

## 1 SAMUEL (“Name of God”)

### All comments from Bruce Birch (NIB) unless otherwise stated.

1) --The composition of Samuel: The Hebrew text of 1 and 2 Samuel (the Masoretic text) is in extremely poor condition and is much shorter than the Greek translation (Septuagint - LXX). The text in the Dead Sea scrolls shows that the LXX did not add tradition to expand the text; they had access to actual manuscripts of 1 and 2 Samuel. /// "The text of Samuel shares with that of Ezekiel the doubtful honor of being the most corrupt in the OT. The translators of the KJV ... did a heroic best with one unintelligible passage after another." (Geo. Caird, Interpreter's Bible) This translation of 1 Sam incorporates 230 alternatives to the Masoretic text. The Qumran findings of large portions of 1 and 2 Samuel have improved the quality immensely. /// Walter Brueggemann's work has emphasized the theology inherent in the Samuel books, challenging the traditional assumption that the books are only of "historical" interest. /// The two books of Samuel and the two books of Kings are one story, the divisions determined by the length of the ancient scrolls. In the Septuagint the books were called I,II,II, IV Kingdoms. Jerome in the Vulgate maintained this and it remained until mid-20th century. /// Compared to other portions of the Deuteronomistic History, there are fewer distinctively deuteronomistic passages, indicating that the Deuteronomistic historian left much of the narrative alone. /// Extra-biblical evidence that there was an historical person by the name of David in 1993 at Tel Dan, archaeologist Michael Askenazi, working under Avraham Biram, found an inscription *Beth David Melech Yisrael* -- "House of David King of Israel" BAR Mar/Apr '94 -- "David Found at Dan," and Sept/Oct '94 -- "More Fragments from David Stela Found at Dan." (Michael Askenazi stayed with us as a young man for 3-4 days at Kiomboi Lutheran Hospital in Tanganyika in 1963, when he was hitch-hiking from Israel to Africa, collecting folk songs. Forty years later, he was one of our archaeologist/guides in Israel!)

#### There are some **glaring inconsistencies**:

- 1 Sam 4:1 and 9:6. The word of Samuel came to all Israel, yet Saul hasn't heard of him.
- 1 Sam 7:13 and 2 Samuel 5. Samuel inflicts a final defeat on the Philistines, but the Philistine oppression continues unabated.
- 1 Sam 13:14 and 15:26. Saul is twice deposed from the throne, but continues to reign without question until his death.
- 1 Sam 16:14-23 and 17:55. David becomes Saul's court musician and armor-bearer but in the next chapter neither Saul nor Abner has any knowledge of him.
- 1 Sam 17:5 and 2 Sam 21:19. Both David and Elhanan killed Goliath.
- 1 Sam 31:4 and 2 Sam 1:10. Saul committed suicide but was also killed by an Amalekite.
- 2 Sam 14:27 and 18:18. Absalom is unaware that he has a family but has four children.

#### There are **two accounts of the same incident**:

- 1 Sam 2:27-36 and 3:11-14. Eli is twice warned about the coming rejection of his family.
- 1 Sam 8-14. Two accounts of the origin of the monarchy.
- 1 Sam 10:10-13 and 19:18-24. Two explanations of the saying, "Is Saul among the prophets?"
- 1 Sam 13:14 and 15:26. Saul is twice deposed from the throne by Samuel.
- 1 Sam 16:14-23 and 17:55 -- 18:5. David is twice introduced into Saul's court.

