**2024 Preaching Conference**

First and Second Samuel: Background and Contextual Issues

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A silver crown with gold accents

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Torah crown (*keter*), Andrea Zambelli ‘L’Honnesta,’ c. 1740–50, silver, parcel gilt, Venice, 27.5 x 31.4 x 31.4 cm. Location: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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**Preaching First and Second Samuel**

A 2019 Pew Research study revealed that only 61% of Christian sermons mention the Old Testament.[[1]](#footnote-2) While preachers would agree that they *should* preach “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), many struggle *actually* to preach from the Old Testament. While we know the Old Testament is vital, we can easily become overwhelmed when trying to discern how best to study and preach from it. This conference will help us to dive into the Old Testament books of 1 and 2 Samuel and encourage us to preach from these inspired texts.

First and Second Samuel are treasure troves overflowing with God’s faithfulness and activity in human history. First Samuel comprises 20,837 words, 31 chapters, and 810 verses. Second Samuel is a bit shorter, at 17,170 words, 24 chapters, and 695 verses. These books contain some of the Old Testament’s most well-known stories. The following are just a few examples:

* Hannah’s Prayer and Samuel’s Birth (1 Sam. 1)
* Samuel’s Call (1 Sam. 3)
* Saul Anointed King (1 Sam. 10)
* David Anointed (1 Sam.16:12-23)
* David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17)
* David and Jonathan’s Covenant (1 Sam. 20:1-29)
* David Spares Saul’s Life (1 Sam. 24, 26)
* Samuel’s Death (1 Sam. 25:1)
* Abigail Narrative (1 Sam. 25:2-44)
* Saul and Jonathan Slain (1 Sam. 31)
* David King Over Judah (2 Sam. 2)
* David King Over All Israel (2 Sam. 5)
* David’s Desire to Build the Temple (2 Sam. 7)
* David’s Kindness to Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9)
* David’s Great Sins and Nathan’s Rebuke (2 Sam. 11-12:15)
* Solomon Born (2 Sam. 12:24-25)
* Absalom’s Conspiracy (2 Sam. 15)
* Absalom Slain (2 Sam. 18)
* David’s Final Song (2 Sam. 23:1-7)
* David’s Census (2 Sam. 24)

By focusing on key areas such as pertinent background issues, theological insights, and homiletical themes, we will be better equipped to preach these books faithfully. I pray that these lectures edify you as you seek to handle the Word of Truth rightfully.

**First and Second Samuel in the Historical Books**

First and Second Samuel are at the heart of the Historical Books. In the English Bible, the Historical Books include the following twelve books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

In the Hebrew arrangement, Joshua, Judges, the books of Samuel, and Kings constitute a group called the *former prophets*.The *latter prophets*include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets. The remaining historical books—Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther—along with Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Daniel, form the section called *the Writings*.

The Historical Books cover a vast period of at least 800 years. The narrative begins with Joshua and the conquest and continues all the way to the Persian Empire in which Esther lived. The following is a 30,000-foot-view of the Historical Books:

*Joshua* was written to show the surpassing value of obedience. The book tells the story of Israel’s conquest of the Promised Land. The book of Joshua covers a span of approximately 20 years. (1405-1385 B.C.)

*Judges* displays a cycle of rebellion, punishment, a cry for deliverance, and God’s gracious sending of a deliverer (judge) to save the people.

*Ruth* takes place during the time of Judges. The book shows God’s sovereign care for faithful individuals, even those living in nations that have succumbed to religious apathy.

*1 and 2 Samuel* trace the early history of Israel’s monarchy—the narrative centers on the prophet Samuel and the first two kings of Israel, Saul and David.

*1 and 2 Kings* discuss the monarchy’s history from Solomon until Jerusalem’s fall. After Solomon’s reign, the nation was divided. (930 B.C.) Eventually, the northern nation, Israel, falls to the Assyrians. (722 B.C.) The southern kingdom, Judah, would later fall to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in 587/586 B.C.

*1 and 2 Chronicles* offer the first commentary on Scripture. These books were written during the post-exilic period to retell the stories of David, Solomon, and the Kingdom of Judah. By recounting God’s faithfulness in these stories, the author provides hope for God’s people.

*Ezra and Nehemiah* were originally a single composition. These books present the restoration events in the middle of the 5th century B.C. The books tell how the people of God, under Persian rule, were allowed to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple and the walls of Jerusalem.

*Esther* tells of God’s sovereign care for His people even while they were living in Persian exile. The book centers on two main characters, Queen Esther and Mordecai. It beautifully shows how God faithfully works to fulfill His promises even when He is silent.[[2]](#footnote-3)

**Overview of Judges**

Because the books of 1 and 2 Samuel continue the narrative that begins in Judges, a brief investigation of the period of the Judges is needed.[[3]](#footnote-4)

*Authorship of Judges*Although Scripture does not clearly indicate the author’s identity, Jewish tradition identifies Samuel as the author.

*Scope of Judges* In Joshua 24:19-20, Joshua warns the people that they will be unfaithful to the Lord and eventually bring disaster upon themselves. The story of Judges confirms Joshua’s words. For several centuries, the following cycle occurred: 1). The people abandon the Lord, 2). God punishes them by raising up a foreign power to oppress them, 3). The people cry out to the Lord for deliverance, and 4). God raises up a military leader (a judge) for them.

The shortest plausible length of the period of the Judges is 150 years. The longest plausible length is around 400 years. The judges are charismatic leaders. They are not generally portrayed as exemplary or holy individuals; however, they are empowered by the Spirit of God. This shows us, and showed them, that ultimately, God is the deliverer of His people.

The Book of Judges mentions 12 judges. In English, we tend to think of legal authorities when we consider judges. However, these judges are military leaders whom God raises up to deliver His people. The judges fill the gap between the people’s entrance into the Promised Land under Joshua and the time of the United Monarchy.

The book of Judges discusses six *major* judges: Othniel (3:7-11), Ehud (3:12-30), Deborah (4:1-5:31), Gideon (6:1-8:28), Jephthah (10:6-12:7), and Samson (13:1-15:20).

*The Story of Judges*

Introduction (1:1-2:5)Judges opens by showing how the Israelites disobey the Lord by not driving out the Canaanites from the land. In time, the Israelites succumb to the false religion and pagan culture of the Canaanites. The main reason Israel fails to complete the conquest of Canaan is because they disobey the covenant.

Main Body (2:6-16:31)The cycle is first laid out in 2:6-3:6. (sin, judgment, repentance, deliverance) The observation that the “Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord” introduces each cycle. (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1)

Appendixes (17-21)This section of Judges does not present a chronological history of the period. Instead, it portrays what life was like before the first king of Israel. The author shows how dangerous it is for people to “do what is right in their own eyes.” (17:6; 21:25) Even today, we need a standard for morality. As fallen creatures, we are incapable of establishing our own. The appendices clearly set up the perceived need for a king in Israel. The people need leadership and structure.

**Background Information for 1 and 2 Samuel**

*The Books*

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel have carried different titles in other time periods and other religious traditions. Initially, Hebrew Bibles recognized no division between the books of 1-2 Samuel. The first Hebrew Bible to split Samuel into two books was the Bomberg edition in 1516/17. Previously, the longer book (1-2 Sam. in the Protestant Canon) was simply entitled Samuel.

The LXX and the Eastern Orthodox Church titled these books as 1 and 2 Kingdoms.[[4]](#footnote-5) In the Catholic and Vulgate traditions, they are titled 1 and 2 Kings. Both the Orthodox and Catholic traditions understand the books of Samuel and Kings as a single, larger literary unit split into four smaller books.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Protestant Canon | Orthodox Canon | Catholic Canon |
| 1-2 Samuel | 1-2 Kingdoms | 1-2 Kings |
| 1-2 Kings | 3-4 Kingdoms | 3-4 Kings |

The naming of the books of 1 and 2 Samuel is a bit of a misnomer as the prophet Samuel dies in 1 Samuel 25. Furthermore, the books’ narratives primarily revolve around Saul and David and not Samuel. Even the division of the books in the Protestant Canon display this as 1 Samuel ends with the death of Saul and not Samuel. (1 Sam. 31)

*Authorship*

Like Judges, the authorship of 1-2 Samuel is anonymous. The Talmud preserves the rabbinic tradition that Samuel authored the content in 1 Samuel 1-24, and the rest of the material is attributed to the prophets Nathan and Gad. This Jewish tradition is based on 1 Chronicles 29:29, “Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the Chronicles of Samuel the seer, and in the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the Chronicles of Gad the seer.” (ESV)

According to Bergen, “Although many modern scholars believe Samuel played an important role in recording some of the material that now comprises the work, the consensus view is that the development of the original canonical (=autographic) form of the book was relatively complex.”[[5]](#footnote-6) While the genesis for 1-2 Samuel comes from the eleventh century B.C., the books did not reach their final form until the Babylonian exile or shortly thereafter. The biblical text demonstrates this in several ways:

* 1 Samuel 9:9 reads, “Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, ‘Come, let us go to the seer,’ for today’s ‘prophet’ was formerly called a seer.” (ESV) This seems to indicate that a term used as late as the 8th century B.C., was outdated at the time of the writing.
* 1 Samuel 27:6 reads, “So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. Therefore, Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day.” (ESV) The knowledge of the divided kingdom and the phrase “to this day” display editorial knowledge.
* 2 Samuel 5:4 reads, “David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.” (ESV) Clearly, the mention of the length of David’s reign is a later addition.
* Reference to the Book of Jashar (2 Sam. 1:18) seems to indicate that 1-2 Samuel were written using at least one other written source.[[6]](#footnote-7)

With all this in mind, Jews living around the 5th century B.C. were the first readers of the finalized form of 1 and 2 Samuel. They would have been working to put their nation back together and likely interested in tracing the historical roots of the theological and political issues that they were facing.[[7]](#footnote-8)

*Composition*

Issues related to the composition of 1-2 Samuel are quite complex.[[8]](#footnote-9) The books of 1-2 Samuel seem to have been originally part of a longer work that traced Israel’s history from Moses to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. This longer history is thought to have been composed of the following: Parts of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings. “These books present a theological history of Israel, evaluating Israel’s past in light of the covenant relationship established in Deuteronomy and relying on the so-called ‘retribution theology’ established there.”[[9]](#footnote-10) The idea of retribution theology is connected to the blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28, which teaches that obedience to the covenant will be rewarded while disobedience will be punished. Because this longer history is believed to be based on the retribution theology of Deuteronomy, the history is commonly referred to as the Deuteronomic History.

1-2 Samuel seem to be based on previous material that was eventually folded into the larger history mentioned above. For this reason,

1-2 Samuel have the least amount of editorial and compositional detail that may be considered distinctly “Deuteronomistic….” It seems likely that the historian had three narrative units available, which presumably had an independent history before being used to produce the books of Samuel. These were: (1) the ark narrative…; (2) the history of David’s rise…; and (3) the court history (otherwise known as the succession narrative). These portions provided the skeletal features used by the final author of the books of Samuel. At places, they appear to have been supplemented with other material, serial lists, and appendices to comprise the whole package.[[10]](#footnote-11)

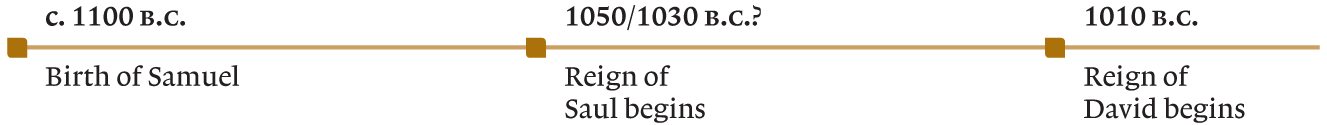
*Purpose*

The narratives of 1-2 Samuel display Israel’s history of establishing and developing the monarchy. “We must remember, however, that the biblical record was written primarily for a people whose interest in the past was motivated by concerns which differ considerably from those of the modern reader.”[[11]](#footnote-12) The Israelites’ primary concern in the monarchy’s history was rooted in their desire to understand better the nature of God’s relationship with His people. As a result, the narrative lacks details modern readers may want to know while offering detailed descriptions of seemingly less important occurrences. (i.e., Details concerning the fall of Shiloh, the center of Israel’s government at the time, vs. the abundant details surrounding the capture of the ark and its movement in Philistine lands.)

