot as a wild roe.

19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner.

20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, *Art* thou Asahel? And he answered, *I am*.

21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armor. But Asahel would not turn aside from following him.

22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?

23 Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth *rib*, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, *that* as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.

24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that *lieth* before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

25 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on top of a hill.

26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?

27 And Joab said, As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother.

28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.

30 And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so *that* three hundred and threescore men died.

32 And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulcher of his father, which *was in* Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

13. *Who won the battle? 2:17*

The Israelites were beaten by the men of Judah. This is the meaning of the statement that Abner was beaten. Abner was the leader of Ish-bosheth's army. They fell before the servants of David, the men of Judah who were under the leadership of Joab. Although there were ten tribes in the north and only one (Judah and Simeon combined) in the south, the southern armies were victorious.

14. *Who was Zeruiah? 2:18*

Zeruiah was David's sister. She had three sons, Joab, Abishai and Asahel. These men were David's nephews and valiant men. Asahel is described as being "as light of foot as a wild roe."

15. *Why did Asahel continue to pursue Abner? 2:19*

Asahel wanted to get the glory of having killed the commander of the opponent. Although Abner, shrinking from arousing the animosity of Joab, showed forbearance in asking Asahel to turn aside and pursue one of the younger men, Asahel continued to pursue him. Abner then thrust his spear behind him and stopped abruptly. Asahel ran against the spear and so died. The hinder part of the spear was pointed so that it could be stuck in the ground when not in use.

16. *What is the meaning of "under the fifth rib?" 2:23*

This is the King James picturesque way of stating that a man was smitten in the abdomen. The American Standard Version gives the translation of the phrase as "in the midst of his body." Repeatedly throughout this part of the Bible reference will be made to men who are smitten "under the fifth rib." A man who was wounded in this area would normally die from his wounds. This happened to Asahel as Abner stuck out the hinder end of the spear. The hinder end of the spear was also sharpened so that it could be stuck in the ground (I Samuel 26:7).

*17. Why did Abner call to Joab? 2:26*

Abner's calling to Joab indicates that Joab had been the aggressor. He asked Joab if he wanted to see the battle continued and more lives be lost. He reasoned with Joab that in the end there would be bitterness. He asked Joab how long he intended to press this battle. Joab indicated that the battle would have been over by the next day, but since Abner had spoken Joab blew a trumpet and stopped his men from pursuing Israel. This was the end of that particular battle.

*18. How many of David's men died? 2:30*

The Scriptures say, ". . . there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel." We cannot be sure that this mention of twenty who died included the twelve who also killed twelve of their opponents. More than likely it did; nothing definite is stated. Had there not been the gathering of the Benjamites on the top of the hill, the slaughter might have been greater. No doubt the Benjamites tried to check Joab in order that the rest might escape. Abner pled that humanity demanded the cessation of the pursuit. Joab replied that he intended to pursue until morning. Both armies did at length return to their headquarters. It was not customary for them to stay in the field. It was their duty to go home and guard the country against other invaders.

*19. How many men of Israel were killed? 2:31*

Abner's losses were much heavier than the losses of Joab. There were 360 of the men of Israel killed in the battle at Gibeon. The loss of Asahel was a very severe loss. He was not only the king's nephew, but he was the brother of Joab who became David's captain. Joab never quite forgot the fact that Abner killed Asahel. From that day forth he was determined to kill Abner. He really had no right to be the avenger of blood since Asahel died in battle and Abner slew him reluctantly.

SECOND SAMUEL  
CHAPTER 2 IN REVIEW

1. To what city in Judah did David go? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What tribe first anointed David as king? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which of David's wives went with him? \_\_\_\_\_
4. To what city in Gilead did David send word? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long did David rule over the one tribe? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Which of Saul's sons ruled the rest of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Who was his captain? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In what city was his capital? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who led David's men against the men of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Near what town did David's men meet the  
men of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 3

- Vv. 1- 5 *David's family.* As David reaches a turning point in his career, the reader of the Bible is introduced to his family. Several sons were born to him during the seven years when he ruled in Hebron. At the same time the reader is introduced to other wives whom David had married and who became the mothers of some of his children.
- Vv. 6-11 *Abner rebels against Ish-bosheth.* Ish-bosheth accused Abner of improper actions with Saul's concubine, Rizpah. Abner neither admitted the charge nor denied it. He did refuse to suffer the embarrassment of being accused and announced that he was transferring his allegiance from the son of his former king to David.
- Vv. 12-21 *Abner contacts David.* Abner was a faithful soldier, and he acted honorably in making his open contact with David. David showed himself to be a man of honor inasmuch as he sent word back to Ish-bosheth so that the king in Gilead would be informed of what was transpiring.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

Vv. 22-30 *Joab murders Abner.* Under the pretense of avenging his brother's death, Joab took Abner aside and killed him in cold blood. Joab was assisted by his other brother, Abishai.

Vv. 31-39 *David mourns for Abner.* David made it plain that he did not have anything to do with the murder of the good soldier Abner. In fact he made personal lamentation of his death and ordered his people to mourn for this good man.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Children are like arrows*" (Psalms 127:4). As David composed the psalm under the direction of the Holy Spirit, he said that children were like arrows and that the man was happy who had his quiver full of them. God certainly blessed David's home with a fine group of sons and daughters.
2. "*A prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel*" (3:38). This is a classic text of lamentation over a great soldier of God that has fallen in the line of duty. It is applicable to Christian workers today as they lay down their armor.

### 3. A Period of Two Kings in Israel, 3:1-39.

#### *David's Family. 3:1-5*

Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

2 And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his first-born was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;

3 And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;

4 And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

*1. Who prevailed in the wars between Israel and Judah? 3:1*

The house of David prevailed in the series of wars between Israel and Judah. The campaign which was fought in Gibeon was indicative of the outcome of later conflicts. As David had grown stronger day by day while fleeing from Saul, more and more people saw that he would be the better king when he and Ish-bosheth held rival thrones. Saul's house had been rejected by God. It was inevitable that the house of Saul would wax weaker and weaker. David had been anointed king by Samuel, and it was equally inevitable that his house should wax stronger and stronger.

*2. Which of the wives of David was of royal blood? 3:2*

Significant it is that we read "house of Saul" instead of "house of Ish-bosheth." Ish-bosheth was insignificant; he was merely a member of the house of Saul. Noteworthy too, is the fact that we read of six wives and six sons of David.

We do not know when the last four wives were taken. *Maacah* was of royal blood. She was the daughter of a king; she was the mother of Absalom. Amnon was the natural heir to the throne of David, inasmuch as he was the oldest of the six sons mentioned.

*Abner Rebels Against Ish-bosheth. 3:6-11*

6 And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.

7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?

8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, *Am* I a dog's head, which against Judah

do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me today with a fault concerning this woman?

9 So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

3. *What was Abner's position in the house of Saul? 3:6*

Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul. The fact that Abner himself became strong, may indicate one reason why he had backed Ish-bosheth as the king in the first place. Abner was of the same family as Saul; both were members of the tribe of Benjamin. This fact alone would incline Abner towards supporting Saul's son as king. But the fact that Abner was able to make himself strong while serving Ish-bosheth indicates that Abner had personal ambitions.

4. *How had Abner strengthened himself in the house of Saul? 3:6*

Some translators view this as Abner's making himself overbearing in the house of Saul. Some say he must have fortified his own cause by using the house of Saul, but the weakness of the house of Saul is against this rendering. If he really wanted to advance himself, he would have used a stronger tool. Some translators even have said that this verse indicates that Abner ruled the house of Saul. He certainly was the strength of the opposition to David.

5. *Who was Rizpah? 3:7*

Rizpah is introduced as the daughter of Aiah. An Edomite clan bore this name (Genesis 36:24). Rizpah had been the concubine of Saul and evidently taken as a



part of the royal family of Ish-bosheth. It seems strange to us that a son would have his father's concubine, but this has been done. Absalom lay with David's concubines in order to show that his break with his father's house was full and complete (II Samuel 16:22). W. R. Smith discusses the proposition of the son marrying the wife of his father in his booklet, *Kinship and Marriage*. The custom seems strange to us, but these people were not living under the Christian dispensation. The practice did not prevail in Israel and is certainly contrary to God's intentions for the human family.

6. *What was the meaning of Abner's question? 3:8*

The alleged offense of Abner was a very serious one. At the death of a king, the wife of the king and the concubines of the king went to the successor on the throne. Treason was the crime of any other person who would dare to take them. Abner was charged with being guilty of such a crime. His question is an idle railing. It is typical of the stubbornness of the human heart rebelling against Divine will. All that Abner said was that he would not tolerate a rebuke from Ish-bosheth. By this question he made clear the fact that he had nothing but contemptuous hate in his heart for Ish-bosheth. This is the real meaning of his question.

7. *What title did Abner give to himself? 3:8b*

Abner asked Ish-bosheth if he considered him to be a "dog's head." The expression is not used elsewhere in the Bible and seems not to be a reference to his Calebite background. Some translate this as his asking if he were a Calebite captain or a turbulent free-booter. He evidently asks if he is to be considered a Judahite "dog's head." He means by this that Ish-bosheth evidently thinks that he is friendly with the enemy and despicable.

8. *Why had Abner dared to fight against God's purpose? 3:9*

Abner evidently knew that God had sworn to David that he would be the next king. He expressed this when

he said that he would translate the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan even to Beer-sheba. Abner had been motivated by personal and selfish reasons. These reasons often cause people to resist God's will for their lives and for the lives of others. Ish-bosheth was not able to resist Abner because Abner was stronger than the king himself. He also may have known that this was God's will and that it was foolhardy for him to attempt to thwart God's purposes.

*Abner Contacts David.* 3:12-21

12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose *is* the land? saying *also*, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand *shall be* with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.

13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver *me* my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from *her* husband, *even* from Phaltiel the son of Laish.

16 And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past *to be* king over you:

18 Now then do *it*: for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.

19 And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron

all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.

20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that *were* with him a feast.

21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

*9. Why did Abner negotiate so long with David? 3:12*

It was Abner who first sent an ambassage to David. David replied by sending messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son. Ish-bosheth met David's demands. Abner then counselled with the elders of Israel. Abner further contacted the Benjamites. Thereafter he went to David himself. The elders of Israel had already expressed a desire to anoint David king of all Israel, as well as over all Judah. They had been saying, "Jehovah hath spoken of David, saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies'" (II Samuel 3:18). This prophecy dates back to the time of the anointing of David by Samuel (See I Samuel 16).

*10. Why does the author give such a full account of Abner's negotiations? 3:12*

Some critics view this section as being filled with interpolations as if a little had been added here and there. The account is historically accurate, and it appears to be homogenous but the story may seem to some to be overfull. For this reason, it is suggested that there were various accounts worked into one. There are not two or more separate accounts, however, but a very careful series of negotiations on the part of David. David received Abner's first message; David then went directly to Ish-

bosheth. He was not willing that something be done behind the king's back. After the negotiations proceeded, then he received Abner in person. Abner's ill-fated journey climaxed the negotiations.

*11. Why did David want Michal back? 3:13*

David was shamed by Saul's giving his wife, Michal, to another man (I Samuel 25:44). The prohibition of a man marrying a woman who had once before been married to him and later given to another man does not prevail in this instance because the marriage was not terminated by mutual consent (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). Saul had simply taken David's wife and had given her to another man. The second man did not have any right to her, and she was still legitimately and rightfully David's wife. The fact that he informed both Abner and Ish-bosheth of this, does not indicate that there were two separate traditions of the account but that he informed both parties of the necessary provision.