- 1 Sam 18:17-19 and 20-29. Two daughters of Saul are offered to David in marriage.
- 1 Sam 19:11-17 and 18-24 and 20:1-42. Three accounts of David's flight from Saul.
- 1 Sam 21:10-15 and 27:1-12. David twice takes refuge among the Philistines.
- 1 Sam 23:19–24:22 and 26:1-25. Two stories of David sparing Saul's life.
- 2) – The events which led to the institution of the monarchy:
- 1-- Disunion of the tribes (Judg 19-20), breakdown of tribal justice (Judge 17:6), pressure of the Philistines, all gave rise to a public demand for a king.
  - 2-- Samuel, a circuit judge whose name was known beyond his immediate sphere of authority, was opposed, on the ground that the Lord was king of Israel. But Samuel was no religious fanatic and acceded with many misgivings.
  - 3) Acting under what he now considered a divine compulsion, Samuel sought out Saul and anointed him.
- 3) 1:1-2 – Ramathaim: elsewhere referred to as Ramah, in the center of Benjamin. It remained Ramathaim up until the time of the Maccabean Revolt, which effectively ended in c142 BCE, when it was given to Jonathan Maccabeus as spoils from the war. Sometime between that date and Jesus's time, the name was changed to Arimathea, probably by Jonathan. This is documented in *The Harper Concise Atlas of the Bible*. Furthermore, the town is still there, but with another name change. It is called Rentis. /// Nebuchednezzar detained the captives there and killed all who could not make the trip to Babylon – “A voice was heard in Ramah...Rachel weeping for her children.” (Jeremiah 31:15) Home of Samuel. Exact location not known. But there was also a Ramah in Naphthali (Joshua 18:36), Asher (Joshua 19:19), Judah (Joshua 19:18), Gilead (2 Kings 8:29). /// Hannah – “charming.” Penninah – “fertile.”
- 4) 1:19-20 – The birth of Samuel points to Israel's future. As God “remembers” Hannah with the gift of Samuel, so does he remember Israel and transforms its future.
- 5) 1:28 – The verb “have lent” (“given to” in some bibles) is “sa’ul” -- as long as Samuel lives, he is *sa-ul to the Lord*. As one dedicated to God, his future is inextricably linked to Saul.
- 6) 2:1-10 – This song became the model for the Magnificat and was probably inserted by the copyist. In vs. 1, the horn is a metaphor of a horned beast; to “raise a horn” is to affirm power and dignity. /// Vss 1b-3 are references to the taunting by Peninnah, and vs. 5 reflects Hannah's desire for seven children [she had six (vs. 21)] But there is a second level of meaning: Hannah is also the mother of Israel, and Samuel's birth is tied to the kingship. So this is also a taunting of whomever might arrogantly challenge God's will for Israel. /// The song is similar to Ps. 113. Also it is remarkably similar in language and theme to 2 Sam 22 (which is in almost identical form in Ps. 18). /// In vs. 8, the prophesy is Israel's rise among the kingdoms, as well as the lowly 8th son (David) who will be king. /// Vs. 9. The key phrase in the song is, “Not by might does one prevail.” /// Vs. 10 foreshadows God's acquiescing to Israel's demand for a king, despite much opposition to it.
- 7) 2:3 – We think of Peninnah here but since she is not named, it may refer to anyone who is so arrogant as to think they can control their own destiny apart from God.
- 8) 2:4 – A reference to David mourning Saul's and Jonathan's death, “How the mighty have fallen.”?
- 9) 2:5 – See v. 21 – she had only five more, not the magic seven.
- 10) 2:25 – An early idea. By Isaiah's time, all sins were against God. Bruce Birch explains vs. 25: God did not determine the actions of Eli's sons; he did not choose the moral course

that leads to death; the death they bring on themselves is from God because God chooses not to rescue them from the consequences of their sin. “The God confronting Eli is no warm fuzzy God.”

