

# **Book of 1 Samuel**

## **Commentary**

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## Chapter 1

(Verse 1): **Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.**

Note that Samuel's grandfather's name was **Zuph**, and he was from the tribe of Levi and the clan of Kohath (1 Chronicles 6: 22-28, 33-38). Probably, Zuph came and lived in Mount Ephraim, and that is why the place was named after it, **Ramathaim Zophim**, meaning the two heights of the family of Zuph, where the great-grandfather Zuph lived. So Samuel is from the tribe of Levi and was called **Ephraimite** because he lived in Ephraim, just as Christ was called a Nazarene even though he was from Judah (Bethlehem) because he lived in Nazareth.

(Verse 2): **And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.**

**And he had two wives:** Wherever there was polygamy, family peace faded (examples: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob... Abraham and Jacob suffered from polygamy, while Isaac had peace in his house).

**Peninnah**= coral or pearl, **Hannah**= tenderness or grace

(Verse 3): **This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there.**

The Jews were obligated to go up to Jerusalem 3 times a year for the feasts (Passover, Harvest, and Tabernacles). Perhaps Elkanah used to take all his family members annually to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice to the Lord (And of the meat of the peace offering, the person offering it, his relatives, his friends, and the priest) eat and drink. On these occasions, they ate and drank, prompting Eli, the priest to think that Hannah was drunk while crying and praying. Some scholars believed that the Jews were satisfied with going up to Jerusalem once a year (Luke 2: 41), and likely it was during the harvest festival to celebrate the great feast. And they were eating and drinking wine. **Shiloh** = is the center of worship, and Joshua chose it as the place of the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. The high priest and Samuel lived there, and it was 27 km north of Jerusalem. **Lord of hosts** = the first time this term is mentioned. And God is the Lord of hosts (the army of angels, the army of humans, and the army of stars (Genesis 2: 1 + Exodus 7: 4 + 1 Kings 22: 19 + Psalm 44: 9 + 148: 2)).

(Verse 4): **And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters.**

For Elkanah's love for his wife, Hannah, he give her two portions of the meat of the sacrifice. The portion of the two is the portion of the firstborn, so the story bears a symbolic meaning. Elkanah refers to Christ and his two wives refer to the Church of the Old Testament (Peninnah), and the Church of the New Testament (Hannah), the Church of the firstborn, who was barren and had children after enjoying the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

(Verse 5-6): **But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb. 6 And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the Lord had closed her womb.**

**to make her miserable:** Meaning to provoke her. Peninnah knew what angered Hannah, so she reminded her of it and repeated it

(Verses 7-9): **So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat. 8 Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?" 9 So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord.**

This is how Christ reproaches us: Why do you grieve over temporal matters or hardships? Is it not enough for you that I gave you My Body to eat and live with, to satisfy you and comfort you (especially since the Peace Offering refers to Communion)? However, Communion alone does not remove bitterness; we need prayer.

(Verse 10): **And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.**

**and prayed:** This is how we should walk to overcome the sufferings, not by complaint, but by prayer. Rather, there is a blessing for tribulations through which we know God. God allows His Church to enter into the sufferings, to share with Him the hardship of the Cross, and to bear fruit in peace that surpasses every returning mind (Romans 8: 17). Note that the bitterness was because every Jewish woman wished that the Messiah would come from her. Therefore, infertility was evidence of God's dissatisfaction with the woman; thus, her grief multiplied.

(Verse 11): **Then she made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."**

Growing one's hair was a sign of a Nazirite for the duration of a vow, and Samuel was a Nazirite to the Lord all the days of his life. And every Levi by birth was dedicated to the Lord. But Hannah vowed that her son would be with the Lord from a young age, and she did. So her request was for the glory of the Lord, and let our requests be like this: "Lord, give us, so that we may glorify You with what You have given us."

(Verses 12-18): **And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth. 13 Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. 14 So Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!" 15 But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. 16 Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now." 17 Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him." 18 And she said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.**

The fact that Eli thought that she was drunk indicates the extent of the deterioration of the spiritual state during the days of the sons of Eli, the priest. It was normal to see drunks in the house of the Lord. However, Eli's accusation against the woman is considered a fall for Eli, the high priest, as he hastens to judge. The drunkards make a fuss, unlike Hannah, who was praying while she was silent with deep faith, but her prayers before the Lord were crying out, as happened with Moses (Exodus 14: 15) and Ishmael and Hagar (Genesis 21: 16, 17) and notice that Moses did not speak and Ishmael did not speak, but their perplexity and inner prayer was a cry before God. Despite this, the words of Eli to Hannah afterwards were a prophecy: **"the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him"** This is the prophecy of a high priest, as happened with Caiaphas (John 11: 50, 51). **a wicked woman** = meaning useless or evil, who does not fear God (2 Corinthians 6: 15). It seems, unfortunately, that as a result of the perversion of the sons of Eli the priest, it was natural for the wicked women, to be present in the temple on these occasions. But notice the meek answer of Hannah as she did not reproach the high priest with his wicked sons, nor that he could not distinguish between the drunkards and the true worshipers. Her meek response was the reason for her blessing and the high priest's call for her, and the Lord answered her request. Also note the woman's faith when she left, **and her face was no longer sad**. Her heart was relieved after the prayer because she met her God and felt deep inside the power of God that can solve problems.

(Verses 19-22): **Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. 20 So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him from the Lord." 21 Now the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go up, for**

**she said to her husband, "Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the Lord and remain there forever."**

(Verse 23): **So Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the Lord establish His word." Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.**

**Only let the Lord establish His word:** Elkanah understood that God answered his wife's prayers, as happened with the mothers of Isaac, Jacob, and Samson, and they were great. He understood that his son would be great. He says to his wife: because the Lord answered you and gave you the child so that the Lord might complete his benevolence and make him great.

(Verse 24): **Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. And the child was young.**

Weaning age at this time was between 3-5 years. **three bulls** = one bull offered as a burnt offering, because Samuel was offered as a burnt offering to the Lord, that is, dedicated to the Lord all the days of his life, and the other two bulls, one of them as a sin offering and the other as a peace offering. Flour and wine were offered with burnt offerings. **she took him up** = the book did not mention that his father was the one who ascended him, but rather his mother to honor her because she had fulfilled her vow, as if the mother offered her son to God whom she long-awaited for, then this is difficult, rather it is similar to Abraham offering his son. So they killed the bull and brought the boy to Eli.

(Verse 25): **Then they slaughtered a bull, and brought the child to Eli.**

(Verse 26): **And she said, "O my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by you here, praying to the Lord.**

**As your soul lives:** This is like may God prolong your life.

(Verse 27): **For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition which I asked of Him.**

(Verse 28): **Therefore I also have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord." So they worshiped the Lord there.**

I asked him from the Lord, and the Lord gave him to me, and here I am returning to Him what He gave me: "And of Your own we have given You" (1 Chronicles 29: 14, 16). The word "**lent**" is translated as "asked" (2 Kings 6: 5). So the meaning is that I gave the Lord what I asked of Him. Let us note that everything we give to the Lord has already been taken from Him. Note that what we give to the Lord, He blesses it, as God raised a great prophet from Samuel (1 Samuel 3: 20 + Psalm 99: 6 + Jeremiah 15: 1). God wanted Samuel as His servant. And who knows if God had opened his mother's womb, she would have kept him by her side.

## Chapter 2

(Verse 1): **And Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the Lord; My horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation.**

Many turn to God in times of distress and forget Him when the distress is lifted (an example is Christ's miracle in the healing of ten lepers); Christ rejoiced over the leper who returned thankfully. Here we find Hannah praising God for His work and response. And as the saints said, every gift without thanksgiving is without increasing. And what increase did Hannah get... Her praises carried the spirit of prophecy, and she saw the redeeming work of Christ, so she glorified for salvation, so her praises came close to the praises of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1: 46-55). **My heart rejoices in the Lord** = She did not say the joy of my heart in my son Samuel or in God's gift, for God can give her 100 Samuel. She rejoiced in the Lord, not in the gift of the Lord, and we must rejoice in the glory of God, not in the glory of ourselves. Let us note that every stream has a spring, and now she is thanking the same spring of good and the maker of all goodness that she enjoyed. **My horn is exalted in the Lord** = Her inner joy in the Lord gave her strength, and she felt that God is her strength, and the horn is a sign of strength. **I smile at my enemies** = Notice that in her prayers, she was a bitter soul, no one heard her complaint, but in her thanksgiving, everyone heard her. During being barren, she could not talk and silent, but now she is praising, and her enemies are silent. **Because I rejoice in Your salvation** = Her mouth preached the salvation she felt. She did not open her mouth to anger her rival but to preach God's salvation. In verse 10, she says that God will "**exalt the horn of His anointed**" and this is the secret of her feeling that her horn is exalted. She began her hymn to glorify the Lord that He delivered her from her hardship and granted her victory over her enemy. But with the spirit of prophecy, she looked to the near future, to the people's victories over the Philistines under the leadership of Samuel and David, and then to the long-term future for Christ's victory over satan, the real enemy demons who open their mouths to gloat against the Lord's people (Psalm 3: 2). The Jews understood this praise of Hannah to be on Christ.

(Verse 2): **"No one is holy like the Lord, For there is none besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God.**

God alone is the Holy One, and Christ came to join us to Him so that we carry the holy life within us and become saints (Leviticus 11: 44).

(Verse 3): **"Talk no more so very proudly; Let no arrogance come from your mouth, For the Lord is the God of knowledge; And by Him actions are weighed.**

This is a call for us so that we do not brag about money, knowledge, lineage, and titles, as Peninnah boasted about her children, and let us know that God's scales and measures differ from what humans have. God can make the barren a mother of many children and humiliate the one with children. He can raise the poor from the dust and humble the rich.



(Verse 4): **"The bows of the mighty men are broken, And those who stumbled are girded with strength."**

**The bows of the mighty men are broken:** This is an application to verse 3, so whoever is proud of his strength, let him know that God can weaken him. **And those who stumbled are girded with strength** = because God is their strength. (David and Goliath as an example).

(Verses 5-8): **Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, And the hungry have ceased to hunger. Even the barren has borne seven, And she who has many children has become feeble. 6 "The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up. 7 The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up. 8 He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes And make them inherit the throne of glory. "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He has set the world upon them.**

Another example that a person is not proud of what he has but rather proud with God: **Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread** = they offered to get hired out of their hunger to get only bread, **And the hungry have ceased to hunger** = that is, they were full and satiated, conditions have changed. Does every person understand this lesson and thank instead of arrogance? **Even the barren has borne seven** = Hannah gave birth to Samuel, then recited this prayer, and afterwards she gave birth to 3 sons and two daughters. When she said seven, she did not mean the number, but rather the perfection that the number 7 refers to. Once again, Hannah refers to the complete Church of the New Testament, while Peninnah refers to the Jews who were fruitful and withered because they rejected Christ. Peninnah withered because she lived in hatred and detestation. She lived, and all her happiness was teasing Hannah; her joy was bullying others. When this reason ended, her joy ended, and she withered, despite what she had of sons (verse 7). In verse 6: **He brings down to the grave** = that is, he descends into the grave. Verse 8: **He raises the poor from the dust** = this happened with Daniel, David and Joseph.

Verse 8: **He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes And make them inherit the throne of glory. "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He has set the world upon them.**

**For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He has set the world upon them:** A metaphorical phrase that reveals God's care for us, for it is for our sake that he established the earth, He reigns over it and establishes us on it, and He is the Pantocrator, nothing that touches our lives escapes from His care. **Scientifically**, some forces stabilize the Earth (centrifugal force / air pressure / the weight of the earth / the influence of the rest of the planets). These are similar to pillars whose function is to stabilize the earth, as the Gregorian Liturgy says, "established the earth for me to walk upon." **Metaphorically**, it may mean kings and chiefs who are in charge of the affairs of the land. It was said in (Revelation 3: 12) "He

who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God" This meaning is metaphorical, but Job long before that said, " He hangs the earth on nothing" (Job 26: 7).

(Verse 9): **He will guard the feet of His saints, But the wicked shall be silent in darkness. "For by strength no man shall prevail.**

**He will guard the feet of His saints:** (Psalm 91: 11, 121: 3) **shall be silent** = because they are in the abyss. **For by strength no man shall prevail** = not by physical strength, nor military preparations, examples (David and Goliath / Gideon), nor by money, nor by intelligence. Christ defeated Satan through His humility, incarnation, and crucifixion, so He reigned over us.

(Verse 10): **The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; From heaven He will thunder against them. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. "He will give strength to His king, And exalt the horn of His anointed."**

**The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces:** That is, those who act according to their will against His will, **From heaven He will thunder against them** = with His anger. The rest of the verse is an explicit prophecy about Christ. **The Lord will judge the ends of the earth** = that is, His kingdom extends to the ends of the earth by preaching, **He will give strength to His king, And exalt the horn of His anointed** = The word "exalt" means that He is first humbled, then exalted, and after that He gives glory. He was incarnated and humbled himself, crucified, rose, ascended, sat at the right hand of the Father, and He is Christ, the King, the Judge. Hannah probably did not understand these meanings but uttered them in the spirit of prophecy. We note that in this verse, the term anointed is mentioned for the first time, and it may be David who Samuel will anoint, and he may be the son of David, Jesus Christ.

(Verses 11-17): **Then Elkanah went to his house at Ramah. But the child ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest. 12 Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the Lord. 13 And the priests' custom with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fleshhook in his hand while the meat was boiling. 14 Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; and the priest would take for himself all that the fleshhook brought up. So they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. 15 Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who sacrificed, "Give meat for roasting to the priest, for he will not take boiled meat from you, but raw." 16 And if the man said to him, "They should really burn the fat first; then you may take as much as your heart desires," he would then answer him, "No, but you must give it now; and if not, I will take it by force." 17 Therefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.**

This chapter shows two stories of two families, and the two stories are of Samuel's family and Eli's family. The two stories are intertwined to show the ugliness of the deeds of the sons of Eli and the

radiance of Samuel, the son of Elkanah, the son of prayer and faith, who was brought up in fear of God and was a cause of blessing for himself, his family, his people and us. As for Eli's sons, they took advantage of their father's position for their own benefit and became like wolves, doing evil and stumbling the people with them. Their father was negligent in disciplining them, and he spoke softly when he wanted to rebuke them. His duty was to remove them from their jobs, as they disgraced themselves, their father, their family, and their people. **they did not know the Lord** = they know the Lord in theoretical knowledge through education but did not show fear of God in their practical life. And they underestimated the rite as the priest has the right to eat the breast and the right leg after he burns the fat to the Lord (Leviticus 3: 3-5). But Eli's children loved grilled meat, so they asked for meat with its fat to be suitable for grilling, so they took the portion of the Lord that was kindled on the altar. They did not care about what the Lord commanded (it was the order and rite of offering the sacrifice: The fat is the portion of the Lord that is burned on the altar, the breast and the leg is the share of the priest, and the rest of the sacrifice is for the one offering it and his family).

(Verses 18-21): **But Samuel ministered before the Lord, even as a child, wearing a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "The Lord give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the Lord." Then they would go to their own home. 21 And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord.**

Samuel began his ministry when he was a young boy, and he started it in a very corrupt priestly atmosphere that cannot be reformed or resisted. However, God, who saves by little as well as by much, used this child for reformation. His mother used to bring him a little robe every year when she went up to Shiloh, and the robe was an undergarment of wool, woven without stitching, and hanging at the legs. Her visit and her gift surrounded him with her tenderness and love. Samuel saw in his mother the love of God, so he loved God. Perhaps his mother visited him several times during the year, as the distance is not far, and she taught him prayer, faith, and love. Her life was reflected in him, so he was a man of faith and a man of prayer. Perhaps her strong influence on him was just from her annual visit to him. This annual meeting saved him from deviation and stumbling because of the sons of Eli, the priest. **Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord**, and how beautiful it is for a child to grow up with the Lord and be cared for by the Lord. Note that she gave the Lord a son, so he gave her five.

(Verse 22): **Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.**

Adding to their corruption, we find the two sons of Eli corrupting the **the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting** = that is, those who serve in the tabernacle of meeting by committing adultery with them, so they corrupted the women of God's people and insulted God Himself by committing adultery in His house.

(Verses 23-25): **So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. 24 No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the Lord's people transgress. 25 If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the Lord desired to kill them.**

Eli's rebuke to his sons was lax and without firmness, as what his children did necessitates killing them according to the law. Eli did nothing except rebuke them rather, did not even remove them from their job. And in the words of Eli there is a high warning to everyone who errs against God. God judges whoever sins against a human being, so how much more is he who sins against God Himself and in holy matters? Let us note that God did not reject them until after they rejected him and rejected His warnings. **who will intercede for him?** = that is, who can pray for this situation? He finds this difficult.

(Verse 26): **And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the Lord and men.**

This is the contradiction of Eli's wicked sons.

(Verse 27): **Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: 'Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?'**

In the midst of corruption, there was found a man for God, that is, a prophet, and God sent him to Eli to warn him before he inflicts punishment. God warns many times before He strikes. God here used this prophet and then used the child Samuel. **Did I not clearly reveal Myself** = It is a positive question, that is, the Lord appeared to his father's house and elected him, and this honors them, as they are a family that the Lord has chosen to serve Him since the days of their father Aaron.

(Verse 28): **Did I not choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire?**

(Verse 29): **Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?'**

**and honor your sons:** Through the weakness of his personality, he did not honor God by deterring and disciplining his two sons. Rather, he despised Him by honoring his two sons or by complimenting them and not chastising them, removing them, or killing them according to the law.

(Verse 30): **Therefore the Lord God of Israel says: 'I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the Lord says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.**

**Forever:** That is, I will make your house always firm if they walked according to God's commandments, but with the sins of Eli's children, the promise was bound to fall. How do we honor the Lord? 1) obeying His commandments; 2) believing in Him and that we are His children and love Him; 3) By our faith and our works.

(Verse 31): **Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house.**

**I will cut off your arm:** The arm is the strength, and the strength of the house is its youth. The meaning is that its offspring die young.

(Verse 32): **And you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever.**

**see an enemy in My dwelling place:** God gave Israel many good things, but now He will leave the Philistines on them to plunder all this, **see an enemy in My dwelling place** = the Philistines took the ark of the covenant of the Lord. It will be a period of distress for Israel.

(Verse 33): **But any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age.**

**But any of your men whom I do not cut off:** His descendants would wish death and cannot find it. Death is sometimes a relief, and God here will leave those who grieve His heart with their poverty and suffering. It's painful to die, but it's even more painful to live a miserable life.

(Verse 34): **Now this shall be a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die, both of them.**

When his two sons died, this was a sign for him that the rest of this prophet's prophecy would be completed entirely.

(Verse 35): **Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.**

The Lord, as usual, does not end His words with sad news but rather opens the door to hope, which is the coming of the real priest, who may be Samuel or Zadok, who was appointed during the days of Solomon, who is not of the descendants of Eli. From Zadok, the priesthood continued until the days of Christ, but the prophecy refers to the true priest, i.e. Christ, because the attributes that were said about him apply only to Christ. The prophecy partially applies to Samuel, who walked before Saul and David = **he shall walk before My anointed forever** = and fully applies to Christ, who walks before His anointed (Christians). Christ walks before His church as the head of His church and intercedes for them while He anointed them with the Holy Spirit. As for how the Jews understood this verse, the kings and Priests are anointed, as they are anointed with holy oil. **I will build him a sure house:** The house is the Church of Christ, that is, the body of Christ, which the Holy Spirit began to build when he began the work of incarnation in the womb of the Virgin, and then, on the day of Pentecost, he established the Church.

(Verse 36): **And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread.""**

This is a sign of the complete downfall of the House of Eli or a prophecy that the Jewish priesthood will fall with the coming of the Messiah. **a piece of silver** = that is the smallest coin. **a morsel of bread** = this speech, if accompanied by true repentance, would resemble the prodigal son's repentance. But if it is not accompanied by repentance and return to Christ, then it would be a miserable condition for what the state that the unbeliever reaches.

## Chapter 3

(Verse 1): **Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.**

**there was no widespread revelation:** (Psalm 74: 1, 9). It is an expression of the situation.

(Verse 2): **And it came to pass at that time, while Eli was lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow so dim that he could not see,**

(Verse 3): **and before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the Lord where the ark of God was, and while Samuel was lying down,**

**before the lamp of God went out:** It seems that God called Samuel before dawn, amid the outer darkness, and the lamp is the light of the lampstand, which they light at night and which is extinguished in the morning. Notice how dark it is.

1. The calling at night; 2. There is no vision, for the word of God is rare; 3. The eyes of the high priest do not see (v. 2).

This is a wonderful depiction of the spiritual famine experienced by the people. If the high priest does not see (spiritually), then if the blind lead a people, where will he take them?

(Verse 4): **that the Lord called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!"**

**that the Lord called Samuel:** From God's mercies is that before the final darkness comes, a new lamp, Samuel, is lit. God always does this. He sent Athanasius as a lamp in front of the darkness of Arius as He took care of and watched over His church.

(Verse 5): **So he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down.**

**So he ran to Eli:** Samuel was lying in one of the buildings attached to the tabernacle, and Eli was lying in another building, and it was said about the whole place that it is the temple of the Lord (the tabernacle + outbuildings).

Note:

It was said that **Eli was lying down in his place** (verse 2), and it was said that Samuel was lying down **in the tabernacle of the Lord** (verse 3). Both of them were in the temple of the Lord, but in the eyes of God, Samuel is in the temple of the Lord, as he is before God: "I sleep, but my heart is awake" (Song of Solomon 5: 2). As for Eli, he is sleeping with his body in this place only. What is meant here is the expression, not the place, as both of them are in the temple of the Lord, but rather the state of each of them. Where is the heart of each of them? The high priest's heart was afflicted with spiritual old age and spiritual weakness, so his heart did not see God.

(Verse 6): **Then the Lord called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He answered, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."**

(Verse 7): **(Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, nor was the word of the Lord yet revealed to him.)**

**Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord:** There is a huge difference between this and what was said about the two sons of Eli who did not know the Lord. Samuel did not know the Lord through visions and revelations; God did not speak directly to him before, and now is the beginning of a new knowledge added to his simplicity, purity, and faith. Samuel here began to know the Lord in a new way. God called Samuel and spoke to him when he was twelve years old (Josephus) and noticed that God did not use a frightening voice, but rather a familiar voice for Samuel so that he would not be intimidated or afraid, but rather he thought it was Eli's voice. The Lord called Samuel while there were many in the temple, but there were no ears sensitive to God's voice except for Samuel's ears. Samuel was responding to Eli because he knew he was an old man who needed help, so the book says, and **he ran** verse 5. Obedience to the Father who is seen (i.e., Eli) is a sign of obedience to the Father who is not seen. Even though it was sleeping time, Samuel went with every call without complaining.

(Verse 8): **And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. So he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you did call me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord had called the boy.**

The Lord called Samuel by his name personally, but Samuel could not recognize the voice without the guidance of Eli, the priest. This is the role of the priesthood.

(Verse 9): **Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.**

(Verse 10): **Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."**



**Now the Lord came and stood and called:** This means that the voice kept getting closer until it was proven. It is a divine condescension and a supreme divine love towards man. Rather, the repetition of the name **Samuel! Samuel!**= means that God loved his name and loved him. After that, God's words were summarized to him as briefly as the boy could bear to hear.

(Verses 11-14): **Then the Lord said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them. 14 And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."**

God repeats the same meanings that the Prophet said before. He did not mention to him the details of the punishment, as there is no need to repeat it. Rather, He reminds Eli and his sons so that they may repent. **the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.** This is a continuation of the Prophet's prophecy (1 Samuel 2: 35-36). Christ, the priest who comes, will abolish the sacrifices with the sacrifice of His blood. His saying "forever" refers to the atoning sacrifice of Christ, which atones for human sins forever. Animal sacrifices do not atone forever. The blood of Christ atoned for the righteous of the Old Testament (Romans 3: 25). But in the case of Eli's children and his house, the blood of Christ will not atone for them, for they are not worthy. Note that the threat was directed at **the house of Eli**, for the man himself feared the Lord, but he was not firm with his children.

(Verse 15): **So Samuel lay down until morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision.**

Samuel was afraid to tell Eli of the vision for fear of hurting his feelings while he was an old man and a beloved father to him. **and opened the doors of the house of the Lord:** He did this in the morning because his work was to open the doors, his service to which he was accustomed to. Now that he knew that the Lord was speaking to him personally, he was not puffed up and did not see that his work had become too small for him.

(Verses 16-17): **Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!" He answered, "Here I am." 17 And he said, "What is the word that the Lord spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the things that He said to you."**

(Verse 18): **Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him. And he said, "It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him."**

Eli's reply indicates his piety, despite his weak personality. His fault is that he didn't do anything positive.

(Verses 19-21): **So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord. 21 Then the Lord appeared again in Shiloh. For the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.**

**and the Lord was with him:** This is the secret of his strength, and the strength of all the children of God (1 Corinthians 15: 10). The children of God lack nothing, for He is with them. And God gave him favor in the eyes of his people = **and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba** = all parts of the country, Dan is in the far north, and Beersheba in the farthest south. **Then the Lord appeared again:** Because he was faithful, after the Lord appeared to him the first time, He appeared to him after that.