*12. Who was the man with whom Michal had been living? 3:15*

The man to whom Saul had given Michal was named Phaltiel. He is given as the son of Leish. When Michal was given to him, he was introduced as being of Gallim (I Samuel 25:44). The only Gallim mentioned elsewhere is Isaiah 10:30, where a reference is evidently to a place in Benjamin.

*13. How far did Phaltiel follow Michal? 3:16*

This picture of a pitiable man reveals that he went along weeping behind the woman with whom he had been living until he got as far as Bahurim. This is a spot north of Jerusalem (II Samuel 16:5; cf 17:18). This was probably the last Benjamite village on the road they were traveling in Judah. He must have felt that it was unsafe for him to enter into David's territory and therefore turned back at that point. Abner commanded him to return thence; the man complied, although undoubtedly still weeping as he went.

14. *What was the wish of the elders of Israel?* 3:17

The elders of the land had already expressed their desire for David to be their king. This is intimated in the statement of Abner who said, "You sought for David *in times past* to be king over you." Abner again makes reference to the promise of the Lord indicating that the anointing of David by Samuel was rather well-known.

15. *How did David receive Abner?* 3:20

When Abner and the twenty men who accompanied him arrived in Hebron, David made a feast for them. He was glad that negotiations had proceeded to this point, and wanted to expedite the matter as much as possible. Later events revealed that David had high regard for Abner, probably the outgrowth of their many pleasant associations together when both were in Saul's service.

16. *What was Abner's final decision?* 3:21

Abner declared that he would arise and go and gather all Israel to make David king over them. This was the same thing that he had said to Ish-bosheth when he broke away from him (verse 10). At that time, Abner said he would make David king over Israel and Judah. He intended for him to rule from Dan, the farthest point on the north border, to Beer-sheba, the farthest point on the south of Judah. This was the entire promised land, and Abner said that David would then rule over all that his heart desired.

*Joab Murders Abner. 3:22-30*

22 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that *was* with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why *is it that* thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew *it* not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth *rib*, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

28 And afterward when David heard *it*, he said, I and my kingdom *are* guiltless before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner:

29 Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

17. *Was Joab sincere in making a charge against Abner?* 3:25

Joab hated Abner. The blood feud that was between them was probably insincere. Joab was expected to seek revenge for the death of Asahel. The fact that Joab was absent was probably as David planned it. The servants of David who were with Joab were military men who had been on the pursuit of an enemy troop. The bounty brought back was that which was taken from surrounding tribes. Such spoil made up the revenue of a monarchy to a considerable extent. Whoever reported Abner's visit to Joab may have given him misinformation, but there was nothing to indicate that Abner was planning to displace Joab. Abner was certainly friendly towards David,

and Joab had no reason to kill him. It was only the strong hatred for Abner on the part of Joab which led to his action. Joab's first point was that David had let Abner get away. His second point was that Abner must have come from an evil motive. Joab could not see Abner as anything but an enemy of Judah.

*18. Where was the well of Sirah? 3:26*

The well of Sirah was about a mile north of Hebron. This is the only mention of it in the Bible, and the only important thing that occurred there is the murder of Abner by Joab. The well is probably the *Ain Sirah* pointed out in modern times. The freedom with which Joab expostulated with David shows the position which he occupied both as a kinsman and as an officer in David's army. He moves about freely and acts on his own. David did not know what Joab was doing.

*19. Why was Abner so unsuspecting? 3:27*

Abner, no doubt, thought that the king had summoned him and so he turned back. The curious thing about the whole transaction is not that Joab would take blood revenge but that Abner should be so unsuspecting. We can account for his conduct only by supposing that he had a distinct certificate of safe conduct from David. An enemy would hardly move into hostile territory without such a permit.

*20. How was the death of Abner connected with the blood of Asahel? 3:27*

One of God's long-standing laws was that a murderer should not go unpunished. This statute was laid down immediately after the flood, when God said, "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). God also indicated that He would require the blood of life at the hand of every man's brother. Joab evidently thought it was his duty to avenge the death of Asahel. The fact that Hebron was a political city of refuge does not alter the situation. It is true that the city

of refuge was for the sparing of the life of a man who had slain another without premeditation (Numbers 35:11). Hebron was a Levitical city (Joshua 21:11-13) and Hebron was also designated a city of refuge. Neither is the situation altered by the fact that Joab took him aside in the gate (verse 27). Inside or outside the city of Hebron, Joab had no real reason to kill Abner.

21. *Why did David say that he was not to blame?* 3:28

David cried out that he and his kingdom were innocent before the Lord, who avenges those slain without cause (Psalms 19:9-13). He did not know that Joab had sent to call Abner back to Hebron. He had nothing to do with the murder of Abner. He regretted the action and wanted his people to know it.

22. *What was David's judgement on Joab?* 3:29

David really uttered a prayer that the murder of Abner should rest on the hands of Joab and all his father's house. It was his prayer that there would not fail to be a sickly member in his descendants. He specified that he hoped that there would be lepers among them. The one who leaned on a staff would be an effeminate person who was unfit for manly occupation, if the staff be considered a part of the spindle used in weaving. Aquila viewed this as being one who was blind, and therefore had to walk with a stick. At least one leaning on a staff would be infirm and old. David went on to say that he hoped that there would be those who would die in war and would be hungry and begging bread. It was a very full imprecation.

23. *What part did Abishai play in Abner's murder?* 3:30

Abishai may have been the one who ran out to call Abner back at Joab's command. Abishai was also the brother of Asahel, as well as Joab's brother. He was an officer in David's army, and involved with the plot to kill Abner. He does not take the lead as did Joab, but he is guilty of Abner's murder by reason of his following Joab's directives.



*David Mourns for Abner. 3:31-39*

31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David *himself* followed the bier.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said,  
Died Abner as a fool dieth?

34 Thy hands *were* not bound,  
nor thy feet put into fetters:  
as a man falleth before wicked men,  
so fellest thou.

And all the people wept again over him.

35 And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or aught else, till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice *of it*, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?

39 And I *am* this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah *be* too hard for me: the Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

24. *Did David justifiably mourn over Abner's death? 3:31*

People respected Abner. Abner's death in such circumstances would cast a cloud of suspicion over David. David did feel real grief at the death of Abner. The deep mourning into which David entered was a token of great sorrow. Rightfully did he grieve over the death of an able captain.

David's own captain, Joab, was a skillful leader, but David was not able to control him. Abner might have made a much better leader for the forces of Israel.

25. *How would a fool die?* 3:33

The fool brings an early death upon himself by his careless conduct (Proverbs 7:22). The Septuagint version puts the word *napal* here for the word foe. A translation of *napal* would give us a fool or a churlish man. It is doubtful that David asked if Abner died as Nabal died, but the death of Nabal was brought on by his own miserable conduct; Abner had done nothing to deserve death. Abner did not even have the honor of being made a prisoner of war. As David said, "Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters" (verse 34). He did not fall honorably on a field of battle, but was treacherously tricked.

26. *How did the people react to David's conduct?* 3:35

The people took notice of the king's mourning and they were pleased by it. They knew that David was not putting on a show. David refused to eat anything throughout the day. He fasted until sundown, when a new day began. By this kind of conduct, David demonstrated that he had nothing to do with Abner's death. The people understood that David was guiltless and the king's stature increased in their sight.

27. *What was David's evaluation of Abner's character?*  
3:38

David said that Abner was a prince. He was not really eligible to succeed Saul, but he was from the royal family. His tribe was the same as that of Saul, Israel's first king. Both were from the tribe of Benjamin. He was also the cousin of Saul, and the son of Ner, brother to Kish, who was Saul's father. More than this, he was a great man. Little more could be said in appreciation of a person's character than to say that he was a great man. True greatness is hard to achieve, but Abner had proved him-

self to be this kind of person. David said this in spite of the fact that Abner had supported Ish-bosheth as successor to Saul and in spite of any suspicion with regard to Rizpah. Perhaps David's evaluation was influenced by Abner's final offer to support him as king. The estimation seems true and is quite often applied today to spiritual leaders who die untimely deaths.

28. *Why did David say he was weak?* 3:39

The word in the original text indicates a person who is tender in years, or delicately nurtured (Genesis 33:12 and Deuteronomy 28:54). Neither meaning is appropriate to David. It is, moreover, difficult to connect the word with what follows. He says that he was tender, though anointed king. Some commentators make this clause to apply to Abner, but it is better to leave it as a reference to David's appraisal of his own strength. He is comparing himself with Joab and Abishai who have proved to be too hard for him. He knows that he can hardly cope with these two vicious men, and so he prays that the Lord will reward the doer of the evil according to his wickedness.

## CHAPTER 3 IN REVIEW

1. Who was David's oldest son? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which of David's wives was of royal blood? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many sons were born to David in Hebron? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who was Saul's concubine? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What epithet did Abner apply to himself? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Which of David's wives had been with Ish-bosheth? \_\_\_\_\_
7. To what other man had she been married? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who killed Abner? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where was Abner slain? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Whose blood were the men who killed Abner avenging? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 4

- Vv. 1-4 *Mephibosheth introduced.* David had made a covenant with Jonathan that he would not destroy his descendants. In this passage of scripture we are introduced to one heir of Jonathan. He has sometimes been called the "little lame prince." The reader of the scripture is informed as to the manner in which he became lame and the man is properly introduced.
- Vv. 5-12 *Ish-bosheth slain.* Two wicked servants of Ish-bosheth's thought they would do David a favor by killing Ish-bosheth. They beheaded him and brought his head to David in Hebron. David reminded them of the punishment he had meted out to the man who said he had slain Saul. He could treat them in no better way. Their hands and feet were cut off and they were hanged up over the pool at Hebron as an object lesson to any others who might commit such crimes.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Men are of more value than many sparrows* (Matthew 10:31). Mephibosheth does not seem very important to us. He did have some later connection with David. We are impressed with the fact that he was important enough for his name to be mentioned in the sacred scriptures. He was a descendant of an honorable man and his associations with David are worthy of note. All of us count in the sight of God regardless of whether we seem important to men or not.
2. *The principle is more important than the policy.* David was a man of principle. He slew the man who said he had killed Saul, and he killed the men who said they had beheaded Ish-bosheth. God's people should always

be fair in their judgment and act on principle and not on shifty policy.

4. The King in Gilead Slain, 4:1-12.

*Mephibosheth Introduced.* 4:1-4

And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled.

2. And Saul's son had two men *that were* captains of bands: the name of the one *was* Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin:

3 And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)

4 And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *that was* lame of *his* feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name *was* Mephibosheth.

1. *What was the effect of Abner's death on the rest of Israel?* 4:1

When Ish-bosheth heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, he felt weak; his hands were feeble. All the Israelites were troubled by this sudden turn of events. It is doubtful that the Israelites were afraid of what would happen, but they must have been disappointed and afraid that their wish for David's ruling over them might not be fulfilled. Such a tragic event would slow up the negotiations.

2. *Who were the Beerothites?* 4:2

Beeroth was an old Canaanite city and one of the four controlled by Gibeon (Joshua 9:17). A modern *El Bireh*, a site with a fine spring of water, has been identified as the probable location. The town was reckoned as belonging to Benjamin (Joshua 18:25). The Beerothites had

fled to Gittim, also a city of Benjamin (Nehemiah 11:33). They, thus, became considered as a part of the Benjamite community, but evidently did not attain full citizenship. Later on, we learn that Saul had tried to exterminate the Gibeonites (II Samuel 21:1-11). This slaying of Saul's son by the Beerothites may be vengeance that they take into their own hands.