According to Philbeck,

The author’s purpose in Samuel, therefore, was not to write an abstract record of isolated events in Israel’s past. Instead, he was attempting to extract from past occurrences the principles upon which the Lord based his relationship to his people. Both the author and his readers saw God as the ultimate authority behind all human history. The Lord was always working for the supreme good of Israel, whether he acted in judgment or redemption.[[12]](#footnote-13)

*Timeline[[13]](#footnote-14)*



**Background Information for Each Chapter of 1 Samuel**

*1 Sam. 1*

Ramathaim

Numerous ancient Palestinian towns were built on the tops of hills and mountains because these locations provided natural barriers against invading peoples. These “high places” (*ramah*), with the passing of time, became towns formally called Ramah. The Old Testament mentions all of the following: Ramah of Asher (Josh. 19:29), Ramah of Benjamin (Josh. 18:25), Ramah of Gilead/ Ramoth-gilead (2 Kings. 8:29), Ramah of Naphtali (Josh. 19:26), Samuel’s Ramah/ Ramathaim-zophim (1 Sam. 1:1), and Ramah of the Negev (Josh. 19:8).[[14]](#footnote-15)

Ramathaim-zophim[[15]](#footnote-16) was the place of Samuel’s birth (1:1), residence (7:17), and burial (25:1). Eusebius and Jerome associated the location with Rentis, which was about 16 miles east of Tel-Aviv.[[16]](#footnote-17) Others suggest its location at Beit Rima (thirteen miles northeast of Lydda), Ram Allah (nine miles north of Jerusalem), Er-Ram (five miles north of Jerusalem), and the New Testament Arimathea, amongst a number of other locations.[[17]](#footnote-18) Clearly, no consensus has been reached about Ramathaim’s precise location. The full name only occurs here in 1 Samuel 1:1, and elsewhere in the Old Testament, is referred to by the shortened Ramah.

Elkanah’s Ancestry

His ancestry is listed here in v. 1 and in 1 Chronicles 6:25-26. A difficulty develops when trying to harmonize the fact that he is listed as an Ephraimite here but from the tribe of Levi in 1 Chronicles 6:25-26. A plausible theory posits that he was geographically an Ephraimite but genealogically a Levite.[[18]](#footnote-19)

Polygamy in the ANE

The ancient Code of Hammurabi included four laws (nos. 145-148), which dealt with the taking of a second wife if the first wife was unable to produce an heir. Andrews and Bergen state, “The inability of a wife to produce an heir was a serious issue in the ancient Near Eastern societies. An heir not only maintained the family line but also provided for the preservation of the father’s estate…. In addition, the heir would provide for his mother after the death of the father as a kind of Social Security of that culture.”[[19]](#footnote-20)

Shiloh

Joshua first settled in Gilgal and then at Shiloh. (Josh. 14:6; 18:1) He set up the tabernacle, Tent of Meeting, here (Josh. 18:1), and it became the center of worship during the time of the Judges.[[20]](#footnote-21) In 1838, E. Robinson identified modern-day Seilun as Shiloh’s location.[[21]](#footnote-22)

While verse 9 refers to “the temple of the Lord,” note that this is not in reference to the Temple proper, which was built later during Solomon’s reign.

*1 Sam. 2*

Eli

He was a high priest descended from Aaron through Ithamar. He also served for forty years as Israel’s judge before Samuel. (1 Sam. 4:18) A prophet declared that Eli’s house would be destroyed and that both of his sons would die on the same day. (1 Sam. 2:27-36) Later, Samuel confirmed this prophecy. (1 Sam. 3:11-18) Around 1050 B.C., Eli died when he received the news that the Philistines had defeated Israel, the Ark of God was taken, and both of his sons were dead. (1 Sam. 4:18) The prophecies against Eli’s house were finally fulfilled when Solomon removed Abiathar from his office and restored the line of Eleazar. (1 Kings 2:27) [[22]](#footnote-23)

Eli’s Sons

Hophni and Phinehas were Eli’s two sons. They “were worthless men” who “did not know the Lord.” (1 Sam. 2:12) As priests, they should have taken the breast and the right thigh of the sacrificial animals (Lev. 7:26-38) or, as listed in Deuteronomy 18:3, the stomach, cheeks, and shoulder of an ox or sheep. Instead, they took the choicest meat, including the fat (which was supposed to be burned before the Lord according to Lev. 7:23-25, 31; 17:6), and demanded the meat be roasted instead of boiled as prescribed. As prophesied, they both died on the same day. (1 Sam. 4:17)

Three-pronged fork

First Samuel 2:13 outlined an irregular system by which the priest used a three-pronged fork thrust into a boiling pot. Whatever stuck to the fork, the priest was able to keep. According to Klein, “A number of large forks have been discovered by archaeologists which were intended for some cooking function.”[[23]](#footnote-24)

*1 Sam. 3*

Samuel’s Call

God called Samuel to be a prophet (*nabi*). Samuel’s prophetical role bridged the gap between the pre-monarchy period and the pre-classical period of Israelite prophesy. Other prophets before and after Samuel also received distinct calls to become prophets of God. (i.e., Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah)

Samuel’s Confirmation

Like Moses (Num. 12:7), Samuel was “established” (v. 20). Samuel’s words passed the test for authenticity (Deut. 18:22), and he was confirmed as Israel’s prophet.[[24]](#footnote-25)

Dan to Beersheba

The phrase “from Dan to Beersheba” can often be found in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. Dan was in the far north, and Beersheba in the south. “From Dan to Beersheba” referred to the whole land of Israel.[[25]](#footnote-26)

*1 Sam. 4*

Philistines

The Philistines were a group of Sea Peoples who ravaged much of the eastern Mediterranean world and were of Aegean origin. They eventually settled in the southwestern coastal area of Canaan, where they established five city-states: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Gath. As they moved inland, they began to war with the Israelites. Saul was unable to prevail against them (1 Sam. 31); however, King David, a vassal of Achish, the king of Gath (1 Sam. 27; 29), defeated them. Over the following centuries, the Philistines had border skirmishes with Israel (i.e., I Kings 15:27, 1 Chron. 11:12-19) until they were conquered by the Assyrians in 734 B.C. The Philistine kingdom officially ended after they were conquered and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C.[[26]](#footnote-27)

Ark of the Covenant

This ark (lit. “chest or coffer”) became known as the Ark of the Covenant because the tablets of the Ten Commandments were deposited inside of it. (Ex. 25:16) The ark also contained a jar of manna (Ex. 16:33-34) and Aaron’s staff (Num. 17:10). Hebrews 9:4 lists the items. However, in Solomon's time, the ark only contained tablets. (1 Kings 8:9)[[27]](#footnote-28)

The Journey of the Ark of the Covenant in 1-2 Samuel [[28]](#footnote-29)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 Sam. 3:3 | The ark was in the tent of meeting |
| 1 Sam. 4 | The ark was captured by the Philistines |
| 1 Sam. 5:1-7 | Philistines bring the ark to Ashdod, setting it next to the idol of Dagon |
| 1 Sam. 5:8-9 | Philistines bring the ark to Gath |
| 1 Sam. 5:10-11 | Philistines send the ark to Ekron |
| 1 Sam. 6:10-15 | Philistines return the ark with a guilt offering to Beth-shemeh |
| 1 Sam. 6:19-19-21 | The Lord strikes 70 men for looking upon the ark |
| 1 Sam. 7:1-2 | Men of Kirath-jearim take the ark to the house of Abinadab (where it stays for 20 years) |
| 1 Sam. 14:18 | Saul commands Ahijah to bring the ark to the war camp |
| 2 Sam. 6:2-5 | David begins to move the ark to Jerusalem on a cart |
| 2 Sam.6:6-7 | The Lord strikes Uzzah dead for holding the ark |
| 2 Sam. 6:10-11 | David takes the ark to Obed-edom, where it stays for three months |
| 2 Sam. 6:12-17 | David brings the ark to Jerusalem and puts it into the tent he pitched for it |
| 2 Sam. 15:24-25 | Zadok brings the ark to David, who commands him to carry it back to Jerusalem |
| 2 Sam. 15:29 | Zadok and Abiathar carry the ark back to Jerusalem |

*1 Sam. 5*

Ashdod

Ashdod was one of the five-city states of the Philistines. It, along with Ekron, were the two northernmost cities. Ashdod was near the coast on the Via Maris road.[[29]](#footnote-30)

Dagon

Dagon was the national god of the Philistines. In some Ugaritic tablets, Baal was referred to as Dagon’s son. The ark was placed in the temple of Dagon in Ashdod (v. 2), and Samson pulled down the temple of Dagon at Gaza in Judges 16:23.[[30]](#footnote-31)

Tumors

The tumors were likely “buboes—not anal tumors or hemorrhoids (=KJV’s “emerods”)—caused by a rodent-borne disease (cf. 6:4).”[[31]](#footnote-32) The tumors align with what the Lord said in Deuteronomy 28:27, “The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed.”

*1 Sam. 6*

Golden Tumors and Rats

Klein states the following,

The detestable diviners recommended appeasing Yahweh with ten fashioned images of gold, a violation of the Decalogue’s prohibition against all likenesses of animals and humans (cf. Exod. 20:24: Deut. 5:8). Incredibly, the recommended statues were to be of ritually detestable animals (cf. Lev 11:29)—rats! As if that were not enough, Yahweh was also to be given a gift of five golden images of unclean portions of the human anatomy—“tumors”! This advice represents a syncretistic blend of pagan imitative magic and perverted Torah ritual.[[32]](#footnote-33)

Beth-shemeh

Beth-shemesh was a priestly city of the tribe of Dan, located on the northern boundary of Judah. Josephus confirmed the biblical account that 70 men were struck down here for irreverently gazing on the ark. The archeological site, Tell er-Rumeileh is associated with the town.[[33]](#footnote-34)

Kirath-jearim

The town was a strategic location situated about 10 miles up the Sorek Valley toward Jerusalem. The location was positioned on a hill on the boundaries of Judah, Dan, and Benjamin.[[34]](#footnote-35)

*1 Sam. 7*

Timeframe

A 20-year gap occurs between v. 1 and v. 2. During those two decades, Israel “lamented after the Lord.” (v. 2)

Ebenezer

The Israelites won an important victory over the Philistines. To mark the occasion, Samuel sets up an Ebenezer. This seems to be different than the Ebenezer (a location) mentioned in 1 Samuel 4:1. This new Ebenezer certainly functioned as a memorial stone and may have marked the new boundary between the Philistines and the Israelites. “Samuel may have chosen the name Ebenezer to declare God’s victory over the Philistines in contrast to the humiliating defeat suffered at the first Ebenezer (4:1).”[[35]](#footnote-36) “All that was lost through sin in the first Ebenezer event was restored through repentance in the second.”[[36]](#footnote-37)

*1 Sam. 8*

Bergen asserts that 1 Samual 8 functions as a commentary on Deuteronomy 16:18-17:20. He lists the following political, military, and spiritual factors that impacted Israel’s demand for a change of leadership.