## Chapter 4

(Verse 1): **And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines, and encamped beside Ebenezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek.**

**And the word of Samuel came to all Israel:** Samuel was known to be a prophet with the word of God. This verse is a link between the previous chapter and this chapter, as it serves as a conclusion to the previous chapter and is also suitable as a beginning for this chapter. However, the inspiration reproaches the people who knew that Samuel had the word of God in this verse. If the people knew that Samuel was God's prophet, why did they not consult him before going to war? It is not understood from the verse that Samuel is the one who commanded the people to go to war; on the contrary, as previously mentioned. And because they went out to war without sanctifying themselves or consulting the Lord, they were defeated, and defeat is always caused by abandoning God. God leaves in the case of insisting on sin without repentance. However, God does not leave His people to the end but always sends someone to save them after chastising them. The Heavenly Father does not spoil His children (as Eli) but rather loves them with true love. **Ebenezer** = This name was taken about 20 years after the events mentioned here (1 Samuel 7: 12). Samuel placed a memorial stone between Mizpah and Shen in the southeast of Aphek.

(Verse 2): **Then the Philistines put themselves in battle array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men of the army in the field.**

(Verse 3): **And when the people had come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Shiloh to us, that when it comes among us it may save us from the hand of our enemies."**

**Why has the Lord defeated us today:** They admitted that their defeat was from the Lord, but they were ignorant that sin was the reason. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" They should have understood that their corruption and deviation from God is the reason. **Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord** = will the ark of the covenant cover corruption? The solution was repentance, holiness and faith. Some wear golden crosses encrusted with diamonds, but without faith, so their crosses will not benefit him at all, and some draw the sign of the cross with faith, so the power of poison goes away (St. George's story). Thus, Semaan Al-Kharaz moved the Mokattam Mountain. The ark is a symbol of God's dwelling among them. Still, in their pagan thinking they thought that the presence of the ark was a charm that protected them like the idols of the rest of the nations, even though God told them that He does not live inside the ark but rather between the two cherubim (where the Shekinah appears, i.e. the glory of God). God will dwell among them if they are in a state of holiness. (This situation is explained by Psalm 78: 56-64). They relied on the formalities of worship without a change of heart.

(Jeremiah 7: 8) + (Ezekiel 10: 18, 11: 22) God set up the tabernacle and the ark for their sake. If they reject Him, He will reject the tent and the ark.

(Verse 4): **So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.**

**Hophni and Phinehas**, who corrupted the people and were corrupt, came to carry the ark of the covenant, so would God accept? **who dwells between the cherubim** = compare with (2 Samuel 6: 2 + Psalm 80: 1 + Psalm 99: 1). This name came from the fact that the cover of the Ark of the Covenant has two cherubim on it, and it refers to the throne of God surrounded by angels, and the saying that God **dwells between the cherubim** means God's comfort and joy with His angels who love Him, and this is because they know Him very well and found Him deserving of this love. The book expressed the depth of this knowledge by saying that they were "full of eyes" (Revelation 4: 8). From this shape of the Ark of the Covenant, David said in his psalm about God, "He rode upon a cherub" (Psalm 18: 10). Refer (Ezekiel 1) to see the shapes of the cherubim, and that the likeness of the firmament above the heads referring to the heaven (Ezekiel 1: 22), above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne (Ezekiel 1: 26).

(Verse 5): **And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth shook.**

**all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth shook:** Here they glorify God with their lips, but the heart is far away. Throats cheered, but hearts remained silent, far from the thought of repentance.

(Verses 6-8): **Now when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What does the sound of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they understood that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. 7 So the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp!" And they said, "Woe to us! For such a thing has never happened before. 8 Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.**

(Verse 9): **Be strong and conduct yourselves like men, you Philistines, that you do not become servants of the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Conduct yourselves like men, and fight!"**

**Be strong and conduct yourselves like men:** The Philistines feared because of their previous knowledge of God's deeds with His people; they increased their enthusiasm and courage instead of retreating. If God were pleased with His people, He would have troubled the Philistines, as happened before. But this did not happen, and the Palestinians prevailed for a while.

(Verses 10-12): **So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent. There was a very great slaughter, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. 11 Also the ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died. 12 Then a man of Benjamin ran from the battle line the same day, and came to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dirt on his head.**

(Verse 13): **Now when he came, there was Eli, sitting on a seat by the wayside watching, for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told it, all the city cried out.**

It is clear that Eli did not agree to take the Ark of the Covenant, and his heart was troubled (**his heart trembled**) by it. But he had submitted to the will of the people.

(Verse 14): **When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, "What does the sound of this tumult mean?" And the man came quickly and told Eli.**

(Verse 15): **Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were so dim that he could not see.**

**and his eyes were so dim:** That is, it became dark and blind, and he completely lost his sight and note that the end of his life was a complete darkness for him and his people, Israel.

(Verse 16): **Then the man said to Eli, "I am he who came from the battle. And I fled today from the battle line." And he said, "What happened, my son?"**

(Verse 17): **So the messenger answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God has been captured."**

Each news is more difficult than the one before it. 1) The people fled and were broken; 2) many died; 3) his two sons died; 4) The Ark of the Covenant was captured.

(Verse 18): **Then it happened, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli fell off the seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.**

The news that terrified and saddened Eli to death was the news of capturing of the Ark of the Covenant.

(Verses 19-20): **Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, due to be delivered; and when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and gave birth, for her labor pains came upon her. 20 And about the time of her death the women who stood by her said to her, "Do not fear, for you have borne a son." But she did not answer, nor did she regard it.**

Phinehas's wife heard that she was giving birth, and when she was dying, she did not care that the child was born.

(Verse 21): **Then she named the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel!" because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband.**

**Ichabod:** The glory has departed, or where is this glory? She thought that the glory lies in the presence of the ark in Israel, but she misunderstood, as the glory is in the presence of God amid His people, that is, among the saints. The ark was taken because the glory has departed from Israel, for they are not saints but wicked, as God does not now reside among them. The woman's catastrophe in capturing the ark was more severe for her soul than the death of her father-in-law and her husband, as taking the ark was a sign of God's abandonment of His people. The birth of her son does not console her, as what future awaits Israel, from which the glory has departed and God departed from it.... This woman was more righteous than her husband and her father in law. Capturing the ark was a punishment for both sides; Israel and the Philistines.

(Verse 22): **And she said, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured."**

## Chapter 5

(Verses 1-5): **Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. 2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon. 3 And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. 4 And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold; only Dagon's torso was left of it. 5 Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.**

It was the custom of the pagan peoples to attribute their victories to their gods and to offer the spoils of war to their gods in gratitude for giving them victory over their enemies. They did this with Saul's armor (1 Samuel 31: 10), and David did the same when he gave the sword he took from Goliath to the Lord's temple (1 Samuel 21: 8-9). Dagon is a Palestinian god with a human head and hand, but his body is in the form of a fish. He is considered the god of fertility because the sea overflows with many fish. God dealt with them in this way because they knew that the Ark of the Covenant represented the divine presence. God spoke to them in the language of disease and disasters, as their god fell while they were struck with tumors, and by the strike of rats. Here God defends the dignity of His name so that these pagans do not think that their god is stronger than God. We have to note that God's entry into the heart must be accompanied by the collapse of all idols, i.e. all that we worship of lust and the love of money. The people of Ashdod had to understand that there is no communion between God and their god, and so we are, " And what communion has light with darkness? " Now the people of Ashdod saw that their god is incapable of leadership and management and is helpless without hands, and they used to imagine that the fish god has strength, reason, management power, and fertility power. Where is all this now? They found Dagon's head and **the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold**. i.e., the place people step on. Thus, every thought or force that opposes God may rise for a while, but its destiny is to be trampled. And in (verse 5) we find the Palestinians not tread on the threshold out of honor to their God, whose members fell on the threshold. We may understand that the Palestinians do this, but how do we understand that the Jews, God's holy people, do this (Zephaniah 1: 9)? How do they imitate pagan customs?

(Verse 6): **But the hand of the Lord was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and He ravaged them and struck them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territory.**

**struck them with tumors:** It is a painful strike and it may be fatal because of the disease that accompanies it, and it is a shameful blow and causes great shame among these people (Psalm 78: 66). Note how the ark was a blessing for the believers if they lived in a holy life in the Lord, and how it becomes a cause of a curse for non-believers (2 Corinthians 2: 15, 16). And the word tumors used here means a disease affecting the lymph glands and the groin, so they feared death (verse 11). And it was

stated in the Septuagint translation that the country was also struck by rats that ate their crops, and this is in line with their strike with tumors. It is scientifically known that rats are associated with diseases.

(Verse 7): **And when the men of Ashdod saw how it was, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for His hand is harsh toward us and Dagon our god."**

This is similar to what the people of the country of the Gerasenes did when Christ destroyed their pigs, so they asked Him to leave their country. But the reason was that the strike was because there was Dagon inside, occupying their hearts.

(Verse 8): **Therefore they sent and gathered to themselves all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" And they answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried away to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel away.**

They moved the ark to Gath.

(Verse 9): **So it was, after they had carried it away, that the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction; and He struck the men of the city, both small and great, and tumors broke out on them.**

The strike of the city of Gath was to realize that what happened in Ashdod was not a coincidence but rather a divine strike. From the beginning, they knew that YHWH is a powerful God who miraculously saved His people from Egypt, but they were hardened to resist him. They are sure they cannot resist Him, but why did God not destroy them and kill them? Because they are ignorant, they do what they do out of ignorance and lack of knowledge."

(Verses 10-12): **Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. So it was, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!" 11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go back to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people." For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. 12 And the men who did not die were stricken with the tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.**

They sent the ark to Ekron, but its people refused to have it out of fear. So everyone decided to return it to Israel.



## Chapter 6

(Verse 1): **Now the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months.**

It took a long time for the ark to stay in the land of the Philistines so that they knew what happened was not a coincidence. And they know that the strikes are a sign of divine wrath against them for their paganism. And until the people yearn for the ark to return among them.

(Verse 2): **And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, "What shall we do with the ark of the Lord? Tell us how we should send it to its place."**

Believers approach God, and non-believers turn away from Him.

(Verse 3): **So they said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty; but by all means return it to Him with a trespass offering. Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why His hand is not removed from you."**

The priests of the Philistines saw that what befell them was the fruit of chastisement and the fruit of their sin against God. The suggestion was to send an offering as moral and material compensation for what befell God's people. They asked that every city of the five great cities in Palestine participate in this offering so that the confession would be collective and the offering is from all the people.

(Verse 4): **Then they said, "What is the trespass offering which we shall return to Him?" They answered, "Five golden tumors and five golden rats, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines. For the same plague was on all of you and on your lords."**

It was the custom of the pagans to present the image of the diseased part to the gods when recovering from the disease. We note the request here to make images of tumors and rates; therefore, the strike was in their sickness with tumors and the release of rats on their crops according to what came in the Septuagint version.

(Verse 5): **Therefore you shall make images of your tumors and images of your rats that ravage the land, and you shall give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps He will lighten His hand from you, from your gods, and from your land.**

The Philistines understood that their gift was not a bribe to God because they said, "**give glory to the God of Israel**" but rather an offering for sin. As for the law of Moses, any sin offering must be bloody,

and for us, the blood of Christ is the One that purifies from all sin. Not with gold, but with blood. But just as the people came out of Egypt with gifts, thus the ark came out of Palestine with gifts.

(Verse 6): **Why then do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He did mighty things among them, did they not let the people go, that they might depart?**

The Philistines also understood that God could not be resisted. So the lesson of Pharaoh spread everywhere. And every person should consider the troubles that happen against sinners and offer repentance.

(Verses 7-12): **Now therefore, make a new cart, take two milk cows which have never been yoked, and hitch the cows to the cart; and take their calves home, away from them. 8 Then take the ark of the Lord and set it on the cart; and put the articles of gold which you are returning to Him as a trespass offering in a chest by its side. Then send it away, and let it go. 9 And watch: if it goes up the road to its own territory, to Beth Shemesh, then He has done us this great evil. But if not, then we shall know that it is not His hand that struck us—it happened to us by chance." 10 Then the men did so; they took two milk cows and hitched them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. 11 And they set the ark of the Lord on the cart, and the chest with the gold rats and the images of their tumors. 12 Then the cows headed straight for the road to Beth Shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and did not turn aside to the right hand or the left. And the lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth Shemesh.**

What a wonderful scene testifying to God's love for His people. No matter how long the ark stays in a strange land, God longs to dwell among His people and stay among them. He drove the two cows despite their natural inclination towards their young ones, and they **headed straight for the road to Beth Shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went**: it is the sound of the cow's lowing for the sake of her imprisoned children, and also note that they are untrained, **which have never been yoked**, as untrained cows do not walk in a straight path, but they were straight and did not lean to the right or to the left (**and did not turn aside to the right hand or the left**): Contrary to nature, it is normal for the two cows to enter the fields to eat. All the circumstances were against the two cows heading to Beth Shemesh, so what power was pushing them other than the power of God? The two cows could not deviate because they knew their owner (Isaiah 1: 3), while Phinehas and Hophni did not know Him. It is amazing that, despite the sin of God's people, we find God longing to return to His people. The new cart and the two cows, which were not yoked, reveal the realization of the pagans that God does not accept faltering between the two sides, as He wants that what is used to carry the ark should not to be used for anything else. Thus God wants the heart to be His alone (2 Corinthians 6: 14). The new cart refers to the new church founded by Christ, and the two cows are a symbol of the Jews and the Gentiles. **which have never been yoked**: that is, they did not submit to sin.

**to its own territory** (verse 9): that is, the land of Israel. The way the two cows walked was a sign to the Palestinian priests that what happened to them was from God. **Beth Shemesh** is a city of priests (Joshua 21: 16) on the border of Judah.

(Verses 13-18): **Now the people of Beth Shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. 14 Then the cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh, and stood there; a large stone was there. So they split the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. 15 The Levites took down the ark of the Lord and the chest that was with it, in which were the articles of gold, and put them on the large stone. Then the men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices the same day to the Lord. 16 So when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day. 17 These are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned as a trespass offering to the Lord: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron; 18 and the golden rats, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both fortified cities and country villages, even as far as the large stone of Abel on which they set the ark of the Lord, which stone remains to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh.**

Splitting the wood of the cart and using its wood as fuel for sacrifice because the cart should not be used for anything again. And in verse (14) the two cows **stood** at the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh: His name is the same name as Jesus or Joshua. And as Joshua led the people to enter the Promised Land. The name Joshua led the two cows. The cart refers to the church, so entering the field of Joshua is an announcement that the church's pleasure and joy is in her Jesus, the secret of her strength. **which stone remains to this day**: on which the ark of the covenant was placed. It is a witness to God's work with His people, to which generations look to remember God's love and care.

(Verses 19-21): **Then He struck the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord. He struck fifty thousand and seventy men of the people, and the people lamented because the Lord had struck the people with a great slaughter. 20 And the men of Beth Shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? And to whom shall it go up from us?" 21 So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath Jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of the Lord; come down and take it up with you."**

It was supposed that when the people would see the ark fall on their faces, offer repentance to the Lord and call the priests to carry it and celebrate it, but they ignored the law. The Palestinians honored him despite their ignorance more than the Jews. The strike of the Jews for their recklessness was much greater than the strike of the Palestinians, for he who knows more will be condemned more. **He struck fifty thousand and seventy men of the people**: This large number has raised some questions; how is there such a large number in a small country like Beth Shemesh?

1. The text stated in the Hebrew that He struck 70, 50,000, and the Vulgate interpreted it as 70 of the chiefs, 50,000 of the people. Some translated it as 70 men, fifty thousand men, meaning there is a distinction between 70 and 50,000. And some understood the text that God struck 70 out of the 50,000 present.

2. Perhaps many of Israel's children gathered and rejoiced at the return of the ark, an unholy joy, and every unholy joy is punished by turning into sorrow and wailing. Hence, God struck 70 of the people of Bethshemesh and 50,000 of the rest of Israel.

3. Personal opinion:

"70 men of the people and 50 oxen of a man"

Verse 19 is like this in an English translation. Oxen translate as 1) oxen. or 2) a big, stupid human being. The word's origin in Hebrew is the letter alif in the Hebrew alphabet and has the shape of a bull. When used as a number, it refers to the number 1000 (before using numbers, the ancients used letters as numbers) "from Strongs American Dictionary" for the origins of the words of the Bible. What is meant by the number has some ambiguity, and likely because the word oxen are taken as a word and not as a number, so the interpretation of the verse is in one of two ways: 1) The Lord struck 70 men from the people of Beth Shemesh and 50 from the stupid tyrants. 2) The Lord killed 70 men from Beth Shemesh and 50 oxen for one man. This is the most plausible explanation.

Disrespect for the Ark of the Covenant and the strike of the people because of that reminds us that we are often negligent when we hear the voice of God, or inside the church, or while we partake of the divine mysteries.

**Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?:** that is, who can face God's strikes, challenge Him, and stand in His face. **And to whom shall it go up from us?:** that is, to whom shall we send the ark, that we may be rid of the plagues? Unfortunately, it is the same position as the Palestinians, and they should have said how to reconcile with God. And in (verse 21) the ark was taken up to **Kirjath Jearim** and did not return again to Shiloh because Shiloh had been destroyed by the Philistines (Jeremiah 7: 12). Samuel set up a tent in Nob and put the utensils, altars, but the ark did not enter it. Samuel cared about the essence of worship, not its formalities. The ark remained in **Kirjath Jearim** until David moved it to Chidon's threshing floor and the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. (1 Chronicles 13: 5-13 + 2 Chronicles 1: 4).

## Chapter 7

(Verses 1-2): **Then the men of Kirjath Jearim came and took the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord. 2 So it was that the ark remained in Kirjath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.**

The people of **Kirjath Jearim** realized that the ark represented the presence of God, so they ascended with joy and brought it respectfully to **the house of Abinadab**, to remain there for nearly 100 years until the prophet David moved it (2 Samuel 6: 1-4), while the cause of strikes for the people of Beth Shemesh was the aroma of life for life and the aroma of death for death. Abinadab was a Levite but not a priest, and it is a firm reprimand that whoever guards the ark is not a priest because the priests insulted God with their actions (the children of Eli). The tent was in Nob, while the ark was in Jearim, and this certainly was a reason for disrupting worship or making worship incomplete, but it was a declaration of the extent of the spiritual decline of the people. Samuel did not care about placing the ark in the tent, as his goal was to call the people to repentance and to keep them away from the outward appearances and formalities of worship. **And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord**: It is a collective repentance due to the work and service of Samuel, who for 20 years kept calling for repentance and rejecting every strange worship. Compare how **Kirjath Jearim** received the ark with joy and dignity and placed it in the house of Abinadab, and between Beth Shemesh, where no one of the priests gave him his home but left it on a rock.

(Verses 3-4): **Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." 4 So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only.**

After Samuel's service for 20 years in Israel, he began to work in the community. After the people's defeat by the Philistines, and after the ark's return, Samuel began establishing the School of the Prophets. During this period, he married and had two children. During the quiet service, hearts were opened with love for God, and the people gathered together in the spirit of unity and love. After 20 years, Samuel found the opportunity to call for collective repentance and explain to them the reason for their previous failure and that it is in distancing from God and worshiping strange gods or faltering between the two sides. **Ashtoreths**: The plural of Ishtar, the consort of Baal, and the Palestinians worshiped her through statues with pictures of the moon or the planet Venus. She is a goddess of fertility and her worship contained a lot of the spirit of immorality and abominations. Priestesses were dedicated to practicing prostitution in Ashtoreths temples. As for **Baals**, the word means master or lord, meaning owner or master of a woman or an enslaved person. Baal was worshiped in many forms and with images of wood, stone or metal bearing the image of the sun as the greatest thing in nature and as the source of life. Unfortunately, the Jews worshipped **Baals** and **Ashtoreths** and even made their

statues in the temple. Their women were devoted to this prostitution and offered their children as living sacrifices to these gods.

(Verses 5 -6): **And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you." 6 So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah.**

It is highlighted the role of Samuel as a judge, a representative of divine rule like (Moses and Joshua), and a religious reformer. He shows the people the power of prayer to explain God's role in protecting His people, **and I will pray to the Lord for you**, as he is a spiritual shepherd who knows that he cannot lead the people without prayer because God is the true leader. The people, in their humiliation before the Lord, **drew water, and poured it out before the Lord**: It is as if they were saying in their repentance, "We have poured out before You, O Lord, without hope that anyone will gather us again, so have mercy on us and gather us." Therefore, the meaning of pouring water is a sign of acknowledgment of weakness, as they have become like spilled water, which cannot be collected except by a divine hand. Thus, it was said about Christ when he was crucified, "I am poured out like water" (Psalm 22: 14).

Some translations have translated the verse as "and they poured out their hearts in repentance before Him like water," it is also understood that they cast away their sins from them as a vessel disposing of spilled water. Previously, they "drank sin like water," so it is a wonderful repentance that included repentance, confession, kneeling, pouring out before God, and fasting.

(Verses 7-8): **Now when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 8 So the children of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines."**

The enemy of goodness revolts and provokes his men with the start of every repentance. So the Philistines agitated against the people is the darkness's rejection of the light. But let us note that when the people return to God through repentance, the war is not against the people but against God. The people were afraid that what happened to them in Afik would happen again, but now they are in a state of repentance, so they asked Samuel to pray for them (the previous time, they did not ask for his prayers or advice). They were now convinced of the power of Samuel's intercession.

(Verse 9): **And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. Then Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him.**

Samuel's prayer without sacrifice becomes useless, as the sacrifice is a sign of the Lamb of God, who offered Himself on our behalf to intercede for us. Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice, and He intercedes for us, which does not mean we should stop praying. The offering is a sign of the complete devotion of the people to God and the complete surrender of the people's souls to God's hand.

(Verses 10-11): **Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel. 11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and drove them back as far as below Beth Car.**

Israel followed the Philistines to **Beth Car**.

**But the Lord thundered:** "The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." God answered Samuel's prayer and offering through nature and gave victory to His people. The enemy of goodness, Satan, stirred up the enemies of God's people against them out of anger at their repentance, but all his wars lead to purifying us and crowning us as long as we are in God's hand (1 Peter 1: 6, 7).

Note:

Samuel was a Levi, not a priest, and God guided him to offer a sacrifice, as he was a prophet first, with a special status. And the priests have polluted themselves. His sacrifice and prayers were stronger than sinful priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant. We also note that the defeat was by thunder (the work of God's grace) and by the people's war (their strife).

(Verse 12): **Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."**

The victory was achieved at the same site where the defeat took place before, and the ark was taken. That is why Samuel took a stone and set it up and called it the Stone of Help (Ebenezer): **and called its name Ebenezer** to be a witness to God's work with His repentant people and to remind Israel of the cause of the first defeat (sin) and the reason for victory now (repentance).

(Verses 13-14): **So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 14 Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines. Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.**

The blessings of repentance and the gifts or fruits that we get out of Satan's battles when he provokes wars against us, from which we come out with more blessings. The people benefited from the Palestine war against them in the following:

- 1- **they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel:** until the days of Saul.
- 2- **the Philistines were subdued**, and their defeat was the beginning of successive defeats.
- 3- **Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines.**
- 4- When the Amorites saw what happened, they reconciled with the Jews because they feared them, so the people lived in peace.

(Verses 15-17): **And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16 He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. 17 But he always returned to Ramah, for his home was there. There he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the Lord.**

Samuel was an active shepherd going around in many places, **Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah**. Samuel did not return the glory of Shiloh, nor did he return the ark to the tabernacle. As what was the ark's benefit in the previous war while they were in their sins? Therefore, he cared about the internal reform of the people and not focus on a specific place so that they would not defile the place with pagan thought. The secret of strength is in repentance, not in place.



## Chapter 8

\* With the end of the previous chapter, the era of judges ends, and this chapter is a preparation for the monarchy period.

\* The people asked Samuel to establish a king for them like the rest of the nations, and this request carried a rejection of the kingdom of God and Samuel. But God gave them the desire of their heart and established a good-looking Saul for them, which was according to their heart's desire. "May He grant you according to your heart's desire"(Psalm 20: 4). And God approved their request to complete the symbol in the story.

God creates the man Adam, and God reigns over him	Adam rejects God, loves the world, and chooses the good-looking Satan	God sends Christ to establish His kingdom
The period of judges = the period of divine judgment	The people chose the good-looking Saul, and they wanted to imitate those around them and to have a king who would protect them and advance them	David establishes the kingdom

\* God has agreed that there would be a king on His own terms. The king in the nations used to rule with absolute authority, and they might view him as a god in some countries. But the king of Israel is subject to God and the law, is anointed by the priest and has no right to priestly work. And God punishes him if he makes a mistake, so God punished David (on the subject of Uriah and the census) and punished Ahab (on the subject of Naboth) and so on.