### 3. *Who was Mephibosheth?* 4:3

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan. In I Chronicles 8:34, his name is Merib-baal. It is the same in I Chronicles 9:40. Merib-baal means "Baal's warrior." Mephibosheth means "one who puffs at a shameful thing." His name was probably changed when he was taken into David's family at a later time (II Samuel 9:1-13). Since he was five years old when his father was killed in the battle with the Philistines, he was about twelve years old at the time when David was made king over all Israel. He is mentioned at the time of Ish-bosheth's death, since he would be the only other survivors and heir apparent to the throne of Saul.

### *Ish-bosheth Slain.* 4:5-12

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.

6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth *rib*: and Rechab Baanah his brother escaped.

7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.

8 And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy

life; and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

9 And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

10 When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings;

11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

12 And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged *them* up over the pool in Bebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried *it* in the sepulcher of Abner in Hebron.

#### 4. *How was Ish-bosheth killed? 4:5-7*

Rimmon and Rechab pretended that they were making deliveries to the king's palace. They chose to enter the place at the heat of the day when the doorkeeper was probably taking a siesta. Ish-bosheth was resting at noon-time in his bed. When the assassins gained access to the interior of the palace, they beheaded Ish-bosheth and took his head with them as a trophy. Such a plot's being successful indicates that Ish-bosheth had a very modest establishment, affording probably only a maidservant as a porter; and she was obliged to do other work while keeping the door.

#### 5. *Why did they take the head to David? 4:8*

These men were like the Amalekite who brought news of Saul's death to David. They all thought that David would be glad to learn of the elimination of rivals to his

throne. They did not realize how much David respected the Lord's anointed, the king of Israel. Rechab and Rimmon had made an all-night trip through the plain of the Jordan, the Arabah, in order to travel from the territory of Israel to the land of Judah.

6. *What was David's reaction? 4:9*

David reminded these Beerothites of the action he took when the Amalekite brought him news of Saul's death. He said that he took hold of him and killed him in Ziklag. Even though the man thought that David would have given him a reward for his tidings, David went on to say that this Amalekite had pretended to do a service for Saul by killing him, when he was already mortally wounded. If David killed the Amalekite for doing what he did, why should the Beerothites think that they would get less punishment for their wicked deed. They had killed a righteous man in his own house while he was lying on his bed.

7. *Why did David cut off the hands and feet of the men? 4:12a*

David commanded his soldiers to fall upon Rimmon and Rechab; they slew them and cut off their hands and feet. They hanged up their bodies over the pool in Hebron. By putting their gibbeted corpses on public display, David was warning anyone else not to commit a similar crime.

The pool of Hebron was probably the larger of two in the lower part of town. Its wall is of very ancient masonry, and it is some 142 feet square and twenty feet deep.

8. *Why did David bury Ish-bosheth in Abner's tomb? 4:12b*

Ish-bosheth was also of the tribe of Benjamin. He was the son of Saul, and thereby a second cousin of Abner. Families were quite often buried together. Jacob said that he had buried his wife, Leah, in the same tomb where



## SECOND SAMUEL

Abraham had buried Sarah. Jacob wanted to be buried there along with Abraham. In addition to these patriarchs, Isaac and Rebekah were buried in the same cave of Macpelah (Genesis 49:28-33). David had evidently kept Abner's body in Hebron to assure that it was given a proper burial; it was fitting and proper that Ish-bosheth's head should be buried in the same sepulchre.

### CHAPTER 4 IN REVIEW

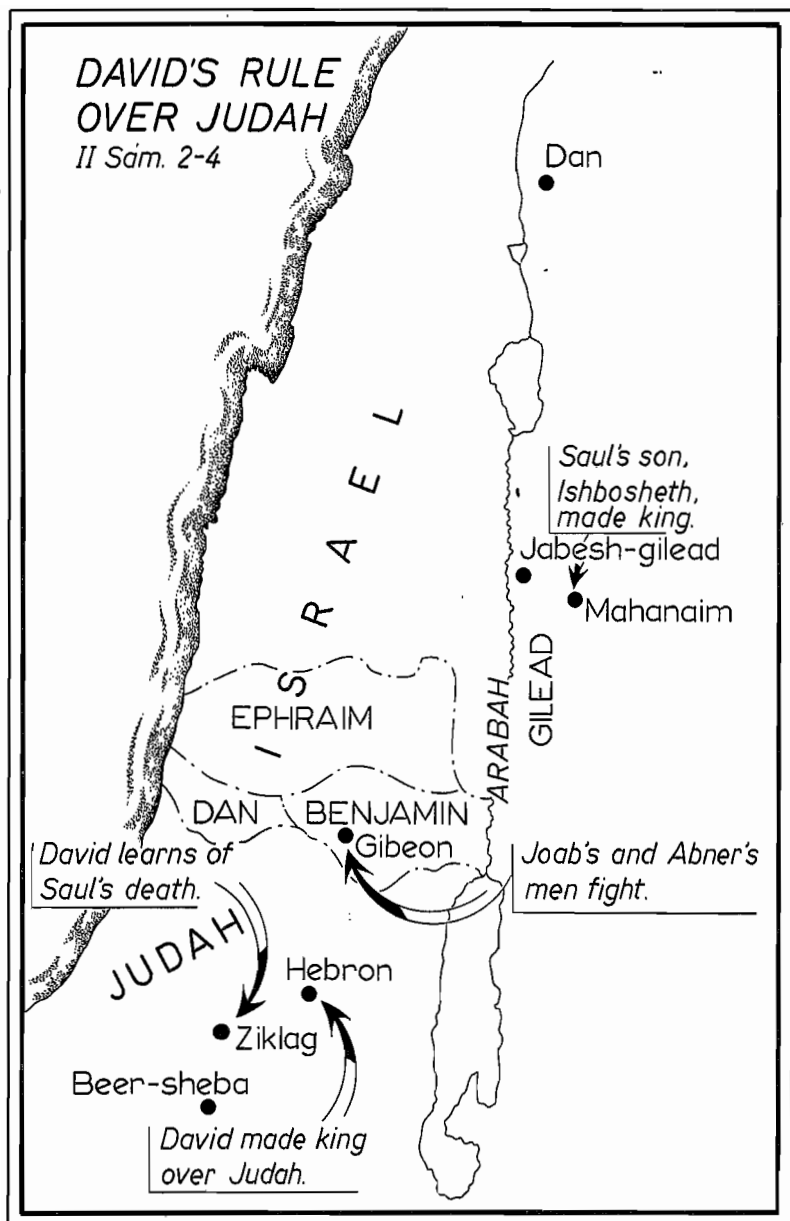
1. What two men killed Ish-bosheth? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Of what tribe were the men? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the name of their native village? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What grandson of Saul was still living? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Whose son was he? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How old was he when his father died? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In whose care was he when he was crippled? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What caused him to be crippled? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where was Ish-bosheth's head buried? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What punishment did David mete out to  
Ish-bosheth's murderers? \_\_\_\_\_

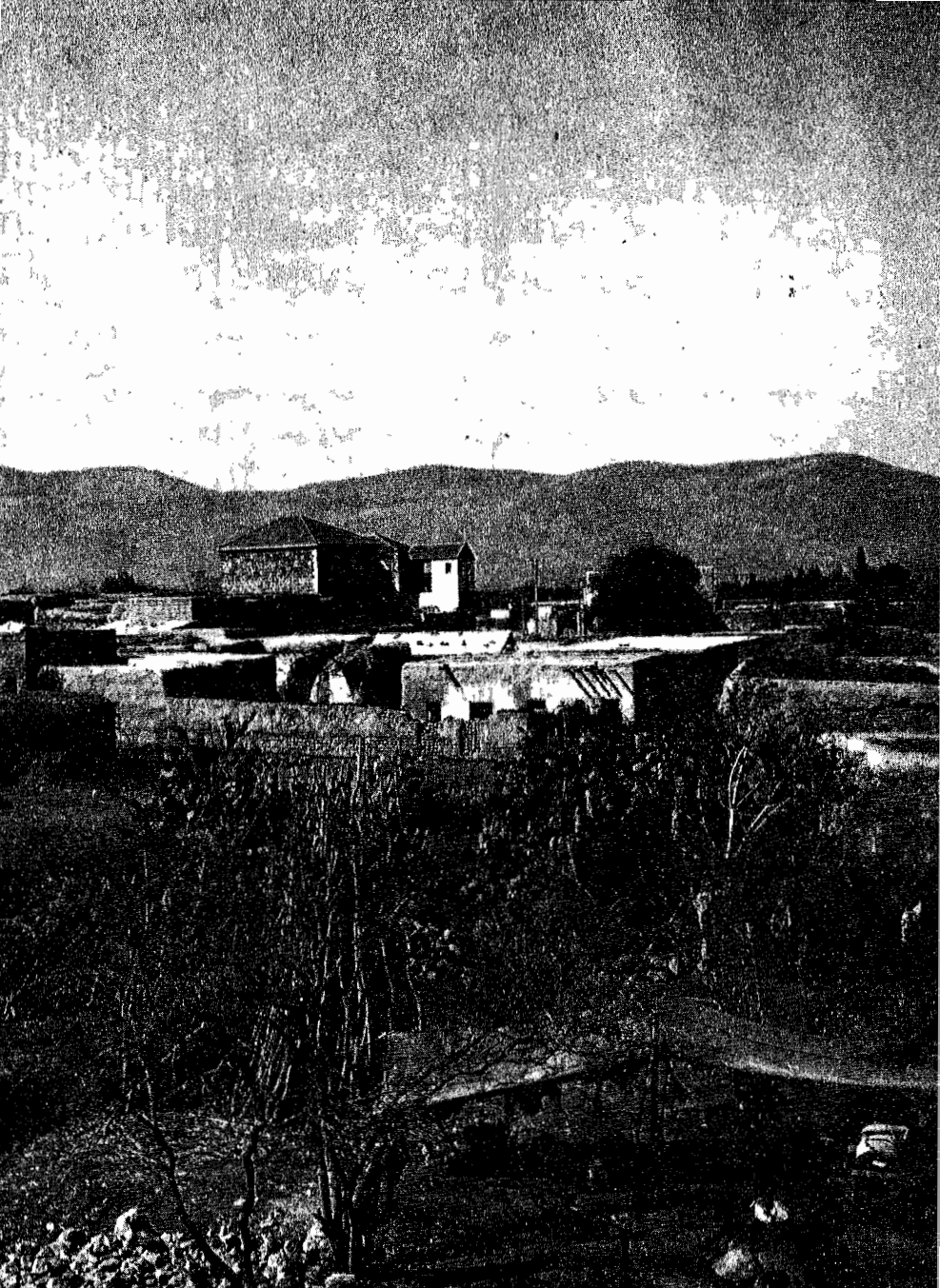
### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 5

- Vv. 1-5 *David king over all Israel.* After David had reigned for seven years in Hebron all the tribes of Israel came to him and asked him to be king over them. Since Mephibosheth was dead, they needed to unite under one king.
- Vv. 6-16 *David in Jerusalem.* David needed a capital city. Hebron was too far south to be reached easily by all the people of Israel. The Jebusites still held the stronghold of Jerusalem. David took this and made it his capital city.
- Vv. 17-25 *David against the Philistines.* When the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel, they saw his rise to power as a threat to

# DAVID'S RULE OVER JUDAH

*II Sam. 2-4*





Bethshean and the mountains of Gilboa

Matson Photo Service

their safety. They attacked him, but God delivered the Philistines into the hands of David.