- 11) 2:33-36 – Widely agreed that v 33 refers to Abiathar who survived Saul’s massacre of priests at Nob (22:6-23). V 35 probably refers to Zadok being designated by Solomon to found a new line of priests. V 36 may be a reference to the later menial and subservient status of the Levites at the Temple (See Deut 18:6-8, 2 Kings 23:9).
- 12) 3:3 – The “lamp of God” – In Exodus 27:20-21, God instructs Moses and Aaron to keep an olive oil lamp burning by the ark of the covenant from dusk to dawn. So this passage indicates that it is almost dawn. On a different level, this may also mean that divine visions in Israel are nearly extinguished..
- 13) 3:13 – “reprove” would be better translated “restrain,” because Eli *did* reprove his sons.
- 14) – Chap 4. A major discrepancy: The Philistines take the Ark from the Levites in Bethshemesh. (1 Sam 4:1--7:2) where it stays until David transfers it to Jerusalem (1 Sam 6). So how can Saul have had it in 1 Sam 14:3? /// The Philistines were non-Semitic, may have immigrated to Palestine from Crete, perhaps pushed out by the Achaeans as they moved south c 1200 BC. (Troy was taken in 1184). But modern excavations of Ashkelon indicate that the Philistines may have been Mycenaean Greeks. Goliath wore Mycenaean armor, Samson’s exploits (including his weakness when his hair was cut) parallels a Greek myth. They were probably a very cosmopolitan people, not as boorish and unsophisticated as the Bible suggests. They occupied five cities: Ashdod, Ekron, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Gath, as well as the surrounding countryside. (See also Judges 13:1, note #42.)
- 15) 4:1b-2 – Probably c 1080 BC, the beginning of Philistine domination which was to last for 50 years. Also marks the end of Shiloh as a religious center and Jerusalem's rise. /// The Hebrew term for “thousand” is “elep,” a military unit of indeterminate size, possibly as few as ten. The loss was probably less than 50 men. /// Aphek lay about 8 miles east of modern Tel Aviv. Eben ha-ezer means “stone of help.” It has not been located, but probably not the Ebenezer of 7:12, probably near Aphek because the Philistines could hear the shouting of the Israelites and saw that they had brought the ark and their “gods.”
- 16) 4:13 – Probably just outside his temple in town, by the road that led into town.
- 17) 4:18 – Eli as a “judge” – an attempt by the deuteronomist to incorporate Eli into the chronological scheme of his history.
- 18) 4:21 – When she names her son Ichabod (“Gone is the glory from Israel”) she means that God has gone into exile, leaving Israel in bondage. Remember that this was written for the Jews in Babylon, who would identify with this story. The tragic defeat and deaths are over-shadowed by a new life being born.
- 19) 5:1-12 – Dagon was a Semitic/Canaanite god, adopted by the Philistines. In the Ugaritic texts he appears as the father of Baal and a fertility god. /// This ark story is a clear refutation of the aphorism, “God has no hands but our hands.” /// Walter Bruggemann likens the early risers finding Dago’s defeat by God to the gospel stories of the early rising women finding death defeated by Jesus’ resurrection.
- 20) 5:6 – Most translations call this "tumors," so with the swarming rats this was probably bubonic plague. /// But Mary Leath (BAR 11-12/08) thinks the golden objects may have been penises because of the symbolic importance of the phallus in Philistine culture. She quotes another author who says the Philistines men were impatient and therefore