1. The failure to establish a system producing an adequate number of qualified judges to lead Israel. (8:3-5) At times, a judge’s son(s) would take over after his death; yet, on the whole, this system failed as the sons were generally seen as unworthy successors.
2. The desire of the people to have a national, rather than local or regional, government. (8:4) Samuel’s influence exceeded his own regional boundaries. This likely occurred because of the lack of qualified candidates in many locations. (8:2-3) While the Torah ideal was numerous simultaneous judges (Deut. 16:18), Samuel’s judgeship prepared Israel for monarchy.
3. The perceived need for more human military leadership in armed conflicts against other nations. (8:20) Bergen states, “It is reasonable to assume that economic considerations, especially the desire of wealthy Israelites to preserve their wealth from foreign confiscation, played a key role in the call for a strengthened military structure.”[[37]](#footnote-38)
4. The people’s desire to have a form of national government that was “like the other nations.” (8:5, 20) The people longed for an earthly king instead of submitting to the leadership of the Lord Himself.
5. Closely related to the fourth point, Israel had rejected God as their king. (8:7)[[38]](#footnote-39)

*1 Sam. 9*

Saul

The first king of Israel, who reigned from 1020-1000 B.C. Saul’s name literally meant “asked for.” The Lord chose a man named Saul to be Israel’s first king, and Samuel anointed him as king. [[39]](#footnote-40)

Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. Externally, Saul looked like a king and would prove to be a competent military leader; however, time would reveal the evil of his heart. The following three instances display Saul’s wickedness:

Instance #1 Saul offered a sacrifice that priests were supposed to offer. Samuel told Saul to wait for him at Gilgal, but after seven days, Saul grew impatient and offered the sacrifice himself to boost his army’s morale. When Samuel arrived shortly thereafter, he told Saul that the Lord was going to take his kingdom from him and give it to another. (1 Sam. 13:8-14)

Instance #2 Saul made a rash oath. He pronounced a curse on anyone who ate before Israel had won the battle. His own son Jonathan ate honey (unaware of the oath his father had made), and if not for the people, Saul would have killed Jonathan for breaking his ridiculous command. (1 Sam. 14: 24-46)

Instance #3 Saul failed to follow God’s instructions concerning the Amalekites. Samuel told Saul that the Lord commanded that the Amalekites and all they had were to be destroyed. Saul spared the best of the herds and the flocks to sacrifice to the Lord. Because Saul chose to disobey God, God chose to remove the kingdom from him. The entire situation was sad and showed that Samuel’s warnings were true. (1 Sam. 15)[[40]](#footnote-41)

*1 Sam. 10*

Anointing

To *anoint* literally meant “to touch, smear, or rub an object or person with oil.” Scripture details many different types of anointing: anointing for medical reasons (Luke 10:34), anointing of the dead for burial (Mark 16:1), anointing of sacred objects (Exod. 29:36; 30:22-29), and anointing of priests and kings. (1 Kings 1:39; Exod. 29:4-7)

The rite of anointing kings, instead of the coronation of kings, was common throughout the ancient Near East. For example, the Arman letters discuss anointing as the right of kingship in Syria-Palestine in the fourteenth century B.C. In Israel, the anointing of kings symbolized their special relationship with God and was seen as the moment when the king would receive God’s own Spirit. This is one reason that David refused to “touch the Lord’s anointed.” (1 Sam. 24:6)[[41]](#footnote-42)

Gibeah

The Gibeah mentioned in this text (v. 26) is referred to as the Gibeah of Benjamin to differentiate it from two other locations named Gibeah in Scripture—Gibeah of Judah (Josh. 15:57) and Gibeah of Phinneas (Josh. 24:33). In other places, the word Gibeah is simply rendered as “hill.” (i.e. Judg. 7:1; Jer. 31:34; etc.) Notice the Gibeah mentioned in v. 5 is translated as the “hill of the Lord.” This location is distinct from Gibeah, mentioned later in the text, v. 26.

Gibeah of Benjamin was Saul’s birthplace and his place of residence after he became king. His descendants were hanged in this location. (2 Sam. 21:6) The modern archeological site Tell el-Ful reveals twelve levels of Israelite history at and around Gibeah of Bejamin.[[42]](#footnote-43)

Mizpah

The town was in the territory of Benjamin (Josh. 18:28); however, the exact location is uncertain. Some connect it to Tel en-Nasbeh (about 7.5 miles north of Jerusalem). Samuel gathered the people to pray at this location (1 Sam. 7:5-11), and it was the location where Saul was publicly chosen king. (1 Sam. 10:17-25)[[43]](#footnote-44)

*1 Sam. 11*

Ammonites

While the origin of Ammon is obscure, Genesis 19:30-38 connects the Ammonites to the incestuous union of Lot and his daughter. Little was known about Ammon until the early Iron Age. (1200-1000 B.C.) The literary and archeological evidence shows that a centralized state formed around the capital city of Rabbat-bene-Ammon (Rabbah of the Sons of Ammon). The modern location is Amman, Jordan.

The earliest recorded Ammonite king was Nahash, who besieged Jabesh-gilead. (1 Sam. 11) His son, Hanun, lost to David, and subsequently, the Ammonites were incorporated into David’s empire as vassals. (2 Sam. 10; 12:26-31) Eventually, the Ammonites became an Assyrian vassal, likely a Babylonian vassal, and later, in the Persian period, the name was attached to a geographical location, but little else is known about what became of the Ammonites.[[44]](#footnote-45)

“Gouge out all your right eyes”

At the beginning of 1 Samuel 11, Nahash stated that he would only make a treaty with the Jabeshites if they “gouge out” their right eyes. (1 Sam. 11:2) Josephus sheds light on this, stating that the left eye was covered by the shield; therefore, gouging the right eye made fighting impossible. Furthermore, blindness brought reproach on the person/people. Other examples of this sort of eye gouging can be seen in Sampson’s narrative (Judg. 16:21) and the story of Zedekiah’s blinding by the Babylonians in 2 Kings 25:7.[[45]](#footnote-46)

*1 Sam. 12*

Samuel’s Address

In this chapter, Samuel gave an address to the Israelites. Sometimes, this chapter is referred to as “Samuel’s Farewell Address.” To title the address as such is a misnomer because this was not Samuel’s final address to Israel; rather, this address ended the age of the judges and officially began Israel’s monarchy. Samuel continued as a prophet, even anointing the next king of Israel, David. (1 Sam. 16)[[46]](#footnote-47)

*1 Sam. 13*

Saul’s Unworthiness

The most important event in 1 Samuel 13 was when Saul offered an unlawful sacrifice. (see Saul under 1 Sam. 9) “The result was a prophetic rebuke, in which Saul was informed that his dynasty would not endure; another man would be appointed to succeed him instead of his own son (13:13-14).”[[47]](#footnote-48)

Michmash

The town of the tribe of Benjamin was located about seven miles northeast of Jerusalem. In 1 Samuel 14, God gave Jonathan a great victory at Michmash. (1 Sam. 14:1-14) Exiles returning from Babylon resettle at Michmash, according to Nehemiah 7:31; 11:31. The city is associated with the ruined village Mukhmas, located on the northern ridge of the Wadi Suweinit.[[48]](#footnote-49)

*1 Sam. 14*

Saul’s Unworthiness

See Instance # 2 under 1 Sam. 9.

Jonathan

Jonathan was the elder son of King Saul and Ahinoam. (1 Sam. 14:49-50) He possessed great bravery and won an exceptional battle at Michmash. In 1 Samuel 18-23, the author discussed Jonathan’s close friendship with David. He, along with Saul and his two brothers, were slain by the Philistines at Gilboa. Later, King David showed favor to Jonathan’s son, Mephibosheth.[[49]](#footnote-50)

Urim and Thummim

First Samuel 14:41-42 mentioned the Urim and Thummim. They were a form of lot-casting in early Israel, which seem to have ceased to be used after David’s time. They were mentioned in Exodus 28:30; Numbers 27:21; Deuteronomy 33:8; etc.

The only description of how these lots were used is found in 1 Samuel 14. That being said, their precise use is still debated. Perhaps Urim meant “accursed, condemned,” while Thummim meant “pronounced whole, acquitted.”[[50]](#footnote-51) Or perhaps the fact that Urim starts with the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet and Thummim with the last is somehow significant. What we do know is that the casting of these lots was seen as the way the LORD Himself disclosed His verdict.[[51]](#footnote-52)

*1 Sam. 15*

Saul’s Unworthiness

See Instance #3 under 1 Sam. 9.

Amalekites

This nomadic tribe’s lineage goes back to Eliphaz, a son of Esau. (Gen. 36:12) The Amalekites show up several times in the Old Testament. For example, they attacked Israel after the Exodus (Exod. 17:8-16). In 1 Samuel 15, Saul disobeyed God’s commandment to exterminate the tribe (1 Sam. 15:2-3). The Amalekites were not fully destroyed until the 8th century B.C. (1 Chron. 4:43)[[52]](#footnote-53)

*1 Sam. 16*

The Fall of Saul and the Rise of David[[53]](#footnote-54)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Saul** | **David** |
| Holy Spirit removed; evil spirit given  (16:14-23) | Anointed with Holy Spirit (16:1-13) |
| Jealous and treacherous (18) | Faithful friend (20) |
| Attempts to kill David (19) | Protects Saul’s life (24; 26) |
| Failed holy war (15) | Mighty holy warrior (17) |
| Kingdom torn away (13:13-14; 15:11, 26) | Kingdom promised forever (2 Sam. 7:1-17) |

Anointing

See Anointing under 1 Sam. 10.

David

David’s story primarily takes place in 1-2 Samuel, concluding in 1 Kings 1-2. He was born in Bethlehem, the eighth son of Jesse. (1 Sam. 16:10) David was anointed by Samuel (1 Sam. 16:13), entered Saul’s service (1 Sam. 16:21), and had a close friendship with Saul’s son, Jonathan. (1 Sam. 18:1-4) He reigned for 40 years. (1 Kings 2:11) He was remembered as “the sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. 23:1) and a “man after God’s own heart.” (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22)[[54]](#footnote-55)

Bethlehem

A Judean village approximately six miles south of Jerusalem. The location was first mentioned in the Amarna letters. (14th century B.C.) Bethlehem was first mentioned in Judges 17-18, in the story of the Levite who became a household priest in Ephraim. Micah 5:2 prophesies a shepherd king from Bethlehem, and of course, Matthew 2 and Luke 2 detail Christ’s birth in Bethlehem.

Christian tradition, as early as the 2nd century A.D., identified a cave as the place of Christ’s birth. Constantine built a church at the location in 338 A.D. Later, around 386 A.D., Jerome made his Latin Vulgate translation from Bethlehem.[[55]](#footnote-56)

In what sense can an evil spirit come from the Lord?

Two possible answers:

1. The Lord may have brought the evil spirit on Saul in judgment for Saul’s rebellion.
2. God may have intended the evil spirit to serve a redemptive function.

* In response to the evil spirit, David ended up in the royal court as a musician.

*1 Sam. 17*

Goliath

Goliath was called a Philistine, though he may have “descended for the old Rephaim, of whom a scattered remnant found refuge with the Philistines after their dispersion by the Ammonites. (Deut. 2:20-21; 2 Sam. 21:22)”[[56]](#footnote-57) In 1 Samuel 17:4 (Masoretic Text), he was described as six cubits and a span tall (A cubit was around 18 inches), about 9.5 feet tall.[[57]](#footnote-58) Some other traditions, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the LXX measured Goliath at four cubits and a span (6 ft. 9 in. tall).[[58]](#footnote-59)

Confusion exists around the meaning of 2 Samuel 21:19, which mentions the death of a warrior named Goliath at the hands of Elhanan. “The AV attempts to harmonize the discrepancy by reading: ‘Elhanan. . . slew the brother of Goliath....’ ”[[59]](#footnote-60) This has led some to conclude that the attribution of Goliath’s death at the hands of David “may not be original.”[[60]](#footnote-61) On the other hand, Unger argues that,

A careful study of the original suggests that the readings both in Samuel and Chronicles originally was either, “And Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi and the brother of Goliath,” or, “Elhanan the son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath.” In the original, it is obvious that both passages substantiate that David killed Goliath and Elhanan killed the brother of Goliath.[[61]](#footnote-62)

Stones

First Samuel 17:40 reads, “Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook….” The stones were not small, flat stones; rather, “because the stones were intended for use ‘with his sling’ in battle, they probably were about the size of typical ancient Near Eastern sling stones—as big as tennis balls.”[[62]](#footnote-63)

*1 Sam. 18*

See Jonathan under 1 Sam. 14.