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Goodness unites God's people.* David was a good ruler. He had ruled well for seven years in the South over the one tribe of Judah. The rest of Israel saw that God was with him. They needed a leader and they naturally turned to David. This is always true among God's people. They unite gladly behind a leader who is worthy of their allegiance.
2. *Blessings are heaped on blessings.* God has said that if we will give Him that which is rightfully His, He will open the windows of heaven (Malachi 3:10). He has done that in the lives of many of His followers. He did this for David. David moved from being king over one tribe to being king over twelve tribes. He moved from the city of Hebron to the well-fortified city of Jerusalem. More sons and daughters were born to him. God heaped blessings upon blessings, and He will do that for His followers today.

### 5. David Made King Over All Israel, 5:1-15.

#### *David King Over All Israel. 5:1-5*

Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel.

4 David *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years.

5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

*1. By whom were the tribes represented at the anointing of David? 5:1*

The tribes of Israel were represented at David's anointing by the elders, the rulers of the tribes. David had previously been anointed by Samuel. At Hebron he had been anointed by the men of Judah.

Now David was anointed the third time. This time he was anointed by all the tribes and peoples of Israel. A fuller account of David's being made king of Israel may be found in I Chronicles 12:23-40.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign. He reigned seven and one-half years at Hebron. He reigned 33 years at Jerusalem. In all the reign of David over Israel can be counted at forty years.

*2. Why was David anointed again? 5:3*

David's anointing at Hebron by the elders of Israel was the third time that he had been anointed. He was anointed secretly first, by Samuel (I Samuel 16:1 ff.). He was anointed over the tribe of Judah only soon after the death of Saul (II Samuel 2:4). The third anointing was performed by all the tribes and leaders of the people of Israel. A fuller account of David's becoming king over Israel may be found in I Chronicles 12:23-40.

*3. What was the length of David's reign? 5:5*

David was thirty years old when he began to reign. He reigned seven and one-half years at Hebron over Judah only. He reigned thirty-three years over all the tribes of Israel. In all his reign was forty and one-half years. Reference is generally made to its being forty years in length, without counting the half year in addition. This was a joyous occasion for the chosen people of God. They came before David with a perfect heart, indicating that

there was none to oppose this move. The people brought bread on asses, camels, and mules, an indication of the festivities connected with the occasion. This was the beginning of a glorious period in Israel's history.

*David in Jerusalem. 5:6-16*

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.

7 Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion: the same *is* the city of David.

8 And David said unto that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, *he shall be chief and captain*. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

10 And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts *was* with him.

11 And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house.

12 And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

13 And David took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.

14 And these *be* the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,

- 15 Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,  
16 And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.

4. *How was Jerusalem taken?* 5:6, 7

There was no better place in the promised land for a capitol than the city of Jebusites which had formerly borne the name, "Jebus." All former attempts to capture the city had failed. So secure did the inhabitants of the city feel that they taunted David by saying, "Except thou shalt take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither" (II Samuel 5:6). The men dwelling in Jerusalem thought that even those who were halt and blind and lame among them could successfully defend the city against the onslaughts of David's men.

Zion and Millo are both ridges in the city of Jerusalem. Zion is the more easterly and the higher of the two. Millo was a stronghold built up by David. This same stronghold was strengthened by Solomon and rebuilt by Hezekiah.

Joab, the son of Zeruiah, first smote the Jebusites. He entered the city through a water main that emptied at a point below the main stronghold. David had announced that whoever was first to get into the city would become his captain. Joab performed this feat and thus became captain of David's armies.

5. *Where was the stronghold of Zion?* 5:7

In David's time the city of Jerusalem was confined to the summit of Mount Zion, and the stronghold of its defenses was a fortification called Millo. Recent excavations have been made at the southern end of Mount Moriah, leading to the erroneous conclusion that Mount Zion, the city of David, was down on Ophel. This was disproved by Warren and Conder in their excavations during the middle of the nineteenth century. Mount Zion itself, was completely isolated by surrounding ravines, except at the northwest corner, where a narrow saddle of rock connected it with higher ground, stretching off in that direction.

The modern Joppa gate stands at the top of this saddle. This would be the usual way to attack the city, but David went in from the south through the water course and was able to surprise the people. Josephus tells of David's capturing a lower city before he assaulted the citadel, but this cannot be verified. The city was indeed a great city, and found its way into the heart of David who praised it in such lines as those in the forty-eighth Psalm:

1. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God, in the mountain of  
his holiness.
2. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole  
earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the  
north, the city of the great King.
3. God is known in her places for a refuge . . .
12. Walk about Zion, and go round about her:  
tell the towers thereof.
13. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her  
palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation  
following. For this our God is our God for  
ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto  
death."

Psalm 48

The city has continued as one of the world's most ancient and most important centers of human activity. A run-down of some important incidents in the history of Jerusalem reveals these dates and events:

1010 B.C.	Taken by David
967	First Temple built by Solomon
587	City taken by Nebuchadnezzar
537	Reoccupied by the Jews
516	Second Temple dedicated
168	City taken by Antiochus Epiphanes and Temple desecrated



165	Temple cleansed by Judas Maccabaeus
63	City taken by Pompey
11	Third Temple built by Herod
70 A.D.	City taken and Temple destroyed by Titus
136	City rebuilt by Hadrian
614	City taken by the Persians
629	Retaken by Heraclitus
637	Taken by the Mohammedans
1099	Taken by the Crusaders
1187	Taken by Saladin
1229	Surrendered to the Emperor Frederic II
1244	Taken by the Tartars
1247	Taken by the Sultan of Egypt
1517	Taken by the Ottoman Sultan Selim I
1917	Taken from the Turks by the Allied Forces of Great Britain, France, and Italy
1956	Divided between Israel and Jordan

6. *Why did Hiram, king of Tyre, send messengers to David? 5:11, 12*

Significant is the statement, "And David waxed greater and greater; for Jehovah, the God of hosts, was with him" (II Samuel 5:10). Hiram, the king of Tyre, could see that David was growing stronger and stronger. Hiram knew that the cedar trees, carpenters, and masons would be needed by a king of a growing empire. He knew too, that the new king would need a palace. He provided these and enabled David to have a place to live befitting a king. The people of Tyre depended upon the south-country for their food supply. The king of Tyre wanted to be a friend of David's.

7. *Why did David take more wives? 5:13*

David was taking his place among kings of the Near East; these kings normally had many wives. David already had seven wives, according to the account in II Samuel 3:2-5, if we include Michal. His family is not only men-

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

tioned here and in the third chapter, but throughout this narrative. We know that David later married Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah (II Samuel 11:27). In all of these listings we find that he also had nineteen sons. Mention is made of only one daughter, Tamar (II Samuel 13:1).

### *David Against the Philistines 5:17-25*

17 But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of *it*, and went down to the hold.

18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

19 And David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

20 And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim.

21 And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them.

22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

23 And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, Thou shalt not go up; *but* fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

24 And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

25 And David did so, as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.

8. *What was the purpose of the Philistine invasion?*  
5:17-21

The Philistines learned that David had been anointed king over Israel. They naturally desired to attack him before he was able to strengthen himself greatly. David went down to the stronghold. Had he already been in control of Jerusalem at this time he probably would not have left the city. As it was, he went down to meet the hosts of the enemy which were encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

The valley of Rephaim leads away from the west side of Jerusalem. Its main course extends toward the Philistine plain. The main body of the valley can be located not far from Bethlehem. The Philistines, who had seen David's rising power and desired to check him, evidently found this to be a likely spot for a pitched battle.

Baal-perazim, as a name, signifies, "The place of breakings forth." The Philistines gave way all at once, like water breaking loose. The people called the place, "the breaking away of Baal." It was here that the enemy left the images that they had brought with them into the battle. David and his men took them away to be burned.

9. *Where was the battle of the Mulberry Trees?* 5:22-25

In the second attack, the Philistines again encamped in the valley of Rephaim. They had gone farther north this time. Chronicles says that the place of retreat is Gibeon, a site farther west. The name "Geba" may have been mistaken for "Gibeah." Probably the names were confused. The location according to Chronicles would be some seven or eight miles from Jerusalem in a northwesterly direction.

10. *Where was Gazer?* 5:25

Gazer is another name for Gezer. Gezer was a very ancient city on the Shephelah. It lay just above the maritime plains, some eighteen miles northwest of Jerusalem and seventeen miles southwest of Joppa. The site was

strategic since it guarded one of the few roads of access from Joppa to Jerusalem. *Tel Gezer* is the modern town of Khirbet-yerdeh. It is called Gezer in II Samuel 5:25 and I Chronicles 14:16. The occupation of the site goes back to times of the Canaanites who occupied the area in the last half of the third millenium before Christ. Their descendants were in the area when the Israelites came into the land under Joshua. Joshua smote the king of Gezer (Joshua 12:12). Yet the Canaanites regained control of the city and remained safe behind their extensive fortifications (Judges 1:29). A famous calendar containing an agenda for a Palestinian farmer's activities in the age of Saul and David was translated by W. F. Albright from Hebrew characters dating around 925 B.C. Whether the Philistines were able to find refuge in Gezer or not, we cannot tell from this narrative, but it was apparent that David was not able to pursue them any further than this well-fortified settlement.

## CHAPTER 5 IN REVIEW

1. What leaders of Israel came to David? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How old was he when he began to rule all Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long did he reign altogether? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long did he rule over all Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What city did David take as his capital? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What foreign king sent greetings to David? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What did he build for David? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many sons were borne to David in Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Over what country did he reign? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who first attacked David after he became king? \_\_\_\_\_

PART TWO:

THE  
PROSPEROUS PERIOD  
OF DAVID'S REIGN

6:1—9:13

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 6

- Vv. 1-11 *Uzzah smitten.* David wanted to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. It was in captivity in Philistia for a number of years, but had been returned by the Philistines and was kept by the men of Kiriath-Jerim. The venture was ill-fated. Uzzah stuck out his hand to steady the ark, and the Lord smote him.
- Vv. 12-19 *The ark brought to Jerusalem.* David was nonplussed by the death of Uzzah. He left the ark in the house of Obed-Edom. Later he learned that God had blessed the house of Obed-Edom. He also learned that he had been careless in trying to move the ark on an ox cart. God had ordained that the ark should be carried by the Levites. David followed God's directive and moved the ark without further mishap. He put it in the special tent which he had erected for it in Jerusalem.
- Vv. 20-23 *Michal cursed.* David had insisted that Michal be sent back to him from Gilead when he was negotiating with Abner and Ish-bosheth. Michal's pride overcame her. She was ashamed of David as he took part in the public ceremonies attending the return of the ark. When she upbraided David, she was evidently smitten of the Lord. At least she had no child unto the day of her death.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's servants must not be careless.* It may seem a small thing to us that David tried to move the ark on an ox cart instead of having it carried by the Levites. Ultimately this carelessness led to the death of Uzzah. Too many people today become overly familiar with

## SECOND SAMUEL

the things of God. His ordinances and services should be observed with care.

2. *Man needs a place to worship.* God had ordained that there would be one central sanctuary for Israel (Deuteronomy 12). He told the people that He would choose a place to put His name there. They were instructed that they were not to offer sacrifices on every high hill. God chose the city of Jerusalem. He has given us a church as the center of our worship.

### II. THE PROSPEROUS PERIOD OF DAVID'S REIGN, 6:1—9:13.

1. David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem, 6:1-23.

#### *Uzzah Smitten.* 6:1-11

Again, David gathered together all *the* chosen *men* of Israel, thirty thousand.

