

I Samuel – An Overview

About 80 years covered, in the lands of Israel, the Philistines, and the Amalekites.

1. Hannah asks for, bears, and weans Samuel, and gives him to the service of God. (chapter 1, or c1)
2. Hannah's praise. The ungodliness of Hophni and Phineas, son of Eli, the high priest and judge. (c2)
3. God speaks to Samuel as a child, and tells of His judgment upon Eli's family. (c3)
4. Israel loses two battles to the Philistines, and loses the ark of the covenant, and Hophni, Phineas, and Eli die. (c4)
5. The Philistines take the ark as a trophy, and God smites them. (c5)
6. The Philistines return the ark with a gift. God smites the Israelites who look into the ark. (c6)
7. Samuel judges Israel, leads to great victory over the Philistines. (c7)
8. Israel cries out for a king. (c8)

8. The anointing and early good reign of king Saul. (c9-12)
9. Saul's disobedience and rejection of God. (c13-15)
10. Samuel anoints David. (c16)
11. David defeats Goliath. (c17)
12. Saul begins to hate David. (c18-20)
13. David flees to Philistia. (c21)
14. David as a fugitive leader. (c22-26)
15. David, pretending to serve the Philistines, camps in Ziklag. (c27)
16. Saul, fearing the Philistines, consults a witch. (c28)
17. David avoids fighting for the Philistines, but returns to Ziklag to find his and his men's families captive. They rescue them. (c29-30)
18. Israel loses the battle to the Philistines, who kill Saul and three of his four sons. (c31)

A Faithful Woman Longs for a Child (chapter 1)

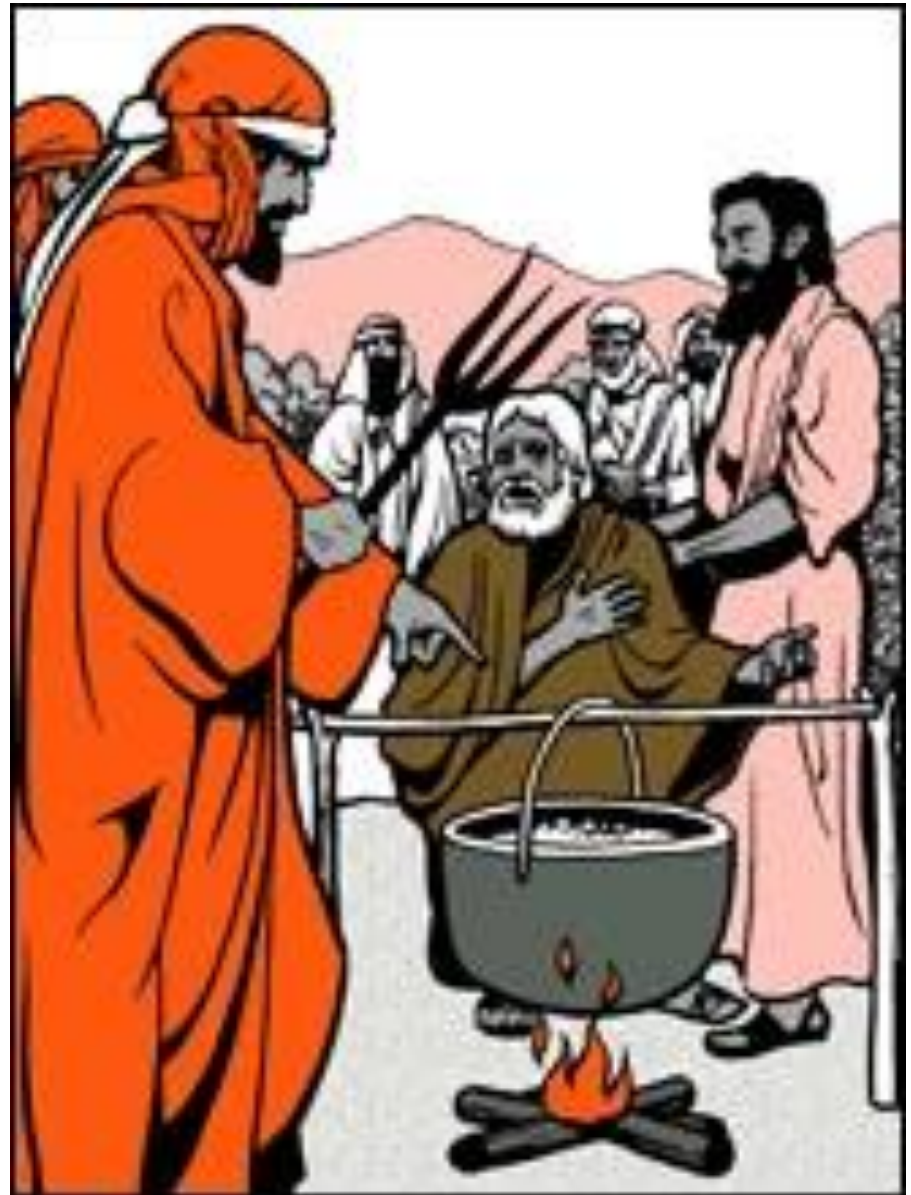
- In the days of the judges of Israel, there was a Levite (see I Chronicles 6:16-28) who dwelt in Mount Ephraim with two wives, Peninnah with children, and barren Hannah.
- Peninnah was mean to Hannah, and when they went to worship at the tabernacle, Hannah prayed for a son, promising to dedicate him to the service of God.