Thousands…and ten thousands

First Samuel 18:7 includes the couplet, “Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” In Psalm 91:7 and in the Ugaritic texts, *thousands* and *ten* *thousands* are used synonymously. “Still, the couplet does suggest a contrast between Saul and David that might make the listener think that the numbers are also to be contrasted. From Saul’s point of view, even an assertion of equality for David might have been suspect.”[[63]](#footnote-64)

Michal

Michal was the youngest daughter of Saul (1 Sam. 14:49) and David’s first wife. (1 Sam. 18:27) David paid double the bride price to marry her. (1 Sam. 18:25-27) She helped David escape from Saul (1 Sam. 19:11-17) and later criticized David for dancing before the Ark of God. (2 Sam. 6:16-23) As a result, she never bore children. (2 Sam. 6:23)[[64]](#footnote-65)

*1 Sam. 19*

David Flees from Saul

* David fled from Saul in Gibeah, and
* David went to Samuel at Naioth in Ramah.
* After Saul found him, David fled back to Jonathan in Gibeah.
* After Jonathan warned David of his father’s plans, David fled to Ahimelech the priest at Nob.
* At Nob, David got food and took Goliath’s sword before fleeing to the Philistine city of Gath.
* David set up his headquarters at the cave of Adullam, where his army grew to more than 400 men.
* In order to protect his parents, David left them in the care of the king of Moab at Mizpeh and
* David went to live in the stronghold.
* Eventually, David went to the forest of Hereth and
* Then David went to rescue nearby Keliah from the Philistine raiding parties.
* When David got word that Saul was heading for Keilah, David and his 600-man army traveled to the wilderness of Ziph.
* After the men of Ziph betrayed David to Saul, David and his men fled to the wilderness of Maon.
* David narrowly escaped capture by Saul at Maon. Fleeing the strongholds of Engedi,
* David escaped capture, and he refused to take Saul’s life when given the opportunity. David returned to the stronghold.
* David then goes to the wilderness of Paran.
* While David is there, the men of Ziph again betray David to Saul, and once again, David refuses to take Saul’s life.
* Finally, David and his men sought refuge with Achish, the King of Gath. [[65]](#footnote-66)

*1 Sam. 20*

The New Moon Festival

Israel followed a lunar calendar, and the new moon was marked as a festival day. According to Amos 8:5, all work was to cease, and sacrifices were to be offered. (Num. 28:11-15) The festival continued to be celebrated into post-exilic times. (Ezra 3:5; Neh. 10:33)

*1 Sam. 21*

Nob

Nob was a town of Benjaman. The town can be found in a list of post-exilic cities in Nehemiah 11:31-32. Nob was also mentioned in Isaiah 10:27-32. This text implies that Nob was between Anathoth and Jerusalem.

Ahimelech had overseen the sanctuary at Shiloh (1 Sam. 14:3) but apparently was moved to Nob after Shiloh’s destruction. (Jer. 7:14) A large body of priests served with him caring for sacred objects such as the ephod (Exod. 28:6-14), the table of Presence (Exod. 25:23-30), and even Goliath’s sword. Doeg the Edomite slaughtered eighty-five people who wore the ephod. Only one son of Ahimelech, Abiathar, escaped.[[66]](#footnote-67)

Ahimelech

Ahimelech was the son of Ahitub, grandson of Phineas, and the great-grandson of Eli. (1 Sam. 14:3) He was a leading priest at Nob, and he helped David by giving him sacred bread and Goliath’s sword. Saul ordered Doeg to murder him and the other priests at Nob.[[67]](#footnote-68)

*1 Sam. 22*

Adullam

Adullam was an ancient city (Gen. 38:1, 12, 20) in the low country, between the hilly country of Judah and the sea. The city was approximately thirteen miles southwest of Bethlehem. Rehoboam fortified the city during his reign. (2 Chron. 11:7) The city was so beautiful that Micah called it “the glory of Israel.” (Mic. 1:15)[[68]](#footnote-69)

David and his men hid in one of the many limestone caves near the city (1 Sam. 22:1-2) after fleeing from Saul. For more information on David’s flight from Saul, see David Flees from Saul under 1 Sam. 19.

Abiathar

Abiathar was a priest and the sole priestly survivor of the slaughter at Nob. He fled to David and eventually became David’s lifelong friend and the high priest. (1 Chron. 15:11) During Absalom’s rebellion, Abiathar remained loyal to David. (2 Sam. 15:14)

After David’s death, Abiathar sided with Adonijah in his attempt to gain the throne. After Solomon became king, he deposed Abiathar from his office (1 Kings 2:26-27) and banished him to Anathoth. Abiathar was the last priest in Eli’s line, thus fulfilling the prophecy. (1 Sam. 2:31-35)[[69]](#footnote-70)

*1 Sam. 23*

Keliah

Keliah was a fortified city of Judah, identified with the modern Khirbet, about 8.5 miles northwest of Hebron. The Jewish returnees from the Exile rebuilt the city. (Neh. 3:17-18) Interestingly, Keliah was one of several places where the prophet Habakkuk was said to be buried.[[70]](#footnote-71)

Ziph/ Ziphites

The desert town of Ziph was built by Mesha, the son of Caleb. (1 Chron. 2:42) Ziph was fortified by Rehoboam. (2 Chron. 11:8) The wilderness of Ziph was part of the Judean desert near to and surrounding the town of Ziph.

The Ziphites twice revealed David’s hiding place to Saul. Some interesting events that happened at Ziph included the farewell interview between David and Jonathan, David sparing Saul’s life, and the temporary relenting of Saul.[[71]](#footnote-72)

*1 Sam. 24*

Corner of Saul’s robe

Bergen discusses the importance of David cutting the corner of Saul’s robe when he writes,

This act was far from meaningless because David’s confiscation of a portion of the royal robe signified the transfer of power from the house of Saul to the house of David. Furthermore, by removing the corner of the robe, David made Saul’s robe to be in a state of noncompliance with Torah requirements (cf. Num. 15:38-39; Deut. 22:12); thus, Saul’s most obvious symbol of kingship was made unwearable. In essence, David had symbolically invalidated Saul’s claim to kingship. David immediately recognized the powerful implications of this act and was conscience-stricken (v. 5; HB v. 6).[[72]](#footnote-73)

*1 Sam. 25*

Abigail

Abigail was the wife of Nabal, who was an evil Calebite. (1 Sam. 25:2) Nabal insulted David, but Abigail intervened and brought gifts to David and his men. (1 Sam. 25:18-19) She eventually married David after Nabal’s death and bore David’s second son. (2 Sam. 3:3) She was captured, along with the rest of David’s family, by the Amalekites but was eventually rescued by David. (1 Sam. 30:18)[[73]](#footnote-74)

*1 Sam. 26*

Ahimelech the Hittite

Ahimelech the Hittite is mentioned nowhere else in Scripture. He was one of David’s warriors, and according to 1 Samuel 26:6, David invited him to accompany him into Saul’s camp in the wilderness of Ziph. It seems that he did not go with David, as the text only names Abishai as accompanying David.[[74]](#footnote-75)

*1 Sam. 27*

Ziklag

The city was certainly situated in the Negev, but the exact location is unknown. Some have connected it to Tell-esh Shari’a (15 miles southeast of Gaza)[[75]](#footnote-76) and others to Tell el-Khuweilfeh (10 miles east of Tell-esh Shari’a).[[76]](#footnote-77) According to Joshua 19:5, Ziklag was given to the tribe of Simeon.

The Philistines controlled the city from the early twelfth century until David’s time. The king of Gath, Akish, gave Ziklag to David, who used it as his base for raids. (1 Sam. 27:6) The Amalekites sacked Ziklag and took its people and possessions, including David’s wives. David pursued and eventually rescued the people and their belongings.

According to 2 Samual 1:1; 4:10, David received word of Saul’s death while at Ziklag. The city stayed in Israelite control, and Ziklag was even named as one of the cities that was reoccupied after the Exile. (Neh. 11:28)

Geshurites, Amalekites, and Girzites

* The Geshurites were included in Judah’s tribal allotment, but the Israelites had failed to gain control of the region. (Josh. 13:1-2)
* The Amalekites were supposed to be destroyed by Israel. (Exod. 17:15-16; Deut. 25:17-19) Saul also failed to accomplish this task. (1 Sam. 15)
* The Girzites are unknown. The text says that they, along with the Geshurites and Amalekites, “were inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt.” So, the Girzites’ territory, at least partially, belonged to Judah.

Why did David raid and destroy these cities? According to Bergen, “David was out from under the watchful eye of Achish. Ever the faithful servant to the Lord, David used this opportunity to pursue the Torah mandate to conquer the Promised Land.”[[77]](#footnote-78) He continues by saying that all three of these cities “were under the ban commanded by the Toah (Deut. 20:16-17); none of them was to be spared by the Israelites in warfare.[[78]](#footnote-79) This is why David, according to 1 Samuel 27:11, “would not leave man or woman alive” when he attacked these locations.

*1 Sam. 28*

The Medium of En-dor

After receiving no word from the Lord, Saul and two bodyguards went to a medium at En-dor.[[79]](#footnote-80) This sort of activity was what the Philistines did (1 Sam. 6:2) but was strictly prohibited by the Torah. (Deut. 18:10)[[80]](#footnote-81)

Did the medium actually contact a person, and if so, was that person really Samuel? Bergen makes the following observations:

1. The plain statement of the Hebrew text is that she did, in fact, see Samuel.
2. The medium reacted to Samuel’s appearance as though it was genuine…. Her strong reaction also suggests that Samuel’s appearance was unexpected; perhaps this was the first time she had ever actually succeeded in contacting the dead.
3. The speeches attributed to Samuel contained allusions to a prior interchange between the two….
4. Samuel’s role and message as a prophet… was unchanged in his encounter with Saul here.[[81]](#footnote-82)

At least two views could be argued from the text. First, it may be possible for mediums to contact dead people and establish lines of communication between the living and the dead. Second, the situation in this text could be seen as a unique act of God that brought Samuel into contact with Saul.[[82]](#footnote-83)

*1 Sam. 29*

Ziklag

See Ziklag under 1 Sam. 27.

Thousands…and ten thousands

See Thousands…and ten thousands under 1 Sam. 18.

*1 Sam. 30*

Abiathar

See Abiathar under 1 Sam. 22.

Amalekites

See Amalekites under 1 Sam. 15.

*1 Sam. 31*

Mount Gilboa

Mount Gilboa is associated with the modern Jebel Fuqus (about 7 miles west of Beth Shan), which is a ridge of limestone hills reaching 1,737 feet above the Mediterranean. The mountain is on the eastern side of the Plains of Esdraelon.

In reference to the battle discussed in 1 Samuel 31, Reed states, “In choosing to defend Gilboa against the Philistines, Saul was taking advantage of the heights offered by the mount where the superior equipment of the enemy would be less effective.”[[83]](#footnote-84) Saul and his sons, including Jonathan, were slain on the mountain. (1 Sam. 31:1, 8)

Saul’s Death

See Saul’s Death under 2 Sam. 1.