- tried to coax their god into helping them.
- 21) **Chapter 6** - Heavily influenced by the Exodus story: v 3 – the priests were not to send the ark back empty like God’s promise to Moses that the people would not go empty-handed. V 4b – Like Moses with the gold snake (Num 21:4-9). Vv 5-6 – payment as “guilt offering” to turn aside the “hand of God” and obtain relief from the tumors and mice (rats?)
  - 22) 6:5 – Not by “hemorrhoids” (as in the KJV), but likely buboes caused by bubonic plague. The whole point of the “ark narrative” (Chap 4-6) is that God cannot be managed and controlled, that manipulation of holy symbols for our own ends can be downright dangerous. The presence of the ark on the Philistine battlefield (4:1-11) did not produce a victory. The Philistines expected triumph by installing it in Dagon’s temple (5:1-12) but instead were humiliated with rats and affected with the plague. The Beth-shemeshites expected restored well-being when they came back (6:19-7:1) but instead 70 were assaulted and killed. The God in the ark story is mysterious, dangerous, and possessed of freedom of action.
  - 23) 7:6 – Now Mizpah is called Nebi Samuel -- "the prophet Samuel." Vss 3-4 – Baal was the Canaanite storm god and chief god related to fertility of the land. Astarte was the goddess of fertility and war and closely related with Baal. Vs. 5 – Bruce Birch says that “pray to” is unsatisfactory.. Better: “intercede with.”
  - 24) 7:11-12 – Beth Car – House of the Lamb. Near Mizpah. Ebenezer – Stone of Help (from the town of Eben ha-Ezer, see 4:20).
  - 25) 7:13-14 – Cannot be accurate. There are many episodes in 1 Samuel that show the Philistines occupying Israelite territory and fighting them (Chap 13-14, 17-18). Saul dies in battle with them (Chap 31). It is David who finally removes the Philistine threat. So the import of these verses is not historical, but theological: the “hand of the Lord has proved victorious.”
  - 26) 8:10-18 – A catalog of the royal abuse of power. May reflect either Canaanite royal practice of the first century or practices forbidden Israel’s kings in the “law of the King” – Deut 17:14-20.
  - 27) – Chap 9:1-10:16. A classic example of the “call narrative.” (See pp 1040-42 NIB for details.) Others: Moses, Gideon, the classical prophets. Format: 1) Divine confrontation, 2) the introductory word (basis for the commission), 3) the objection (in most calls this comes after the commissioning), 4) Commission, 5) The sign (here only the third sign -- the encounter with the prophets -- is narrated; the other two had to do with the lost donkeys and are irrelevant), 6) the reassurance.
  - 28) – 9:15-17 – But conflicts did persist, as documented as far as 2 Samuel 5. But chap 7 concludes the epoch of Israel’s history that began with the book of Judges. Samuel is actually the last judge.
  - 29) 10:1 – This may have been the secret and actual anointing ceremony, to be followed later by the public ceremony (10:24).
  - 30) 10:5 – The "prophets" were not seers, nor did they foretell the future or preach in the manner of the later prophets. They went about in companies and by music and dancing worked themselves into an ecstatic frenzy. Under these spells they often delivered solemn utterances (see Num 24:2-4). When Saul joined them, onlookers were shocked because although the prophets were religiously respected they were socially despised for their uncouth ways. So the term, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" corresponds to our

- phrase "a fish out of water." /// Vs. 10:8 -- the background for the first conflict between Samuel and Saul that occurs in 13:1-15. Samuel is clearly in charge here and wants Saul to know it.
- 31) 10:14-26 – The public ceremony -- see 1 Sam 10:1. Vss 17-33 -- This selection by lot was probably with the Urim and Thummim. It is strange that Saul was selected -- apparently without being physically present -- and then could not be found until the Lord tells them where he is. As it stands, we have to imagine that Saul was present, chosen by lot, then runs to hide before he is really noticed. /// Vs. 25 – before the Lord – in a sanctuary. /// Vs. 26 – “Warriors” is, in Hebrew *hayil* which can also be translated as wealthy and/or politically powerful men. Vs 27 The word for “worthless ones” is the same one that is used of the men who later come to David’s support (22:1-3). -- The “worthless ones” are properly skeptical if Saul’s supporters who think Saul and the kingship can save Israel without God’s help. As it turns out (Ch 15) the worthless ones were prophetic.
  - 32) 11:1 – Jabesh is in Gilead, east of the Jordan, half way between the Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee. This battle almost certainly took place **after** the battle of Michmash (1 Sam 13). Saul could not have raised an army to fight so far afield unless he already controlled his local territory.
  - 33) 11:8 – Another improbable anachronism. Israel and Judah were not divided for another century. Also, the number of troops raised is impossibly high.
  - 34) – Chap 12 – the entire chapter follows chronologically after 10:24.
  - 35) 12:10 – Identical to Judg 10:10, probably indicating the same author. /// Vss 6-15 are from the hand of the deuteronomistic author (s) as are 20-25, following the pattern of Judges: people sin, a crisis, cry to the Lord, deliverer. /// Vs. 23 shows clearly that this speech cannot be considered a “farewell” address; it marks a transition in Samuel’s role now that Saul is king and will take over the military/administration duties. This speech was cited by English writers as support for making the monarchy accountable to the people in signing of the Magna Carta. Thomas Paine used Samuel to support democratic forms of leadership accountable to the people.
  - 36) 13:1 – The MT literally reads “one year old.” Three LXX texts read “30,” but a verse later he has a grown son, Jonathan. Acts 13:21 says he reigned for forty years but that is a round number used when the actual time period is unknown.
  - 37) 13:3b – A problem: the Israelites never referred to themselves as “Hebrews.” Elsewhere the term is applied by others and is pejorative.
  - 38) 13:8 – When Saul was told in 10:8 to wait seven days for Samuel, he was a young boy, but here he is a seasoned warrior with a grown son, a difficulty which cannot be resolved.
  - 39) 13:14 So what is his sin? Not told! Geo. Caird: "No use in trying to ascribe a reason to the “muddleheaded” writer.” But Bruce Birch says that it is the writer’s way of showing that the kingship does not include usurpation of religious matters; also, that Samuel’s seemingly over-reaction is necessary to provide a reason for disinheriting Saul’s descendants from that kingship. /// But he did continue to rule until his death at Gilboa, Chap 31. /// The “man after God’s own heart” is a clear reference to David.
  - 40) 13:19-22 should be disregarded because it is a very, very corrupt addition.
  - 41) **Chapter 14** -- “One of the finest examples of narrative prose in the Hebrew Bible.” /// Jonathan is the hero, relying on God to deliver the Philistines to him. Saul is exposed as a man whose cautious piety and foolish actions nearly led to Jonathan’s death.