- Hannah moved her lips as she prayed silently, and Eli the high priest and judge of Israel thought she was drunk, and rebuked her, so she told him of her situation.
- Eli then blessed her, and she went home at peace.
- She conceived, and then delivered a little boy named Samuel.
- That coming year, she did not make the regular trip to the tabernacle, but weaned Samuel, and she took sacrifices later to the tabernacle, and there dedicated him to God's service.
- She reminded Eli of her prayer, and her promise.
- Hannah and Elkanah left Samuel with Eli to learn God's service in the tabernacle

Wicked Sons of the Priest (chapters 2-3)

- Hannah prayed in praise to the Lord.
- Eli blessed her for the dedication of Samuel to serve God.
- Hannah later bore 3 sons and 2 daughters, and returned annually to bring Samuel a little coat.
- Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phineas, also priests, who were very wicked.
- They would take for themselves women who gathered before the tabernacle.
- They would threaten people to take the meat they wanted before it was sacrificed properly to the Lord.
- They made people to despise the worship of God at the tabernacle.
- Eli rebuked them, but left them in office.
- God sent a prophet to tell Eli that his house would be judged.
- God then spoke to Samuel as a child, and sent Eli a similar message by Samuel.
- Samuel grew, and was recognized as a prophet.



The Ark of the Covenant Captured (chapter 4)

- The Philistines gathered at Aphek to fight the Israelites, who were at Ebenezer.
- The battle began, and Israel was defeated, losing 4000 people.
- The Israelites decided that the ark of the covenant would save them in battle, so they sent message to bring the ark out of the tabernacle at Shiloh.
- Hophni and Phinehas came with the ark, and the men of Israel shouted in confidence.
- The Philistines heard about the ark, and at first were frightened, but then gathered their courage. They went to battle and won, slaying 30,000 people, with Hophni and Phineas.



- The Philistines also captured the ark.
- When the news reached Eli, especially the news of the ark, he fell backward and broke his neck. He was 90 years old.
- Phineas' wife delivered their son, and named him Ichabod (the glory is departed), and also died.