\* There are not less than 20 years between this chapter and what preceded it, and Samuel was old, and the age of Samuel when the people asked him to rule over them is estimated at 70 years.

\* God was planning to establish a king over the people according to his heart, and Jacob preceded and prophesied that he would be from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49: 10). God also preceded and gave them the laws of this king (Deuteronomy 17: 14-20). God sends His promise in the fullness of time, and it was the people's fault that they hastened the events. Their second mistake is that they did not ask for a king according to God's will, but rather a king like the nations (1 Samuel 8: 5). They looked at the power and the appearance of the king, so God gave them according to their heart a king whose appearance was good, who was for them the cause of great misery. They wanted a king to lead them in war, and they forgot that they had defeated their enemy by the prayers of Samuel. They forgot that in the age of judges they could choose the leader who would fight their enemies according to their will. The position of judge is not by inheritance, but the king to be inherited.

(Verses 1-5): **Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice. 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."**

The sons of Samuel were probably excellent, so the people nominated them for the judiciary. Samuel appointed them as judges in the south (in Beersheba), and they did not take the position by inheritance, as there is no inheritance in the judiciary. But the position was a reason for their conquest, so **they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice**. Why did God not rebuke Samuel as He did Eli?

1. The mistakes of the sons of Samuel were much less, as they did not underestimate the rites and the temple, nor did they commit adultery.

2. They were upright, but the position seduced them into perverting the judiciary.

3- It is implicitly understood that Samuel deposed them and placed them before the judiciary and the people (1 Samuel 12: 2). The name of his eldest son **Joel** = YHWH is God, and the second is **Abijah** = God is my father. However, we find in the English version (OKJV) (1 Chronicles 6: 28) "the sons of Samuel; the firstborn Vashni and Abijah", so what is the explanation for this difference?

- a. Joel may have another name, Washni (Sheni).
- b. The word Washni means the second, so scholars believe that the word Joel was omitted inadvertently in the copyists and that the word Washni meant the second son, and it is not a name for the firstborn. And the meaning is that the children of Samuel are the firstborn (and his name was not mentioned) and the second, then Abijah.
- c. Searching in (Strongs) dictionary, we find the word Washna means erecting a wall of thorns to protect an area. It appears to be a nickname he got from the people when he was working as a judge. I think this interpretation is the closest to reality.

(Verse 6): **But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord.**

The prophet Samuel counted that request as a personal rejection of him and his judicial work.

(Verse 7): **And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."**

As for the Lord, He considered their request as a rejection of Him as King over His people. This is a lesson for every servant, not to consider the insult directed at him personally, but rather towards God, as he is a servant of God, provided that he considers all praise and dignity directed at God and not at his own

person. **Heed the voice of the people** = God sanctifies human freedom and responds to collective requests. "May He grant you according to your heart's desire," If He explains to them the bad consequence and warns them, He still responds. If the people had been patient for several years, they would not have been exposed to Saul's problems, for God was preparing a king for them according to His heart in the fullness of time.

(Verses 8-22): **According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. 9 Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them." 10 So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king. 11 And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. 12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. 14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. 15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. 16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. 17 He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. 18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day." 19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." 21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the Lord. 22 So the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city."**

God responds but warns of a bad consequence for their choice. Note the kings' enslavement of the daughters and sons of their people, and let us see the great difference between the kings of the earth and our heavenly King, Jesus Christ, who gives generously and without reproach. Rather, when He reigns, He reigned over us with the cross of His love and sacrifice. The fact that God answered their request does not mean that He is pleased with that, for He "grant you according to your heart's desire." If the desire of your heart is heavenly, you will enjoy the heavenly blessings, and if the desire of your heart is not in your favour, God allows it to be fulfilled for the sake of discipline (Psalm 20: 4 + 37: 4 + 106: 15 + Hosea 13: 11). As previously mentioned, God allowed them to have a king, but God is the real king, and the kingdom that will be established will be just a representative of God, so none of the kings of Judah tried to change the law.

## Chapter 9

(Verses 1-2): **There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. 2 And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.**

God gives us a lesson not to be concerned with outward appearance but with the heart. God has given them the desire of their heart, a man of good looks, but his heart was not upright, so he could not bear wealth and dignity, and his heart was puffed. He cared about temporal dignities, so his life ended with God's rejection. The end of the life of the first king chosen by the people was that the enemies killed him. However, the Bible justly shows Saul's other virtues. He was a man from Benjamin, and Benjamin is a small tribe (Judges 20), but it is a mighty tribe that has its dignity.

(Verses 3-5): **Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." 4 So he passed through the mountains of Ephraim and through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and they were not there. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them. 5 When they had come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease caring about the donkeys and become worried about us."**

Events that seem trivial, but the inspiration reveals how God is the Pantocrator (Greek word means controller of everything) of all. He is transforming all events, no matter how trivial they may seem, to achieve a divine plan for us, and nothing happens by chance. The donkeys that were lost caused the choosing of the king of Israel, "God who cares for sparrows, and not a sparrow falls to the ground except by His permission." He takes care of us. However, God's arrangement does not conflict with human freedom. God arranged the meeting, but Saul came by his own will, and God did not force him to do so. We see here a positive side in Saul, i.e. his serious search for the lost donkeys, as his caring about carrying out his father's order, no matter what it costs him, then his thinking of returning to his father so as not to get worried about him, so he cares about his father's feelings.

(Verses 6-10): **And he said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go." 7 Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" 8 And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one-fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give that to the man of God, to tell us our way." 9 (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for he who is now called a**

**prophet was formerly called a seer.) 10 Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.**

The Jews used to call the prophet a man of God, as he works to advance the people to God through prayer, divine commandment, guidance, and prophecy. He is also called the seer because he sees some matters of the future with an open spiritual insight. In verse (9), the writer of the book explains the naming of the Prophet at that stage: **for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.** But the word prophet was known from ancient times in the story of Abraham and Abimelech. The word prophet means a man who has a relationship with God and whose intercession is acceptable to God. Saul was ignorant of Samuel, which is unsurprising, as young people are drawn to wars and victories, and Samuel was not a military leader. Saul probably lived in his village, not caring about politics or religion. And because Saul was brought up not to enter the house of God empty-handed nor to meet the man of God empty-handed, as it was customary for him to go to him with a gift of his food, crops, or money. They found only **one-fourth of a shekel of silver**: a very small amount, but they were not ashamed to offer it, for the matter is not in the quantity but in the nature of the giving.

(Verses 11-15): **As they went up the hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?" 12 And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because there is a sacrifice of the people today on the high place. 13 As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him." 14 So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place. 15 Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying,**

In (verse 12), **there is a sacrifice of the people today..** and in (verse 15), **Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear.** From this, we understand that the prophet Samuel made this banquet for Saul after God told him his secret. And because Ramah is built on two hills, we notice that Samuel took Saul with him up to eat from the sacrifice. This is a spiritual contemplation that to enjoy the sacrifice, we must ascend above, leaving the earthly places, and Samuel the seer is with us; that is, our eyes are opened to the heavenly matters, and the two hills refer to the two covenants, the Old Testament - and the New Testament. God's words in His Holy Book open our eyes to the heavenly matters. As for the young women, they refer to the men of the two covenants who guide us through the prophecies of the Bible to Christ.

(Verse 16): **"Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me."**

(Verse 17): **So when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people."**

When Samuel saw Saul, God told him: **There he is, the man of whom I spoke ...**

There seems to be a contradiction between this and the verse (1 Samuel 7: 13), but the meaning is that the Philistines were defeated in a battle, but the enmity still continued, and the war with them continued all the days of Saul. They were in Aphek at Mizpah, broken for a specific time then by the prayer of Samuel, Saul struck them, and David defeated them.

(Verse 18): **Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where is the seer's house?"**

**Please tell me, where is the seer's house?** It is nice that Saul does not distinguish Samuel, for he appears as an ordinary member of the people, and he does not surround himself with something special, nor does he wear expensive clothes.

(Verses 19-21): **Samuel answered Saul and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. 20 But as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house?" 21 And Saul answered and said, "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?"**

Samuel hosted Saul and revealed everything to him. He asked him not to be preoccupied with the lost asses, as this is a trivial matter in front of the gifts he will receive because, as a king, he will have **all the desire of Israel**. Even for this trivial matter, Samuel reassures him that the donkeys have been found. This is equal to "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." We have to leave our uncertainty with the lost donkeys, as the Lord will restore them and grant us what is greater, i.e. His heavenly kingdom.

(Verse 22): **Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there were about thirty persons.**

**Hall:** It is a room in the high place at the altar and is prepared for banquets related to the sacrifices. The word is translated as a chamber in (Ezra 8: 29) and in the book of Ezekiel. Here it is used as storage for sacred stores and stocks such as wheat, oil, wine, and other tithes of the people.

(Verse 23): **And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, 'Set it apart.'"**

It shows that Samuel was aware that Saul was coming and that this banquet was specially prepared for him.

(Verse 24): **So the cook took up the thigh with its upper part and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, "Here it is, what was kept back. It was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people." So Saul ate with Samuel that day.**

It shows the same that the cook saved a sumptuous portion for Saul, according to Samuel's will. Note that the leg was the share of Samuel, and as a tribute to Saul, he left his share for him.

**It was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people**= I knew from God that you would come to me, so I decided to make this invitation for the people to eat with me, and you eat with me from it. And from that day on, I allocated this share for you to honor you and told the cook of that.

(Verse 25): **When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the top of the house.**

Saul enjoyed a secret conversation with Samuel on the roof, and probably Samuel explained to him his choice as king, and taught him that the people were at rest when they were in holiness, so let him rule and reign in fear of the Lord so that he and his people would be blessed.

Spiritual meditation: After eating from the sacrifice, Let us rise above the earthly matters and be on the roof, to enjoy a sweet conversation with our Christ, in which He reveals to us that He has established us as spiritual kings.

(Verse 26-27): **They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel. 27 As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God."**

**Note:**

Note the gradual announcement of Saul about the news of his kingdom in verses 19, 20, 22, and 25. God gradually announces His will to the people so that they prepare for it, and He prepares them for it.

## Chapter 10

(Verse 1): **Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance?"**

When God calls a person for a specific work, He gives him the talents needed. Here, God gives Saul the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The anointing from **a flask of oil** was for kings, priests, and prophets, so they are considered the Lord's anointed ones, a symbol of the Lord Christ, in whom alone the three functions were combined. The one who is anointed must use these talents given to him for the glory of God's name and not for himself. **and kissed him**: with consent, in humility, teaching us the spirit of submission to rulers (1 Peter 2: 13). We should submit to rulers and respect them, no matter how much we disagree with them. Samuel was not satisfied with the idea of a king other than God, but now Saul has become a king, and he must respect him. **the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance**: What Saul received was not due to his own merit, but a free divine gift by which Saul became the steward of God's people or God's inheritance. But the people are God's, not Saul's, and the inheritance is God's.

(Verses 2-8): **When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to you, 'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' 3 Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. 4 And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall receive from their hands. 5 After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying. 6 Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. 7 And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you. 8 You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do."**

After Saul was anointed, Samuel told him what would happen to him—the benefits of these signs 1. Saul will know if the signs are realized that the matter is from God. 2. These signs bore the constitution of the successful life of the kings of Israel. 3. Since the command is from God, God is obligated to provide for him and manage the affairs of his kingdom if he adheres to the law.

Verse 2: The first sign is that he **will find two men by Rachel's tomb**. So he knows first that the end of every kingdom is the tomb, as the first sign is by a tomb, so he learns not to be puffed up. **in the territory of Benjamin**: Rachel died while giving birth to her son Benjamin, and she wanted to name him Ben-Oni, but his father named him Benjamin, meaning the son of right. Saul learns from this that after



he was the son of this nation's grief and misery, he will become the son of the right and raise its status  
**'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found:** The subject of donkeys is a trivial subject, and here it is over, so he learns not to care about trivial matters so that he can devote himself to the affairs of his kingdom, that is, he leaves his personal affairs and seeks to solve the affairs of the nation.  
**your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you:** He learns to care about others, not himself, and his personal affairs are managed by God. By these signs, he realizes the hidden hand of God working even in simple matters.

Verses (3-4): The men carrying **young goats** (to offer them to the priests as a sin offering), **bread** (for the offering), and **wine** (to accompany the offering as well). They thought he was poor and hungry, so they gave him bread, and this was his first gift as an anointed king, and it has meanings 1. They did not give him goats because he was not a priest, and he should not interfere in the priesthood matters. 2. They did not offer him wine. And wine is a sign of worldly joy and luxury. 3. Rather, they offered him bread only, the thing necessary for life for him and the boy with him. So he understands that as a king, he should not be preoccupied with the luxury and pleasures of the world or interfere in the priesthood but seek to live and seek only what is necessary, without luxury, caring for the poor who find nothing but bread. And to learn from these men to ascend to pray and offer a sacrifice so that he will have true spiritual joy (wine), true spiritual fulfillment (bread), and forgiveness of sin (calves).

Verses (5-6): He goes to **the hill of God**, and there Samuel established a school for the prophets, who were a source of education and a place of holiness and praise. There among them, **the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them.** He shares their joy and worship and accepts their advice. **and they will be prophesying:** that is, they praise and worship the Lord, and it is not necessary to understand the word to prophesy is to predict the future. **and be turned into another man:** when God bestows upon a man His Holy Spirit, the Grantor of gifts, his nature is renewed, and Saul is transformed from a peasant and a shepherd into a king who cares for his people. Thus we are in baptism and chrism. **where the Philistine garrison is,** after Saul turns into another man, will he accept this foreign occupation? Will he accept that there should be a garrison and a camp for the Philistines in the hill of God? This is his duty to expel this enemy. Thus, after baptism and being sanctified, do we accept the existence of sin that dwells in us? No, we have to fight against it.

Verse (7): **that you do as the occasion demands:** After you know that **God is with you** with the signs that I gave you and that God will give you strength and victory, do whatever you can do. This is what Saul did afterwards in the matter of Nahash the Ammonite when he went up to Jabesh-Gilead.

(Verse 9): **So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day.**

**God gave him another heart:** Although this heart was later corrupted, as it relied on human wisdom, not on divine work, and was arrogant and transgressed against the priesthood.

(Verses 10-11): **When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. 11 And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What is this that has come upon the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"**

**Is Saul also among the prophets?:** A prophet does not necessarily mean a man who predicts the future, but rather a man who prays, supplicates and praises (Genesis 20: 7) which is what is meant here. For Saul, who was not interested in knowing the man of God, became a man of prayer. God changed him to a praying man to give him wisdom in his prayers. [See (1 Kings 18: 29) to see that the word prophesied refers to prayer and supplication to Baal]. The people of the hill, who knew Saul that he was not religious since his birth, and despite his residence next to the school of the prophets, he never mixed with them, and now he amazed his neighbors that he prophesied with the prophets. The people said this proverb, "**Is Saul also among the prophets?**" It refers to God's exalted work in the lives of the believers and His power to change them. The same applies to everyone who masters a job that is not part of his job or position. The same was also said in another incident about Saul (1 Sam 19: 24) in the same sense.

(Verse 12): **Then a man from there answered and said, "But who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"**

**But who is their father?** The Bible did not explain what is meant by this saying, and there are three possibilities

- A. The Father may refer to God, for He is the One who gives talents to whoever He wants (including prophesying), and He is the Father of all.
- B. The father may refer to Samuel, as he is a father in the school of the prophets for those prophets whom Saul now joined.
- C. The Septuagint adds, "But who is their father? Wasn't he Kish?" The meaning becomes how Saul, the son of Kish, both of whom are not religious, how does he do what he is doing now. Perhaps this meaning is consistent with the parable.

(Verses 13-19): **And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place. 14 Then Saul's uncle said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?" So he said, "To look for the donkeys. When we saw that they were nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel." 15 And Saul's uncle said, "Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you." 16 So Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of the kingdom, he did not tell him what Samuel had said. 17 Then Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah, 18 and said to the children of Israel, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.' 19 But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and**

**you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your clans."**

He came to the high place where his father lived and did not tell his uncle about it because he understood that this was a secret that should not be announced before the people chose him and made him king in front of everyone.

(Verse 20): **And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen.**

(Verse 21): **When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found.**

The lot came to Saul.

Samuel, in front of everyone, used the lottery system to show that God chose Saul. If Samuel had told the people directly that God had chosen Saul as king, no one would have believed him, and a bloody struggle would have occurred between the tribes and clans, but rather between individuals. Everyone wants to be the king.

(Verse 22): **Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, "Has the man come here yet?" And the Lord answered, "There he is, hidden among the equipment."**

We don't know why Saul hid himself. Is it out of humility? Did he feel unworthy? Or to escape from the responsibility? Or was he afraid that the people would reject him as king and he would feel embarrassed? This hiding is not true humility; real humility is a feeling of weakness, but "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Saul was sure of Samuel's words and the signs he gave him, then by drawing lots that God chose, so why run away?

(Verse 23): **So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.**

The people found him to be the tallest of all.

(Verse 24): **And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"**

(Verses 25-26): **Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. 26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched.**

The people rejoiced in God's gift without thanking and praising God Himself. They rejoiced in appearances, and when we get preoccupied with God's gifts on behalf of God, the virtues that God gave us turn into vices. **Long live the king!**: Thus we should pray for Kings and Presidents, which the Church does.

(Verse 27): **But some rebels said, "How can this man save us?" So they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.**

**some rebels**: They despised him, as they considered him incapable of saving them, perhaps because his tribe is the smallest of the tribes and because his clan is the lowest. The important thing is that Saul **held his peace**: he endured their taunts and remained silent to stop the bloodshed and prevent an internal revolution, and his silence was an internal victory. Afterwards, God showed His external victory over Nahash the Ammonite after a month.

## Chapter 11

(Verses 1-4): **Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against Jabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you." 2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, "On this condition I will make a covenant with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring reproach on all Israel." 3 Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if there is no one to save us, we will come out to you." 4 So the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and told the news in the hearing of the people. And all the people lifted up their voices and wept.**

**Jabesh Gilead:** A city on Mount Gilead in eastern Jordan. The Ammonites were on the eastern borders of Reuben and Manasseh. **Nahash:** means snake or a serpent, and perhaps the name is because of their deification of the serpent. In (2 Samuel 10: 2), it was mentioned that Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, showed kindness to David. Perhaps he was the son of this Nahash, and the father and his son could be called by the same name. There is also no objection that he is the same and lived a long time to be contemporary with Saul and David. According to the Septuagint translation, this incident occurred a month after Saul was chosen as king. Perhaps the people asked for a king to rule over them because they felt that Nahash was planning a war against them, and this possibility was confirmed in (1 Samuel 12: 12). It appeared from Nahash's request to the people, which is to **put out all your right eyes:** the extent of the degradation and miserable condition of the people, their weakness, and the enemy's underestimation of them. Theodoret and Josephus explained this request that removing the right eye disables a person from being a warrior. The warrior holds the sword in his right hand, and the shield in the left, and the shield covers the left eye and disrupts the field of vision. By removing the right eye, a person ceases to be a warrior, so he surrenders entirely to his enemy. The symbolic meaning of the story is that Satan, the ancient serpent, and his symbol here, Nahash, aims to enslave man completely, and the symbol of man here are the people of God. By removing the right eye (a symbol of spiritual insight with which we aspire to the heavenly things) and leaving the left eye (a symbol of the worldview with which we desire the pleasures of the world). Therefore, Coptic icons depict Christ and the saints with wide eyes, as Christ looks at His people and knows everything about them, and the saints have spiritual insight. As for Judas, they draw him on his side so that only one eye appears because he is looking to silver, not to his eternal salvation. And notice what is written: **and encamped against Jabesh Gilead.** Satan has no power to enslave us unless we have descended to the level of loving the world. First, he blinds our spiritual insight by trying to get us preoccupied with temporal matters. "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." If a person agrees to this love for temporal things, he will descend to the earthly level, and Satan will descend upon him and enslave him completely. **Hold off for seven days:** the besiegers' custom was to ask for a reprieve. And Nahash agreed with an underestimation of all of Israel, as he was confident that no one in all the tribes could save them. And note that the people of Jabesh-Gilead previously agreed to be enslaved to Nahash (verse 1), but he asked to put out the right eye, i.e. he asked for complete servitude.

(Verses 5-9): **Now there was Saul, coming behind the herd from the field; and Saul said, "What troubles the people, that they weep?" And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. 6 Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger was greatly aroused. 7 So he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, "Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen." And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. 8 When he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 9 And they said to the messengers who came, "Thus you shall say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have help.'" Then the messengers came and reported it to the men of Jabesh, and they were glad.**

Until this moment, Saul did not practice any royal work, for fear of division among the people, mainly because of the rejection of some people (the rebellious men) or because he felt that he did not know his exact duty and what he should do. He was waiting for a call from the Lord to determine the required work for him. There is a difference between what Gideon did, who sounded the trumpets to call the people to war, and this is according to the law, and what Saul did when, with human excitement, where he tore a cow and sent its parts to all the tribes, threatening them to strike the cattle of those who do not go out to war. Tearing the cows apart was not according to the law. However, in Saul's credit, he did not hesitate nor postpone action but was brave.

The Spirit of God that descended upon him gave him courage, and he did not hesitate, and in (verse 7) **Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle.** Samuel is known to be a man of God, so this saying of Saul proves that his reign is from the Lord, and perhaps Samuel went with him to war. His mention of Samuel is also credited to him, which means he knows that war is for God.

(Verse 10): **Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do with us whatever seems good to you."**

**Tomorrow we will come out to you:** The response of the people of Jabesh-Gilead contains wisdom, as they made Nahash understand that they would surrender tomorrow and that they had lost hope of any rescue. Therefore, Nahash did not prepare for war.

(Verse 11): **So it was, on the next day, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.**

Based on the response of the people of Jabesh, Nahash and his army slept reassured, but Saul surprised them. With this victory, we see that God turns evil into good. The harshness of Nahash's request moved Saul to fight him, and he prevailed. We have to trust that God transforms hardships into good, but we do not know when the good will come. We notice that Saul had powerful energy and was a king without

work or benefit, but the intense experience showed his capabilities and energies. We should not be afraid of trials, as they bring out the talents buried in us and reveal them.

(Verse 12): **Then the people said to Samuel, "Who is he who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death."**

(Verse 13): **But Saul said, "Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the Lord has accomplished salvation in Israel."**

Another stance that counts for Saul is his refusal to take revenge on those who previously insulted him: "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves" (Romans 12: 19). Therefore, Saul carried out Paul's commandment in particular, this was a day of joy, and he did not want to turn it into a day of revenge and sorrow.

(Verse 14): **Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there."**

Because of the victory, the victorious Saul deserved to renew his kingdom, and the renewal was religious, as they offered sacrifices and prayers, and everyone was joyful.

(Verse 15): **So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal. There they made sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.**

## Chapter 12

(Verses 1-5): **Now Samuel said to all Israel: "Indeed I have heeded your voice in all that you said to me, and have made a king over you. 2 And now here is the king, walking before you; and I am old and grayheaded, and look, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my childhood to this day. 3 Here I am. Witness against me before the Lord and before His anointed: Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I received any bribe with which to blind my eyes? I will restore it to you." 4 And they said, "You have not cheated us or oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from any man's hand." 5 Then he said to them, "The Lord is witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they answered, "He is witness."**

**my sons are with you:** Samuel gives a farewell and candid speech here. The people testify in him before God and before the king of his faithfulness towards them, and he did not exploit them, but why does he say, "**my sons are with you**" This refers to one of two:

(a) He removed them from their positions as judges; now they are among the people without judicial positions. The fact that he says this while talking about his integrity, he testifies to them that he deprived his children of their positions because they accepted bribes.

(b) If he had not forbidden them before, then the meaning of the words is that my children are now among you. You have a king before whom I speak, and they are like you, subject to the king's authority, so let him judge them as they are like you without any privileges. And especially that is because he said this after saying, "**the king, walking before you**" = that is, he has authority over you, but rather he has authority over me personally. He judges me if I have sinned, and if my sons have sinned, he judges them. He acknowledged the king's power over him to condemn him personally if he had sinned. But why this talk now?

(a) He now relinquishes his political and leadership role to Saul to devote himself to religious work and spiritual leadership.

(b) He is giving a lesson to the new king in the integrity of service. It is a lesson for every servant not to desire temporal wages in exchange for his services to them, and to pray for his people, teach them, and bear their weaknesses. He does not defend himself, and no one accused him of anything, but intended to educate the new king to be honest in his service.

(c) He intended in the coming verses to issue a warning to the people, which would not be accepted except by an honest person.

And saying **before the Lord** = He bears witness to the Lord who examines the depths and knows the inner thoughts **and before His anointed** = meaning that the king may judge me if I have sinned. **Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken** = donkeys and oxen are the most valuable possessions of the farmer.