- 42) 14:18 – The ephod contained the Urim and Thummim. Saul was going to ask God (through the priest's casting of lots) if he should attack the Philistines. In vs. 19 (“withdraw your hand”) Saul is asking the priest to discontinue his use of the Urim and Thummim. Urim means “cursed,” Thummim means “counted whole,” a positive or negative verdict. But no one knows just exactly what they were.
- 43) 14:47-51. This is a summary of material suppressed in the Deuteronomic edition, for dogmatic reasons.
- 44) 15:1-3 – The Amalekites were a nomadic people living in the Negeb and Sinai, posing no threat now to the Israelites, but being punished now by God for their opposition during the exodus from Egypt. See: Ex 17:8-16, Num 14:45, Deut. 25:17-19
- 45) 15:4 – Telaim – “young lambs” – probably in southern Judah. “Elep” in Hebrew also means “group” or “unit,” so there were probably 200 units, not 200,000 men.
- 46) 15:5 – Judah was Israelite in language and culture, but looked upon by the rest of Israel as more primitive and barbaric, semi-Canaanite and subservient to the Philistines. Here, Saul must pass through their territory and recruit them.
- 47) 15:22-23 – This elevation of obedience over sacrifice is a central theme in the prophets: Isaiah 1:10-13, Amos 5:21-29, Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:6-8. /// The central issue here is Saul’s disobedience, the failing to carry out the total annihilation ordered by God. Apologists for Saul (e.g. David Gunn), feel that Saul and his people saw no significant incompatibility in God’s order and their actions. Birch: “We must reject the content of ancient standards of morality in the matter of holy war while at the same time taking seriously the confrontation over obedience to the divine word in this story.”
- 48) 15:29 – This seems a direct contradiction to Vss 1 and 35, where God does regret (changes his mind about) Saul’s kingship. Vs. 29 is a near duplicate of a passage in Balaam’s speeches (Num 23:19). And God’s regret in the flood story (Gen 6:6) is the same. Fretheim writes that God “learned something” in his experiment with Saul and used a new tack with David.
- 49) 15:32-35 – Both Samuel and God are disappointed in Saul’s behavior. But God is more concerned with Israel’s future than with Saul’s. /// The books of Samuel show God responding to human history, now “regretting having made Saul king.” Gunn and others see in this chapter the “dark side” of God, being manipulative, ruthless, and less than honorable. Fretheim: God learned something from the experience (experiment?) with Saul. Birch: God is responding to human history, not unrolling a predetermined script. He responds and alters course in pursuit of divine purposes. Recall Gen 6:6 where God regrets that he created man and sends the flood.
- 50) 16:1-13 – David, the 8<sup>th</sup> son of Jesse, is chosen by God despite the undistinguished background of the family: 1) Jesse’s grandmother was Ruth, an immigrant Moabite (Ruth 4:17), 2) Jesse’s grandfather was Boaz, one of whose ancestors was Tamar, who was almost executed as an adulteress (Genesis 38), and 3) Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute in Jericho (Joshua 2). /// *A midrash tells the story of Jesse and his wife Nitzevet. Jesse became convinced that he was not a true Israelite because of Reason One above. Therefore he separated from Nitzevet so as not to have any more degraded children. She wanted at least one more child so one night she traded places with one of Jesse’s Canaanite concubines and became pregnant with David. She never told Jesse or anyone else about the switch, so David was considered illegitimate. He was therefore shunned by the family, the towns-people, and made to tend the sheep. See Psalm 69 for David’s*