List of Judges (Judges 3 - I Samuel 7:2)

| Name | Tribe | Enemy | Judge Yrs | Bad Yrs | Comments |
|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Othniel | Judah | Mesopotamia | 40 | 18 | Caleb's son-in-law |
| Ehud | Benjamin | Moab | 80 | 20 | Left-Handed |
| Shamgar | ? | Philistines | ? | ? | Slew 600 men with ox goad |
| Deborah | Ephraim | Hazor | 40 | 7 | w/Gen. Barak; Jael slew Sisera |
| Gideon | Manasseh | Midianites | 40 | 3 | Son Abimelech bad, civil war |
| Tola | Issachar | ? | 23 | ? | Dwelt in Mt. Ephraim |
| Jair | Manasseh | ? | 22 | ? | Had 30 sons |
| Jephthah | Manasseh | Ammonites | 6 | ? | Made bad vow; fought civil war |
| Ibzan | Judah | ? | 7 | ? | 30 sons & daughters-in-law |
| Elon | Zebulun | ? | 10 | ? | Buried in Aijalon |
| Abdon | Ephraim | ? | 8 | 40 | 40 sons and 30 nephews |
| Samson | Dan | Philistines | 20 | ? | A Nazarite from birth |
| Eli | Levi | Philistines | 40 | ? | Written in I Samuel, not Judges |
| Samuel | Levi | Philistines | 20 | ? | Written in I Samuel, not Judges |

God Defends the Ark of the Covenant (chapters 5-6)

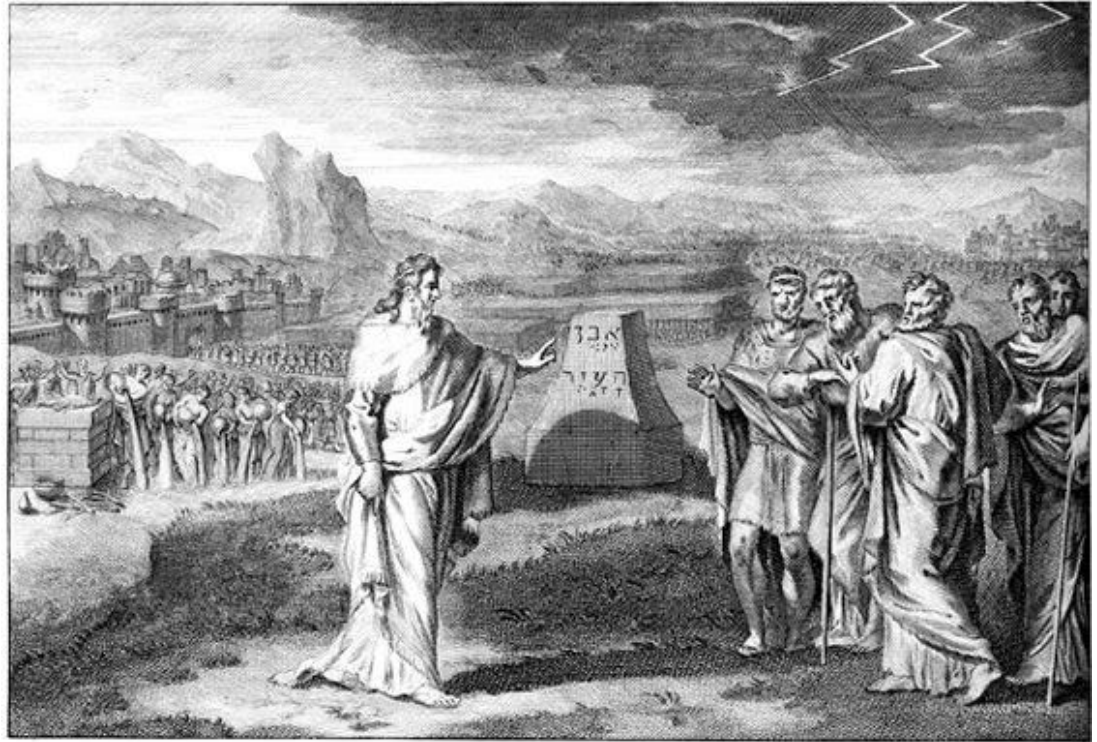
- The Philistines took the ark of the covenant, and put it in the temple of their fish god, Dagon, as a trophy and offering to Dagon.
- The next day, the statue of Dagon had fallen before the ark. They set it up again.
- The day after that, Dagon had fallen again and broke off his head and hands, a stump.
- The five great cities of the Philistines were Ashdod, Askelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza. This temple was at Ashdod, and God smote the people of Ashdod with emerods (hemorrhoids) and mice. When they moved the ark to Gath, they got hemorrhoids and mice. When they wanted to move it to Ekron, the people of Ekron protested.
- The Philistine soothsayers told them to put the ark on a new cart drawn by cows with five golden mice and golden hemorrhoids.