Beth Shan (Shean)

Beth Shan was a fortified city on the crossroad of the Jezreel and Jordan valley. The bodies of Saul and his sons were hung on the walls of the city. A temple to the goddess Ashtaroth was located here. (1 Sam. 31:10) The city was rebuilt in the Hellenistic period and renamed Scythopolis, which became one of the cities of the Decapolis. The city is identified with Tell el-Husn, which is next to the Harod Stream.[[84]](#footnote-85)

Ashtaroth

Ashtaroth was one of the three great Canaanite goddesses. She was a goddess of fertility and love (her Greek counterpart was Aphrodite) and was also associated with war. The Bible condemns the worship of her repeatedly. (i.e. Judg. 2:13-14; 10:6-7) Solomon was criticized for worshiping her, and the prophet Jeremiah condemned the people for making sacrifices to the “Queen of Heaven,” which was a syncretism of Astarte and Ishtar.[[85]](#footnote-86)

**Background and Contextual Information for Each Chapter of 2 Samuel**

*2 Sam. 1*

Saul’s Death

In 1 Samuel 31, the writer indicated that Saul “fell upon” his own sword (1 Sam. 31:4); however, in 2 Samuel 1:10, the Amalekite recounted that he killed Saul by saying, “So I stood beside him and killed him.”

How do we make sense of these, seemingly contradictory, reports of Saul’s death? Generally speaking, scholars fall into three camps on this issue. Some argue that the Amalekite made the story up. Others accept the Amalekite’s story as a truthful account of what happened. Others argue that there is no way to be sure about the historicity of the episode with the Amalekite.

The following is a brief sampling of some of these scholarly opinions:

* Joyce G. Baldwin: “The reader knows that his story does not tally with the events already recorded.” (*1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Vol. 8 [Leicester: InterVarsity, 1988], 176)
* P. Kyle McCarter Jr.: “The contradiction is deliberate, a result of the writer’s self-conscious portrayal of the Amalekite messenger as a liar.” (*II Samuel*, The Anchor Bible, Vol. 9 [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984], 64)
* A.A. Anderson: “It must have been fairly clear to the readers that the Amalekite was exaggerating his own role in this particular episode.” (*2 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 11 [Dallas: Word Books, Publishers, 1989], 5)
* Hans Hertzberg: “His account does not tally with that of ch. 31.” (*1 & 2 Samuel*, The Old Testament Library [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1965], 236)
* Robert P. Gordon: “He will be executed as a regicide…, but he was more probably a common looter with some facility in story-telling.” (*I and II Samuel*, Library of Biblical Interpretation [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999], 209)
* Ronald F. Youngblood: “Josephus…errs in his basic assumption that the Amalekite fabricated his story. But the whole narrative seems against this.” [*1 & 2 Samuel*, Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992], 806)
* H.P. Smith: “The easiest hypothesis is that the Amalekite fabricated his story. But the whole narrative seems against this.” [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of* *Samuel*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1904), 254]
* A.F. Kirkpatrick: It is not necessary to regard this as a lie of the Amalekite.” (*The First Book of Samuel*, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1880], 51)
* Brueggemann is noncommittal on this point, suggesting that “there is no way to adjudicate the question of the historicity of either narrative.” (*First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 213][[86]](#footnote-87)

While no consensus has been reached, Bergen offers the following harmony of both texts: “The reader can conclude that Saul inflicted on himself a blow that, given sufficient passage of time, would have killed him; however, his death was hastened by the Amalekites’ efforts.”[[87]](#footnote-88)

The irony of the entire episode is that Saul lost his kingdom because he refused to kill an Amalekite king (1 Sam. 15:9, 26); yet, an Amalekite, which should have been destroyed, lived to kill the king of Israel.

Book of Jasher

The Book of Jasher (2 Sam. 1:18) is not extant, and little is known about the work. Joshua 10:12-13 mentions the book, which is thought to be a work regaling the heroic exploits of the Israelites.[[88]](#footnote-89)

*2 Sam. 2*

Abner

Abner was Saul’s cousin. Abner was the son of Ner the Benjaminite, who was Kish’s brother. Kish was Saul’s father. Abner was the commander of Saul’s army (1 Sam. 14:50), and Abner later made Saul’s son Ish-bosheth king of Israel. (2 Sam. 2:8) Eventually, Ish-bosheth accused Abner of sleeping with Rizpah, Saul’s former concubine. (2 Sam 3:7) Incensed, Abner flipped to David’s side. David received Abner, but soon Joab murdered Abner. Joab's animosity stemmed from the fact that Abner had killed Joab’s brother, though he seemingly did so in self-defense. (2 Sam. 2:12-32) David, grieved by Abner’s death, composed a lament in his honor. (3:33-34)[[89]](#footnote-90)Joab

Joab’s mother, Zeruiah, was David’s sister. (2 Sam. 2:13; 1 Chr. 11:6) Joab was the commander of David’s army (2 Sam. 5:8), and he achieved many military exploits while in service to David, such as victories against the Edomites (2 Sam. 8:13-14) and the Ammonites. (2 Sam. 10:6-14) He aided David’s wicked plot to have Uriah the Hittite killed. (2 Sam. 11:14-25)

Joab remained faithful to David after Absalom’s rebellion; however, David eventually gave command to Amasa, Joab’s cousin. (2 Sam. 19:13) In retaliation, Joab killed Amasa. (2 Sam. 20:8-13) Later, Joab supported Adonijah as king instead of Solomon. Benaiah, at Solomon’s command, pursued Joab and eventually killed him as he grasped the horns of the altar. (1 Kings 2:28-31)[[90]](#footnote-91)

Ish-bosheth

Ish-bosheth was the fourth son of Saul and became king of Israel after his father’s death. He was a rival to David, and he was eventually killed by Baanah and Rechab. (2 Sam. 4:5-6) Interestingly, Ish-bosheth was also known as Ishvi (1 Sam. 14:49) and Esh-baal (1 Chron. 8:33).[[91]](#footnote-92)

Hebron

Hebron was located approximately 19 miles south of Jerusalem. The city has a rich history, as shown in the Old Testament.

* Abraham built an altar at Hebron.
* Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah were all buried there in the cave of Machpelah.
* David’s established his first capital here. After Jerusalem was established, Hebron’s importance diminished.

Herod the Great built a wall around the supposed burial site of the aforementioned patriarchs. The site is now part of a Mosque. The modern name for the city is Halil, which reflects the fact that Abraham was the “friend” of God.[[92]](#footnote-93)

*2 Sam. 3*

Abner

See Abner under 2 Sam. 2.

Rizpah

Rizpah was a Hivite who eventually became a concubine of Saul. She also became an issue of contention between Abner and Ish-bosheth. (See Abner under 2 Sam. 2). She appeared again in the text in 2 Samuel 21, where she was seen protecting the bodies of her deceased sons. (2 Sam. 21:9-10) Unger describes the situation that led to her sons’ deaths in the following way:

A famine, which lasted three successive years, induced David to seek the face of Jehovah and to ask the cause of the judgment. The LORD replied, “It is for Saul and his bloody house because he put the Gibeonites to death.” David, therefore, sent for the Gibeonites to inquire of them as to the wrong that had been done to them by Saul and how he should make atonement for it. They asked for the crucifixion at Gibeah of seven men of Saul’s sons. David granted the request because, according to the law (Num. 35:33), bloodguiltiness rested upon the land could only be expiated by the blood of the criminal; thus, David gave up to the Gibeonites two sons of Rizpah and five sons of Merab, the daughter of Saul. The victims were killed “at the beginning of of barely harvest,” about the middle of Nisan (our April) and their bodies hung in the full blaze of the summer sun until the fall of rain in October. (2 Sam. 21:9-10) During all this time, without any tent to protect her and only a garment of sackcloth to rest upon, Rizpah watched the bodies and “allowed neither the birds of the sky to rest on them by day nor the beast of the filed by night.” (v. 10), c. 970 B.C.[[93]](#footnote-94)

*2 Sam. 4*

Ish-bosheth

See Ish-bosheth under 2 Sam. 2.

Mephibosheth

Mephibosheth was referred to as Merib-Baal in 1 Chronicles 8:34 and 9:40. Merib-Baal literary translates as “a striver against Baal,” but his name was likely changed because of the term *Baal*’s association with idol worship.

Mephibosheth was a son of Jonathan and a grandson of Saul. He was five years old when his father and grandfather died. His nurse dropped him when she was fleeing with him after their death. The fall left him crippled for the rest of his life. (2 Sam. 4:4)

Mephibosheth never attempted to gain the throne, and afterward, David restored Saul’s estates to him and gave Mephibosheth a place at the royal table. (2 Sam. 9:7-13) David showed Mephibosheth such grace because of the covenant he had made with Jonathan in 1 Samual 20.

During Absalom’s rebellion, Ziba falsely accused Mephibosheth of being disloyal to David. (2 Sam. 16:1-4) Unfortunately, David believed Ziba’s lie and stripped Saul’s territory from Mephibosheth and gave it to Ziba. In time, David learned of Ziba’s deceit and offered to restore half of Saul’s estates back to Mephibosheth. He refused David’s offer, saying, “Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home.” (2 Sam. 19:30)[[94]](#footnote-95)

*2 Sam. 5*

The City of David

The City of David was called by several names in the Old Testament: Jebus (Judg. 19:10), Salem (Ps. 76:2), Zion (2 Sam. 5:7), and, of course, Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:2). Jerusalem was originally a Jebusite city located on the border between Judah and Benjamin. After David had captured the city, he renamed it and made it his capital. The site is located on the southeastern hill of Old Jerusalem.[[95]](#footnote-96)

Why was Daivd’s first act as king to take Jerusalem from the Jebusites? According to Bergen,

By David making his first recorded act as Israel’s king that of fulfilling the long-neglected Torah command to dispossess the Jebusites and of reinstating the crusade to eradicate them from the land (cf. Exod. 23:23-24; Deut. 7:1-2; 20:17), he was demonstrating his continuity with Moses and establishing himself as a king devoted to the Lord’s commands (cf. Deut. 17:19) …. Jerusalem would become a trophy of obedience to the Lord for David and his descendants.

The Millo

The Hebrew for Millo literally meant “the fill.” The Millo was a series of terrace walls built on a steep slope that supported the fill behind it in order to create level areas. These artificial platforms had houses built atop them. Apparently, the king looked after the construction and maintenance of these terraces. “During heavy rainfalls, the fill became heavy and increased the pressure on the terrace walls, thus requiring regular maintenance of these walls. When this construction was neglected, the houses would fall down the steep slope, and the city would disintegrate. Remains of these supporting walls have been found on the eastern slope of the city of David.”[[96]](#footnote-97)

Hiram, king of Tyre

Hiram provided David with cedars to build his house and later provided cedars for Solomon to build the temple. (1 Kings 5:1-18) These cedars of Lebanon, which have all but disappeared, were famous in the ancient Near East. Assyrian reliefs have been found depicting the trees being cut down and taken to Ninevah.