*lament, giving some credence to the story.*

- 51) 16:2-5 – Did God participate in a lie? No, Birch says, he is merely instructing Samuel in practicalities that Samuel seems unable to decide for himself in his fearful state.
- 52) 16:14 – “An evil spirit from God.” For the author, this indicates that there is a spiritual dimension to Saul’s condition, an alienation from God. And for the biblical writers *all* things came from God.
- 53) **Chapter 17** – Overview of the entire chapter: Many scholars believe David killed a Philistine warrior and not Goliath. In 2 Sam 21:19 Elhanan killed Goliath. In 1 Chron 20:5 Elhanan kills a cousin of Goliath. A textual problem: the LXX is much shorter (see NIB p. 1109 for missing sections), the major exclusion being 1:12-30. /// Probable sequence of the two stories: 1) 17:1-11, 32-49, 51-54. 2) 17:12-31, 50, 55-58.
- 54) 17:25 “Make his family free in Israel” – probably means that the family of the victor would be freed of some obligation: e.g. taxes or military service.
- 55) 17:31 and 55 – No indication that Saul knows David in 17:31 and 55, even though he had him play the harp, and tried to fit him with armor for his battle with Goliath. No satisfactory solution, but Birch says flatly that the three stories of Saul’s meeting with David have just come together in a collection of David tradition and cannot -- need not -- be reconciled.
- 56) 17:54 – Jerusalem was not an Israelite city until David himself took it (2 Samuel 5:6-9).
- 57) 18:1 – Should be translated “Jonathan’s soul was bound to David’s soul.” The Hebrew for “soul” (*nepés*) indicates the essential life of a person, the whole being of a person. The Hebrew here for “love” (*\_hab*) connotes a personal and emotional commitment with social and political dimensions..
- 58) 19:1 and 20:2 – These contradict each other, either with disregard for the tension created, or the episodes are not in chronological order.
- 59) 19:19 – Sheds – in most translations this is “Naioth” – probably a camp or section within Ramah, not a separate town, and, perhaps, some sheds!
- 60) 20:30 “Jonathan’s shame and mother’s shame.” Many translations read, “...the shame of your mother’s nakedness.” This is a merciless slander of Jonathan’s mother, implying that Jonathan was a shame from the moment of his birth. /// In this passage Saul is so paranoid that he never uses David’s name, referring to him always as the “son of Jesse.”
- 61) 20:35-42 – The parting. In *David* by D. H. Lawrence, Jonathan says, “I would not see thy new day, David. For thy wisdom is the wisdom of the subtle and behind the passion lies prudence. Thy virtue is in thy wit and thy shrewdness. But in Saul, I have the magnanimity of a man.”
- 62) 21:2-10 – Ahimelech (Eli’s great grandson) shows his recognition that David is the future king by giving him the twelve loaves of “holy bread of the presence” baked each Sabbath, asking only that his men be pure. Jesus refers to this incident as a violation of ritual law (Matt 12:3-4, Mark 2:25-26, Luke 6:3-4). But Brueggemann says that both David and Jesus overturn conventional notions of the sacred, moving the notion of “holy” away from the shrine out into the normal affairs of men.
- 63) 21:11-15 --The significance of this strange episode is that Achish recognizes David as king. It also shows David’s cleverness and resourcefulness. But David doesn’t fit the role so is dismissed. To proclaim a crucified criminal as Messiah must have seemed equally mad to the nations in Jesus’ time. (Achish does accept David’s services later in chapter 27.)
- 64) 22:9 – Other translations say “To inquire of the Lord” which is to seek an oracle of guidance.