2 And David arose, and went with all the people that *were* with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth *between* the cherubim.

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that *was* in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which *was* at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of *instruments made of* fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook *it*.

7 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for *his* error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah to this day.

9 And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

11 And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

*1. How many people went to fetch the ark? 6:1*

David gathered the chosen men of Israel to accompany him down to the west border of the land of Judah to get the ark. Thirty thousand are mentioned as being the number of these. The passage of I Chronicles 13:1 says only that David consulted with the captains of thousands and of hundreds. It goes on to declare that he consulted every leader and that he gathered all the people from throughout the land. If there was a full assembly of the people, there would be more than thirty thousand men. David evidently did invite all to be in attendance for this auspicious occasion, but he did his work largely through the thirty thousand chosen men. David had thirty captains over these; each would then be the captain of a thousand and were sometimes called a chiliarch (II Samuel 24:13).

*2. Where was Baal-Judah? 6:2*

The title Baal-Judah signifies "Lords of Judah." It was a city of Judah, from which David went out to bring the ark into Jerusalem. It is probably the same as Baalah; a city on the northern border of Judah (Joshua 15:10).



One of the religious centers of the ancient Gibeonites was here, and the name is evidently given to the same spot that is elsewhere called Kirjath-jearim (I Chronicles 13:6). This spot was out on the western border of Judah near the Philistine territory. The ark had been left here when it was brought back by the kine prepared by the Philistines (I Samuel 6:21).

3. *Why did David prepare a new cart?* 6:3

David evidently wanted to give the best for God's service. He prepared a new cart in similar fashion to the way in which the Philistines had made a new cart when they sent the Ark back to Israel (I Samuel 6:7). David was not careful enough. He should not have made a cart at all. He learned this later, much to his regret.

4. *What was the sin of Uzzah?* 6:6

Uzzah was the son of Abinadab, the man in whose home the Ark had been kept. He became overly familiar with sacred things. God had ordained that the Ark should be cared for only by the Kohathites, out of the tribe of the Levi. God had said that they were not to touch any holy thing, lest they die (4:15). Directions were given to indicate that when the camp of Israel set forward, Aaron was to come with his sons, take down the covering vail, and cover the Ark of Testimony with it. They were to put over the Ark a covering of badger's skins and spread over that a cloth made only of blue. They were then to put the staves in the ark. Only the sons of Kohath were to carry these sacred articles of the tabernacle furniture. These directions were not followed by David at all. Had the Ark been carried by Levites, it would not have been sitting on the oxcart in the first place. There would have been no danger of its falling when the oxen stumbled if it had been moved in the correct fashion. As the Scripture says, "God smote him there for his error" (verse seven).

5. *Why was David afraid?* 6:9

David was afraid of the Lord because of the ill-fated venture of moving the Ark. I Chronicles 13:11 says that David was displeased. He was naturally disappointed that his attempt to move the ark had resulted in tragedy. Later on David admitted his fault and carried the Ark in the correct fashion. He came to this conclusion as he said, "None ought to carry the Ark of God but the Levites" (I Chronicles 15:2). For the time being, however, he was distressed and carried the Ark aside and left it there.

6. *Who was Obed-edom?* 6:10

On the first attempt to bring the Ark of God up to Jerusalem, Uzzah put forth his hand and took hold of it; for the oxen stumbled. God's anger was kindled against Uzzah; God smote him there that he died.

David was afraid of Jehovah that day and refused to continue his attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. Therefore he turned aside and placed the Ark in the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite.

Obed-edom was a Philistine. The fact that he was called a Gittite signifies that he was formerly a resident of that city of Gath in Philistia. Many of the Gitties emigrated to Judah. Six hundred of them formed a bodyguard to David (II Samuel 15:18 ff.). The Gittites seem to have been remarkable for their great stature (II Samuel 21:19; I Chronicles 20:5 ff.).

*The Ark Brought to Jerusalem.* 6:12-19

12 And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

14 And David danced before the Lord with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

17 And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts.

19 And he dealt among the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of *flesh*, and a flagon of *wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house.

#### 7. *How was the Ark brought to Jerusalem?* 6:12

Having moved forward six paces with the Ark, the procession halted to make a sacrifice, so thankful were they that they had been permitted to make a start. By their leaping and dancing the members of the procession showed the Lord that they were pleased. Of course, all of this is known to be an expression of joy—a religious service.

When the procession reached Jerusalem, all the multitude that had gathered to witness the sight received presents of bread, flesh, and raisins. Inasmuch as the Levites had borne the Ark, God was pleased with all the respect that was shown for His commandments and blessed the day's activities. David had prepared a tent to house the

Ark, and the people must have returned to their homes that night with a feeling of God's blessings resting upon them and abiding with them.

The account of the day's activities as it is given in Chronicles contains more of the history of religious matters. This account also gives a table of numbers and goes more into detail than the account in Samuel.

8. *Why did they sacrifice after only going six paces?* 6:13

The men carrying the Ark were just starting their journey. It was a respectable distance from the point of debarkation. David evidently ordered the company to stop because they had made a successful beginning. On the first attempt they had met with tragedy, but now they were moving successfully. No doubt they stopped to give thanks to God for this successful beginning of the journey.

9. *Who bore the Ark this time?* 6:13

The Levites carried the Ark as God had ordered on the second attempt. David realized that God had smitten Uzzah because they had not made proper arrangements in the first place. The Levites who carried the Ark are listed by name in I Chronicles 15:5-11. Six chieftains from among the Levites are mentioned by name; and in that reference in addition Zadok and Abiathar, the chief priests, were summoned by David and given specific instructions with regard to the effort.

10. *Who officiated in the sacrifices?* 6:17

No doubt the priests officiated at the sacrifices; Saul had been rejected from ruling because he had presumed to offer sacrifices after Samuel had told him to wait for his coming (I Samuel 13:11). Specific mention is made of the fact that David called for Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, to be with him when he brought the Ark to Jerusalem (I Chronicles 15:11). These men were probably in charge of the sacrifices.

11. *Where was the old tent of meeting?* 6:17

David had pitched a new tent for the Ark in Jerusalem. The old tent of meeting had been located in Shiloh. The tabernacle had been moved from that point to Nob in the days when David was fleeing from the presence of Saul (I Samuel 21:1). Because the Ark was not there, the people evidently did not feel that it was a permanent location, and it was finally located in Gibeon. Solomon had gone to Gibeon to sacrifice because it was the great high place (I Kings 3:4). It was necessary for him then to bring up the articles and furniture of the tabernacle to Jerusalem when he built the temple (I Kings 8:4).

12. *Why did David provide bread, flesh, and raisins?* 6:19

Everybody was involved in this momentous occasion. David had provided that every woman, as well as every man, should have a cake of bread, a sizeable piece of meat, and a flagon of wine to drink. There had been no festive occasion like this in Israel for many years. David saw it as a time for celebrating and made provisions for all to have a part of it.

*Michal Cursed.* 6:20-23

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

21 And David said unto Michal, *It was* before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord.

22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor.

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.

*13. Why did Michal reprove David? 6:20*

Michal had seen David as he danced before Jehovah in the body of people that accompanied the Ark to Jerusalem. She thought he had lowered himself by mingling with the people. This was not her idea of a king. Michal had been raised at the king's court. She had pride that David did not have. Although the narrative might indicate that Michal's barrenness was a punishment for her pride, the writer does not actually say that such was the case.

*14. Was David vile and base? 6:22*

Michal had said that David uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaidens of his servants. She said that he had been as one of the vain fellows who shamelessly uncovered themselves (verse 20). David simply repeated her accusation and said that he would be more vile than this. He was glad to be base in his own sight and in the sight of the maidservants who were despised by Michal. He knew that he was held in honor by his people. David had not been naked; his uncovering himself amounted only to his taking off his kingly garments. David had worn an ephod as he danced before the Ark among the people (verse 14). A linen ephod was the distinctive garment of the priests. It was an abbreviated garment having no sleeves and reaching only to the thighs. It was much in the fashion of a jumper and enabled David to leap and dance about freely. Michal had thought this beneath the king's dignity and had rebuked David for this kind of action. He was glad to be counted among his people and made this defense of his actions.

## CHAPTER 6 IN REVIEW

1. On what means of conveyance did David try to move the Ark?

## SECOND SAMUEL

2. Out of whose house did he take it? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Near what town did the man live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who stuck out his hand to steady the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What happened to the man who touched the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What name was given to the place? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In whose house did David leave the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How long was it left in his house? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What did David wear as he danced before the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who carried the Ark when it was brought to Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 7

- Vv. 1-11 *David's desire to build a temple thwarted.* David wanted to build a temple as a place of worship for God's people. Nathan the prophet was in favor of this at first but God told him that this was not to be David's privilege.
- Vv. 12-17 *God's covenant with David.* Nathan the prophet came to David with the announcement that it was not to be his privilege to build the temple. He also told him that God would bless his house for generations to come. It was promised of David that there would not cease to be a man out of his loins to sit on the throne of Judah as long as there was a kingdom of Judah.
- Vv. 18-29 *David's response to the Lord's will.* David went in and sat before the Lord when he heard of His will for his life (v. 18). His disappointment over not being able to build a temple did not keep him from accepting God's will for his life.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God does not dwell in a house of stone.* David's purpose of building a temple was admirable, but God told him that He had not dwelt in any house since the time that He had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt (v. 6). When it was the Lord's will to have a temple as a center for worship, He made it known to the man who was to build it. Until it was his intention, God would not let man's pride or ambition take precedence. We need to remember that it is not necessary to have a grand building as a center of worship.
2. *God knows best.* The things that God did for David were much better for him than would have been the glory he achieved by building the temple. The fact that the House of David was established as the ruling house as long as the kingdom stood was a much greater blessing. When God refuses our requests, He always has something better in mind for us.
3. *"Thy will be done"* (Matthew 6:10). Jesus taught His disciples to pray in this way. This was David's prayer as he went in and sat down before the Lord. He gave God thanks for the blessings He had promised to him. He was willing for God's will to be done in his life. Christians need to have this same attitude.