(Verses 6-11): **Then Samuel said to the people, "It is the Lord who raised up Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt. 7 Now therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord concerning all the righteous acts of the Lord which He did to you and your fathers: 8 When Jacob had gone into Egypt, and your fathers cried out to the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them dwell in this place. 9 And when they forgot the Lord their God, He sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of Hazor, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them. 10 Then they cried out to the Lord, and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord and served the Baals and Ashtoreths; but now deliver us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You.' 11 And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you dwelt in safety.**

Samuel reminds them of God's previous dealings with them, as he always sent them someone to save them from their enemies, as He sent Moses to save them from Egypt... and so on. And when they prayed and asked God to send them a savior. God would not hand them over to anyone who would strike them if they did not sin, and that was to discipline them. And it is better for us always to remember God's old dealings with us. In (verse 9), **He sold them** = whoever sells something he no longer cares about or asks about, but God's mercy was moving inside Him, and He returned and had compassion on them. And in (verse 11) **Bedan** = is the name of a judge who is not mentioned in the Book of Judges, and it may be a well-known name at the time, or it is a nickname for a judge from the Book of Judges that they used at the time of Samuel. It was said that he is Samson, who is from the tribe of Dan, and Bedan, meaning the son of Dan, or who is from the tribe of Dan.

(Verses 12-16): **And when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' when the Lord your God was your king. 13 "Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired. And take note, the Lord has set a king over you. 14 If you fear the Lord and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the Lord your God. 15 However, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be against you, as it was against your fathers. 16 "Now therefore, stand and see this great thing which the Lord will do before your eyes:**

If God did not fall short of you and always saved you, why did you ask for a king when you feared Nahash? Why did you ignore that the Lord is king over you? And Samuel probably repeats his talk about their mistake in asking for a king because it is a mistake against God Himself. Samuel did not mean to depose the king but to make it clear that God allowed and established a king for them on conditions that if they adhered to them, God would bless their king and bless them, and that they do not lean on the king as a human arm, but rather on God, for God is the Almighty. Still, in His love, He left them the freedom of choice.

Verse (14): Here Samuel sets the basic rule for the kings of Israel = **then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the Lord your God** = the kings of Israel do not have the right to make laws by which they rule the people, but rather they rule according to the law that God gave Moses. The kings of Israel and the people of Israel are subject to God, and if they abide by God's law, God will bless the king and the people. Therefore, God is the true ruler above all, the king and the people. Thus, the kings of Israel realize that their rule is not absolute, but rather they are subject to the laws of God. Both themselves and their people. The true King of Israel is God.

(Verses 17-18): **Is today not the wheat harvest? I will call to the Lord, and He will send thunder and rain, that you may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking a king for yourselves." 18 So Samuel called to the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.**

Rain falling at the time of wheat harvest with thunder, i.e. heavy rain, is considered a miracle, but it is to show that God, the King they left, has power over nature. So did their king, Saul, whom they chose, have this power? Samuel wanted to prove that they had replaced God, the mighty King, with a human king who had no power over nature. So how can he protect them, and he wanted them to understand that they and their king should fear God and His prophets, so Samuel, with his supplication, the Lord answered, and the rain descended.

(Verses 19-25): **And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves." 20 Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. 21 And do not turn aside; for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing. 22 For the Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people. 23 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way. 24 Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you. 25 But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king."**

Here he opens the door of hope for them, and a warning is given to follow the Lord. And God can turn all things for the good, as He turned the evil brothers of Joseph against him into a blessing, and for all. He can make their king a blessing if they fear God. And in (verse 23), a golden verse for each servant, Samuel considers that he is sinning against the Lord if he stops praying for them. The job of every servant is to teach and pray for his flock.

## Chapter 13

(Verses 1-2): **Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, 2 Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.**

**Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel:** This is how the Hebrew text came. The great possibility is that this verse belongs to the previous chapter, meaning that Saul ended his war with the Ammonites and was crowned king for the second time (1 Samuel 11: 14) a year after he anointed him with a bottle of oil for the first time (1 Samuel 10: 1), then Samuel's words in the previous chapter, when Saul was two years in reign. **2 Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin:** Between this verse and the previous verse (1), there are no less than 20 years in which corruption spread. And Saul's army weakened, and each one went back to his tent. In it, Jonathan grew up as Saul was a young man at the time of his choice as king (1 Samuel 9: 2). Now we find his son Jonathan leading 1,000 soldiers. We find there is a big difference between the victorious Saul and his strong army in front of Nahash and the completely defeated Israel that does not find weapons for its soldiers (1 Samuel 13: 22), and this is due to the spread of sin and the corruption of the people and the pride of Saul.

This was a negative point for Saul: Was it not the king's duty to prepare for war by forming a strong army? So where is this army now, when the nations around him await the opportunity to attack his people? Probably he devoted himself to enjoying the king's privileges and did not strive to form a strong army, and corruption prevailed until the number of the army reached 600 men (verse 15). Rather, the like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Thus for us - God made us kings and priests. If we do not strive spiritually while Satan is around us, "prowling around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5: 8, 9), he will seize the opportunity when he finds us in a state of weakness to attack and devour us. We are in a life-long war, and note that Satan prevents us from using the weapons mentioned here that God gave us (see Ephesians 6: 10-18).

(Verses 3-7): **And Jonathan attacked the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" 4 Now all Israel heard it said that Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal. 5 Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth Aven. 6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people hid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits. 7 And some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.**

**the garrison of the Philistines:** We heard about this in (1 Samuel 10: 5), so why did this garrison exist until now, and why did Saul leave this pocket or this focal point of pus in the body of Israel (this represents a sin beloved by man that he leaves and does not fight against, so it would be the cause of problems in the future). Because Saul cared about the temptations of his position, he forgot about this war for twenty years and did not care about the cleansing of Gibeah. His young son, Jonathan, was warmer than him, so he struck this outpost or this military garrison. In verse (4), **Saul had attacked:** the act was of Jonathan, but the people attributed it to his father, the king. **Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines:** by doing this, he made the enemies hate us very much. The Philistines considered this an insult to them, so they went up in large numbers to Michmash. Note that Saul was in Michmash, and now he and his soldiers left it to join Jonathan. Now the Philistines are in Michmash, and Saul, Jonathan, and their men are in Gilgal. Of course, Saul's ascension to Gilgal facilitated the task of the Philistines in occupying Michmash. Perhaps the Philistines intended to strike Saul first in Michmash and then turn around to strike Jonathan in Gilgal, but Saul left Michmash and went to Gilgal, possibly to support Jonathan or to escape from the Philistines when he saw their huge numbers. And he notice the poor condition of Saul's army and their flight, so the number of his men decreased from 2000 to 600 verse (15), and fear and trembling were caused by their weakness of faith or loss of faith, and this is due to the corruption that spread.

(Verses 8-12): **Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. 9 So Saul said, "Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me." And he offered the burnt offering. 10 Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him. 11 And Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, 12 then I said, 'The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord.' Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering."**

The sins of Saul can be summarized from these verses as follows:

1. He decided to meet the Philistines without consulting Samuel or taking a blessing from him. Compare this with (1 Samuel 11: 7).
2. He usurped the priesthood and offered the sacrifice while he had no priesthood. He did not send a messenger to ask about Samuel; rather, he seized the opportunity and offered the sacrifice. Let us note that God does not seek sacrifice but obedience (Psalm 51: 16, 17).
3. Rather, he went to greet Samuel and blessed Samuel.
4. He rebuked Samuel for his delay and accused him as a result of any mistake to show that he was zealous for God's people and Samuel was at fault.

5. He did not fulfill his duty as a king, prepare his army with suitable weapons (v22), and then usurp the priesthood.

6. he showed no remorse or willingness to repent when he informed Samuel. Rather, the words of his excuse were strange: I needed to plead to the Lord: **"The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord."** Therefore, The offering of the sacrifice is for him a mere formality, as for him, He could only pray. But he thought the offering is like a veil that leads to victory. Rather, some said that a great altar like Gilgal had to have a priest, but Saul did not call this priest, preferring that he perform the priesthood work. God forgave David for more serious sins than this but did not forgive Saul for two reasons: 1. It is clear that behind all this is a terrible sin of pride. 2. David was always ready to repent and weep with great humility. **I felt compelled:** he trampled on what was left of his conscience that reprimanded him for wrongdoing. And in verse (8), **according to the time set by Samuel**, this is from what increases his sins. Samuel had promised to come to pray on his behalf and offer the sacrifice on his behalf.

(Verses 13-14): **And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."**

Just as Satan fell because of his pride, the kingdom of Saul fell, and it was given to David, a man after My own heart = and about this verse, the Apostle Paul quoted what he said about David (Acts 13: 22). The saying, **"the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever"** God knew that he would make a mistake and take his kingdom away from him and give it to David. Jacob had already predicted that the kingdom would belong to Judah. However, this is similar to the fact that God created Adam to live forever, but by his sin, he died, so God sent Christ, the man according to His heart, the son of David, to reign forever. God allowed the reign of Saul to complete the symbol and to understand God's plan. Rather, Saul also represented Israel, which would lose the kingdom or even reject it entirely. Jesus Christ reigns spiritually, not physically.

(Verse 15): **Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people present with him, about six hundred men.**

(Verses 16-18): **Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people present with them remained in Gibeah of Benjamin. But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. 17 Then raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned onto the road to Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18**

**another company turned to the road to Beth Horon, and another company turned to the road of the border that overlooks the Valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.**

Saul and Jonathan were in Gibeah of Benjamin, and the Philistines besieged them as they entered the passes of Eglon and Beth Horon and even extended to Michmash. And now, a deep narrow valley separates them from Saul, thus isolating Saul completely. And in (verse 17) **Then raiders came out:** that is, the plunderers, and their goal was to humiliate Israel, and perhaps they intended to stir up Saul to get out of his fortified places, and on their way they took spoils and ravaged the land. But the merciful God did not give them wisdom, so if they went down at the beginning to Gilgal, they would strike Saul and the 600 men who were with him and Jonathan, and thus they would seize Israel. But God blinds the enemies of the Church from harming His people. God only chastises but does not kill and sever all relationships with His people. That is why God allowed the raiders to plunder, as the whole people are in a state of sin.

(Verses 19-22): **Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears." 20 But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man's plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle; 21 and the charge for a sharpening was a pim for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to set the points of the goads. 22 So it came about, on the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son.**

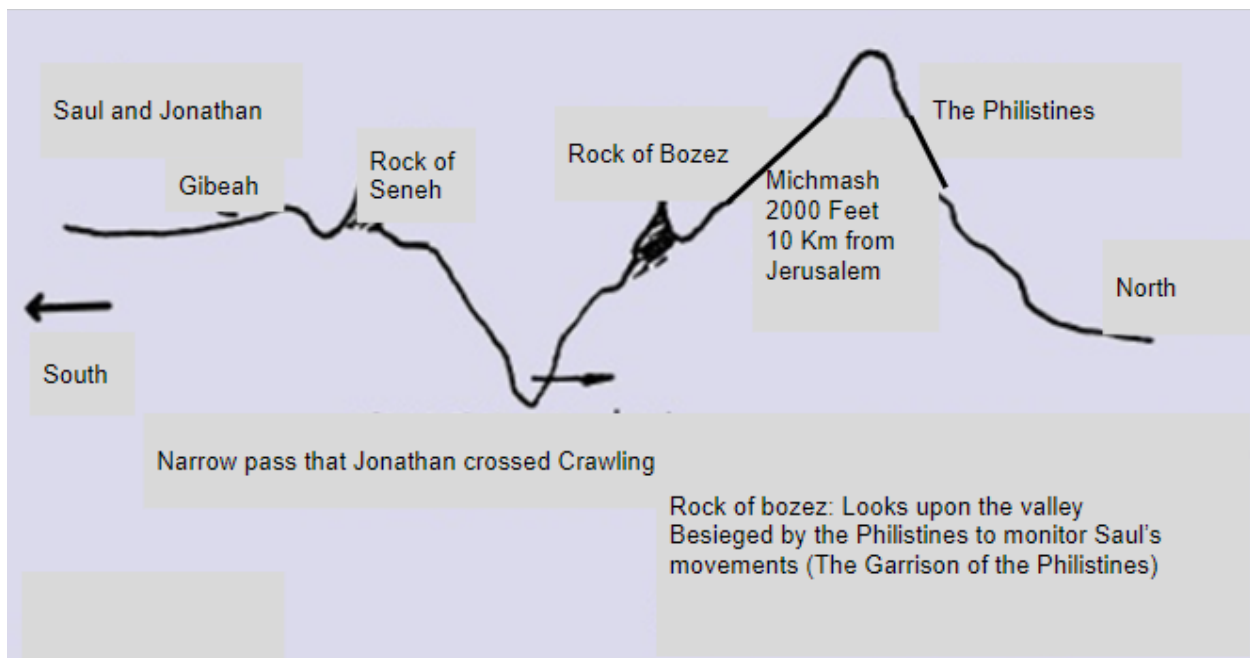
The Philistines humiliated Israel, as they did not allow the presence of a blacksmith among them so as not to make a sword or a spear. It is a painful picture of the work of sin in a person's life when Satan makes him lose his weapons, destroys all his energies and capabilities, and pushes him to humiliation and dishonour. By the end of this chapter, we find Israel in a state of complete degradation and extreme weakness. Saul's beginnings were not his endings. This miserable situation continued until David came and fixed the situation.

(Verse 23): **And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.**

**the garrison of the Philistines:** It was probably a Philistine garrison whose job was to watch over Saul's army.

## Chapter 14

(Verses 1-10): **Now it happened one day that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on the other side." But he did not tell his father. 2 And Saul was sitting in the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men. 3 Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. But the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. 4 Between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on one side and a sharp rock on the other side. And the name of one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5 The front of one faced northward opposite Michmash, and the other southward opposite Gibeah. 6 Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us. For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few." 7 So his armorbearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart." 8 Then Jonathan said, "Very well, let us cross over to these men, and we will show ourselves to them. 9 If they say thus to us, 'Wait until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place and not go up to them. 10 But if they say thus, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up. For the Lord has delivered them into our hand, and this will be a sign to us."**



Full of faith, Jonathan could not bear the loss of his people's dignity, so he rose up to fight, putting before him that the Lord has no objection to redeeming by little as by many: "**nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few.**" Perhaps Jonathan took advantage of the fact that the three armies of vandals left and a few remained in Michmash, so he attacked them. At the same time, his father was under the **pomegranate tree**. He moved without telling his father so as not to stop him. So he left his father and army in their confusion, believing in God that He would achieve victory with little or with

much. The young man who bore his armor shared the same faith, highlighting the importance of having a believer friend, and even more beautiful to have a heavenly friend from among the martyrs and saints. **Question:** If Jonathan had thought only by reason without faith, would he have done what he did? The answer is absolutely no. Therefore, let's start even if we are crawling on our hands and feet, and surely God will help and complete it, and the results will be beyond our imagination. We start without doubt, and whoever relies on God works wonders with his hand. In verse (3), the news is mentioned as a prelude to what will come in verse (18), and **Ahijah** is Ahimelech. Ahitub and Ichabod were the children of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest. **wearing an ephod:** that is, he performs the duty of the high priest, and in (9, 10), they put a sign to know from the Lord whether they complete their work or not. God, who reigns over hearts and tongues, can make these pagans answer with what He wants and put it in their mouths, for He is the Almighty. Indeed, when the Philistines saw them, they mocked them, saying, come up.

(Verses 11-12): **So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden." 12 Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me, for the Lord has delivered them into the hand of Israel."**

**we will show you something:** That is, we discipline you and kill you. They speak in jest and disdain, but Jonathan takes it as a sign from heaven and ensures the enemy is defeated because of their pride.

(Verse 13): **And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees with his armorbearer after him; and they fell before Jonathan. And as he came after him, his armorbearer killed them.**

**And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees:** He was crawling\*, as he couldn't descend or climb on the rock while standing because of its steep slope. He endured in faith this tiring and shameful situation with the ridicule of enemies. **and they fell before Jonathan:** In front of this faith, they should have fallen, as God struck terror in their hearts. Perhaps God made pictures for them or made them hear the sound of a great army following them, so they got afraid and tried to escape, so they fell. Perhaps an earthquake really broke them and terrified them (verse 15).

\* That narrow pass that Jonathan crossed crawling, no man can cross it but only mountain goats.

(Verse 14): **That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about half an acre of land.**

**half an acre of land:** It is a spot plowed by two oxen in one day. Perhaps it was also their fall from the rock due to its steep slope, so in their flight, terrified, they fell from it and died.



(Verse 15): **And there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and the raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was a very great trembling.**

**the camp:** The location of the Philistine army in Michmash, **trembling:** When they heard the news of the fall of their brothers, terror fell on their hearts, and this was also the work of God. **The garrison:** The army in the camp.

(Verse 16): **Now the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and there was the multitude, melting away; and they went here and there.**

**the watchmen:** Meaning the spies of Saul, who surveyed the enemy's army.

(Verses 17-20): **Then Saul said to the people who were with him, "Now call the roll and see who has gone from us." And when they had called the roll, surprisingly, Jonathan and his armorbearer were not there. 18 And Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here" (for at that time the ark of God was with the children of Israel). 19 Now it happened, while Saul talked to the priest, that the noise which was in the camp of the Philistines continued to increase; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." 20 Then Saul and all the people who were with him assembled, and they went to the battle; and indeed every man's sword was against his neighbor, and there was very great confusion.**

Saul was amazed at what he heard about the terror that befell the Philistines. Then he knew that Jonathan was absent, asked to ask the priest, backtracked, and decided to act himself without asking God. This reveals the nature of Saul, that he is hasty and impatient, relying on his arm. He could ask the Lord but does not wait to hear the answer. And in his haste, he brought down his son in transgression.

(Verse 21): **Moreover the Hebrews who were with the Philistines before that time, who went up with them into the camp from the surrounding country, they also joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan.**

Probably those were the Jews who were captured and enslaved by the Philistines and joined Saul.

(Verse 22): **Likewise all the men of Israel who had hidden in the mountains of Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, they also followed hard after them in the battle.**

At last, the terrified fleeing people, who had fled and scattered, joined Saul.

(Verse 23): **So the Lord saved Israel that day, and the battle shifted to Beth Aven.**

**Beth Aven:** It is between Michmash and Bethel.

(Verse 24): **And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had placed the people under oath, saying, "Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies." So none of the people tasted food.**

Saul imagined that if the army ate, he would lose time and be unable to catch up with the enemies, and he made a mistake and hastened in his decision. Saul's mistakes here are summarized as follows:

1. He did not wait to hear the words of God from the priest, so he was not like Moses, who was praying and Joshua was fighting. So Saul was relying on himself and not on God.
2. He made a mistake in preventing his army from eating, as he counted victory as the fruit of his work and not as a result of faith, which is the opposite of Jonathan. Rather, by his decision, he made Jonathan transgress without knowing it.
3. He did not consider the needs of his men; how could they fight when they were hungry? Rather, he made them sin and eat blood (contrary to the law) due to their hunger (verse 32). There was no time for the sacrifice to bleed its blood, while eating blood is forbidden by the law.
4. He says **I have taken vengeance on my enemies**: He considers them to be his enemies, not the enemies of God and his people, which is arrogance.

(Verses 25-31): **Now all the people of the land came to a forest; and there was honey on the ground. 26 And when the people had come into the woods, there was the honey, dripping; but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. 27 But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath; therefore he stretched out the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his countenance brightened. 28 Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed is the man who eats food this day.'" And the people were faint. 29 But Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. Look now, how my countenance has brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. 30 How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now would there not have been a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?" 31 Now they had driven back the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. So the people were very faint.**

God prepared honey for the army of His people in the wilderness, and by the foolish behavior of Saul, he exhausted his army. The quick decisions emanating from an unrighteous heart cause man to lose a lot, depriving himself of God's gifts and the opportunities that the Lord presents.

(Verse 32): **And the people rushed on the spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered them on the ground; and the people ate them with the blood.**

(Verse 33): **Then they told Saul, saying, "Look, the people are sinning against the Lord by eating with the blood!" So he said, "You have dealt treacherously; roll a large stone to me this day."**

**a large stone:** To slaughter animals on it so that the sacrifices are high from the ground, and the blood comes out before they eat it. Indeed, the people obeyed.

(Verses 34-35): **Then Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people, and say to them, 'Bring me here every man's ox and every man's sheep, slaughter them here, and eat; and do not sin against the Lord by eating with the blood.'" So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night, and slaughtered it there. 35 Then Saul built an altar to the Lord. This was the first altar that he built to the Lord.**

(Verses 36-46): **Now Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and plunder them until the morning light; and let us not leave a man of them." And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you." Then the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here." 37 So Saul asked counsel of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But He did not answer him that day. 38 And Saul said, "Come over here, all you chiefs of the people, and know and see what this sin was today. 39 For as the Lord lives, who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But not a man among all the people answered him. 40 Then he said to all Israel, "You be on one side, and my son Jonathan and I will be on the other side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." 41 Therefore Saul said to the Lord God of Israel, "Give a perfect lot." So Saul and Jonathan were taken, but the people escaped. 42 And Saul said, "Cast lots between my son Jonathan and me." So Jonathan was taken. 43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, and said, "I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand. So now I must die!" 44 Saul answered, "God do so and more also; for you shall surely die, Jonathan." 45 But the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not! As the Lord lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die. 46 Then Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.**

In (verse 36), when the priest saw him hasty, he told him to calm down and ask the Lord. Saul did well when he listened. Because God did not answer on this day, Saul hastened again, for he swears to kill the one who sinned, and the lot fell on Jonathan, the hero, who, through his faith, saved the people. But the

people did not accept the death of Jonathan. But why did God not respond? Is it because of Jonathan's sin?!

1. God does not accept transgression, even from Jonathan, the hero and believer. Though Jonathan did not know, he was wrong in any case. However, Jonathan is not to blame, but Saul.
2. God wanted to show Saul his many mistakes and forbade him to complete his final victory over the Philistines on that day as a punishment for all his mistakes.
3. How would God accept to give victory to an army that broke the law, devoured blood, and became defiled?
- 4- From God's mercy, he prevented them from continuing the war while they were losing their strength after this exhausting day, and they might have beaten each other in the dark.

(Verses 47-52): **So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the people of Ammon, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he harassed them. 48 And he gathered an army and attacked the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them. 49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Jishui, and Malchishua. And the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger Michal. 50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. 51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel. 52 Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man or any valiant man, he took him for himself.**

As the book mentions the sins of Saul, it honestly mentions his virtues, so his zeal and courage are evident here. He did not stop striving and included every mighty man in his army. He became a feared king and saved his people from their enemies. **So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel:** his kingdom became stable after this victory as if by defeating the enemies, his people gave him allegiance. Saul likely had another wife, whom he may have married later on, named Rizpah (2 Samuel 21: 8). Or maybe she is a concubine, not a wife.

## Chapter 15

Many years passed between the previous chapter and this chapter, for Saul is now a strong king with a strong army.

(Verses 1-4): **Samuel also said to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the Lord. 2 Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'" 4 So Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah.**

After his army was 600 men, it is now 210,000, but the lack of Judah's army perhaps indicates Judah's dissatisfaction or the beginning of division. However, Saul enjoyed successive victories for a while (1 Samuel 14: 47). We see God offering one last chance to Saul, whose mistakes multiplied. God asked to utterly destroy all that belonged to the Amalekites, and God would have given him victory. **The Lord sent me to anoint you** = Samuel reminds him of this so that he can listen to what he will say to him afterwards. The utterly destroying of the Amalekites was an implementation of what the Lord had said before (Exodus 17: 8-16). God does not forget His promises but fulfills them at the right time. Now is the time; why?

1. Saul's army is now ready.
2. The guilt of the Amalekites became complete, and they were corrupted entirely. The Amalekites were a group of savage thieves who committed crimes and abominations.

(Verses 5-7): **And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley. 6 Then Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, get down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them. For you showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt." So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7 And Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is east of Egypt.**

Saul asked the Kenites - a peaceful people, loving Midianites - to stay away from the Amalekites because the Kenites did a favour with Israel (Exodus 18, Numbers 10: 29-32, Judges 1:16), and God does not forget a cup of water. Among the Kenites were Moses' father-in-law and Jael, who killed Sisera (Judges 4: 17) and the Rechabites (1 Chronicles 2: 55 + Jeremiah 35: 6-10). The meaning of the word Kenites means blacksmiths, so they may be a group of nomadic blacksmiths. After their departure, Saul struck Amalek.

(Verses 8-9): **He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.**

Saul did not listen to the voice of the Lord, and spared:

1. Agag to satisfy his self-conceit because he had pardoned a king who had fallen into his hands, even though he was a savage king (verse 33).
2. The best of sheep kept them as material gains, similar to those who have a relationship with God for material gains.

Therefore, some think that he kept Agag to obtain a hefty ransom. And some wonder, what is the fault of animals that we kill them? And we respond with a question: what is the Holy Christ's fault in being crucified? God wants to show the ugliness of sin and that it is the cause of death but rather the cause of the destruction of the world, and it will be the reason for the crucifixion of Christ in the future.