- 65) 22:18-20 – The LXX reads 305, Josephus 385. Abiathar would be the gr-gr-grandson of Eli and the last of the old line of Shiloh priests. All the priests killed were Elides -- descendants of Eli. This slaughter fulfilled the prophecy of a man of God to Eli in 1 Samuel 2:30-32. /// Birch: “The hard truth of human freedom is that God does not stay the hand of one bent on evil....God does not intervene to prevent the possibilities of evil in the service of power.”
- 66) 23:1 – Keilah (Kee-eye-lah) – in lowlands of Judah, 18 miles south of Jerusalem. 67) 23:15-18 – The last face-to-face meeting of Jonathan and David.
- 68) 23:24 – The Arabah – a major region in Israel, from Mt. Hermon in the north to the Red Sea in the south, including Sea of Galilee, Jordan River valley, Dead, and Maon.
- 69) 25:2-3 – See description of a fool in Isaiah 32:5-8. The word “nabal” appears frequently in wisdom literature as the opposite of “wise.” But it has the connotation of being mean and surly rather than benignly simple. /// The tribe of Caleb was the most influential in Judah, its chief city Hebron. /// Carmel – “Garden of God.”
- 70) 25:22 – Literally, “all those who piss against the wall.”
- 71) 25:28 – “Lasting dynasty” – the first direct reference to the fact that David is to become king over Israel and more.
- 72) 25:32-35 – David recognizes that Abigail has saved him from bloodguilt and vengeance. His claim to the kingdom would have been severely strained. His enthronement at Hebron would have been unlikely if he had murdered a prominent Calebite family (see note # 69).
- 73) 25:43-44 – Ahinoam – almost certainly not the same one who was married to Saul (1 Samuel 14:50); she is probably from an important clan in Judah, not the Jezreel Valley much farther north. Saul’s depriving him of Michal is an effort to deprive David of any legitimate claim on the Saulide line. /// “Palti” means “My deliverance.” (See 2 Samuel 3:15 for “Paltiel.”)
- 74) 26:6 – Abishai – one of the sons of Zerulah, David’s sister (1 Chron 2:16). His two other brothers were Joab and Asahel. Joab becomes David’s military commander. Both were members of “the Thirty” involved in many battles in 2 Samuel.
- 75) 27:8 – The Negeb was held by five different tribes, all south of Palestine.
- 76) 29:8 – David doesn’t name the king he would be loyal to. He may have meant Saul.
- 77) 30:1-6 – First note that in 15:7-8, all the Amalekites except King Agag were killed. Then contrast the Amalekite’s raid with David’s. They spared the women and children. David did not, because he couldn’t allow word to reach Achish that he had gone against the foes of Achish, not of Israel. The Amalekites decision to spare the women and children was a matter of economics, not mercy. /// Note that they traveled 80 miles in three days.
- 78) 30:18-20 – Saul was condemned (Chap. 15) for taking Amalekite spoil. David is celebrated. Things are changing in Israel. The old traditions of holy war promulgated by Samuel have passed.
- 79) 30:21ff – Walter Bruggemann likens David’s decision to Jesus’ parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt 20:1-16). “He also serves who only stands and waits.” John Milton – “On Blindness”.