### 2. God's Covenant With David, 7:1-29.

#### *David's Desire to Build a Temple Thwarted. 7:1-11*

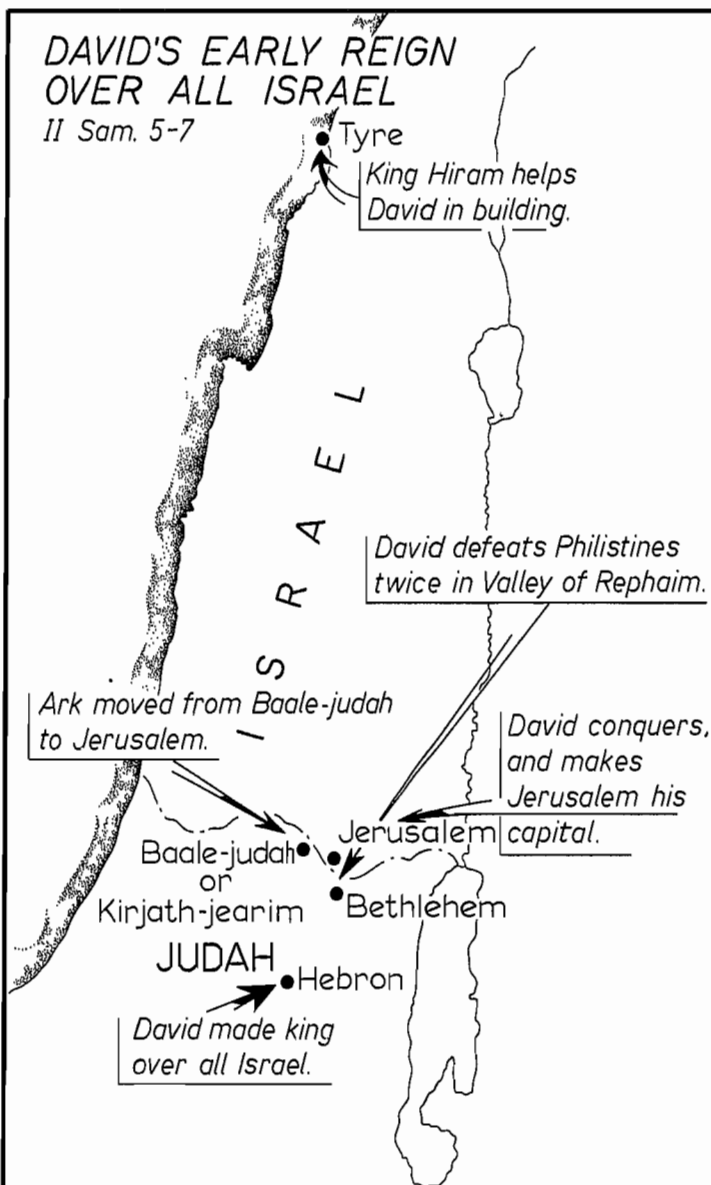
And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies;

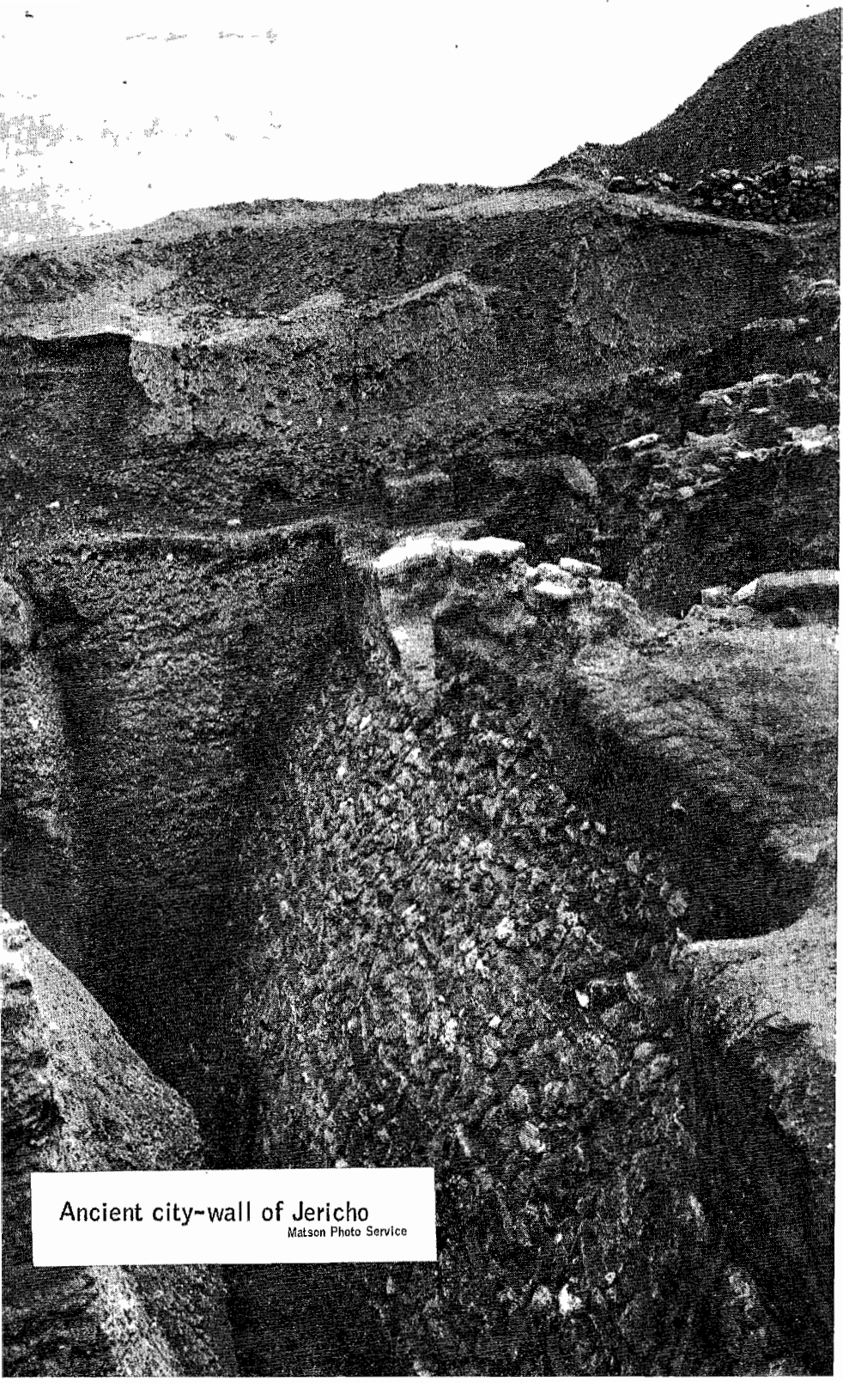
2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.



# DAVID'S EARLY REIGN OVER ALL ISRAEL

II Sam. 5-7





Ancient city-wall of Jericho

Matson Photo Service

3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that *is* in thine heart; for the Lord *is* with thee.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying,

5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in?

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me a house of cedar?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house.

1. *When did David express his desire to build a temple?*

7:1

The first part of David's reign was given over to conquests of surrounding territories. The first seven years of his reign were spent in Hebron as he ruled over the tribe of Judah only. David was obliged to take the city of

Jerusalem as his capital. Another of his duties at the beginning of his reign was the centralization of the worship in Jerusalem. He accomplished the major part of this purpose by bringing the Ark up from the house of Abinadab and Obed-edom. He built a temporary structure to house the Ark (II Samuel 6:17). David was entering into the prosperous period of his reign; and the Phoenicians at the instigation of Hiram, King of Tyre, sent cedar trees, carpenters, and masons. They built David a house (II Samuel 5:11). As David viewed his own personal prosperity, he realized that very little provision had been made for a house of the Lord. This prompted him to propose the building of the temple.

*2. How did the Ark dwell within curtains? 7:2*

The Ark was kept in a tent or a tabernacle (II Samuel 6:17). This had been the provision made by God for the housing of the Ark when the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness of Sinai. The original structure was described as being a tent with ten curtains (Exodus 26:1). This was the covering of fine-twined linen. Another curtain of goat's hair was laid over the tabernacle (Exodus 26:7). In addition, there was a veil hanging inside the tabernacle to separate the holy place from the most holy place (Exodus 26:31). The court itself was enclosed with a curtain (Exodus 27:5). It would be hard to find any better way to describe the tabernacle than to call it a dwelling of curtains.

*3. Who was the Nathan? 7:3*

Nathan was a prophet and a close friend of David's. He seems to take the place formerly occupied by Samuel in the affairs of the king. Some have called him a "court prophet." It is probable that his name was the shortened form of Nathanael, the name of one of Jesus' apostles (John 1:48, 49; 21:2). Nathan first came to David when he proposed to build the temple. Later, Nathan was sent to rebuke David for his sin with Bathsheba. It is also

known that Nathan wrote the history of David (I Chronicles 29:29). He was with David even at the time when David was dying (I Kings 1:11). At first David's proposal appealed to Nathan; he encouraged him to do all that he planned because it was apparent that the Lord was with David.

*4. How did the word of the Lord come to Nathan? 7:4*

God spake in times past in different ways and varied manners as he revealed His will to the fathers by the prophets (Hebrews 1:1). On occasions, men saw visions (Joel 2:28). This expression of the word of the Lord coming to a man was also used with regard to Samuel (I Samuel 15:10). The expression occurs frequently in Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and unless there is a definite statement in the Scripture, it is impossible to tell whether the word came by an audible voice, a dream, a vision, or some other manner. There was no question about its being the word of the Lord, and Nathan spoke what God had told him to reveal to David.

*5. Why did God oppose David's proposal? 7:5*

The first reason given for not building the temple was that it was contrary to precedent. God said that His dwelling place had not been a house from the time that He brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt until David's time. Through all those ages God had used a tent or a tabernacle as a place for His worship. Joshua had established the tabernacle in Shiloh (Joshua 18:1). The tabernacle had remained there throughout the three hundred years of the judges and it was still there when Samuel was born (I Samuel 1:3). God reminded David that He had not said anything about building a house.

*6. Who was to feed God's people? 7:7*

From the context it is apparent that God is speaking of different tribes whom he had commanded to lead His people Israel. Throughout the time of the judges, men of different tribes were raised up to be leaders. Othniel, the

first judge, was of the tribe of Judah (Judges 3:9). Ehud, the second judge, was from Benjamin (Judges 3:15). Deborah, the only female leader, was from Ephraim (Judges 4:5). Other judges were from Manasseh, Gilead, Naphtali and Dan. To none of these men from the different tribes had God ever given an order to build a permanent residence for the Ark.

7. *What blessings had God showered upon David?* 7:8, 9

God reminded David that he had brought him from the sheepcote. This was where Samuel had found him when he went to Bethlehem to anoint a king. God reminded David that he had made him ruler over Israel. First David had been king over only one tribe, but finally he was brought to the place where he ruled over all his people. God reminded David that He had been with him wherever he had gone throughout the wanderings as he fled from Saul. God had been with him and spared his life. God had cut off all his enemies, so that he had peace in his kingdom. Only recently in his career David had been victorious over the Philistines; these were the people who had oppressed most persistently; but in all his campaigns against them, he had been successful. Finally, God had made a great name for David. His reputation had reached to the Phoenecian kingdom in the north; and Hiram, their king, had sent messengers to express his good will (II Samuel 5:11). Remembering these blessings would soften the blow of disappointment which was to be David's as God told him that he could not build the temple.

8. *What blessings did God promise to Israel?* 7:10

God told David that He would appoint a place for his people. He gave them the land of Canaan as their inheritance. He also promised to establish them there. They were to be planted in Palestine. Their roots were to go down deep, and this was to be their perpetual inheritance. God said that these Israelites would dwell in a place of their own and move no more. They had been nomads,

driven from pillar to post. Abraham and Isaac had sojourned in tents. Jacob had died in the foreign country of Egypt. The descendants of Jacob had been slaves for four hundred years in a land that was not their own. God had brought them into a place that was their own, and this was to be their land. Although in later history they disobeyed God and were driven out, they have been allowed to return and establish the nation of Israel. In a very real and unusual sense Palestine belongs to the Jews. God said that the children of wickedness would not afflict His people any more as beforetime. How far into the future this reaches, man unheeded by Divine guidance cannot say for sure. The forty years of David's reign plus the forty years of Solomon's grandeur, would fulfill this prophecy. God's people were to enjoy a long stay in the promised land. The children of wickedness did not afflict them any more as they had in their former years.

9. *What blessing did God promise to David? 7:11*

God promised to build a house for David. Since David already had a building in which to live, this reference can only be to the fact that his family is to be established as a royal family. David wanted to build God a house out of stone and wood. He was not to be given this privilege, but God was to build him a house that would live for generations. Saul's house had been deposed. His family was not allowed to continue to rule over Israel. David's house was to be established as the ruling family in Israel.