Josephus stated that Hiram’s reign did not begin until near the end of David’s own reign. Either this means that the construction should be dated to the end of David’s reign, or the Hiram mentioned in 1 Kings 5 may have been the son of the Hiram mentioned in 2 Samual 5.[[97]](#footnote-98)

*2 Sam. 6*

Uzzah

Uzzah was a son of Abinidab of Kiriath-jearim. (For more information, see Kiriath-jearim under 1 Sam. 6) He, along with his brother Ahio, help to guide the cart carrying the Ark of God from Baalah to Jerusalem. Uzzah was killed when he reached out to steady the ark after the oxen stumbled. As a result of this incident, David placed the ark at Obed-edom’s house. (2 Sam. 6:3-10)[[98]](#footnote-99)

Why was Uzzah punished so severely? Unger asserts that Uzzah and the others sinned by placing the ark on a cart, as the Philistines had done (1 Sam. 6:7), instead of obeying the Lord’s command that only the Levites should move the ark. (Num. 4) While it appears that Uzzah had no idea of the “unapproachable holiness of the Ark of God,” he had to “expiate his offense with his life, as a warning to all the Israelites.”[[99]](#footnote-100)

“David was angry because the LORD had broken out against Uzzah”

The phrase, found in 2 Samuel 6:8, has two possible interpretations, according to Bergen. “David was mad at God for killing Uzzah (unlikely, since God was merely enforcing the Torah) or that he was upset that Uzzah had acted in such a way as to cause God to bring fatal judgment to bear (more likely).”[[100]](#footnote-101)

Michal

See Michal under 1 Sam. 18. *2 Sam. 7*

Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant was “the most crucial theological statement in the Old Testament.”[[101]](#footnote-102) According to Bergen, “The Lord’s words recorded here constitute the longest recorded monologue attributed to him since the days of Moses (197 words).” [[102]](#footnote-103)

This covenant became the foundation for the hope that the later prophets would declare. Through Assyrian and Babylonian devastation, the people clung to the promise that David’s line would endure forever.

The New Testament writers understood Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.

* Jesus is the Son of David. (Matt. 1:1; Acts 13:22-23; Rom. 1:3)
* Jesus is the one who would rise from the dead. (Acts 2:30; 13:23)
* Jesus is the builder of the house of God. (John 2:19-22; Heb. 3:3-4)
* Jesus is the possessor of a throne. (Heb. 1:8; Rev. 3:21)
* Jesus is the possessor of an eternal kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:24-25; Eph. 5:5; Heb. 1:8)
* Jesus is the Son of God. (Mark 1:1; John 20:31; Acts 9:20)
* Jesus is the product of an immaculate conception since he had God as his father. (Luke 1:32-35)[[103]](#footnote-104)

Nathan

Nathan was the main prophet in David’s court. The Lord used Nathan to announce his covenant with David. (2 Sam. 7:4-5) Nathan famously rebuked David for his sin with Bathsheba. (2 Sam. 12:7) After David’s death, Nathan also served Solomon, and the author of Chronicles states that Nathan was partly responsible for recording events of David and Solomon’s reigns. (1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29)[[104]](#footnote-105)

*2 Sam. 8*

Catalog of David’s Military Activities

The *ESV Study Bible* has a helpful summary of David’s military activities:

Chapter 8 is a catalog of David’s military victories, from the old enemies, the Philistines, to the Transjordan nations of Moab and Ammon, through the Syrian countries, and all the way to “the River” (the Euphrates), ending with a statement about his administration. The varied events of this chapter are not necessarily chronological with the rest of the book. The Ammon War of chs. 10-12 may have been the prelude to David’s defeat of the important kingdom of Zobah in this chapter. Chapter 8 has ties with the title to Psalm 60: “when he strove with Aram-naharim and with Aram-zobah [cf. 2 Sam 8:3], and when Joab on his return struck down twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt [cf. v. 13].” The older empires in Egypt and Mesopotamia were at a low point, which allowed David to take advantage of the international situation.[[105]](#footnote-106)

Metheg-ammah

The exact meaning of Metheg-ammah is unclear. Anderson says that no “location is attested even though it ought to have been sufficiently important to be singled out for mention in this passage.”[[106]](#footnote-107) Regardless, some translators use the term as a formal name for a location. (i.e., the ESV, CSB, etc.) Others refer to Metheg-ammah as a figurative or metaphorical term referring to a chief city of the Philistines. (i.e., Gath) [[107]](#footnote-108)The NASB renders Metheg-ammah this way, translating it as “chief city.”

Valley of Salt

This valley was between Jerusalem and Edom, but the exact location remains unknown. At the Valley of Salt, David’s armies won great victories over the Edomites (2 Sam. 8:13), as did Amaziah, king of Judah. (2 Kings 14:7; 2 Chron. 25:11)[[108]](#footnote-109)

*2 Sam. 9*

Mephibosheth

See Mephibosheth under 2 Sam. 4.

*2 Sam. 10*

Ammon

The Israelites had a long, tumultuous history with Ammon, a Semitic kingdom located east of the Jordan River. From the time of Moses (Deut. 23:3), Israel was in conflict with Ammon. Jephthah (Judg. 11:4-33), Saul (1 Sam. 11:6-11), and David (2 Sam. 10:1-12:31) all led military campaigns against the Ammonites. The modern city of Amman is located on top of Rabbah, the ancient capital of Ammon.[[109]](#footnote-110) For information related to the Ammonites, see Ammonites under 1 Sam. 11.

War with Ammon

The war between Israel and Ammon served as the backdrop for 2 Samuel 10:1-12:31. The Ammonites' disgrace of David’s ambassadors began the war between the two kingdoms. Second Samuel 12:26-31 detailed the ending of the conflict. The Israelites gained control of the section of the city of Rabbah where the water supply was kept. Soon after Israel gained control of the water, the city surrendered. Joab called David to come to the front so that he could get credit for the capture.[[110]](#footnote-111)

Syrians

Second Samuel 10:6 says that the Ammonites hired Syrian troops from Syrian kingdoms in the northern Transjordan and Lebanon Valley. The practice of hiring soldiers was common in this period. Scholars debate whether the Syrians were contracted as mercenaries or whether they were bribed into helping the Ammonites.[[111]](#footnote-112)

*2 Sam. 11*

When kings go out to battle

Second Samuel 11:1-2 clearly states that while “all Israel” went out to battle, King David “remained at Jerusalem.” Some take the phrasing of these verses to mean that “something is wrong: the kings go out to battle, but this king does not. …Readers can see a contrast between the king, who is at leisure (11:2), and the soldiers on the field (v. 11).”[[112]](#footnote-113)

Others, such as Bergen, argue that David’s absence “should not be understood as dereliction of duty.” He continues, “David had previously remained in Jerusalem when the Ammonites were attacked (cf. 10:7). Furthermore, … David’s men had pleaded with him to avoid an active role in military campaigns (cf. 21:17) out of concern for the king’s safety and the best interests of the nation.”[[113]](#footnote-114)

Bathsheba

Bathsheba was the daughter of Eliam, one of David’s best fighters (23:34), the granddaughter of Ahithophel, one of his most trusted advisors (16:23; 23:34), and the wife of Uriah, one of his honored soldiers. (23:39)[[114]](#footnote-115)

Scholarship is divided on many issues related to David’s affair with Bathsheba. For example, some argue that 2 Samuel 11:4 alludes to Bathsheba purifying herself after her menstrual period,[[115]](#footnote-116) while others contend that v. 4 “intended to stress that it was a favorable time for conception, and especially that Uriah could not have been the father of the child that was eventually born.”[[116]](#footnote-117)

Keil and Delitzch find Bathsheba at fault for the affair,[[117]](#footnote-118) while Bergen stresses that though “the text merely omits any mention of hesitation and resistance,” it does not affirm the position of Keil and Delitzch.[[118]](#footnote-119) Arnold posits that “it is impossible for us to speculate about her motives.” Furthermore, the writer “carefully and deliberately” places the blame “only on David.”[[119]](#footnote-120)

*2 Sam. 12*

Nathan

See Nathan under 2 Sam. 7.

Solomon

First Kings 1-11 and 1 Chronicles 28 through 2 Chronicles 9 contain most of the narrative surrounding Solomon’s life. He ruled from approximately 962-922 B.C.[[120]](#footnote-121) Second Samuel 12 details Solomon’s birth. Bathsheba named him Solomon, which has historically been associated with peace (Shalom). Recently, “It has been taken as a replacement name, meaning, ‘his replacement’ and referring either to the first child who had died or less likely, to Uriah, Bathsheba’s husband.”[[121]](#footnote-122) Solom was also referred to as “Jedidiah,” meaning “beloved of Yahweh.” It was not uncommon for some people, especially kings, to have more than one name.[[122]](#footnote-123)

*2 Sam. 13*

Amnon and Tamar

According to 2 Samuel 3:2, Amnon was the first son that David had with his wife Ahinoam of Jezreel. David married Ahinoam after he married Michal, but before he married Abigail.[[123]](#footnote-124) Amnon took his friend Jonadab’s advice and ended up raping his half-sister, Tamar. Two years later, Absalom avenged his sister Tamar’s death by having Amnon assassinated. (2 Sam. 13:29)[[124]](#footnote-125)

Absalom

Absalom was the third son of David. He killed Amnon for raping his sister, Tamar. He was exiled to Geshur, the home of his mother Maacah. Absalom conspired to overthrow David and built a sizable following in Israel, eventually declaring himself king in Hebron. He chased David out of Jerusalem and attacked David in Ephraim. Absalom was defeated and, against David’s wishes, was killed by Joab.[[125]](#footnote-126)

Geshur

Geshur was an Aramean city-state northeast of the Sea of Galilee, between Bashan and Hermon. David married Maacah, whose father was Talmai, the King of Geshur. Maacah was Absalom’s mother, and Geshur was the place he fled after he killed Amnon.[[126]](#footnote-127)

*2 Sam. 14*

“Longed to go out”

The meaning of the expressions “the spirit of the king longed to go out, (2 Sam. 13:39) and “the king’s heart went out to Absalom” are not clear in Hebrew. The expressions may point to the fact that David’s “enthusiasm for marching out against” Absalom was spent.[[127]](#footnote-128) On the other hand, the expressions may convey that “David was still hostile to his son. Consequently, Joab had to use his elaborate deception to bring about Absalom’s recall.”[[128]](#footnote-129)

Joab

See Joab under 2 Sam. 2.

Joab’s Plan

Joab devised a plan to help bring David’s family back together. Joab, like the prophet Nathan did in 1 Samual 12:1-14, created a fictitious situation in order to compel the king to rethink his decision. Joab enlisted a woman from Tekoa to act as a woman in mourning. “She was to come before King David to seek an authoritative judgment and in the process deliver in a convincing way a speech Joab had given her.”[[129]](#footnote-130) Though the scheme was cunning, Joab’s motives appear pure in this situation.

Absalom

See Absalom under 2 Sam. 13.

*2 Sam. 15*

Hebron

See Hebron under 2 Sam. 2.

Ahithophel

Ahithophel was Bathsheba’s grandfather and one of David’s counselors. Ahithophel sided with Absalom during the rebellion, and he eventually committed suicide when Absalom rejected his advice on how to attack David.[[130]](#footnote-131)

Hushai

Hushai, like Ahithophel, was one of David’s counselors. Hushai remained faithful to David and actually acted as a spy for him against Absalom. He was probably the father of Baana, one of Solomon’s 12 officers.[[131]](#footnote-132)

Ittai

Ittai served David in Jerusalem and went into exile with him in Mahanaim. He functioned as one of three top commanders in David’s struggle against Absalom.[[132]](#footnote-133)

Zadok

Zadok was one of David’s priests. He sided with Solomon against Adonijah and eventually anointed Solomon as king. During Solomon's reign, Zadok was the sole chief priest after Abiathar was banished. “Zadok’s decedents controlled the priesthood in Jerusalem from this time on until the exile (the chief priest in Hezekiah’s time is said to be from the house of Zadok) ….”[[133]](#footnote-134)

*2 Sam. 16*

Ziba

See Mephibosheth under 2 Sam. 4.

Shimei

Shimei was the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Saul’s household. According to 2 Samuel 16, he insulted King David, but David did not allow Abishai to kill him. Later, Shimei appeared to be penitent for his earlier actions (2 Sam. 19:16-23), and David again spared his life. David was not totally convinced of Shimei’s repentance and later recounted the whole ordeal to Solomon. As a result, Solomon confined Shimei inside the wall of Jerusalem. Shimei obeyed for three years but then traveled outside the walls. When he returned, Beniah killed him. (1 Kings 2:38-46) [[134]](#footnote-135)

Ahithophel

See Ahithophel under 2 Sam. 15.