(Verses 10-11): **Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, 11 "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments." And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the Lord all night.**

**I greatly regret:** Saul's actions saddened me. The Lord rejected Saul because Saul rejected Him, and what a pure heart Samuel had, and his stronger love, who stayed all night praying for Saul. Despite Samuel's great love, this did not prevent him from being firm, so we see him rebuking Saul severely.

(Verse 12): **So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, "Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal."**

Saul went to Carmel and set up a memorial for his victory over Amalek.

(Verse 13): **Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord."**

Saul covers his disobedience with sweet words, but Samuel was not deceived, for God revealed everything to him.

(Verses 14-15): **But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" 15 And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the**

**people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."**

There is a rule that the true repentant does not justify his mistake with any excuse, but the non-repentant always wants to justify himself and always condemns others. Here we find him ascribing the error to the people, as he says **for the people spared** and attributes to himself the correct behaviour. **and the rest we have utterly destroyed.** And he finds another excuse to keep the sheep, which is **to sacrifice to the Lord your God** = but are God's commandments incomplete, and he had to complete them?! We are to do the commandment even if we don't understand it. He repeats the same tone in verses (20, 21) and extensively indicates his lack of remorse and insistence. Note what he said to Samuel, **"the Lord your God"** and he did not say, "The Lord our God," as if he was saying that what we brought is not for ourselves, but rather for your God! If we honoured your God, then we honoured you, so why are you angry?

(Verses 16-17): **Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak on." 17 So Samuel said, "When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord anoint you king over Israel?"**

**When you were little in your own eyes:** That is, Saul saw himself little in his own eyes, and when he was humble, God chose him, but when pride entered, God rejected him.

(Verses 18-22): **Now the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Lord?" 20 And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal." 22 So Samuel said: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.**

Compare this with (Psalm 40: 6, 51: 16, 17) as bringing an ox as a sacrifice is easier than slaughtering any arrogant, disobedient thought. Therefore, God is pleased with obedience, which is the glory of the angels (Psalm 103: 20)

(Verse 23): **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king."**

**Witchcraft:** Consulting the spirits of the dead, demons and witches and determining the future by examining the intestines of animals. **idolatry** = household deities, and they imagine her presence in the house as a blessing for them.

(Verses 24-31): **Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord." 26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." 27 And as Samuel turned around to go away, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. 28 So Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. 29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent." 30 Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God." 31 So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul worshiped the Lord.**

It is clear from (verse 30) that Saul's repentance is not sincere. All that he cares about is his appearance before the people and that he is inducing the prophet Samuel to come back with him and honour him before the elders of the people. Because the people honour and fear Samuel, so if it appeared that Samuel was angry with him, he was afraid that the people would desert him. The true repentant does not care what people think of him (1 Corinthians 4: 3). Unfortunately, it is clear that Saul was afraid of people, not of God. Certainly, such repentance is not accepted by God, so in (verse 26), we find Samuel not accepting to return with him. Then it was that Saul tore Samuel's robe, and Samuel saw in this a sign that God would tear the kingdom from him (verse 28) as if Saul would wear his kingdom like a robe, and God would tear it away from him. Note that the robe that was torn was worn by Samuel, not Saul, for the kingdom is the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of Saul. Samuel here, as a prophet of God, is the representative of God. **and has given it to a neighbor of yours:** David, for he will marry his daughter. Note that the symbol was complete, as David tore Saul's robe, just as Saul tore Samuel's robe. And in (verse 31), we find that Samuel has returned with him, as he honours the King, the Lord's anointed (Romans 13: 1 + 1 Peter 2: 17), but his previous refusal was an announcement to Saul of God's rejection of him. How far is the image of Saul now from Saul, who hid on the day of the lot?

(Verses 32-35): **Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me." So Agag came to him cautiously. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past." 33 But Samuel said, "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. 34 Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. 35 And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the Lord regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.**

As Samuel was known for his kindness and sympathy, Agag thought that he would set him free, but he had to be killed in the implementation of the Lord's judgment and a declaration of the removal of sin and corruption. **And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces:** he commanded to kill him according to the commandment of the Lord: **before the Lord. And Samuel went no more to see Saul:** God no longer spoke to Saul through Samuel.



## Chapter 16

(Verse 1): **Now the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons."**

Undoubtedly, Samuel prayed a lot for Saul, but Saul did not benefit from these prayers because he did not want to repent. But by divine order, Samuel stops mourning, and God fills his heart with consolation, for behold, God will turn evil into good and choose David instead of the rejected Saul. When darkness prevails in the world in the eyes of people, God gives hope in a new light, and in the last watch of the night, God appears among His disciples, bestowing on them what they did not expect. **For I have provided Myself a king among his sons:** God saw what people did not see. Thus, God sees people whom He Himself chooses to work for His kingdom, in whom people may not see this. When Michael Angelo used to see a piece of marble, he would say how beautiful it was. He knew that he could transform it and create an incredible work of art from it. God chose David, and even his father did not see his worth. Samuel anointed him so that the Spirit of the Lord might come upon him and prepare him. **Fill your horn with oil:** The horn was used as a drinking vessel, and compared with Saul, who was anointed from the flask of oil and did not use the word "fill" with it. David symbolizes Christ, whom the Spirit descended upon with fullness. And the horn indicates strength. God saw in David the faithful, his shepherd of the sheep, the person fit to take care of his people "you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things." Thus, God prepares for us small works; if we are faithful in them, He gives us greater works. And David was anointed at the age of 20 years.

(Verse 2): **And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." But the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'**

**If Saul hears it, he will kill me:** This shows what Saul reached regarding cruelty, injustice, and resistance to God. And Samuel did not say this out of fear or conviction but to seek advice, i.e. how to act when Saul resists him.

(Verse 3): **Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."**

Saul does not need to know that God will not make David king until Saul dies. And everything must be kept a secret so that Saul does not kill Samuel and David. We are not obligated to declare all the affairs of our lives to every human being.

(Verse 4): **So Samuel did what the Lord said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"**

The city elders trembled, fearing Samuel had brought terrible news because of some fault they have done.

(Verse 5): **And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.**

It appears that Samuel stayed as a guest at Jesse's house.

(Verses 6-7): **So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!" 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."**

After the sacrifice, Samuel came to the banquet in Jesse's house, as banquets are usually held after offering the sacrifice. The sacrifice was offered publicly in Bethlehem, while David was secretly anointed among his brothers, so why?

a. With this, Samuel does not lie when asked about the reason for his coming to Bethlehem but rather hides part of the truth.

b. So that King Saul does not oppress Samuel the prophet and David as well.

c. The time had not come to proclaim David's kingship, as he did not assume the throne until after the death of Saul. Rather, the anointing was given as a divine blessing that would prepare him and support him to work until he took over the kingdom. This is just like our situation now. We have received the holy anointing, but the time has not yet come for the coming glory to be revealed within us (Romans 8: 18). We will not take it except after the sufferings of this present age and even the end of this world (the death of Saul). As for this world and this time, the glory in it (power, wealth, and might...) is similar to the glory of Saul after the Spirit of God was taken away from him.

d. The sacrifice refers to the cross, and this was done publicly. While the king, although he started with the cross, did not complete it until after the resurrection and the ascension, and these two things were known and witnessed only by the close ones. And whoever accepts to suffer with Christ every day openly will be glorified with him secretly.

(Verses 8-13): **So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 10 Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." 11 And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse,**

**"Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." 12 So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.**

Perhaps David did not understand when he was anointed, but that it was a blessing from Samuel, and perhaps his brothers did not understand that he would reign over them. God chose him for his inner purity and not for his appearance. He had previously given them a king according to their heart, and now He chooses a king according to His own heart. God would prepare him for his responsibility; how?

- a. He is a shepherd who has learned to love every sheep. He will love his people and redeem them from the bear and the lion to save them.
- b. While tending the sheep, he learned music and played the harp, so God used this talent to enter to King Saul.
- c. Probably, after the descent of the Spirit on him, with his love for music, he recited psalms and learned praises, so he chanted spiritual psalms in which he glorified God's creation and the nature that he saw in front of him (Saul probably calmed down with these psalms). So because the Holy Spirit was on David, we found that his psalms were full with prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- d. As a shepherd who learned to hit with the sling with which he defeated Goliath.

And David was the eighth among his brothers, and the eighth symbolizes eternal life (the number 7 refers to time, i.e. seven days of the week, and the number 8 is beyond this time, i.e. eternal life). Therefore, he symbolizes Christ, the heavenly King, who became the last, as he spared himself for our sake to include us and raise us to the heavenly things in Him. The word David is derived From DOD, meaning love or loved. Without love, we will not have eternal life (the number of the name of Jesus in Greek = 888).

(Verse 14): **But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him.**

While the Spirit of the Lord descended on David to prepare him as a king, as in (Genesis 1: 2) to create a beautiful world out of the empty land. **the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul** because he refused to accept the Spirit of God. **and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him:** the place cannot continue to be swept and adorned, as it must be filled. The heart does not remain empty. A bad spirit does not come from the Lord but is by the permission of the Lord. The spirit took power over Saul with God's permission. By rejecting the Spirit of God due to his pride and because he resisted the Spirit of the Lord so much, Saul prepared himself as a dwelling ready to accept this bad spirit. God left him to himself (Romans 1: 24-28).

(Verses 15-23): **And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you. 16 Let our master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well." 17 So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me." 18 Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the Lord is with him." 19 Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." 20 And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them by his son David to Saul. 21 So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. 22 Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight." 23 And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.**

The secret of David's strength, the Lord is with him (verse 18). By God's arrangement, David now arrives at the palace. How humble David is; he went to play for Saul while knowing he was the Lord's anointed. And what a power of David's psalms that expel demons and calm souls. As a form of honoring the king, they bring him gifts. We find Jesse sending his son to the king with gifts. **he became his armorbearer:** Perhaps this happened after a while and this verse is an introduction to a long story such as "God created the heavens and the earth." then the detailed explanation began. Perhaps while David was playing for Saul, David was carrying the weapon of the sick man, who was afflicted with a terrible disease. Saul may have appointed him as an armorbearer for a short period, but he did not continue or receive the job and returned home until the story of Goliath came. These are several possibilities to explain that Saul did not know David when he killed Goliath. Let us note that they were bringing David to Saul while he was lying down, and he did not know anything around him, so it is logical that he did not recognize David. David is only one of his servants. And some say that Saul claimed that because he envied David.

## Chapter 17

The people longed for a tall king, and here he stands in shame and trembling before the Philistines.

(Verses 1-6): **Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. 3 The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. 4 And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. 6 And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders.**

The two teams stood on mountains (more like hills), between which there was a valley with plants and acacia trees. Goliath is 9¾ feet long: **six cubits and a span**, of about 290 cm. And he **was armed with a coat of mail**: that is, a shirt with copper pieces like fish scales, weighing 33 pounds, and **had bronze armor on his legs** (two shields to protect the legs), and **bronze javelin** that is, a short spear between his shoulders. This was a source of great terror to Saul and his men. And both armies were afraid to go down to the valley; otherwise, they would be in a lower place than the other army, and therefore the army in the high position on the mountain could easily hit them. Therefore, the solution proposed by Goliath, in which he disgraced the ranks of God's people came. Perhaps there was a stream of water in the valley, which made the situation more complicated.

And verses (12-15) introduce the events after that.

(Verses 7-15): **Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. 8 Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." 10 And the Philistine said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." 11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. 12 Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name was Jesse, and who had eight sons. And the man was old, advanced in years, in the days of Saul. 13 The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14 David was the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. 15 But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.**

**who had eight sons:** David becomes the eighth. We note that the number 8 is the number of eternal life. God created the world in 6 days and rested on the seventh day (see the table at the end of the chapter). Thus, Adam was created on the sixth day and died on the sixth day, and God rested in the redemption of Adam and his descendants. Man also rested in the redemption of Christ, and this was on this seventh day in which we are living now, which was the meaning of God rested. For God does not tire from the work of creation, but God gets tired from human sin (Malachi 2: 17) - the sin that causes His death, as He created man because He loves man. God rests when he completes the work of redemption that brings eternal life to man. Christ will come on the eighth day so that we may start life with Him on the eighth day that has no end. It is the day of eternal life in which we live eternal life in the living Christ who does not die. We note that the name of Jesus in Greek is Ἰησοῦς, and its number is 888 (its number, i.e. putting the number corresponding to each letter of the name in the way A = 1, B = 2 ....) for Christ is life. As for the number 3, it is the number of the resurrection. Christ rose on the third day, so the number 3 refers to the resurrection. And the Lord says, "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11: 25).

\* Resurrection ← 3; life → 8.

(Verses 16-22): **And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening. 17 Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. 18 And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." 19 Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. 20 So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. 21 For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. 22 And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers.**

Jesse sent David to see his brothers, which is a symbol of the love of the Father, who sent His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to see His children, redeem them, and save them from Satan, who accuses them. If Jesse had sent his son to check on the rest of his children, would the heavenly Father not do so? **an ephah of this dried grain:** An ephah is full weight, and dried grain is a form of wheat. Christ presented Himself to us in a perfect human body. And the number 10 in bread and cheese refers to the commandments that we broke and was the reason for Christ to come so that we might be perfect in Him. **and bring back news of them:** The writing was not widespread for them to send letters, and Jesse wanted any material proof of their safety.

(Verses 23-24): **Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them. 24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid.**

David heard the Philistine's reproach and saw the army's fleeing before him.

(Verses 25-30): **So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel."** 26 Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" 27 And the people answered him in this manner, saying, "So shall it be done for the man who kills him." 28 Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." 29 And David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause?" 30 Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did.

Let us observe the attributes of David to know the reason for his power:

1. In verse 20, **David rose early in the morning**: David obeyed his father and hastened in the morning without delay.
2. When his brother Eliab repulsed against him (verse 28), he answered him calmly and wisely and turned away his anger. Rather, his silence before his brother and his victory over himself is greater than his victory over Goliath.
3. His jealousy for the name of the living God: **defy the armies of the living God**. He considered that every victory is for the Lord's account and every defeat insults the Lord. He looked to the battle as a war between God Himself and the enemy of good, Satan. This is unlike Saul, who said take revenge on the Philistines, my enemies, as he considered it only a personal battle. David asked **What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine** out of curiosity, for there is no reward equal to human life. To stand before this mighty man means certain death. There is no motive for a man to this unequal battle except his faith and jealousy for the name of God, and this man would not ask for a reward. He only wants the glory of God, but there was a reward, so whoever overcomes marries the king's daughter. Jesus offered Himself to death to glorify God's name (John 17: 4) and restore His children kidnapped by Satan. The Church God's Daughter became His bride.
4. David gave himself on behalf of the people, and Christ gave Himself on behalf of the church.

And in (verse 29) **Is there not a cause**: He did not want to enter into an argument, for he is a man of action, not an argument, and it is a time for action, and the brother's rebuke of David was like the rebuke and insult of the Jewish people to Christ, even though He came to save the people, but rather the whole human race, so they insulted Him and accused Him with many accusations.

(Verses 31-37): **Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him. 32 Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." 33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 Moreover David said, "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"**

We see the development of faith's experiences here, as it began with killing a bear, then killing a lion, so his trust in God increased. The logic of faith in David says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Therefore, if God helped me against the lion and the bear, why would He not help me against Goliath? God always introduces us to this school of faith. And David, the faithful shepherd, did not let the lion and the bear prey on any of his flock, so he defended them.

(Verses 38-39): **So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. 39 David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off.**

This simple shepherd is not used to these weapons, but his powerful weapon is faith.

(Verse 40): **Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.**

There were Jews who were skilled in the sling, so they did not miss a hair's breadth (Judges 20: 16)

(Verses 41-51): **So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. 42 And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. 43 So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" 45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you.**



**And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands." 48 So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.**

The driving force that moved David was jealousy, as this pagan insulted the name of the living God.

Verse 43: **So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.**

And there is a question... Where was Jonathan, the champion of faith, in all of this? The answer is that this battle is a symbol of the battle of the cross, and it is preserved for the Messiah, the son of David, and only Christ is capable of it. Whatever the faith of Jonathan, he cannot carry out this battle. Satan is represented here by the bear, the lion, and Goliath. As for Goliath's reproaches, they are Satan's reprimands. David here, as a symbol of Christ, in his jealousy when he heard Goliath's reproaches, as if he was repeating what Christ said, and his state says that Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up, and The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me. Whatever the power of Goliath, the lion, or the bear, Christ's love and zeal for the glory of His name and His love for His people made Him enter the battle to snatch the prey from the hands of Satan. Note Goliath says **you come to me with sticks** (verse 43), and the stick symbolizes the cross, both of which are wood. Christ came and tied the devil as a dog with chains and freed us, and the devil has no power except over those who want to be associated with him by their will. Do not be afraid of him if you are attached to Christ. He will not harm you forcibly. And the stone with which Goliath was struck symbolizes our Lord Jesus because He is The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. (Psalm 118: 22), and He is stone was cut out without hands (Daniel 2: 34). David killed Goliath with Goliath's sword, indicating that Christ, upon his coming, would defeat Satan with his own sword. With his cunning and oppression, Satan brought Christ to the cross, so the cross was the weapon Satan was struck with. And in (verse 48) **So it was, when the Philistine arose**: He used to sit down from the weight of his weapon and did not stand except to fight. He thought himself invulnerable and a strong and mighty man of war, but he relied on his human strength and heavy equipment, which could not stand up to the mighty faith of David. Every human force, no matter how well it is managed, finds a loophole in it that leads to its failure, so the Lord closed with His hand on Noah's ark so that the ark would not sink (Genesis 7: 16). And we must not be afraid of the wicked, for God gives a simple weapon against every wicked person. God defeats them with the simplest things. The period of forty days is the period of our waiting on earth, after which the victory of Christ will be accomplished for our account. Throughout the Church's presence in the world (the 40 days), giants stand before her, but God allows the evil one to go far in his pride for a symbolic period of

40 days, after which he strikes him. And every haughty person who stood against the church was broken, God erased him from existence, and the church remained. And note the secret of David's strength that he knew that the battle was not personal between himself and Goliath or between the believer and his enemies, but rather against God. And the weapons are not human but:

**But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts ..... You come to me with a sword**

(Verses 52-53): **Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. 53 Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents.**

After David's victory, the people rose up, fought, defeated their enemies, glorified and chanted. Christ defeated Satan; now he has become a defeated, weak enemy, and it is easy to fight him.

**the entrance of the valley = The Valley** came in many translations, Gath. The meaning is that the men of Israel expelled the Philistines from the lands of Israel in which they resided and pursued them even to the entrances of **Gath and Ekron**. Gath and Ekron are Philistine cities.

(Verse 54): **And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.**

**he put his armor in his tent:** We were tools in the hands of Satan, and now we have become a temple for Christ, and He dwells in us. And we are in His church (Romans 6: 13,19).

(Verse 55): **When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know."**

It is not surprising that Abner did not know David, for David was just a young boy who played music, while Abner was the chief of an army. Certainly, Abner did not give any consideration to David.

Note: Some scholars think that the Battle of Goliath took place about eight years after the anointing of David.

Because David is the grandfather of Christ in the flesh, and he is a symbol of Christ. In the life of David, many symbols symbolized Christ. At the end of each group of chapters, we will put a summary of these many symbols. The following table includes the symbols that appeared in chapters 16 and 17.

<b>David</b>	<b>Christ</b>
1. He was a shepherd	He is the good shepherd.
2. He was faithful in his care, striking the lion and the bear.	He struck the devil to save the church from his mouth.
3. Samuel anointed him from a flask full of oil.	The fullness of the Spirit came upon Him, and He was filled with strength (Luke 4: 1).
4. From Bethlehem (1 Samuel 16: 4)	Christ is from Bethlehem (the house of bread), for He is the bread of life.
5. The elders trembled at Samuel's visit.	Herod was terrified, and the angels rejoiced.
6. The anointing of David was secret, and the sacrifice was public.	The cross was public, and the resurrection and ascension were for the close ones only.
7. He was good looking	Christ is fairer than the sons of men.
8. He was chosen among his brothers and reigned over them.	He was like us in everything and reigned over us.
9. He was the youngest; even his father neglected him (1 Samuel 11: 16)	He humbled Himself, taking the form of a bondservant.
10. He is the eighth (8 is the number of eternal life).	Jesus is eternal life, and the number of His name is 888.
11. The meaning of his name is beloved.	Jesus is the beloved of the Father (Ephesians 1: 6).
12. He was called the Lord's anointed.	Jesus is the Christ (anointed).
13. When his father sent him, He came to check on his brothers in their distress.	The Father sent the Son to redeem and save His church.
14. His brothers despised him, and Goliath reproached him.	The Jews insulted him, and the kings of the earth rose against him, Psalm 2
15. David relied on the Lord.	It was said about Christ that He relied on God.
16. The battle of Goliath and the victory of David.	The battle of the cross and the victory of Christ over Satan.

17. After the battle, the war became easy for the people.	We, in the name of Christ, conquer easily.
18. After the battle, they chanted.	We, in the name of Christ, praise and chant for He who defeated satan for us.
19. He married the king's daughter.	The church became His bride, and she is the king's daughter.
20. David came to Goliath with a stick (a wood).	Christ came to Satan with his cross (a wood).
21. Goliath was defeated by a stone.	Christ, the stone that was cut without hands.
22. The true beginning of David as a king over the people's hearts was after the defeat of Goliath, for the people loved him.	Christ reigned over our hearts when he liberated us from the devil.

(Verses 56-58): **So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man is." 57 Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58 And Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" So David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."**

Table to explain the meanings of numbers **3, 8**:

	<b>The sixth day of creation</b>	<b>The seventh day of creation</b>	<b>The eighth day of creation</b>
<b>Adam</b>	<b>Adam's creation and death</b> With the death of Adam, man began to live on the seventh day	<b>Redemption = relief</b> We die now and go to rest in Paradise	<b>Eternal life in Christ</b> And the eighth day begins with the second coming of Christ in His glory.
<b>Christ</b>	<b>The sixth day</b> The Great Friday Christ's death	<b>The seventh day</b> Bright Saturday Rest of Christ in Paradise	<b>The eighth day</b> Resurrection on the third day of the crucifixion It is the eighth day of His entry into Jerusalem

The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday as if every Sunday is the beginning of a new week.

Thus, the eighth day of creation is the beginning of a new week and eternal life for man in the glory of his Heavenly Father. The day of Christ's resurrection comes on Sunday, which is the eighth day of His entry into Jerusalem. And by His resurrection, those who believed in Him, who were baptized, had eternal life. Through baptism, we are abiding in the life of the risen Christ (Romans 6: 1-14). But now we only live by faith and not by sight (Galatians 2: 20, 2 Corinthians 5: 7). But on the eighth day of creation, we will move to the eyes, and then we will see face to face (1 Corinthians 13: 12), and we will live in His glory and joys as children. But all we got now is just an earnest.

## Chapter 18

(Verse 1): **Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.**

Jonathan's friendship with David is an amazing friendship with no equivalent in history. Jonathan was brave, a man of war, a man of faith, and beloved by the people, and he was the crown prince. Nevertheless, he loved David and did not feel any jealousy towards him after the people loved David. His father, the king, warned him of David and that he would be the reason for losing the kingdom's throne from him, but he only cared about this pure friendship. This friendship was amazing because it was based on the love of both of them for God and their similarity in the characteristic of strong faith, as one attacked the Philistines alone and the other killed Goliath. Here, all the conditions for true friendship were fulfilled: 1. One goal (which is the glory of God) and zeal for His people; 2. similar qualities (i.e. faith); 3. Each of them is willing to sacrifice everything (even the kingdom) for the sake of the other.

(Verses 2-5): **Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. 3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 4 And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. 5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.**

Jonathan refused to keep David in the shepherds' clothes, so he gave him what he had. **the robe that was on him:** It is the dress of the honourable. **he loved him as his own soul:** they became one soul in two bodies.

(Verses 6-9): **Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. 7 So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." 8 Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9 So Saul eyed David from that day forward.**

**musical instruments:** Like the triangle used in the church. Note the beginning of Saul's envy of David and the beginning of his hatred began when jealousy arose. **ten thousands.** This is the characteristic of the arrogant person, as he cannot hear any praise for another person but himself, as he likes that glory should be for him alone.

(Verse 10): **And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand.**

This cursed pride, the more it increases, the more the person falls into the hands of Satan so he torments him and he goes mad.

(Verse 11): **And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.**

He wanted to kill David, so he became a bad example of anger and envy. When his envy appeared outward, it appeared that he was seeking glory for himself, not the glory of God or the benefit of his people. David was successful in everything and a cause of goodness for the kingdom, so why kill him? His envy made him lose his inner peace and handed him over to a more violent demon, which is murder. He tried to kill David but rather tried to kill his son Jonathan because he defended David (1 Samuel 20: 33). He also killed the priests (1 Samuel 22). Envy makes us lose our temporal life when we lose our peace and our life to come, and makes us weak and despised by everyone. Note that the bad spirit when Saul stormed made him lose his peace and mind. Whereas David, who was filled with the Holy Spirit, was full of peace. Rather, he was playing on his instrument and reciting his psalms, which calmed Saul. David did not have armour or power, but Saul was afraid of him and felt that he was getting smaller in front of him. Thus, envy harms the envier and not the envied, for if the envied is in the hands of God, no creature can touch him.