*God's Covenant With David. 7:12-17*

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

*10. Who was to build God's house (in Israel)? 7:13*

Although David was not allowed to have the privilege of building a temple for God, David's son was to be given this privilege. God made it clear that after David slept with his fathers, his son would rule after him. His kingdom was to be established, and he would have the privilege of building the temple. God also repeated His promise to establish the throne of His kingdom.

*11. Whom did God call His son? 7:14*

God referred to Solomon as His son. Solomon was not His "only begotten son," the express image of His person; but Solomon was a man who walked with God as a son would walk with his father. David understood this, and referred to it on a number of occasions (I Chronicles 22:10; 28:6). The verse reached beyond Solomon and has an application in prophecy to Jesus Christ, the "only begotten Son of God." This idea is carried out as David spoke by the inspiration of the Spirit in Psalms 2. God fulfills the relationship of a father to all His children, but He was the Father of the Messiah in a unique way. The father and son relationship between Jesus Christ and the Lord God Jehovah, helps the Christian to understand his relationship to his heavenly Father.



12. *Was David's kingdom unending?* 7:16

As long as there was a kingdom in Jerusalem, there was a son of David to sit upon the throne. Twenty kings ruled in Jerusalem, and each of them was a direct descendant of David. David was succeeded to the throne by his son Solomon. Solomon's son, Rehoboam ruled over the Southern Kingdom when it was divided. To call the roll of the kings in Judah is to call the roll of the descendants of David. Since Jesus Christ sits on the right hand of the Father yet today, He rules the spiritual kingdom of Israel as a direct descendant of David (Daniel 7:13, 14 and Acts 7:55, 56).

13. *Why was David not permitted to build the temple?* 7:17

Sometime after David had overcome all his enemies, he proposed to build a house to keep the Ark in and to be known as God's house. It seemed that God had "walked in a tent" because the Ark had been moved about so much.

At the first, the proposal sounded good to Nathan, the prophet. Jehovah answered by telling David that because he had been a man of war and had shed blood he could not build the temple (I Chronicles 28:2, 3). This was not a condemnation of David's method of warfare, but it showed that David's place in God's plan was to subdue Israel's enemies and establish the kingdom. Great consolation came to David, moreover, in the promise made by God that the kingdom of David should last forever. The kingdom would not be wrested from the hands of his heir as it had been wrested from the hands of Saul and his heirs. In Christ, known as David's son, was a kingdom set up forever.

*David's Response to the Lord's Will.* 7:18-29

18 Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who *am* I, O Lord God? and what *is* my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And *is* this the manner of man, O Lord God?

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.

21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know *them*.

22 Wherefore thou are great, O Lord God: for *there is* none like thee, neither *is there any* God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

23 And what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people, *even* like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and their gods?

24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel *to be* a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God.

25 And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.

26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts *is* the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

27 For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O Lord God, thou *art* that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee:

for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken *it*: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

14. *What caused David's thanksgiving?* 7:18

Even though he was not allowed the blessed privilege of building the temple, David knew that he had received great blessings from the hand of Jehovah. Had not God promised him that his kingdom should last forever? Therefore had David taken a place in the tent in Jerusalem that he had placed there for the housing of the ark and rendered up to God a song and prayer of thanksgiving. His background was one of humble origins, but he had risen to a place of national and international prominence.

15. *Why did David sit before the Lord?* 7:18

David's gratitude for all the blessings of God overwhelmed him. He would not be allowed to go into the tabernacle proper and probably sat by the altar which was outside the temporary tent erected to house the Ark. Sitting is not the usual attitude of prayer in the Old Testament. The oriental mind does not see anything inappropriate in it, as is evidenced by the Mohammadian ritual; where it is one of several postures. The Coptic Christians also practice this kind of posture. The fact that David was sitting would indicate that he may have been meditating as well as praying the prayer which is recorded. He may have spent quite an extensive time in rendering this thanksgiving to God.

16. *Why did David call this a small thing in God's sight?*  
7:19

David had a faith in God that was deep and abiding. He thought that God could do whatever pleased Him. It was a great thing to David, but nothing was impossible with God. God had not only cared for David in the immediate past, but He had also revealed to him the future. Martin Luther saw in this verse, an indication of the mystery of the incarnation as David said, "and is this the

manner of man, O Lord God?" Certainly the virgin birth of Jesus Christ was not "the manner of men."

*17. Why did David say no more? 7:20*

David did not make a long speech or prayer. The heart of a true worshipper is revealed without much speaking. David was overwhelmed by the revelation that was given to him and in a sense was left rather speechless. He simply said for God to do that which was best. He believed that God knew him even better than he knew himself.

*18. How could this be for God's word's sake? 7:21*

The word of God is true. God honors His word. Mankind should learn that when God speaks, man should listen. No word of God has ever yet been broken. Jesus said that heaven and earth would pass away, but His word would never pass away (Matthew 24:35). If God made a prediction about David's house and the prophecies came true, then God's word would be established. David viewed these things as coming to pass in order that God might demonstrate the veracity of His word.

*19. What was David's concept of God? 7:22*

David viewed God as being a great God. He expressed his faith in the fact that there is none like God. As a matter of fact, he did not believe that there was any God except the Lord God of Israel. David was a monotheist through and through. He had no images, as far as we have any record. He was not led astray, as was Solomon, to worship other gods. The faith of David was outstanding, pure, and deep. His faith was based on what he had heard. The faith of the fathers had been handed down to the children from generation to generation. David had experienced many manifestations of God in his own life. These things had led him to have the faith which he possessed.

*20. What was Israel's position? 7:23*

David believed that there was no nation as blessed as Israel. God had redeemed His people out of difficult

times. He wanted a people for His own possession. By this He had made him a name. As other nations viewed the fortunes of Israel, they would come to the logical conclusion that God was blessing His people. This would bring many people to worship the God of Israel. God had done many great and terrible things for Israel. He had redeemed them from Egypt; they had been spared from many nations—such as the Amalekites, Edomites, Ammonites, and Philistines. None of the superstitious practices of people who believed in false gods had been able to stop the advance of Israel. Israel was unique.

*21. What was God's purpose in all this? 7:24*

As Israel came out of Egyptian captivity, God said that He was to make of them a nation of priests (Exodus 19:6). They were to be a peculiar treasure unto God. God was looking forward to the time when they would say that they were God's people and that He was their God. This was the tragedy of the circumstances in the days of Hosea. They had turned their backs on God, and God had said to them that they were not His people. He said, furthermore, that He would not be their God (Hosea 1:9). Throughout the intervening years, God has been wooing people. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. His activities look forward to the time when they can say in truth that the tabernacle of God is with men, that He will dwell with them, that they shall be His people, and that God Himself shall be with them and be their God (Revelation 21:3).

*22. What was David's final prayer? 7:25*

David concluded his prayer by beseeching God to fulfill the promises that He had made. He prayed that the name of God might be magnified forever (verse 26). He saw this being fulfilled as people would say, "the Lord of Hosts is the God over Israel." David did not have overweening ambitions for himself. He put God first. He would not reject God, as the people had rejected Him when

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

they asked for a king to rule over them (I Samuel 8:7). David prayed that it might be understood that the Lord God Himself was the ruler of Israel. He put himself second and then prayed that his house might be established forever before God.

### 23. *What assurance did David have? 7:27*

David rested his hope in the word of God. He said that God had revealed these things to His servant, and it was this that had given him confidence to pray his prayer to God. His final petition was that the words of God be found true (verse 28). As far as David was concerned, the fulfillment was as sure as the nature of God was true. God could not lie (I Samuel 15:29 and Hebrews 6:18). What God had spoken to David was sure to be fulfilled.

## CHAPTER 7 IN REVIEW

1. To what prophet did David tell of his plan to build a temple? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what had the Ark been housed? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Of what material was David's house made? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did God permit David to build the Temple? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Whom did God want to build the Temple? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What posture did David take as he prayed? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What title did David give himself as he prayed? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Out of what country had Israel been redeemed? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What title did David give to God? \_\_\_\_\_
10. In what way did David describe God's word? \_\_\_\_\_

## SECOND SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 8

- Vv. 1-13 *David's victories.* As a king David was just as effective as he had been when he was a soldier in Saul's army. He met every challenge that was thrown before him and was victorious over all the enemies which surrounded Israel.
- Vv. 14-18 *David's government.* David manifested a great deal of wisdom in organizing his kingdom. He placed officers over various responsibilities and functions of the government. Many of these men were very faithful to him and were still serving him at the close of his reign.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The battle is won by the strong.* David had many enemies. There were the Moabites to the south and east. The Syrians were to the north and east. The Philistines were on the west. None of these caused David to fear. He was a brave man, and he went out and did battle for the Lord. The Lord gave him the victory. Victory is promised to a Christian soldier as he goes out to fight for the Lord.
2. *"Done decently and in order"* (I Chronicles 14:40). David was anxious that his people have good government. He had a valiant captain for his army in the person of Joab. He saw to it that the government business was properly recorded and appointed Jehoshaphat as his recorder. Zadok and Abiathar were his priests. Seraiah was his scribe. Benaiah was over his mercenaries. David's sons were provincial governors. God has given elders and deacons as well as evangelists and teachers in His church. The church's work should be done decently and in order.

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### 3. The Throne of David Established, 8:1-18.

#### *David's Victories. 8:1-13*

And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Methegammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And *so* the Moabites became David's servants, *and* brought gifts.

3 David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.

4 And David took from him a thousand *chariots*, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them *for* a hundred chariots.

5 And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, *and* brought gifts. And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.

9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

10 Then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And *Joram* brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:



11 Which also king David did dedicate unto the Lord, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

13 And David gat *him* a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, *being* eighteen thousand *men*.

1. *What was the "bridle of the mother city"? 8:1 (ASV)*

David took "the bridle of the mother city of the land of the Philistines." This statement is hard to understand unless it means that one of the cities of the Philistines ruled the other Philistine cities and that David then in turn conquered this leading city. The King James translators transliterated the Hebrew word as *Methegammah*, but this hardly is the name of a Philistine city. More than likely Gath was the mother city.

2. *What was David's treatment of Moab? 8:2*

When David conquered the Moabites, he caused all the men to pass along to be measured. The actual procedure he used is not clear. It may have been that he caused all the men to lie on the ground and then taking a measure counted off two measures of men to be put to death, leaving every third measure to live. Or, it may have been that all the men that were tall enough to reach the upper two measures were put to death and only those that were short enough to come within the third measures were left alive.

3. *What battle did David fight in the north? 8:3*

David also warred against Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah. We are told that he had gone to recover his dominion at the river. David very evidently was extending his rule to the Euphrates river. This being true, the dominion was still within the land promised to

Abraham. Because horses were not very valuable in Palestine, David hocked all the chariot horses, reserving only enough for a hundred chariots. By so disabling the horses, David made them of no use to the king of Zobah. When the statement is made that ". . . the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer . . ." (II Samuel 8:5), light is thrown on the fact that Syria used to mean either all of Palestine or country about Damascus. Such a specific statement makes clear which Syrians so came to Hadadezer.

4. *Where was Hamath?* 8:9

Hamath was the extreme northern boundary of the land of Israel. It lay near the Orontes River and was considered the most important town of upper Syria. The modern name is Hamah, and from this site inscribed stones have been taken by archaeologists. The civilization that was most outstanding was of Hittite background. Whether David's kingdom quite extended to the city or not, we can not tell; but his borders reached to the edge of the territory of Hamath.