*2 Sam. 17*

Absalom

See Absalom under 2 Sam. 13.

Hushai

See Hushai under 2 Sam. 16.

Zadok

See Zadok under 2 Sam. 15.

Mahanaim

Mahanaim was the location where Jacob saw angels while on his way home after being gone for two decades. (Gen. 32:2) Mahanaim literally meant “two camps.” The city was located in Gilead, east of the Jordan River, around the Jabbok River. Ishbo-sheth made Mahanaim his capital and reigned there for two years. (2 Sam. 2:8, 12, 29) David made Mahanaim his headquarters during Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam. 17:24), and Solomon made it the capital of one of his 12 districts. (1 Kings 4:14)[[135]](#footnote-136)

Barzillai

Barzillai showed David exceptional hospitality during the conflict with Absolom. (2 Sam. 17:27-29) He accompanied David over the Jordan after David’s triumphant return. David offered to make Barzillai part of his court, but Barzilla declined because of his age. Instead, he asked David to bless his son Chimham. (2 Sam. 19:31-39) Even on his deathbed, David recalled Barzilai’s kindness and asked Solomon to continue to provide for his children.[[136]](#footnote-137)

*2 Sam. 18*

Ittai

See Ittai under 2 Sam. 15.

Absalom

See Absalom under 2 Sam. 13.

Joab

See Joab under 2 Sam. 2.

*2 Sam. 19*

Amasa

See Joab under 2 Sam. 2.

Shimei

See Shimei under 2 Sam. 16.

Mephibosheth

See Mephibosheth under 2 Sam. 4.

Barzillai

See Barzillai under 2 Sam. 17.

*2 Sam. 20*

Sheba

Sheba was of the tribe of Benjamin. He was remembered for his unsuccessful rebellion against King David after Absalom’s defeat. Eventually, Sheba was beheaded by the citizens of Abel Beth Maacah.[[137]](#footnote-138)

Abel Beth Maachah

Abel Beth Maachah was a fortified town near the town of Dan. Second Samuel 20:19 described it as “a mother of Israel.” Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) and Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings 15:29) both attacked the town.[[138]](#footnote-139)

Amasa

See Joab under 2 Sam. 2.

Joab

See Joab under 2 Sam. 2.

*2 Sam. 21*

Epilogue

According to the *ESV Study Bible*,

These last four chapters form an epilogue. There are six sections arranged concentrically. The first section deals with a drought, the last with a plague. The second and fifth talk about David’s heroes, and the middle two are psalms of David. They are not placed in chronological order with the rest of the book (note the vague expression “in the days of David” in 21:1). The last section is climatic, describing the events leading to the purchase of the land on which Solomon would build the temple.[[139]](#footnote-140)

Gibeonites

See Rizpah under 2 Sam. 3.

Rizpah

See Rizpah under 2 Sam. 3.

Giants

Second Samuel 21:15-22 is interesting as it recounts four fights that David’s men had with giants. The giants (*Rapha*) may be connected to the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan, who are called the Rephaim.[[140]](#footnote-141) McCarter understands them as “votaries of Rapha,”[[141]](#footnote-142) which means that Ishbi-Benob and the others were members of “an elite military unit devoted to a pagan god.”[[142]](#footnote-143)

Goliath

See Goliath under 1 Sam. 17.

*2 Sam. 22*

Psalm

David’s psalm in 2 Samuel 22 clearly relates to Psalm 18. While the two psalms are quite similar, they were intended for different functions. “Whereas Psalm 18 was intended for hymnic use in public worship, 2 Samuel 22:1-51 was intended to reveal the religious core of Israel’s most revered king.”[[143]](#footnote-144) Interestingly, 2 Samuel 22 is the longest quotation attributed to David (365 words in Hebrew), and Psalm 18 is the longest psalm attributed to David. (376 words)[[144]](#footnote-145)

*2 Sam. 23*

Mighty Men

Szikszai offers a helpful overview of “mighty men” in the Old Testament:

The designation accorded to proud, bold, and strong heroes…. It refers to foreigners (Josh. 10:2) as well as to Israelites (II Sam. 17:8), but it is also a technical term for the mercenaries and warriors of David. This host of mercenaries included the Cherethites and the Pelethites (I Kings 1:38) and the Gittites (II Sam. 15:18) and were led by Joab (II Sam. 10:7) and Benaiah (1 Kings 1:10). The heroic exploits of the “three mighty men” of David and those of “the thirty” were preserved in the biblical records (II Sam. 23:8-39).[[145]](#footnote-146)

The Three and The Thirty

Second Samuel 23 lists two groups of David’s fighting men. The first group, called the three, consists of Josheb-basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah (vv. 8-12). The other group, called the thirty, is actually comprised of thirty-four names (vv. 18-29). This could mean that,

* Thirty was a round number.
* The group began with 30 members but eventually grew to 34 but kept the name “the thirty.”
* The group remained at 30, but when someone died, they were replaced by other names on the list. A parallel list can be found in 1 Chronicles 11:10-47. That list includes 16 additional names, likely because men were, in fact, added to “the thirty” when others died.[[146]](#footnote-147)

*2 Sam. 24*

The Census

Second Samuel 24 states that the LORD was angry with Israel, though we, as readers, are not given details about why the LORD was angry. David’s desire to number the fighting men showed a shift in David’s “object of faith—a shift from reliance on Yahweh to win battles to a reliance on access to military might (2 Sam. 24:3).”[[147]](#footnote-148)

This text parallels 1 Chronicles 21:1, which asserts that Satan incited David to take the census. How should we deal with this seeming discrepancy? “Traditionally, Jewish and Christian interpreters have harmonized these two statements by asserting that God’s permissive action is expressed in 2 Samuel 24:1 and Satan’s instrumentality is the emphasis of the Chronicles parallel.”[[148]](#footnote-149)

The Plague

Gad, the prophet, told David that judgment was coming. David could choose three years of famine, three months of overwhelming defeat on the battlefield, or three days of a plague in the land. David chose the latter. Seventy thousand people died in Israel as a result of the plague.[[149]](#footnote-150)

Gad

Gad was a prophet who joined David when he was in the stronghold. Second Chronicles 29:25 associated Gad with the arrangements of the music in the House of the Lord. He was also connected to authorship of parts of 1-2 Samuel.[[150]](#footnote-151)

*Appendix 1*

**Timeline for the Historical Books**

1406 [or 1220] Moses’ death; Israel’s entry into Canaan under Joshua

1375 [or 1210] Joshua’s death

1375–1055 [or 1210–1050] Period of the judges

1050/42/30–1010 Saul’s reign

1010–971 David’s reign

971–931 Solomon’s reign

931–722 Divided kingdom (Israel)—19 kings

722 Destruction of Samaria by Assyria; Israel’s resettlement

931–586 Divided kingdom (Judah)—19 kings, 1 queen

586 Destruction of Jerusalem and Temple by Babylon

586–538 Judah’s exile in Babylon

561 Release of King Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon

539 Cyrus II of Persia captures Babylon

538 First return of Jews to Jerusalem under Jeshua and Zerubbabel

516 Temple rebuilding completed

478 Esther and Mordecai rise in the Persian court

458 Ezra’s return to Jerusalem from Babylon

445 Nehemiah’s return to Jerusalem from Babylon

445 Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt

433 Nehemiah’s visit to Babylon and return to Jerusalem[[151]](#footnote-152)

*Appendix 2*

**Timeline for the Prophets**

**The Early Group**

Moses 1447or 1225 in Egypt

Samuel 1100 in Israel

Elijah 870 in Israel

Elisha 850 in Israel

Joel 835-820 in Jerusalem

Jonah 800 in Israel

**The 8th Century**

Amos 760 in Israel

Hosea 745 in Israel

Isaiah 740-698 in Jerusalem

Micah 735 in Jerusalem

**7th Century**

Zephaniah 630-622 in Jerusalem

Jeremiah 626-585 in Jerusalem and Egypt

Nahum 625-612 in Jerusalem

Habakkuk 610-605 in Jerusalem

**Exilic Group**

Ezekiel 592 in Babylon

Obadiah 586 in Jerusalem or Babylon

**Post-Exilic Group**

Haggai 520 in Jerusalem

Zechariah 520 in Jerusalem

Malachi 435 in Jerusalem [[152]](#footnote-153)

*Appendix 3*

**Biographical Sketch: Samuel**

Samuel’s Equipping

* Hannah, Samuel’s mother, was a godly woman. She petitioned God for a son. She prayed with such passion that the priest, Eli, thought she was drunk. Hannah literally gave Samuel to the Lord and visited him yearly.
* Samuel was from the tribe of Levi. (1 Chr. 6:33-38) Furthermore, he had training in the sanctuary under Eli. Eli had failed with his own sons, but his work with Samuel bore fruit.
* Samuel had a direct call from the Lord. (1 Sam. 3) He spent his life to fulfill God’s purposes.

Samuel’s Work

* Samuel was God’s man in one of the darkest hours in Israel’s history.
* He served as the last judge of Israel.
* As the people’s leader, he helped save the land from the Philistines. He helped them gain a national existence.
* As a maker of kings, he anointed Saul and David.
* As a man of prayer, he demonstrated the power of God. (Jer 15:1)
* He was the second great mountain (Moses the first) in the range that led all the way to Christ Himself.

Practical Lessons from Samuel’s Life

* What work one man can do when he is controlled and directed by God.
* Personal piety can never be a substitute for parental training. (Eli)
* We must listen for the voice of God and answer when He calls. (1 Sam. 3)
* Obedience is better than sacrifice. (1 Sam. 15:22)
* The value of early religious training at home.
* The happy state of the man who has lived a life above reproach in every detail.
* A true servant of God may be called upon to train a younger man who will overshadow him in the estimation of the people. (i.e., Eli with Samuel)[[153]](#footnote-154)

*Appendix 4*

**1 Samuel Outline**

I. The Story of Samuel (1:1-7:17)

1. Rise of Samuel as a prophet (1:1-4:1a)
2. Story of the ark of God (4:1b-7:1)
3. Judgeship of Samuel (7:2-17)

II. Transition to the Monarchy (8:1-22)

III. The Story of Saul (9:1-15:35)

1. Saul made king (9:1-11:15)
2. Samuel's address to Israel (12:1-25)
3. Reign of Saul (13:1-15:35)

IV. The Story of Saul and David (16:1-31:13)

1. Introduction of David (16:1-23)
2. David and Goliath: the battle at the Valley of Elah (17:1-54)
3. Saul, Jonathan, and David (17:55-18:5)
4. Saul becomes David's enemy (18:6-30)
5. Saul's attempts to kill David (19:1-20:42)
6. David's escapes from Saul (21:1-26:25)
7. David in Philistia (27:1-30:31)
8. Deaths of Saul and Jonathan (31:1-13)[[154]](#footnote-155)