(Verses 12-15): **Now Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, but had departed from Saul. 13 Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. 14 And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him. 15 Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him.**

**removed him from his presence:** When he returned to his mind, he feared to kill David since the people loved him, and he had succeeded in his ways. **captain over a thousand:** Perhaps Saul thought that when David went to war, he would die in the war. But David succeeded even more.

(Verse 16): **But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.**

**loved David, because he went out and came in before them:** The people yearn to see their leader in their midst and not sitting in his palace of an ivory tower, not mixing with the people. The people love a humble leader who shares their pain and labour and risks his life for them. Thus, Christ loved all people, and people loved Christ because He became incarnate for their sake, lived in their midst, and shared with them their sufferings (Hebrews 2: 17).

(Verses 17-18): **Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight the Lord's battles." For Saul thought, "Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him." 18 So David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my life or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?"**

A new plot from Saul, as he tempts David to marry his daughter Merab, on the condition to go and fight, perhaps the enemies will kill him. Note Saul's wickedness, as he calls the battles "**the Lord's battles**," to encourage David to go, as he knows his jealousy for the Lord, and now there is another goal: his marriage to Merab. But David's response was in humility to extinguish the fires of Saul's envy. And note that according to Saul's previous promise, David was to marry Merab without going to war, for he was the one who killed Goliath. David humbled himself before Saul, although he could have been proud of killing Goliath, he did not.

(Verse 19): **But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.**

David went to war, while Saul broke his promise and gave Merab for marriage to another person to anger David. We find that Saul broke his promise to David and deprived him of Merab, but God gave David a lot:

- a. Love for Jonathan;
- b. His success in everything;
- c. The women singing for him and giving him dignity;
- d. He was the one who healed Saul;
- e. Saul deprived him of Merab, and Michal (the youngest daughter) loved him.

The world imagines when God's children are deprived of something that they are humiliating them, but God compensates many folds.

(Verses 20-29): **Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21 So Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall be my son-in-law today." 22 And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'" 23 So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I am a poor and lightly esteemed man?" 24 And**



**the servants of Saul told him, saying, "In this manner David spoke." 25 Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.'" But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. 26 So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law. Now the days had not expired; 27 therefore David arose and went, he and his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife. 28 Thus Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; 29 and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually.**

Once again, Saul deceived David and demanded 100 foreskins from the Philistines; that is, he demanded to kill 100 of them to endanger David, but David killed 200 and married Michal. (God gave David double).

(Verse 30): **Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.**

**Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war:** This war was probably to take revenge for what David did, and we do not know anything about it except that David succeeded in it as well.

## Chapter 19

(Verses 1-7): **Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David; but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted greatly in David. 2 So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide. 3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you. Then what I observe, I will tell you." 4 Thus Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you. 5 For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and the Lord brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?" 6 So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "As the Lord lives, he shall not be killed." 7 Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. So Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past.**

Everyone loved David except Saul because of his envy. Here we find God moving Jonathan to convince his father not to kill David. God always sent a saviour. Here, Jonathan warns David to hide until the morning, **Therefore please be on your guard until morning**: he knows that there is an order to kill him. He asked for time until the morning to attempt with his father to pardon David and reconcile with him. It is a wonderful friendship between two heroes who both know that they have a chance to reign: Jonathan was born to reign, and David was called to reign. However, they looked at each other with admiration and appreciation. Jonathan's words focused on the kingdom needing a successful man like David, so why should you kill him? And Jonathan could have asked David to flee entirely from his father's face, but he counted that as a loss for the kingdom and also because he loved him. Jonathan's efforts succeeded this time, but only for a while, as Saul was a capricious man.

(Verses 8-10): **And there was war again; and David went out and fought with the Philistines, and struck them with a mighty blow, and they fled from him. 9 Now the distressing spirit from the Lord came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing music with his hand. 10 Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.**

When the war returned, and David won again, envy and jealousy returned to Saul and he wanted to kill him with a spear. Here he sang Psalm (59).

(Verses 11-17): **Saul also sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." 12 So Michal let David down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped. 13 And Michal took an image and laid it in the bed, put a cover of goats' hair for his head, and covered it with clothes. 14 So when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." 15**

**Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." 16 And when the messengers had come in, there was the image in the bed, with a cover of goats' hair for his head. 17 Then Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and sent my enemy away, so that he has escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I kill you?'"**

This is a new attempt to kill David, and God uses Michal, David's wife, to save him. God has many means by which He saves His children and declares His care for them. **an image**: A household statue of human size, so she placed it in David's bed under the covers and made the soldiers think he was asleep. She loved her husband. **Michal let David down through a window**: Perhaps their house was next to the wall or in the wall of the city, and David fled out of the city to start a new episode of his experiences, living as a suffering fugitive who has no place to settle in and feel the pain of the expelled as king (this is how Christ lived). **Note**: The images were images used for optimism, and perhaps Michal wanted to use them to give birth, but David did not know anything about them. **Let me go! Why should I kill you?**: Michal defended herself by lying that David had threatened to kill her if he did not flee.

(Verses 18-24): **So David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. 19 Now it was told Saul, saying, "Take note, David is at Naioth in Ramah!" 20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. 21 And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. 22 Then he also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is at Sechu. So he asked, and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "Indeed they are at Naioth in Ramah." 23 So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"**

David's flee to Samuel is an escape to God to hear God's voice and Samuel's advice to him. He went to Samuel in **Naioth**: the School of the Prophets dwelling. There Samuel stayed with David to protect him with his spiritual authority. Perhaps Saul feared this holy place, but this did not happen. Rather, Saul sent a mission there to arrest David. When the mission arrived there, they forgot their mission, as it was affected by the spiritual atmosphere of worship, and the Spirit of the Lord descended on them, so they began to prophesy, that is, they participated with the prophets in prayer and praise, **and thus Samuel was protecting Saul**. Thus, by spiritual authority, the men could not arrest Christ the first time (John 18: 6), then He allowed them to seize Him. (Review John 7: 45, 46). This was repeated twice after that, and Saul did not return back to himself or learn but decided to go by himself. As God wanted to be glorified, the Spirit of God descended on him too, which was a new opportunity for repentance. He was deeply inspired by the praises, music, and prayer, so he removed his robe, royal robe, and military equipment and remained in his white inner garment, prostrate day and night, praising and singing. Everyone who

saw him was amazed. God tried with Saul all attempts (Jonathan - Michal - his messengers who prophesied - in fact he prophesied), but he rejected everything. Let's see how God saved David: not with a sword or a spear, but with His spirit. They came to capture David, so the Holy Spirit captured them. Rather, they prophesied. And some said that they prophesied the kingdom of David. They became like Balaam, whom they had asked to curse Israel, but he blessed Israel.

## Chapter 20

In the previous chapter, we saw unnatural hatred; in this chapter, we find supernatural love.

Jonathan's love for David is a supernatural love. What is natural love and what is supernatural love? Natural love is love according to instinct. It is natural for a mother to love her children and for a person to love those who love him. But it is not natural for Jonathan or anyone to love someone who knows that his presence will deprive him of the throne of kingship. It is clear that Jonathan knew that God gave the kingdom to David, and thus the presence of David would deny him of the kingdom. Where did this love come from? There is only one source of love, and that is God. "God is love" (1 John 4: 16). This means that God is a source that radiates love for all creation. And whoever can receive these waves of love, you will find him:

1. He realizes how deep God's love is for him and all creation, so he reciprocates God's love with love, no longer preoccupying himself with anyone else, and no longer searches for anything except what glorifies the name of God.
2. These waves of love are reflected from him to everyone... to God first, all people, his enemies, and even to all creation.

Who has this potential? He is the one who has a pure heart that is free of hatred, malice and envy. The more pure the heart is, the more loving it will be to all people. This is like a mirror that reflects God's love for everyone. However, sin obscures the mirror of human purity so that he does not feel the love of God and hates everyone even himself.

Therefore, we find that Saul, filled with envy, hated David, and the envy that filled his heart abolished this mirror. He was like the chief priests of the Jews and Pharisees who, out of envy, handed Christ over (Mark 15: 10). As for Jonathan, who was filled with zeal for the glory of God, he focused his gaze on everything that glorifies the name of God, without looking for the glory of himself. Nothing radiated from him except love, especially for this young man, in whom he found the same love for God and zeal for the glory of His name. This young man, David, does what Jonathan wants: the glory of God. This is what appears in his words with his father Saul (1 Samuel 19: 5).

This unnatural love is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22). Therefore, the absence of love in a person means his death (1 John 3: 14, 15), why? Because the absence of love is evidence of the extinction of the Holy Spirit, as there are no fruits. The Holy Spirit is the One who confirms us in Christ and makes us a new creation with a pure heart (like a shining mirror) capable of receiving waves of divine love and radiating them out as love for all human beings. We are saved if we have this new creation (Galatians 6: 15).

Therefore, the Lord Christ says, "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? (this is love by nature)... But I say to you, love your enemies" (This is love that is not according to nature, but a gift from God) (Matthew 5: 43-47).

Jonathan's love for David was a love of this kind, a pure heart that does not search for himself but for everything that glorifies God. He did not envy David for being a king or a reigning a kingdom because his eyes were fixed on the glory of God, so he loved David, who, with his deeds and zeal, glorified the name of God. Whoever is preoccupied with looking at God no longer turns to anything, even himself. David said about Jonathan's love for him: "Your love to me was wonderful, Surpassing the love of women." (2 Samuel 1: 26). A man envies a man when he gets a higher position than him, but a woman who loves her man will be happy with him if he gets the highest positions and will not envy him for it, but rather she will be proud of her husband.

(Verse 1): **Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and went and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity, and what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?"**

After the previous chapter's events, Saul's multiple attempts to kill David, and the three missions to kill him, he realized that Saul was determined to kill him, so he came to Jonathan to consult with him, as he is his trusted friend. Review verses (1 Samuel 20: 14, 15) to see that Jonathan realized that God gave the kingdom to David, and he accepted God's will with joy; rather, his friendship and protection to David and his protection appeared more. David's question to Jonathan is, does he flee from the whole country? Thus, when Saul's envy closed all the doors in front of David, the Lord opened the heart of Saul's son to protect David. David's question: **what is my sin** is repeated in (Psalm 7: 1-5), and this is equivalent to (John 14: 30), but this is not surprising because when a person walks with perfection, the enemy of good must revolt against him.

(Verses 2-4): **So Jonathan said to him, "By no means! You shall not die! Indeed, my father will do nothing either great or small without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so!" 3 Then David took an oath again, and said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death." 4 So Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you yourself desire, I will do it for you."**

**there is but a step between me and death:** Death became very close to me because of Saul's hatred

(Verse 5): **And David said to Jonathan, "Indeed tomorrow is the New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may hide in the field until the third day at evening."**

Note that David speaks to Jonathan with the utmost respect as crown prince, as he does not take advantage of the friendship to neglect his friend's rights. We find him saying to him, "**let me go**" = that is, allow me to go. In the absence of Saul, he is following the order of Jonathan. Then we find him before leaving him (verse 41), bowing down to him three times as a sign of respect.

**tomorrow is the New Moon** = They used to offer sacrifices at the beginning of every month of the lunar months. The lunar month begins with a feast in which sacrifices are offered, and then banquets are held after that (Numbers 28: 11).

(Verse 6): **If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked permission of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.'**

**a yearly sacrifice:** It is a time of joy and family gathering. **he might run over to Bethlehem** = that is, he hastens to offer the sacrifice and returns quickly to be at the king's service. Bethlehem is the City of David.

(Verse 7): **If he says thus: 'It is well,' your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that evil is determined by him.**

**But if he is very angry:** If Saul was angry at David's absence, that would mean that he was concealing evil in himself. His anger certainly would not be because he was prevented from seeing David's face, but his anger would be because he was denied the opportunity to kill him.

(Verses 8-11): **Therefore you shall deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you. Nevertheless, if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?" 9 But Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?" 10 Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me, or what if your father answers you roughly?" 11 And Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So both of them went out into the field.**

**into a covenant of the Lord:** That is a covenant with truth and with a sound conscience, and there is no deception or betrayal in it. The one who promises will look at God during his promise, trembling that God will witness his deception and be punished.

**you have brought your servant** = that is, you entered into a covenant with me, and this is humility on your part, O Jonathan, for you are the king's son.

(Verses 12-13): **Then Jonathan said to David: "The Lord God of Israel is witness! When I have sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, or the third day, and indeed there is good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, 13 may the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father to do you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And the Lord be with you as He has been with my father.**

**The Lord God of Israel is witness:** It was the custom in those days that oaths were sometimes in the form of prayer. This explains the saying in verse 8, "**a covenant of the Lord**" The oath was to confirm his faithfulness in conveying Saul's intentions towards David. If his father was going to speak well of David, he would send him a messenger to reassure him to return back, and if it was the other way around, he would tell him to flee.

(Verse 14): **And you shall not only show me the kindness of the Lord while I still live, that I may not die;**

When they came to power, it was the custom of the kings to kill the previous king and all his descendants so that the new king would be assured that there was no opportunity for a person of the royal line to revolt against him. David did this.

(Verse 15): **but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the Lord has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."**

The two verses (14, 15) mean that Jonathan fully knew that God had chosen David the king to reign instead of Saul. Here, Jonathan sought safety for himself during his life and security for his children if he died.

(Verses 16-18): **So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "Let the Lord require it at the hand of David's enemies." 17 Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul. 18 Then Jonathan said to David, "Tomorrow is the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty.**

**the house of David:** That is David and his descendants. **at the hand of David's enemies** = the meaning of the oath is that if he violates his covenant, the Lord will demand from his hand, that is, he will repay him for what his hands committed against Jonathan's family. But Jonathan, out of his love, could not bear to ask for the punishment of David, whom he loves, even if he made a mistake, even if it was by assumption. He said, "**Let the Lord require it at the hand of David's enemies.**" Daniel used the same polite method with King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4: 19).

(Verses 19-21): **And when you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you hid on the day of the deed; and remain by the stone Ezel. 20 Then I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target; 21 and there I will send a lad, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I expressly say to the lad, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them and come'—then, as the Lord lives, there is safety for you and no harm.**



**the day of the deed:** Refers to (1 Samuel 19: 2). For Jonathan had told him to "stay in a secret place and hide." so it seems that it is an agreed-upon place for him to hide, which only Jonathan and David know. But what he said on **the day of the deed** is understood as the day we worked, and it was agreed that you would hide in this place, and I will go to speak to my father about you well. If my father calms down, I will tell you, so you will get out of the hiding place and come back, and if I fail, then I will tell you so that you remain hidden.

**the stone Ezel** = Thus it was called after this incident.

(Verses 22-24): **But if I say thus to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you'—go your way, for the Lord has sent you away. 23 And as for the matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the Lord be between you and me forever." 24 Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast.**

**for the Lord has sent you away:** The Lord allowed us to separate. This was by His permission and not by our will because if David stayed, Saul would kill him.

(Verse 25): **Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.**

**by the wall:** In the most honourable place opposite the entrance.

(Verse 26): **Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him; he is unclean, surely he is unclean."**

**Unclean:** The unclean person does not eat the sacred meat until after he bathed in the evening.

(Verses 27-29): **And it happened the next day, the second day of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?" 28 So Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked permission of me to go to Bethlehem. 29 And he said, 'Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the king's table."**

It is clear from verses (25, 27) that David had a special place, and it was because of his absence that the places of Abner and Jonathan changed. Saul felt his absence. **the son of Jesse** = said this in contempt.

(Verses 30-32): **Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"**

**You son of a perverse:** He calls him that his mother is perverse to insult him. That is, he is perverse like his mother, as Saul understood that David and Jonathan have an agreement together. **to your own shame** = means that your protection of David will lead him to take the kingdom from you.

Saul's thought that if he killed David, he would change God's plan to give David the kingdom is a strange perception. Can Saul change God's will?! And Saul's saying, "**you shall not be established, nor your kingdom**" indicates that he understood that God had given the kingdom to David. What can be said about this except that it is real blindness and extreme ignorance? This does not happen except to those who grieved the Spirit of God and extinguished Him, so they are like one floundering in the darkness without vision or wisdom. As for Saul here, he reached a worse condition, because God had completely taken away His Spirit from him (1 Samuel 16: 14). And the Holy Spirit is the "spirit of wisdom" (Isaiah 11: 2), and he is the "Spirit of sound mind," that is, the one who guides and leads to the right decision (2 Timothy 1: 7).

Saul's jealousy of David, when he knew God's plan to give him the kingdom, and his attempts to kill David, is the same as Satan's jealousy of man when Satan knew God's plan to give man the inheritance of heaven and deprived Satan of it, so he overthrew Adam and his sons and became a killer of people from the beginning (John 8: 44).

(Verse 33): **Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David.**

Saul's madness here reached its limits, and he tried to kill his son. This is the way of all persecutors throughout the ages. When they cannot answer, they resort to physical force. **cast a spear** = He aimed it at Jonathan.

(Verse 34): **So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully.**

Perhaps Jonathan refrained from eating from the sacrifice, as the distressed is ritually prevented from eating from the sacrifice.

(Verse 35): **And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad was with him.**

(Verse 36): **Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.**

The sign with arrows was in case Saul or his spies followed Jonathan. But it seems that Jonathan was reassured that no one was following him, so he went to see his friend and bid him farewell.

(Verses 37-42): **When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" 38 And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. 39 But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. 40 Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry them to the city." 41 As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so. 42 Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, 'May the Lord be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.'" So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.**

## Chapter 21

(Verses 1-6): **Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech was afraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one is with you?" 2 So David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, 'Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.' And I have directed my young men to such and such a place. 3 Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found." 4 And the priest answered David and said, "There is no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women." 5 Then David answered the priest, and said to him, "Truly, women have been kept from us about three days since I came out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in effect common, even though it was consecrated in the vessel this day." 6 So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away.**

The city of Nob was counted as the city of priests, as it became the seat of the Tabernacle after the destruction of Shiloh. **Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest** = perhaps he was Ahijah the son of Ahitub (1 Samuel 14: 3) or his brother who succeeded him in the priesthood. He was a righteous man, and he was the great-grandson of Eli, the priest. And the Lord Christ mentioned this incident in (Mark 2: 26) and said that it occurred in the days of Abiathar, the high priest, and Abiathar was the son of Ahimelech (1 Samuel 23: 6) who performed priesthood with his father, and he became a high priest after his father. Abiathar was a high priest throughout David's reign. Perhaps David met Abiathar, and the interview in Samuel was attributed to Ahimelech because he was the father and the high priest, or the story was attributed to Abiathar \* due to his association with David throughout his reign. Christ did not say that Abiathar was the one who gave the bread but rather said in the days of Abiathar, which supports this opinion. **Why are you alone:** Ahimelech saw David alone. David, the husband of the king's daughter and a famous commander, and Ahimelech heard that Saul wanted to kill David. This scene made Ahimelech confused and afraid that Saul would take revenge on him if he hosted David. He understood this because David, by virtue of his position, was supposed to move with a procession of soldiers and nobles. When he moves alone or has a few soldiers with him, he is a fugitive and a pursued. In verse (2): We find David telling a clear lie that caused many problems afterwards. Rather, we find that David has fallen into many failures in this chapter. 1. He ran away while he saw the hand of God protecting him several times. 2. He has a promise given to him, so how can he be killed? 3. Lying. 4. Afterwards, he turned to the Palestinians, the enemies of his people. 5. He pretended to be insane. The reason for all this is that he went out and fled without consulting God, praying, or asking Samuel. He went through an experience that we go through a lot while we are in distress, which is the feeling of loneliness and God's abandonment of us and that no one supports us, which is a bitter feeling. David was after God's heart. But he was making mistakes, so how can it be said that he was according to God's heart? Because he was always ready to repent. And if he was subjected to discipline from God, he submitted in humility, feeling that he deserved this discipline without complaining against God even once.

In verse (3), He fled suddenly without any preparation, food, or weapons; in (verse 8), we find him asking for bread.

In verse (4), The holy bread is the showbread that was placed hot on the table of showbread on Saturday; then, the following Saturday is removed to put a new hot bread. And the removed bread is not lawful to eat except for the priests. However, Ahimelech accepted to offer it to David and his men if they were clean (even from marital relations) because they were hungry and there was no other bread. The Lord Christ used this incident to explain to the Jews how it is permissible for the disciples to pick the ears of grain and rub them with their hands to eat from them on the Sabbath (Mark 2: 25).

In verse 5: **And the vessels of the young men are holy:** Nothing impure entered it or came into contact with impurity. **and the bread is in effect common** = this is David's opinion that although bread is eaten only by priests and their families who are ritually pure, but in case of necessity, and he and his men are hungry, they cannot stand, and they are also clean, so there is no objection to them eating, because mercy is superior to sacrifice, for God seeks mercy, not sacrifice. And the Lord Christ agreed with David in what he said, **even though it was consecrated in the vessel this day** = David adds another thing, that the new bread will be placed today, so the vessels will not remain empty. Rather, the new bread will be sanctified by placing it in the holy vessels. And in verse (6): The priest agrees with David.

(Verses 7-8): **Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord. And his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of the herdsmen who belonged to Saul. 8 And David said to Ahimelech, "Is there not here on hand a spear or a sword? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste."**

**Doeg, an Edomite:** One of Saul's servants, an intruder and chief of Saul's herdsmen. **detained before the Lord** (was confined before the Lord) either for the fulfillment of a vow or for purification. David realized that his presence brought danger, so he hurried to flee. Indeed, Doeg informed Saul of what had happened, and Saul killed all the priests, along with their wives, children, and livestock.

(Verse 9): **So the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, there it is, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take it. For there is no other except that one here." And David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."**

David gave the sword to God, and it was placed in his temple... Let us know that everything we give to God will return to us for the good of ourselves. And here David took it from the priest to use it.

(Verses 10-15): **Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. 11 And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him to one another in dances, saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten**

**thousands'?" 12 Now David took these words to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 So he changed his behavior before them, pretended madness in their hands, scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. 14 Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? 15 Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"**

David fled to the city of Gath, the city of Goliath, who killed him, and perhaps he thought that they had forgotten his appearance. But they remembered him, especially when they found their hero's sword in his hand. They thought he was a malicious spy, so he feigned madness to save his life. These are moments of weakness experienced by the mighty man of faith. He became floundering because he did not consult the Lord and doubted that the Lord would protect him. And he pretended madness by scratching the doors with his fingers and making his saliva run down his beard.

## Chapter 22

(Verses 1-5): **David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. 2 And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him. 3 Then David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me." 4 So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. 5 Now the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.**

David felt his mistake when he turned to his enemies, so he returned to Judah and hid in the cave of Adullam. God allowed the people of Gath to revolt against him so that he could feel his mistake and return. When he returned, his family gathered around him, and all those who were distressed found hope in him. Those who were distressed by Saul's rule, who were dangerous in his view, later became mighty men working for the new kingdom. And there, David sang his hymn (Psalm 57), and in this, we find a symbol of the work of Christ.

David	Christ
23. The rejected Saul reigns over the people.	Satan reigns over the hearts of many.
24. David's kingdom was hidden despite his anointing.	The kingdom of Christ is hidden in the hearts that only the believer can realize.
25. The distressed and the indebted (400 people) gathered around David, and he turned them into a mighty army.	Christ gathered around Him the sinners to remove their sins and turned them into an awesome army with banners. These are (Christ's flock).
26. The hope of those around David was that he would reign.	We are waiting for the Lord to come to reign forever.

And David went to Moab, perhaps for two reasons:

(1) David's Moabite grandmother (Ruth),

(2) Because of the war between Saul and Moab (1 Samuel 14: 47), the king of Moab chose to shelter the rebels against Saul.

Note that the number of David's men is 400 = 4×100, 100 of whom are Christ's flock throughout the world (4).

(Verses 5): **Now the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.**

We heard about Gad the Prophet here and in the census incident (2 Samuel 24: 11-15) and helped arrange the musical service (2 Chronicle 29: 25). One of the historians, probably a disciple of the prophet Samuel, left him with David for guidance, and now he is guiding him to stay in Judah. There he faced troubles and pains, but he saved his people from many hardships, so he saved the people of Keilah (1 Samuel 23: 1, 2) and defended the cities of Judah (1 Samuel 27: 8-11), so his fame spread, and he gained the trust of Judah. The efficiency of David appears in that he turned these weak people into a valiant army, and so does Christ, when he transforms His weak church into an awesome army with banners.