5. *What did David do with the spoils of war?* 8:11

David dedicated the silver and gold which he took in his wars to make a treasury for God's house. These things were dedicated to the Lord. As David neared the end of his career, he encouraged Solomon and his subjects to enter into the building effort. He gave a pattern for all that was to be built, and gave gold and silver for the work itself (I Chronicles 28:16).

*David's Government.* 8:14-18

14 And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

15 And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

16 And Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* recorder;

17 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and Seriah *was* the scribe;

18 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was over* both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.

6. *What was the extent of David's Kingdom? 8:13, 14*

The land of Edom reached from the southern part of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqabah. The borders may be set as having extended from south of Akabah to the Euphrates river after David's extensive conquest. No student need wonder at the terrible severity shown with regard to the Edomites when it is remembered that the Edomites and the Israelites had always been enemies. Garrisons were needed in the land of Edom, because it was such an important country. The garrisons would provide means for controlling the country.

Thus it was that under the mighty hand of the warrior David as he was blessed by God the kingdom came to its mightiest influence. The land that was at times subdued first by the Egyptians and then by the Chaldeans, the land that was so important to link together the civilizations of the Nile and the Euphrates valley was now under the control of a people who knew Jehovah and feared him. The Promised Land became a glorious reality to the seed of Abraham.

7. *How did David organize his kingdom? 8:16-18*

In this passage we have a very accurate listing of the offices and officers instituted by David to care for the military, religious, and civil functions of the kingdom. A listing of these officers is as follows:

Joab	Chief of Staff (over the host)
Jehoshaphat	Recorder (Chronicler)
Abiathar (at Zion)	Priests
Zadok (Gibeon)	

Seraiah

Secretary of State (Scribe)

Benaiah

Provincial Governor  
(over the Cherethites  
and Pelethites)

David's sons

Chief Ministers

Most interesting is the way in which Seraiah, the scribe is mentioned. With all the other ministers, notice is made of their ancestry. No mention is made of the name of the father of Seraiah. It is possible that he was a foreigner. It was the duty of the recorder to keep the annals of the kingdom and call David's attention to the needs of the kingdom. The scribe's duty was the writing of the official documents. Other men were entrusted with the oversight of subdivisions of the kingdom. The Cherethites and the Pelethites were a part of the Philistine peoples.

Benaiah had been distinguished through his killing of two prominent men of Moab. He had also killed a lion in a pit, the account of which is one of the very interesting sidelights of the Scripture. It was this same Benaiah who met an Egyptian, disarmed him, took his spear from him, and killed him with his own weapon. Benaiah was a descendant of Eleazar, the son of Aaron.

8. *Who was the high priest? 8:17*

The listing of these names says, "Ahimelech the son of Abiathar." This is the mistake of taking the son for the father, for according to I Samuel 22:11, 20, Abiathar was the son of Ahimelech.

Keil and Delitzsch in their *Commentaries on the Old Testament*, suggest that Zadok officiated at the tabernacle at Gibeon (I Chronicles 16:39), and Abiathar probably tended the Ark of the Covenant upon Mount Zion. Even so, it is very strange to find an Ahimelech named since Abiathar was the son of an Ahimelech, according to I Samuel 22:20; and in other passages, Zadok and Abiathar are mentioned as the two high priests under David

(II Samuel 15:24, 35 and 17:15; 19:12; 20:25). Some commentators transpose the names and read here Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech. Such a solution to the problem is ruled out by the fact that in I Chronicles 24:3-6, 31, Ahimelech is mentioned along with Zadok as head of the priests of the line of Ithamar. According to verse six, in that reference, an Ahimelech was the son of Abiathar. It would, therefore, be necessary to change the name Ahimelech to Abiathar, and this is too great a change to ascribe to a copyist. It is possible that Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, also had a son named Ahimelech. It is, by no means, uncommon for grandfather and grandson to have the same name (I Chronicles 5:30-41). The younger Ahimelech may have performed the duties of the high priest in connection with his father who was still living at the beginning of Solomon's reign (I Kings 2:27). Probably Ahimelech is mentioned here as the titular holder of the office, but since he was killed by Doeg, in the days of Saul, his son was serving in his place. Later references then attribute the office of priest to Abiathar.

## CHAPTER 8 IN REVIEW

1. What did David take from the Philistines? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many of the Moabites did David put to death? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What king of Zobah did David attack? \_\_\_\_\_
4. To what river did David extend his kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many chariots did David capture? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What did David do to the horses? \_\_\_\_\_
7. To what northernmost point did David extend his border? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who was David's captain? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who were David's priests? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who was David's recorder? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 9

- Vv. 1- 4 *David seeks Saul's heirs.* It was customary for a king to seek out the heirs of his predecessor. Generally the motive was to exterminate them. David had a different reason for looking for the heirs of Saul. He had made a covenant with Jonathan that he would deal kindly with any descendants of the royal family.
- Vv. 5-13 *Mephibosheth brought to David.* David's courtiers knew one heir of Saul's. He was a lame prince, the son of Jonathan. He was introduced to the narrative in Chapter four (v. 4), and the nature of his lameness was explained. David gave Mephibosheth a place in his court. He was treated as one of the king's own family.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Pay thy vows*" (Psalm 58:14). David wrote in a psalm that the God-fearing man should pay his vows "unto the most high." David had made a covenant with Jonathan that they would befriend each other and the descendants of their families. This was a sacred vow to David. As soon as he was in a position to do so, he sought out the heirs of Saul's family. God-fearing people through the years have considered their words as their bonds. They try to make good on their promises. This is a quality that is sorely needed in today's society.
2. "*The king's favor is towards a wise servant*" (Proverbs 14:35). Ziba showed himself to be a wise servant. He spoke kindly concerning the king and his master, Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth came before David with all the humility of a servant. David made him as one of his own sons. Although none is expected to grovel at the feet of his superiors, Christian people will do well to give honor to whom honor is due (Romans 13:7).

## 4. David's Kindness to the House of Saul, 9:1-13.

*David Seeks Saul's Heirs. 9:1-4*

And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name *was* Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant *is he*.

3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God unto him? and Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is* lame on *his* feet.

4 And the king said unto him, *Where is he?* And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, *he is* in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.

1. *Why was David interested in survivors of Saul's house?*  
9:1

Quite often a king would seek out survivors of his predecessor's royal house in order that he might put all of them to death. David's motive was quite different as he made inquiry about any survivors of Saul's house. David knew that Saul's sons—Jonathan, Malchi-shua, and Abinadab—were all slain in the battle on Mount Gilboa. Ish-bosheth's head had been brought to him by his assassins, and this was the fourth member of Saul's house to die. David had made a covenant with Jonathan that he would show kindness to any of his house; and so when he was settled in his kingdom, he made inquiry about any survivors. David would probably have spared not only descendants of Jonathan but any other of the house of Saul, for he had made essentially the same covenant with Saul when they parted after David spared Saul's life the first time (I Samuel 24:21, 22).

2. *Who was Ziba?* 9:2

Ziba was a former servant of Saul's who knew about the existence of Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth. The word Ziba is apparently from Semitic stem of a word meaning "branch" or "twig." Since he was Saul's servant, it is reasonable to suppose that he was from the tribe of Benjamin. He had been left behind when Saul went to battle, but had kept a record of the activities of the family.

3. *What had caused the boy's lameness?* 9:3

The nurse, taking care of the five-year-old boy, had dropped him while fleeing from the invading Philistines. This was made clear in II Samuel 4:4, but it does not indicate that she was actually carrying him in her arms or on her back. She may have lost her hold on his hand as they were fleeing from the mountains, causing the lad to fall and become permanently injured. The exact nature of the injury is not given, but when David returned from his successful suppression of Absalom's revolt, Mephibosheth said that he had not gone with David because he could not walk. He also said that he had not dressed his feet all the time David was gone (II Samuel 19:24). Such a circumstance would indicate that his feet had open sores.

4. *Who was Machir?* 9:4

Machir was a former friend of Saul. Mephibosheth had been living in his house. Machir was the son of Ammiel, a resident in the area of Lo-debar. We gather from this fact that Mephibosheth was in his house and from a reference in II Samuel 17:27, that he was a man of wealth and prominence. The home was beyond the Jordan, and probably not very far from the Mahanain.

*Mephibosheth Brought to David. 9:5-13*

5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and



did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am*?

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, who name *was* Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants unto Mephibosheth.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

5. *What was Mephibosheth's attitude toward David?* 9:6

Mephibosheth showed reverence for David. When he came unto David's presence, he fell on his face and honored the king. Later, David told him that he should not be afraid and assured him that he would show kindness to him. Mephibosheth was not like Ish-bosheth, his uncle, who had tried to keep David off the throne. He evidently harbored no ill will towards David, although Ziba later

accused him of staying behind in Jerusalem at the time of the revolt of Absalom in hope that the people of Israel would make him king. Mephibosheth denied this after David returned, and so it is impossible to tell whether he ever had any hope of ruling himself (II Samuel 16:3). Had anybody else become king, he might well have killed Mephibosheth as the sole surviving heir of the preceding regal family.

6. *What land was owned by Saul?* 9:7

With all the misfortune self-inflicted upon Saul and his family, he would retain possession of the ancestral home of Kish. This land was restored to the house of Saul in the person of Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth was grateful. He asked David why he had deigned to look upon ". . . such a dead dog." The character displayed by Mephibosheth here and in the later appearances he makes in the Biblical narrative depict the results of chronic disappointment, disaster, suspicion, and treachery upon a sensitive mind. Mephibosheth was broken in spirit, and taking possession of the family's tract of land in the tribe of Benjamin was small compensation for all he must have suffered.

7. *Was David's kindness unusual?* 9:8

It was very uncommon for any member of a kingly family to treat the heir of a rival house in such consideration. This was a very unusual kindness. It is almost without parallel in the history of mankind.

Receiving this kind of treatment at the hand of the new king was so surprising to Mephibosheth that he referred to himself as a "dead dog." He knew that he did not personally deserve the treatment that he received from David, but he was grateful for it. The recognition afforded Mephibosheth was sufficient to humble even the proudest oriental. The special mark of favor in giving him a place at the king's table is all the more noteworthy in view of Mephibosheth's physical imperfection.

8. *What duties were given to Ziba?* 9:10

Ziba had cared for the land of Saul at one time, and so David arranged that Ziba should cultivate the land and bring its produce to Mephibosheth. The income from the property would provide for his support, since his presence in the court of David would rather increase than diminish his expenses. The extent of the estate is indicated by the force that is needed to cultivate it—Ziba's fifteen sons, and twenty servants (verse 10 b).

9. *Who was Mephibosheth's son?* 9:12

Verses twelve and thirteen are something of an appendix to the actual narrative of chapter nine, although they are evidently by the same author. The verses give further information as to the line of Saul.—Mephibosheth had one son whose name was Micha. He is also mentioned in the genealogy in I Chronicles 8:34. David had remembered his covenant and had shown kindness to Jonathan's descendants. Mephibosheth was given the rank of a prince, eating at the king's table and having jurisdiction over suitable property as well as a group of servants. The unfortunate nature of his infirmity was the only thing that could detract from his happy state, and it is mentioned as the final statement of the chapter.

## CHAPTER 9 IN REVIEW

1. What was the name of Saul's servant? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the name of Saul's living heir? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Whose son was he? \_\_\_\_\_
4. With whom was he living? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where did he live? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was his physical ailment? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many sons did Ziba's servant have? \_\_\_\_\_
8. By what figure did Saul's heir refer to himself? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What position did David give to Saul's heir? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What land was given to Saul's heir? \_\_\_\_\_