*Appendix 5*

**2 Samuel Outline**

I. The Story of King David (1:1-20:26)

A. David and the death of Saul (1:1-27)

B. David becomes king (2:1-5:5)

C. Jerusalem, the city of David (5:6-25)

D. Zion, the place of worship (6:1-23)

E. Davidic covenant: eternal throne (7:1-29)

F. Catalog of David’s military activities (8:1-18)

G. Mephibosheth (9:1-13)

H. Israel-Ammon war (10:1-12:31)

I. Absalom’s banishment and reinstatement (13:1-14:33)

J. Absalom’s rebellion (15:1-19:43)

K. Sheba’s rebellion (20:1-26)

II. Epilogue (21:1-24:25)

A. Famine and the death of Saul’s sons (21:1-14)

B. Philistine wars (21:15-22)

C. Song of David (22:1-51)

D. Last words of David (23:1-7)

E. David’s heroes (23:8-39)

F. The census and the threshing floor (24:1-25)[[155]](#footnote-156)

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1. The Pew Research Group, “U.S. Churchgoers are Satisfied with the Sermons They Hear, Though Content Varies by Religious Tradition,” available from https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/01/28/u-s-churchgoers-are-satisfied-with-the-sermons-they-hear-though-content-varies-by-religious-tradition/#:~:text=At%20least%20one%20book%20from,the% 20New %20and%20Old%20Testaments. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Bill T. Arnold and Bryan E. Byer’s book, *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*, 3rd ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 131-139. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Of course, the book of Ruth comes directly before 1 Samuel. Ruth takes place sometime during or directly after the period of the Judges.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The authors of the LXX seem to have divided the texts into books because of the length of the narrative, not the content. In other words, they “preferred to divide longer books into units that would fit on a standard-sized scroll.” See Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, vol. 7 of *The New American Commentary*, ed. by E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Bergen, *NAC*, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. For more information see the following: Stephen J. Andrews and Robert D. Bergen, *1&2 Samuel*, vol. 6 of the *Holman Old Testament Commentary*, ed. Max Anders (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2009), 1-2; Arnold, *TNAC*, 25-28; Bergen, *NAC*, 18-25; and Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, vol. 10 of the *Word Biblical Commentary*, eds. David Hubbard and Glen W. Barker (Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1983), xxviii-xxxii. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC,* 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. This section offers a 30,000-foot-view of issues related to the composition of 1-2 Samuel. For a fuller treatment of this topic, see Bergen, *NAC*, 18-27; Klein, *WBC*, xxvi-xxxii; and Phil F. Philbeck Jr., “1-2 Samuel,” in *1 Samuel-Nehemiah*, vol. 6 of *The Brodman Bible Commentary*, ed. Clifton J. Allen (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970*),* 3-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Arnold, *TNAC*, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Arnold, *TNAC*, *26*-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Ben. F. Philbeck, Jr., *BBC*, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Ben. F. Philbeck, Jr., *BBC*, 1-2. Bergen offers a thorough discussion of the following five functions and purposes of 1-2 Samuel: 1). 1, 2 Samuel as History, 2). 1, 2 Samuel as Literary Art, 3). 1, 2 Samuel as Apology, 4). 1, 2 Samuel as Theology, and 5). 1, 2 Samuel as Scripture. See Bergen, *NAC*,27-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Crossway Bibles, “Introduction to 1-2 Samuel,” available from https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/introduction-to-1-2-samuel/. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. For detailed information on each of these locations, see Merril F. Unger, “RA’MAH” in *The New Unger’s Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), 1062-1064. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Zophim likely refers to the region settled by Zuph, Elkanah’s ancestor. (1 Sam. 9:5) For more information see Bergen, *NAC*, 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Klein, *WBC*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Bergen, NAC, 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Bergen, *NAC*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*,11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. David Alexander and Pat Alexander, eds., *Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Bible Gateway, “Shiloh,” in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible*, available from https://www.biblegateway.com/ resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Shiloh.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Unger, 347-348. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Klein, *WBC*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Bergen, *NAC*, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Carl S. Ehrlich, “Philistines,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 591-592. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Unger, “Ark of the Covenant,” 102-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. This table is found in the *ESV Study Bible*, 498. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. “Ashdod,” *ESV Study Bible*,500.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Daniel E. Fleming, “Dagon,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Bergen, *NAC*, 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Klein, *WBC*, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Unger, “BETH-SHE-MESH,” 167. This article also discusses the unusual Hebrew numbering that literally puts the number of men killed at 50,070. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. “Kiriath-jearim,” *ESV Study Bible*,502. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Bergen, *NAC*, 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Bergen, *NAC*, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Bergen, *NAC*, 110-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. David M. Gunn, “Saul,” *The* *Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 280-282.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Arnold and Beyer, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Sophie Laws, “Anoint,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. Unger, “GIB’EAH,” 471-472. This article is a helpful source if you are looking for more information about the archeological discoveries related to Gibeah of Benjamin. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Wayne T. Pitard, “Ammon,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 23-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Klein, *WBC*, 105-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. “Samuel’s Address to Israel,” *ESV Study Bible*,509. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. Arnold, *TNAC,* 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. Unger, “MICH’MAS,” 851. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. Unger, “JON”ATHAN,” 706. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. Klein, *WBC*, 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. Klein, *WBC*, 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. Andrews and Bergen, 87.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. “The Fall of Saul and the Rise of David in 1 Samuel,” *ESV Study Bible*, 517. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 110. David M. Gunn offers a detailed analysis of David’s life in “David,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 51-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Sherman Elbridge Johnson, “Bethlehem,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. Unger, “GOL’LIATH,” 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. Unger states that skeletons recovered in Palestine attest that men as tall as Goliath once lived in the region. See Unger, “GOL’LIATH,” 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. Hector Ignacio Avalos, “Goliath,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. Avalos, “Goliath,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. Avalos, “Goliath,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. Unger, “GOL’LIATH,” 489-490. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. Bergen, *NAC*, 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. Klein, *WBC*, 188. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 132-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. “David Flees from Saul,” *ESV Study Bible*,524. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. O. R. Sellers., “NOB,” vol. 3 in the *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 556-557. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. J.D. Douglas, and Merrill C. Tenney, eds., “ADULLAM,” in *The New International Dictionary of the Bible: Pictorial Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. Unger, “ABI’ATHAR,” 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. V.R. Gold, “KELIAH,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. Unger, “ZIPH’ITES,” 1390. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. Bergen, *NAC*, 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. Unger, “AHIM’ELECH,” 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. V. R. Gold, “ZIKLAG,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 957. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
77. Bergen, *NAC*, 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
78. Bergen, *NAC*, 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
79. En-dor was about 4.5 miles northeast of Shunem, where the Philistines were camped at that time. So, En-dor was on the other side of the enemy from where Saul was camped. This is one reason Saul wore a disguise and took bodyguards. See “En-dor,” *ESV Study Bible*, 536. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
80. Klein, *WBC*, 271. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
81. Bergen, *NAC*, 266-267. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
82. Bergen, *NAC*, 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
83. W. L. Reed, “GILBOA, MOUNT,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 396-397. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
84. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 181.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
85. Susan Ackerman, “Astarte,” *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
86. Bergen, *NAC*, 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
87. Bergen, *NAC*, 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
88. A.A. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, vol. 11 of the *Word Biblical Commentary*, eds. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas: World Books, 1989), 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
89. Douglas, “ABNER,” *The New International Dictionary of the Bible: Pictorial Edition*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
90. Ronald F. Youngblood, F.F. Bruce, and R.K. Harrison, eds., “JOAB,” in *Nelson’s Compact Series: Compact Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 326-327. For a more comprehensive overview of Joab’s life, see Unger, “JOAB,” 692-693. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
91. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
92. Michael D. Coogan, “HEBRON,” *The Oxford Guide to Peoples and Places of the Bible*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
93. Unger, “RIZ’PAH,” 1083. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
94. Douglas, “MEPHIBOSHETH”,” *The New International Dictionary of the Bible: Pictorial Edition*, 398-399. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
95. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 222. For more information see the following two articles located in *The Oxford Guide to People and Places of the Bible*: Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “The History of Jerusalem,” 127-30; and Barbara Geller Nathanson, “Jerusalem’s Symbolism,” 130-136. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
96. “The Millo,” *ESV Study Bible,* 551. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
97. “Hiran King of Tyre,” *ESV Study Bible,* 551. For a more detailed account of Hiram’s life, see R.W. Corney, “HIRAM,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 606-607. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
98. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
99. Unger, “UZ’ZAH,” 1322. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
100. Bergen, *NAC*, 330. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
101. W. Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville: John Knox, 1990), 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
102. Bergen, *NAC*, 336. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
103. Bergen, *NAC*, 337-338. Bergen offers a helpful examination of the Davidic Covenant, 336-341. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
104. Timothy M. Willis, “NATHAN,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
105. “Catalog of David’s Military Activities,” *ESV Study Bible*, 555. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
106. Anderson, *WBC*, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
107. Unger, “ME’THEG-AM’MAH,” 841. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
108. Douglas, “SALT, VALLEY OF”,” *The New International Dictionary of the Bible: Pictorial Edition*, 886. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
109. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
110. For more information on Israel’s war with Ammon, see the following articles in the *ESV Study Bible*: “Israel-Ammon War, 557; “Beginning of Israel-Ammon War,” 557; “End of Israel-Ammon War,” 562. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
111. For more information on the Syrian kingdoms discussed in 2 Sam. 10:6, see Anderson, *WBC*, 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
112. “11:1”, *ESV Study Bible*, 558. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
113. Bergen, *NAC*, 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
114. Bergen, *NAC*, 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
115. “Woman Bathing,” *ESV Study Bible*, 558. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
116. Andrews, *WBC*, 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
117. C.F. Keil and F. Delitzch, *Biblical Commentary on the Books of Samuel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
118. Bergen, *NAC*, 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
119. Arnold, *TNAC*, 526. For a helpful overview of the events related to David and Bathsheba, see Arnold, *TNAC*, 526-538. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
120. Ronald E. Murphy and James M. Reese, “Solom,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, 294-297. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
121. Andrews, *WBC*, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
122. Andrews, *WBC,* 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
123. Interestingly, Saul had a wife with the same name, Ahinoam. (1 Sam. 14:50) [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
124. Unger, “AM’NON,” 54. For a more detailed account of the incident, see Unger, “TA’MAR,” 1251. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
125. Timothy M. Willis, “ABSALOM,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
126. Andrews and Begen, *HOTC*, 287. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
127. McCarter, *TAB*, 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
128. Anderson, *WBC*, 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
129. Bergen, *NAC*, 389. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
130. Anderson and Bergen, *HOTC*, 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
131. Youngblood, Bruce, and Harrison, eds., “HUSHAI,” *Nelson’s Compact Series: Compact Bible Dictionary*, 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
132. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
133. Jo Ann Hackett, “ZADOK, ZADOKITES,” *The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*, 343. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
134. Unger, “SHIM’EI,” 1184. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
135. Youngblood, Bruce, and Harrison, eds., “MAHANAIM,” *Nelson’s Compact Series: Compact Bible Dictionary*, 381. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
136. Unger, “BARZIL’LAI,” 147-148. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
137. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
138. Youngblood, Bruce, and Harrison, eds., “MAHANAIM,” *Nelson’s Compact Series: Compact Bible Dictionary*, 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
139. “Epilogue,” *ESV Study Bible*, 576. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
140. “21:16,” *ESV Study Bible*, 576. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
141. McCarter, *TAB*, 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
142. Bergen, *NAC*, 448. Bergen has a helpful overview of the Rapha on pg. 448. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
143. Bergen, *NAC*, 450. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
144. Bergen, *NAC*, 450. For a more detailed analysis of Psalm 22, see Andrews, *WBC*, 261-265. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
145. S. Szikszai, “MIGHTY MEN,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 376.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
146. “David’s Heroes,” *ESV Study Bible*, 581. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
147. Arnold, *TNAC*, 643-644. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
148. Arnold, *TNAC*, 644.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
149. Andrews and Bergen, *HOTC*, 368. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
150. Unger, “GAD,” 450. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
151. Crossway Books, “Historical Books Timeline,” available from https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/chart-06-historical-intro/ [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
152. Kyle M. Yates, *Preaching from the Prophets* (Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1942), 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
153. Kyle M. Yate’s classic work, *Preaching from the Prophets,* is a helpful resource for finding biographical information about the prophets. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. “Outline,” *ESV Study Bible*, 541. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. “Outline,” *ESV Study Bible*, 489-490. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)