(Verses 6-23): **When Saul heard that David and the men who were with him had been discovered— now Saul was staying in Gibeah under a tamarisk tree in Ramah, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants standing about him— 7 then Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, you Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds? 8 All of you have conspired against me, and there is no one who reveals to me that my son has made a covenant with the son of Jesse; and there is not one of you who is sorry for me or reveals to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day." 9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who was set over the servants of Saul, and said, "I saw the son of Jesse going to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. 10 And he inquired of the Lord for him, gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." 11 So the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were in Nob. And they all came to the king. 12 And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub!" He answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13 Then Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword, and have inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day?" 14 So Ahimelech answered the king and said, "And who among all your servants is as faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, who goes at your bidding, and is honorable in your house? 15 Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? Far be it from me! Let not the king impute anything to his servant, or to any in the house of my father. For your servant knew nothing of all this, little or much." 16 And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house!" 17 Then the king said to the guards who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me." But the servants of the king would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the Lord. 18 And the king said to Doeg, "You turn and kill the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod. 19 Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep—with the edge of the sword. 20 Now one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 21 And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the Lord's priests. 22 So David said to Abiathar, "I knew that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have caused the death of all the persons**



**of your father's house. 23 Stay with me; do not fear. For he who seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you shall be safe."**

When David and his men returned to Judah and his news spread, many loved him, and this aroused Saul's jealousy again. And here he is, gathering his men and saying to them, "**Hear now, you Benjamites**"= Therefore, he chose his men close for high positions from Benjamin. Moses did not fall into this leadership mistake, as he appointed his successor, Joshua, from another tribe and did not appoint one of his children. This is a mistake caused by mistrust and his fear that someone would usurp the kingdom, but this raised many divisions. We note that Saul does not mention the name of David out of his hatred and says **the son of Jesse** as a form of contempt. We find in (verse 7) that Saul frightens his men from David and will deprive them of all the privileges he gave them if David reigned. Rather, in (verse 8) he is suspicious even of his men and his son. When a person loses his peace, he thinks everyone around him is his enemy. We see Doeg the Edomite, perhaps to justify himself, or out of hope to please him, and out of hope that Saul would give him more fields, telling him of David's incident with Ahimelech. However, in (verse 10) we find that the story mentioned by Doeg is incomplete and distorted, as he did not tell Saul of David's lie but made Saul think that it was a conspiracy between Ahimelech and David, and thus Ahimelech would be a traitor to Saul. We note that Ahimelech spoke to the king with all respect, but the king spoke to him insolently, "**Hear now, son of Ahitub**" (verse 12) and in (verse 14) a defense by Ahimelech in which he rebukes Saul, as he tells him that David is your son-in-law and your faithful man...etc., and the meaning is did I made the mistake by dealing with a person who loves you and you love him like this. In (verse 15) **Did I then begin to inquire of God for him?** I know that David that is your man and the place of your trust. I have always prayed for him and asked God for him in his wars and other matters, and this is not the first time I have dealt with him. As for if there were disagreements between you, I do not know them: **For your servant knew nothing of all this, little or much**, and as usual Saul, his decisions are hasty, and he does not consult anyone. He issued a death sentence against Ahimelech and all the priests and their families, and only this traitor Doeg the Edomite dared to execute it. This is an abomination that polluted the history of Saul. However, in any case, the prophecy was fulfilled in the house of Eli the priest (1 Samuel 2: 31), and God certainly allowed this for their evils. He allowed the people to be deprived of their priests, as they did not deserve the presence of priests because of their wickedness and because they were the ones who sought a king according to their hearts and rejected God's advice. It seems that Abiathar was far from the place of the massacre, so they did not kill him, and he fled to David (perhaps he did not go to Saul to continue guarding the tent). David protected him, and this is the protection of Christ for every soul that turns to Him. In (verse 22) we see the vital virtue of David, which is his quick admission of error, as he does not place blame on others. He could have blamed Saul or Doeg the Edomite, but he doesn't. Rather he said, **I have caused the death of all the persons of your father's house.**

## Chapter 23

(Verses 1-14): **Then they told David, saying, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors."** 2 Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the Lord said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah." 3 But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" 4 Then David inquired of the Lord once again. And the Lord answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand." 5 And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. 6 Now it happened, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, that he went down with an ephod in his hand. 7 And Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." 8 Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men. 9 When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." 10 Then David said, "O Lord God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah to destroy the city for my sake. 11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant." And the Lord said, "He will come down." 12 Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And the Lord said, "They will deliver you." 13 So David and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition. 14 And David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in the mountains in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand.

In (verse 1) **they are robbing the threshing floors**: They used to come to plunder the storehouses (stores of grain) after collecting the grain. **Therefore David inquired of the Lord**: David has now with him Gad the prophet and Abiathar the priest, and he learned not to decide without asking the Lord. And note why Palestinians attack Israel:

1- God left Saul.

2- David, the great leader, left him, fled, and became alone.

3- All of Saul's energies were wasted in hatred against David, and his goal became killing David, not victory over the enemies of the people. It is strange that a person sees his friends as enemies and does not see the real enemy who destroys his life. Note that the people lost hope in Saul, and when the Philistines attacked them, they resorted to David and did not resort to Saul. Saul has no goal other than chasing after David. The wicked always do not tolerate the righteous and attack them. David, with a burning heart, was zealous for his people. When he heard of this assault against them, he immediately asked God if he would fight. Now David realized why the Lord asked him to return to Judah, as he is now using him to defend his people.

Verse (6): indicates that Abiathar was doing his priestly work and asking the Lord.

Strangely, an enemy like the Philistines surrounds Saul's kingdom and threatens it daily, and Saul puts all his focus on killing David so that David does not inherit the kingdom. Saul's concern and adherence to the king's lust made him neglect the striving against the real enemy, the Philistines, setting his sight on killing David so that David would not inherit the throne, the desire of Saul's heart. The result was that the real enemy was the one who killed Saul. Isn't this exactly what happens in the lives of each of us, when we get distracted by our desires and stop striving against our true enemy, who is "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8: 44). This enemy of ours is "a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5: 8).

In this, we see Satan is represented here by the Palestinians **robbing the threshing floors**. (The Palestinians who rob the threshing floors) leaving the people hungry. Note that the one who is interested in his lusts starves spiritually, as there is no real satiety except with God, and Satan plunders this real spiritual satiety by distracting us with the lusts of this world, leaving the holy life with God, just as Saul was preoccupied with his lust for the kingdom.

I am represented here by Saul, the king who is interested in the kingdom of the world and not with his life and the lives of his people, so the Philistines killed him.

And in (verse 7): Strangely, the evil Saul says that God worked with him, as the evil person should imagine that God supports him in his evil. It is strange that the king abandons such a successful commander, whom he should have honoured for his victory. Compare verse (8) and verse (9), and you will find that Saul calls on the people to kill David. At the same time, David asks God and turns to Him to guide him on whether to go to war against the Philistines to protect the kingdom of Saul and the people of Saul and even Saul himself, as David is going to fight the enemies of Saul. But why did God ask David to flee? Is God unable to protect him? The reason is that a war would have occurred, and many of the people would have been killed, and God wanted to stop the bloodshed. In addition, he believes that this is not the right time for Saul to die in battle, and he might die at the hand of David. God did not want David to kill the Lord's anointed, nor did he want David to fight against the king of Israel. And in (verse 13) they **went wherever they could go**: i.e. wanderers. We are often lost in problems as if we have no guide, but let us trust that the eyes of the Lord are upon us.

(Verses 15-19): **So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest. 16 Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God. 17 And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that." 18 So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord. And David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house. 19 Then the Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is David not hiding with us in strongholds in the woods, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? 20 Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand." 21 And Saul said, "Blessed are you of the Lord, for**

**you have compassion on me. 22 Please go and find out for sure, and see the place where his hideout is, and who has seen him there. For I am told he is very crafty. 23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hides; and come back to me with certainty, and I will go with you. And it shall be, if he is in the land, that I will search for him throughout all the clans of Judah." 24 So they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men were in the Wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. 25 When Saul and his men went to seek him, they told David. Therefore he went down to the rock, and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued David in the Wilderness of Maon. 26 Then Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. So David made haste to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men were encircling David and his men to take them. 27 But a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land!" 28 Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; so they called that place the Rock of Escape. 29 Then David went up from there and dwelt in strongholds at En Gedi.**

It was strange that the people of Keilah, whom David saved, would be ready to hand him over to Saul, but we find for them an excuse that Saul will besiege them in their city, but it is even more strange to see the people of Ziph seeking themselves to hand over David to Saul. Perhaps this was greed for positions that Saul would give them or fear without justification that Saul would attack their villages in search of David. The important thing is that Saul did not ask them to hand over David, but it was an initiative on their part, like Judas, who went to the chief priests asking... What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you? David took refuge in Ziph, where there are natural forts. And the people of Ziph could have asked David to leave them if they were afraid instead of betraying him. And David recited Psalm (54) when the Zephites did that. And in (verse 21) it is strange that Saul blesses them for this and asks for the Lord's blessing for them. The name of the Lord is close to his tongue, far from his heart. It is strange that Saul imagined that he was the one who was not wronged, and that David was the one who was wronged. And in (verse 22) Saul asked the Ziphites, with their experience in the region, to trace David's footprints so that they might find him. And in (verse 23) **throughout all the clans of Judah** = that is, he searches carefully throughout the entire land of Judah. Finally, Saul knew where David was, and he was hiding in a mountain, while Saul was on a mountain opposite, and between them were rugged rocks that could not be crossed. But Saul began to surround David and besiege him so he would not escape. But God found an outlet for David, when a message came to Saul that the Philistines invaded the land (verse 27), and the interpreters say that the land here is Saul's personal property; otherwise, he would not have left David and descended to fight against the Philistines, **Rock of Escape** = where Saul slipped, that is, he stumbled, and David did not catch him.

In verse (29) we find that David went from there and resided in the fortresses of **En Gedi**, which are natural fortresses like rocks and caves on the Dead Sea. These were Saul's attempts against David, but they are interspersed with verses (16-18) where we find a contradictory image of hatred, which is the image of Jonathan's amazing love where David and Jonathan meet for the last time. Jonathan could not offer David anything but his love, which is more valuable than anything. Jonathan died before David took over the kingdom, so God, with His mercy, transferred Jonathan to heaven, for he knew the weakness of human nature, so there was a possibility after the death of Saul, and Jonathan knew that he

was the heir that he would start the struggle for the throne and lose this purity. God, out of His love, transferred him to heaven while he was in his purity. And it would have been certainly difficult for David to take the throne from this loyal friend. God did not allow this predicament.

## Chapter 24

(Verses 1-22): **Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi."** 2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3 So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs. (David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.) 4 Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 5 Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. 6 And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." 7 So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul got up from the cave and went on his way. 8 David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. 9 And David said to Saul: "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Indeed David seeks your harm'? 10 Look, this day your eyes have seen that the Lord delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and someone urged me to kill you. But my eye spared you, and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.' 11 Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you hunt my life to take it. 12 Let the Lord judge between you and me, and let the Lord avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. 13 As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you. 14 After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A flea? 15 Therefore let the Lord be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand." 16 So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17 Then he said to David: "You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. 18 And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me; for when the Lord delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. 19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him get away safely? Therefore may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. 20 And now I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 Therefore swear now to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house." 22 So David swore to Saul. And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Saul returned from chasing the Philistines and returned to chase David, who was hiding in En Gedi. The name means the rocks of the ibex, which are rugged rocks that no one can reach except the wild ibex and mountain goats. That is why it was named thus. Saul bore all these hardships for his hatred of David. And he came to **the sheepfolds** = a sheep pen or a goat that the shepherds set up at a cave door to shelter the sheep in the rain and cold. And Saul entered a large cave **to attend to his needs** = a polite

expression for the saying to empty his bowels, and David and his men were in the same cave. David's men encouraged him to kill Saul, but he refused. When Saul entered, he could not see because of the cave's darkness, but David and his men were inside, and they were used to the darkness. They saw him and recognized him. Saul had taken off his robe, and David contented himself with cutting off part of Saul's robe [as Saul cut off Samuel's robe, symbolizing the cutting of the kingdom from Saul]. David's greatness was manifested in two situations: 1. He refused to extend his hand to harm the Lord's anointed, even though Saul sought to kill him many times. 2. He contented himself with cutting off part of Saul's robe, and even in this regard, **David's heart troubled him** for what he had done. This means that his heart strongly blamed him for having cut off part of Saul's robe (extreme spiritual sensitivity), and the expression of his heart troubled him, so his heartbeat increased greatly. Then note David's stooping to the earth in front of the king in humility, and his speech was filled with humility to a rejected king because he is the Lord's anointed. [Many refuse to bow down to the saints, bishops, and patriarchs, so what do they say in front of this situation?] Bowing down here is reverence and respect for the Lord's anointed ones, and definitely not worship. And David was exalted in the eyes of God and people by his humility, and in (verse 12) **Let the Lord judge between you and me** = it is the best of what the oppressed say. And in (verse 14) **A dead dog** = a sign of contempt. **A flea** = sign of weakness. But with all this humility, David showed his courage, as he went out after the king without fearing his spear, his sword, or his soldiers. Rather, he showed him that he was the one who forgave him. David practiced Biblical love as it should. In front of this humility, the devil in Saul was crushed, so Saul became belittled in his eyes, and called David his son and wept. Saul felt his wickedness and said, "**You are more righteous than I**" Rather, he realized that the kingdom would belong to David, and he sought safety for his children from David. The terrible weapon that defeats Satan is humility, as happened on the cross.

## Chapter 25

(Verse 1): **Then Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and lamented for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the Wilderness of Paran.**

Samuel was called for service when he was twelve, and he served faithfully and laboured until the age of ninety. David participated in this funeral, then **arose and went down to the Wilderness of Paran**, south of Judea, west of Edom and north of Sinai. There, David began to protect the shepherds from the attacks of the Amalekites and the Philistines and wild animals, so his presence with his men was a source of reassurance.

(Verses 2-3): **Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. 3 The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.**

**Nabal:** The meaning of the name is folly (verse 25). I wish we would confess our ignorance before the son of David, the treasure of wisdom, to remove ignorance from within us. He was a very rich man and has many livestock that David and his men watched over as they did for many others. But it seems the man was only great with his money.

(Verses 4-8): **When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep, 5 David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. 6 And thus you shall say to him who lives in prosperity: 'Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! 7 Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel. 8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.'"**

**shearing his sheep:** Shearing sheep is a time of joy, eating, drinking, and giving generously. Shearing sheep gives wool, which is a source of wealth.

(Verse 9): **So when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and waited.**



**and waited:** So that they do not add a wrong word, that would be attributed to David.

(Verses 10-12): **Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. 11 Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?" 12 So David's young men turned on their heels and went back; and they came and told him all these words.**

David did not want to take anything without the consent of the owner of the thing, but Nabal's response was harsh. He ignored David and despised him and considered him and those with him to be pursued = **I do not know where they are from.**

**who break away each one from his master** = they flee and escape. Therefore, he considered David a runaway slave from Saul, and **break away** is said about the slaves who run away from their masters. Therefore, he is a criminal. He said this without examining the reason for the escape, or because he wanted not to pay anything or send anything to David and his men, so he took advantage of the subject of David's escape. But his greed is clear.

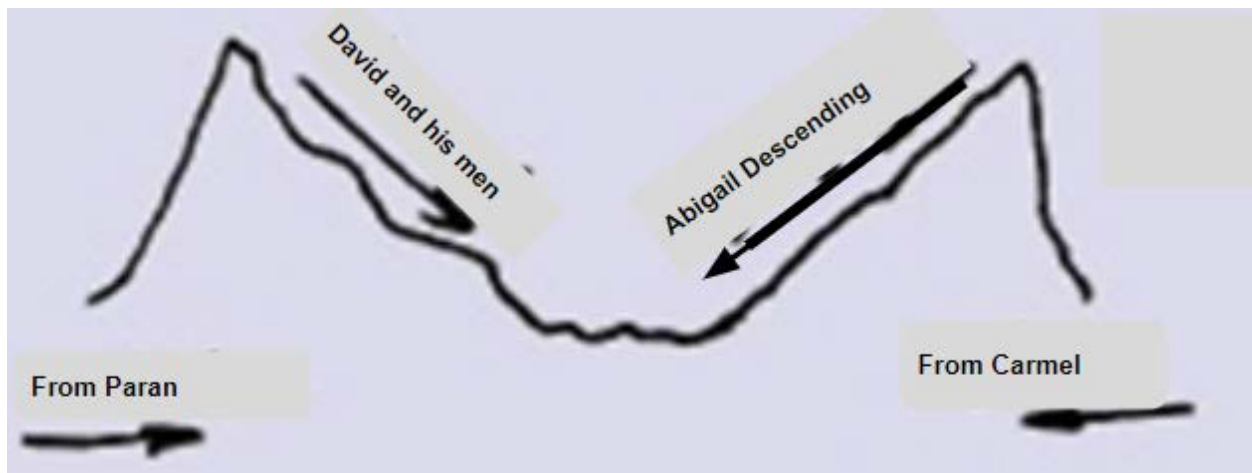
(Verse 13): **Then David said to his men, "Every man gird on his sword." So every man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went with David, and two hundred stayed with the supplies.**

David, characterized by self-restraint and humility, is now in a moment of weakness, about to commit a crime that would pollute his history and become a stumbling block before his people. But out of God's love, we find Him interfering to save the man from himself.

(Verses 14-17): **Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. 15 But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. 16 They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep. 17 Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him."**

(Verses 18-31): **Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys. 19 And she said to her servants, "Go on before me; see, I**

am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. 20 So it was, as she rode on the donkey, that she went down under cover of the hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them. 21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. 22 May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light." 23 Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. 24 So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. 25 Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him! But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. 26 Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, since the Lord has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal. 27 And now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. 28 Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the Lord will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the Lord, and evil is not found in you throughout your days. 29 Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. 30 And it shall come to pass, when the Lord has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, 31 that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."



Nabal's folly almost led to his destruction. As for the wisdom of Abigail, it calmed David's heart so that he would not avenge himself. And the name Abigail meant (Abi = father or source + Gail = joy), as if she had become a source of joy in her wisdom. Nabal's servants knew their mistress was wise, but their master was a fool, so they came to Abigail and did not go to Nabal. Abigail did not get angry at the words of the boys, for it was not a time of reproach but rather a time of action, and verse (20) shows that Abigail came from Carmel, descending on the mountain to meet David and his men, who were

descending from another hill. **under cover of the hill** = Abigail was coming down the mountain, and she was turning around it at a bend on the mountain. After the bend, she was surprised by David and his men in front of her so **she met them** = i.e. they met by chance without human planning, but it is the divine planning that protects David from his weaknesses. And Abigail gave David a soft answer that diverted his anger. **because my lord fights the battles of the Lord** = that is, sir, you are busy with holy wars for the Lord, so do not pay attention to the small things, but leave revenge to the Lord. **and evil is not found in you throughout your days**: Do not damage your name and history with such action, and do not let Saul, the man who hunts you down (**Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life**), troll you unnecessarily. Note her faith and wisdom, for she called Saul a man and did not call him a king. While in her words, she sees David on his way to the throne, verse (30). **but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God** = God has preserved my master until now from all attempts to kill him. Therefore my lord David is very precious to God, and God preserved him as if in a bundle. The bundle was used to store money, jewels and valuables. She prayed that God would keep him alive. **and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out** = that is, God who preserved you, He will cast your enemies. If God casts them, then why do you avenge yourself? **let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal** = that is, let your enemies be weak and ignorant, who cannot do anything, or this is a prophecy of his death. And note her humility that she blamed herself: **On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be** = she did not sin, but she considered herself a partner in what her husband did because she was his wife. God sent this wise woman to prevent David from sinning. God sees the pain of David, how much he endured and his humility, so He protects him now so that he does not sin. How many times God intervenes in our lives to prevent us from sinning? Indeed, her coming was divinely arranged. God looked at David's humility and did not want him to fall.

(Verses 32-35): **Then David said to Abigail: "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! 33 And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. 34 For indeed, as the Lord God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!" 35 So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person."**

The humble David accepts Abigail's sermon and considers it a divine message, for which he thanks God for preventing him **from coming to bloodshed**. From David's humility, he accepts others' advice as long as it is sound. Here the wisdom of both David and Abigail emerged. And David preferred to break his word to take revenge on Nabal than to keep a promise associated with cruelty and revenge.

(Verse 36): **Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light.**

Here we find Nabal, who was stingy with David, wasting away at a feast **like the feast of a king** = wasting away for the sake of luxury.

(Verses 37-38): **So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became like a stone. 38 Then it happened, after about ten days, that the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.**

**his heart died:** From horror.

(Verses 39-43): **So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the Lord, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the Lord has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head." And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. 40 When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife." 41 Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." 42 So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife. 43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives.**

When David learned of Nabal's death, he knew that God had avenged him. David's marriage to Abigail= Abigail accepted marriage with David while he was in a period of distress and did not care about his poverty, as she believed that he would be the king, for this is God's promise. This is a lesson for us now in our lives. Despite the world's hardships, let us accept Christ as our Bridegroom and believe in the glory that will be revealed to us, just as Abigail believed that she would become queen. Whoever suffers with Christ will be glorified with him. And symbolically, the union of the Church with her Groom is a joy for the Heavenly Father. But polygamy is unacceptable, as after Abigail, David returned and took Ahinoam as a wife. It was expected that there would be problems as a result.

(Verse 44): **But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was from Gallim.**

As a result of David's marriage, his wife was taken to be given to another husband.

## Chapter 26

(Verse 1): **Now the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is David not hiding in the hill of Hachilah, opposite Jeshimon?"**

For the second time, the Ziphites betray David. He was hidden at their place. And again, Saul betrays David.

(Verses 2-25): **Then Saul arose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. 3 And Saul encamped in the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon, by the road. But David stayed in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. 4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul had indeed come. 5 So David arose and came to the place where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army. Now Saul lay within the camp, with the people encamped all around him. 6 Then David answered, and said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother of Joab, saying, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" And Abishai said, "I will go down with you." 7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and there Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay all around him. 8 Then Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time!" 9 But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" 10 David said furthermore, "As the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish. 11 The Lord forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed. But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head, and let us go." 12 So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got away; and no man saw or knew it or awoke. For they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them. 13 Now David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off, a great distance being between them. 14 And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Do you not answer, Abner?" Then Abner answered and said, "Who are you, calling out to the king?" 15 So David said to Abner, "Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. 16 This thing that you have done is not good. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the jug of water that was by his head." 17 Then Saul knew David's voice, and said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" David said, "It is my voice, my lord, O king." 18 And he said, "Why does my lord thus pursue his servant? For what have I done, or what evil is in my hand? 19 Now therefore, please, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant: If the Lord has stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering. But if it is the children of men, may they be cursed before the Lord, for they have driven me**

out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' 20 So now, do not let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord. For the king of Israel has come out to seek a flea, as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains." 21 Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, my son David. For I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Indeed I have played the fool and erred exceedingly." 22 And David answered and said, "Here is the king's spear. Let one of the young men come over and get it. 23 May the Lord repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the Lord delivered you into my hand today, but I would not stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed. 24 And indeed, as your life was valued much this day in my eyes, so let my life be valued much in the eyes of the Lord, and let Him deliver me out of all tribulation." 25 Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, my son David! You shall both do great things and also still prevail." So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

Some scholars thought that the story of this chapter was repeated in the chapter (1 Samuel 24), but the differences are:

Chapter 24	Chapter 26
1- The events took place at En Gedi	Events at the hill of Hachilah
2- David cuts Saul's robe.	David takes his spear and his bowl.
3- Here, David goes out after Saul and speaks to him.	Here, David speaks to Abner and the people, then the king from another mountain.
4- This incident was during the day.	This incident was at night.
5- After this incident, David fled quickly.	After this incident, he sought refuge with the Philistines.

Perhaps this story is similar to the other, but evil is always similar, and God's actions are always similar in His providence. In verse (4), David did not believe that Saul went after him again after he had promised him and sent spies to ensure this happened. In verse (5) **within the camp**: a barrier made of stones, earth, or wood, behind which soldiers hide during the war for protection, but the original word can be translated as a circle of chariots, as he set up chariots as barricades and slept in the midst of them. And out of God's care, everyone fell asleep; they relied on their human strength, but they were overcome even by their nature, so they could not stay awake; accordingly, it is clear that God's hand is in the matter. **Abishai**: He is the son of Zeruah, David's sister, from the mother, not the father. As it seems that Jesse's wife was a wife of Nahash, king of Ammon, before her marriage to him (2 Samuel 17: 25), and she bore him Zeruah and Abigail, then Jesse took her, and she bore him David and his brothers. Nahash may be the king of Ammon, or his name is like this, and in verse (8) **God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day** = Abishai realized that this sleep is not natural, but rather it is from God to give David an opportunity. Abishai understood that the opportunity was for David to kill Saul, but David understood that it was another opportunity to defeat the demon of hatred with his love and

humility. Indeed, the Lord gives His beloved sleep and peace, but the enemies of God have the sleep of heedlessness. And in verse (13), David stands far away, as he does not trust Saul or his men. He spoke to Abner to scold him, but politely, as if he were saying, "Isn't sleep enough for you?! In verse (14) **Who are you, calling out to the king?** That is, how dare you wake the king. In verse (15) **Are you not a man?** this contains a reprimand to Abner, which means you are a mighty man of strength, so how can you be negligent in guarding your master? In verse (19) **If the Lord has stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering** = that is if I had sinned and God wanted to punish me by handing me over to you, then I accept to offer myself as a sacrifice. Or if God agrees to deliver me into your hand so that you may rejoice, then I agree to be the sacrifice that pleases God so that he smells a sweet fragrance in my obedience. **But if it is the children of men, may they be cursed before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, 'Go, serve other gods:** here he reveals his bitterness because he was denied participating in prayer and praise with his people, as he is fleeing as a result of a conspiracy of people. Or, as a result of what is happening, he is compelled to leave Israel and flee again to any of the pagan peoples as if these people were asking him to leave his God and his country and go to another country to worship strange gods. And in verse (20) , **do not let my blood fall to the earth** = he believes in God's justice and that if his blood was shed unjustly, he would have cried out like the blood of Abel, and God would take revenge on the killer. **a partridge:** The partridge is chased by the Arabs, who chase it until it does not settle on the ground, so it gets tired of flying and lands on the ground exhausted, so they hunt it with a club. In other words, Saul tired David by chasing him [and the partridge is a bird of no great value, which is from David's humility, same as he said **a flea**]. **Return, my son David:** Here Saul returns him to his position, but David no longer trusts him. Saul became small in his own eyes when he saw David's repeated pardoning of him. **May the Lord repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness:** Here, David did not want a reward from Saul for his love, forgiveness, and pardon but left judgment and reward to the Lord.

## Chapter 27

(Verses 1-4): **And David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand." 2 Then David arose and went over with the six hundred men who were with him to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. 3 So David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's widow. 4 And it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath; so he sought him no more.**

Once again, we find David in a state of weakness as he turns to Achish without consulting the Lord. David is certainly one of the heroes of the faith, but every person has his mistakes. David was tired of Saul's frequent hesitation and changing his views every day, and he saw this as a threat to his life and the lives of his wives. But David forgot that he was under God's protection, and God does not change his words, and not a single word of His words is omitted. God wanted David to remain in Judah. Of course, he sought refuge in the land of the Philistines because Saul would not dare enter it after him. His escape to Achish this time was different, as he came with his wives, his family, and his men, so it was difficult for him to be like this as a spy, while last time he went alone to Achish, so Achish doubted him. Achish considered him a power to benefit from as an ally, especially since Saul's enmity towards him was known throughout the region, so they thought David would fight with them against Saul. God wanted David to stay in Judah to share with the people the pain they were suffering from Saul. Perhaps this Achish is the son of the former Achish.

(Verses 5-7): **Then David said to Achish, "If I have now found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?" 6 So Achish gave him Ziklag that day. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. 7 Now the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was one full year and four months.**

David did not like to live in Gath with Achish because his men and their families were large, which would cause hardship for the people of Gath. In addition, his presence in Gath would put him in an embarrassing situation because of the worship of pagan gods, and he firmly rejects this. What would he do on feasts and celebrations while he lives among these people? And his constant presence will make him a slave to Achish, only carrying out his orders. What would his position be if Achish decided to fight Saul? David only wants to show that he is hostile to Saul but does not want to fight Saul. The king accepted and gave him Ziklag: In the first place, this city was given to Simeon, and in the days of Saul, it was in the hands of the Philistines, and later on, it became the possession of Judah.

(Verse 8): **And David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. For those nations were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as you go to Shur, even as far as the land of Egypt.**



David's stay away from Gath gave him freedom of movement. Therefore, he began to carry out some raids against the pagan peoples who were known for their violent lives, banditry, corruption and abominations. **from of old:** Perhaps the Geshurites and Gerzies were branches of the giants, and what he said about them from ancient times indicates that David was carrying out the command of the Lord to exterminate and destroy the enemies of the Israelites and that they were the ones whom the Lord had forbidden from ancient times. The period of David's stay in Ziklag was the best preparation for managing his kingdom after the death of Saul and the prohibition and extermination of the Amalekites, the Geshurites, and the Girzites. It had two benefits: 1. Carrying out God's command to take revenge on these people. 2. That none of them tell Achish what David did so that he would begin to guard against him and take a hostile stance towards him, and perhaps he envied his success, as did Saul. And because God did not forbid the livestock of these people, David kept some of it for himself, and it was natural for him to give gifts from it to Achish in exchange for hosting him.

(Verses 9-12): **Whenever David attacked the land, he left neither man nor woman alive, but took away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the apparel, and returned and came to Achish. 10 Then Achish would say, "Where have you made a raid today?" And David would say, "Against the southern area of Judah, or against the southern area of the Jerahmeelites, or against the southern area of the Kenites." 11 David would save neither man nor woman alive, to bring news to Gath, saying, "Lest they should inform on us, saying, 'Thus David did.'" And thus was his behavior all the time he dwelt in the country of the Philistines. 12 So Achish believed David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; therefore he will be my servant forever."**

The bad results of David's refuge in Achish are clear:

- 1- To pay tribute to Achish,
- 2- David was forced to lie.

And when Achish asked him, "**Where have you made a raid today?**" meaning, did you invade today, and who did you invade? The sentence came in the Septuagint, "against whom you invaded today?" David lied and said that he invaded southern Judah and the Jerahmeelites of the descendants of Judah. This was to show Achish that he was at war against Saul and his people so that he would enjoy peace in Gath. The Kenites were counted from the tribe of Judah (1 Chronicles 2: 55).

Note: We notice from Achish's question to David that the invasion of the neighboring tribes and peoples to plunder them was the prevailing and natural thing in those days, so David had to subjugate the neighboring peoples when he received the kingdom so that his people would be safe from these invasions?

## Chapter 28

(Verses 1-6): **Now it happened in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war, to fight with Israel. And Achish said to David, "You assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle, you and your men." 2 So David said to Achish, "Surely you know what your servant can do." And Achish said to David, "Therefore I will make you one of my chief guardians forever." 3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land. 4 Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 6 And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets.**

**the mediums:** His Holiness Pope Shenouda the Third says that he asked some teachers of the Hebrew language, and they said that it means just underground spirits.

**Now it happened in those days:** The days of David's stay in Ziklag. Here we see Achish very certain of David's loyalty to him in the war against Saul. And in (verse 2) we find David's answer floating ambiguously, bearing at least two meanings. David did not give an explicit promise but rather said, "**Surely you know what your servant can do**" So, Achish considered the issue of David's participation with him against Saul as a certain matter. Rather it was an honour for him to fight with the Philistines against his enemy. Therefore, Achish appointed David **one of my chief guardians** or the leader of his private guard. In (verse 3) he repeats the incident of Samuel's death as an introduction to the following events. Saul had banished all those who practiced magic and sorcery from the country, and this was probably under the guidance of Samuel. **the mediums** = the origin of the word mean those who speak from their stomachs and pretend to be possessing a spirit in them, and he is the one who tells them about hidden matters, the future. **and the spiritists** = the followers of the mediums who follow them wherever they go as slaves to their master. He reveals things to them that humans do not realize or see and offers them capabilities beyond human capabilities, such as summoning the souls of the dead. The Holy Bible has prohibited magic and sorcery of all kinds because it means a person resorting to evil and to Satan as a guide and a support that helps him instead of resorting to God and relying on Him.

And in (verse 4) **Shunem**, a city in the land of Issachar. And **Gilboa** opposite Shunem. And in (verse 5) the secret of Saul's real fear is the abandonment of God [contrary to David the prophet who says (Psalm 27: 1)]. In (verse 6) how does God answer a man who killed all the priests and the high priest and expelled the man who was fighting valiantly, who was David. It seems that Saul set up a priest in some way to ask God for him, but the remaining legitimate priest was Abiathar, whom David protected. **either by dreams** (see Numbers 12: 6), for God may speak to the prophets in dreams, but because of the evil of Saul, the prophets and every good person turned away from him, and God rejected him, and he became in the worst condition. Let us notice, after that, what degradation Saul reached; instead of offering repentance and praying, we find him resorting to the worst method that could be resorted to. Let us notice how Saul spent the last night of his life.

(Verse 7): **Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor."**

Saul resorted to asking a woman who was medium, and thus he insulted God, as he appointed this lying woman in God's place. Thus Saul deviated from one weakness to another until he committed this great evil.

(Verses 8-20): **So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please conduct a séance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you." 9 Then the woman said to him, "Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" 10 And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, "As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." 11 Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." 12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!" 13 And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth." 14 So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. 15 Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do." 16 Then Samuel said: "So why do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy? 17 And the Lord has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. 18 Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you this day. 19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." 20 Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night.**

There are two opinions about this story, i.e. the appearance of Samuel after he died to Saul:

First: What appeared was indeed the spirit of Samuel. Certainly, he did not follow the orders of the female medium, but with God's permission, to give a final lesson to Saul so that he might repent and to rebuke him for what he had done, as he resorted to the mediums instead of resorting to God through repentance. Those who hold this view prove it as follows:

1. Joshua, the son of Sirach, testifies to this, saying, "And after this he slept, and he made known to the king, and shewed him the end of his life, and he lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy to blot out the wickedness of the nation." (Sirach 23: 46).
2. The woman's screaming with a loud voice indicates that she saw something she was not used to, as she was used to seeing her demons.
3. The woman's knowledge of Saul while he was in disguise. Then she said "spirits" about Samuel, shows that what she saw was strange.
4. Samuel's saying to Saul: **Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?** = a rebuke to Saul for his sinful act.
5. Everything that Samuel said as a prophecy took place (verses 16-19). It is clear that it is a final warning to Saul, so that he may repent.

Second: That what appeared was a demon and claimed to be Samuel, and the owners of this opinion have evidence that:

1. It is a satanic deception, "For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11: 14 + 2 Thessalonians 2: 4), where we understand that he will show himself as God + (Matthew 24: 24) so that we know his deceptions.
2. The prophecies of the spirit that appeared do not need intelligence, as it knows the strength of the Philistine army and the weakness of Saul's army, that it is a losing battle, and that the Philistines will not calm down unless they get rid of Saul.
3. The words of the Spirit to Saul do not contain a call to repentance and reconciliation with God but rather put Saul in a serious state of despair, without any hope.
- 4- The woman's terror is an acting representation of her, and her knowledge of the name Saul was led by her demons.

In verse (10), **Saul swore to her by the Lord** = he still has the appearance of religion while he is losing its essence. How can he swear by God to protect her against the law that demands the stoning of witches (Leviticus 20: 27). And in (verse 9) we find the woman afraid for her life, that is, that Saul would kill her, but she does not fear for her own salvation. Then we find Saul saying to her, "**no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.**" Did Saul set a new law to protect her from God's wrath?

He, who claimed that he would protect the woman with the mediums, soon collapsed and fell on his face in terror. First, he was terrified of the Philistines, then he collapsed in front of his servants, who knew that he had previously exiled all the mediums, and here he is, returning and declaring his need for them, forcing him to disguise himself, forcing himself to disguise unless someone discovers his identity.

(Verse 21): **And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled, and said to him, "Look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice, and I have put my life in my hands and heeded the words which you spoke to me.**

**and I have put my life in my hands:** That is, I risked my life for you, knowing that this is forbidden.

(Verses 22-24): **Now therefore, please, heed also the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way." 23 But he refused and said, "I will not eat." So his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and sat on the bed. 24 Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she hastened to kill it. And she took flour and kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread from it.**

Here, the woman pitied Saul and gave him her finest food because of his collapse.

(Verse 25): **So she brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.**

It is a sad and shameful end for a king whose beginnings were so encouraging. This represents someone who is given many talents by God but who enters into vanity and pride. And an internally corrupt person accumulates bitterness for himself daily until the last minute of his life. As for the spiritual person, he stores in his depths successive glories that fill his depths with joy until the end of his life on earth.

## Chapter 29

(Verses 1-11): **Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. 2 And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. 3 Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or these years? And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me." 4 But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of the Philistines said to him, "Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these men? 5 Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands?'" 6 Then Achish called David and said to him, "Surely, as the Lord lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my sight. For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. 7 Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines." 8 So David said to Achish, "But what have I done? And to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" 9 Then Achish answered and said to David, "I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.' 10 Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come with you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart." 11 So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.**

The problem David got himself into reached its climax. He put himself in a terrible predicament, as he is now required to fight against his people under the leadership of a pagan king who hosted him while he was in distress and now demands that he return the favour. The dilemma is that if David did not fight on the side of the Philistines, he would have been a traitor to those who hosted him, and if he fought with them against his people, he would have become hated in Israel, and they would have rejected him as a king. Only God can solve this problem that he put himself in, and He did, as David had a straight heart with God. God had chastised him for leaving Judah, but God will not allow His children to be tempted beyond what they are able (1 Corinthians 10: 13). The solution was represented in the rejection of David by the Palestinian princes, who considered him dishonest in his relationship with them, and that if he entered the war, he would surely turn against the Philistines and stand on the side of his people.

In verse (2): **at the rear** = that is, in the rear of the army, so the leaders of the Palestinian army did not notice the presence of David from the beginning.

In verse (4): **if not with the heads of these men?** = that he pleases his master, his God or his king by turning around and killing the Philistines in the war, for he is now outwardly supporting us, but in the

war, he will surrender us to their hand. Achish loved David, but he was one in the middle of the five princes, so he agreed to the majority's opinion and asked David to return. Note the influence of David on Achish during his stay with him as in verse (6), we find Achish swearing by the Lord, **as the Lord lives**, and in verse (9), he likens David to **an angel of God**, so from where did Achish get these words except from David? Note that the word God originally used by Achish is YHWH. Where did Achish come up with these terms except from David? It is clear that the influence of David, the man of faith, on those around him is great and mighty. Or suppose Achish was complimenting David with these Israeli religious expressions. In that case, this is because he loved him, respected his God, and considered him a God who could swear by his name, which is generally the first step on the path of faith. Refer to verse (6) to see how much Achish loved David and how great the testimony of the non-believers was to the believers. And in verse (8), David returns the courtesy, and surely his heart was flying with joy when he got rid of the impasse and knew that he would not fight his people.

## Chapter 30

(Verses 1-6): **Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, 2 and had taken captive the women and those who were there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried them away and went their way. 3 So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. 4 Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5 And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. 6 Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.**

God saves his children but disciplines them. David made a mistake by being in Ziklag among the Philistines, which would have led him to fight his people. Perhaps he would have done what he had refrained from doing before, to kill Saul, the Lord's anointed, and perhaps the Israelites would have rejected him as king because of this. By that, he would have disrupted God's plan to establish a kingdom according to His heart, so God intervened to save David and to glorify the name of the Lord. But he needed a lesson to discipline him. So staying in the outskirts of Judah was better for him than this predicament.

The Amalekites took advantage of the departure of David and his men from Ziklag to participate in the war with the Philistines. They struck Ziklag and burned it, and took the women and children captive. Here we see how meaningless Saul's pity for the king of Amalek was. And now we see David in distress that he had not encountered before, and matters became more complicated in an amazing way:

1. He is expelled and rejected from his homeland and King Saul.
2. He is rejected by the Palestinians.
3. His people and men, who ate his bread, raised their heels on him. His men wanted to stone him, as their women had been taken captive.
4. His wives are captive.
5. Their tents were burned with fire.

This situation certainly requires a strong faith like the faith of David = **But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.**



(Verse 7): **Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David.**

David made a mistake when he went down with Achish without consulting the Lord, but now we find that he learned the lesson, and here he is calling the priest to ask God with the Urim = **the ephod**. This is the benefit of trials. Note that when David returned to the Lord, even his soldiers who thought of stoning him returned to submit to him and fought with him.

(Verse 8): **So David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all."**

**for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all:** Therefore, it is a limited strike for chastising only, and note that they did not lose anything and all returned safely, men, women, and children, with all their possessions, rather their spoil was so great that David distributed it among the people of Judah (refer to verses 19,20). So why do we fear trials and hardships? These trials:

1. For discipline and removal of sins so that we qualify for the inheritance of the heavens and so that this inheritance will not be lost from us if it remains as it is without chastisement.
2. We will not lose anything, but we will return with spoils (virtues and blessings) after each trial.
3. If we are patient with the trial, God will bestow upon us material blessings (spoils / the return of the soldiers to David, and this is equivalent to our reconciliation with the people of the world) and spiritual blessings, i.e. reconciliation with God and with the heavenly ones who will rejoice in our repentance.

(Verse 9): **So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those stayed who were left behind.**

**the Brook Besor:** It is a small creek that descends from the mountains of Edomia to the Mediterranean Sea at Gaza, and some believe that it is what is meant by the River of Egypt, i.e. the one on the borders of Egypt (Genesis 15: 18).

**where those stayed who were left behind:** David's men were 600, but 200 of them could not bear it and lagged behind from the battle and did not cross the Besor River because of their fatigue. David went with only 400 to meet Amalek.

(Verse 10): **But David pursued, he and four hundred men; for two hundred stayed behind, who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor.**

(Verse 11): **Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David; and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water.**

**Then they found an Egyptian:** David and his men came across an Egyptian man in a state of complete exhaustion between life and death. He had not eaten or drunk for 3 days. It seems that he was the slave of an Amalekite man who was previously captured and was enslaved to him, and when he fell ill, he was ruthlessly thrown into the wilderness until he almost died. Full of compassion, David gave him food and water, and his spirit returned to him.

(Verses 12-14): **And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So when he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. 13 Then David said to him, "To whom do you belong, and where are you from?" And he said, "I am a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind, because three days ago I fell sick. 14 We made an invasion of the southern area of the Cherethites, in the territory which belongs to Judah, and of the southern area of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire."**

The man told them he was with his master, the Amalekite, when they attacked. **the southern area of the Cherethites** = a tribe of Philistines whose land is in the south (Ezekiel 25: 16 + Zephaniah 2: 5) and was originally from Crete. In this attack on the Philistines, they attacked what **belongs to Judah**.

And note that David, due to his generosity and love, took care of this man who was thrown into the wilderness and refrained from catching up with the invaders because it was not possible for him to leave a person about to die while he was able to offer him a helping hand. David did not know that this person would help him and be a guide for him (Anba Bishoy did that when he met Christ).

(Verse 15): **And David said to him, "Can you take me down to this troop?" So he said, "Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to this troop."**

David asked the Egyptian to lead him to the place of the invaders, and he agreed not to kill him since, in the past, they used to kill the evidence in wars so as not to betray them.

(Verse 16): **And when he had brought him down, there they were, spread out over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.**

They were in a state of amusement and indifference, knowing that both the Palestinians and the Jews were at war and no one would catch up with them quickly. And let us note that fun and dancing may be on the night of a person's death, i.e. this night of fun may be the last night in a person's life [(This

happened here and with Belshazzar (Daniel 5)]. Thus, it was Saul's last night, and he spent it in En Dor with the medium.

(Verses 17-20): **Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. 18 So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. 19 And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; David recovered all. 20 Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those other livestock, and said, "This is David's spoil."**

God chastises, but He preserves all, for the hearts of every human being are in the hands of God. Rather, he is the one who orchestrated the presence of the Egyptian man who was a guide to David. Thus God allows limited strikes to chasten (the story of Job). And in verse (17) it seems that David and his men reached the area in the evening, so they ambushed them until the Amalekites fell asleep, and at dawn, his men attacked them, and the fighting lasted all day.

(Verse 21): **Now David came to the two hundred men who had been so weary that they could not follow David, whom they also had made to stay at the Brook Besor. So they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. And when David came near the people, he greeted them.**

We find David with a soft heart here asking about those who lagged behind from exhaustion and did not direct a word of blame to them.

(Verses 22-25): **Then all the wicked and worthless men of those who went with David answered and said, "Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man's wife and children, that they may lead them away and depart." 23 But David said, "My brethren, you shall not do so with what the Lord has given us, who has preserved us and delivered into our hand the troop that came against us. 24 For who will heed you in this matter? But as his part is who goes down to the battle, so shall his part be who stays by the supplies; they shall share alike." 25 So it was, from that day forward; he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.**

Some wicked people asked that the 200 that lagged behind should not share in the spoils, but David refused, and David took advantage of a text in the law to prove his opinion (Numbers 31: 25-27). It was considered that these 200 remained because they were assigned the job of keeping the luggage. Certainly, the text of the law does not apply to them completely, but they also did not fall short of negligence or cowardice but rather out of fatigue. Therefore, it was said in (verse 25) that it became an ordinance that David made in Israel. David's wisdom in this spared his evil men of division and fighting

among themselves. And in (verse 23) he considered that the victory was a gift from God, so he did not attribute the victory to himself or his men.

**There are symbols of Christ in this battle:**

David	Christ
The 400 who fought with David and crossed the river	The New Testament Church that crossed the waters of baptism
And the 200 who fell ill.	And the people of the Old Testament were burdened with the burdens of the law.
David frees his two wives.	Christ freed the people of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

(Verses 26-31): **Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Lord" — 27 to those who were in Bethel, those who were in Ramoth of the South, those who were in Jattir, 28 those who were in Aroer, those who were in Siphmoth, those who were in Eshtemoa, 29 those who were in Rachal, those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, those who were in the cities of the Kenites, 30 those who were in Hormah, those who were in Chorashan, those who were in Athach, 31 those who were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to rove.**

David was characterized by a big heart and generosity, as we see that the Amalekites rejoiced in the spoils, but David divided it with those who became weary on the way and with the people of Judah. This is brotherly love. He considered that God is the one who gave the victory, and therefore he has no right to it alone. As long as God is the one who blessed, let him share the blessing with the rest of the brothers. It is clear that the spoils were enormous. He considered that this was a blessing from God and that his gift to the men of Judah was a blessing from God. These are the actions of kings, as they do not care about themselves but about their people. He fought not for his own sake, but fought the wars of the Lord for the account of his people. Therefore, when the time came for him to rule over them, they made him king with joy. This is our case with Christ, and note that the first gift was to **Bethel** = which is different from the famous Bethel in Benjamin. As for Bethel mentioned here, it is in Judah (Joshua 12: 16) because Bethel means the house of God, and the first thing we remember should be the house of God. We note that there are no gifts for the Ziphites, as they are unworthy traitors.

## Chapter 31

(Verses 1-2): **Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. 2 Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.**

The inspiration spoke of victory and then returned to the war between Israel and King Saul against the Philistines. And here we see Saul seeing with his own eyes the death of his children before him. Saul tried repeatedly to kill David and failed, and David refused to touch Saul and left the whole matter to God. Saul chased David until he fled, and Saul thought that he had rested and that the kingdom became for him and his children, but he did not realize that by this, he had preserved David to receive the kingdom after the death of Saul and his sons. Rather, the very same day of Saul's defeat and death was a day of victory for David. For whoever relies on God, God will never put him to shame, and whoever abandons God, God will abandon him, so he must be defeated. Let us not rush to judgment, for one day Satan and all his soldiers will fall, and victory will be for the believers, no matter how long their pain and Satan's persecution of them. Here is Saul dying, not at the hands of David, but at the hands of his enemies.

(Verses 3-5): **The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers. 4 Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. 5 And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him.**

The Philistines focused their strikes on Saul because the whole army would fall if Saul fell. When he was wounded, he feared that the Philistines would do to him what they did to Samson, put out his eyes, and harm him. So he asked his armorbearer, who, according to the Jewish tradition, is Doeg the Edomite, to kill him. **Therefore Saul took a sword** = it is said that the sword is the sword of Doeg the Edomite with which he killed the priests. With the sword which the priests were killed, by order of Saul himself, Saul also committed suicide. Let us note that suicide is strange to the people of the Lord, but it is a habit among the pagans. And in (5) we find Doeg the Edomite himself committing suicide with the same sword.

(Verses 6-7): **So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.**

**7 And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.**

Saul's sons died with him, while they were innocent. The innocent may die with the wicked, but his soul will be saved, and this is an example of how one person sin affects his children. The sons of Saul, including Jonathan, died because of the sin of their father, Saul, but their souls are preserved for eternal salvation. The father's sin cannot affect the salvation of the son's soul (Ezekiel 18). Will the loving Jonathan, the champion of faith, perish?!

**Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together:** his private guards. As for his son Ishbosheth, who was unable to work, and the chief of his army, Abner, they did not die. And Jonathan's death relieved David of a predicament. If Ishbosheth was disabled, and he found someone to make him reign, how much more would Jonathan? And if Jonathan abdicated to David, it would have been Jonathan who made David king, not God.

(Verses 8-12): **So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9 And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people. 10 Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan. 11 Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 12 all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there.**

**strip the slain:** To take away precious clothes, everything of value, and weapons. They put Saul's weapon in the house of Ashtaroth (**Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths**) = By this they attribute victory to their god. The Philistines thought that by killing Saul, they had won a final victory over Israel, but David soon came to subdue them. There is no one who can defeat God. And we find the people of Jabesh-gilead returning the favor to Saul, who previously saved them from Nahash.

(Verse 13): **Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.**

**and fasted seven days:** A sign of intense sadness and mourning. Burning the bodies is an anomaly on the rule of burying the bodies intact, and they may have been afraid that the Palestinians would come again to take the bodies. Note that the book began with the birth of Samuel, who came as a divine gift and fruit of prayers, tears, and piety of his mother, and ends with Saul's suicide, which was according to the people's advice and according to their heart. And every human being must either choose God and live in dignity or choose the world, and his end will be shameful.