- If the cattle went straight to Bethshemesh of Israel, it was of God. If not, it was chance.
- The cattle went straight.
- The men of Bethshemesh rejoiced and made sacrifice.
- Later, they looked into the ark, and God slew 50,070 people.
- In fear, they sent the ark to Kirjath-jearim. The men of that town took the ark to the house of Abinidab, and sanctified his son to tend to it.

An Israelite Victory (chapter 7)

- Samuel told the Israelites that if they returned to the Lord, they must put away Ashtoreth and all strange gods, and God would deliver them from the Philistines.
- The Israelites did this, and Samuel gathered them together at Mizpeh, where they fasted and confessed.
- The Philistines drew near against the Israelites at Mizpeh, and they feared.
- Samuel told them to cry out to the Lord, and he sacrificed a lamb, and he prayed.
- The Lord greatly thundered upon the Philistines, and they became discouraged.
- The men of Israel pursued the Philistines, and won a great victory in battle that day.
- Samuel then set up a great stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the stone “Ebenezer” which means “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”
- Samuel then judged Israel for the rest of his life, traveling in circuit from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpeh, and he lived in his house in Ramah.



Israel Cries Out for a King (chapters 8-9)



- When Samuel grew old, he made his two sons judges, but they were corrupt.
- The people of Israel asked for a king to (1) make them like other nations, and (2) fight their battles.
- Samuel prayed to God, who said Israel was rejecting God, but that Samuel was to grant their request after he protested against them.
- Samuel protested: a king would take their sons, daughters, fields, seed, servants, and sheep, but they still wanted their king.

- Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, was a very tall and handsome person, and he and a servant were looking for some of his father's lost donkeys.
- After much hard travel, Saul was ready to give up, but his servant suggested they go ask Samuel for counsel, who was in the city nearby, and he had some money to give Samuel.
- They went in to the city, and God had told Samuel he would send him a Benjamite.
- God pointed out Saul to Samuel, and Samuel invited him to eat with him, for a sacrifice was scheduled for that day, and told Saul that the donkeys had been found days ago.
- Samuel told Saul that the desire of Israel was upon him. Saul said he was unworthy.
- Saul had a special portion of the food set aside for Saul, and he asked for the servant to let him and Saul speak privately for a while.

Saul Anointed King (chapters 10-11)

- Samuel anointed Saul with oil, kissed him, and stated that God had chosen him to lead.
- Samuel prophesied that Saul would meet messengers who would tell him of the donkeys, men who would give him bread, and prophets with whom he would prophesy.
- As he turned from Samuel, God gave Saul another heart (I Samuel 10:9).
- Saul kept this to himself, and in seven days, Samuel called a sacrifice and meeting in order to select a king by casting a lot.
- The lot fell upon the tribe of Benjamin, the family of Saul, and then Saul, who was hidden.
- They found Saul, and proclaimed him king, but some wicked men spoke against the choice.
- The Ammonites threatened Jabesh-Gilead of eastern Israel, and would only negotiate with them if they could gouge out the eyes of the elders of Jabesh-Gilead.
- The men of Jabesh-Gilead called out for help, and Saul, blessed by the Spirit of God, got angry and promised help.
- Saul said he would destroy the oxen of Israelites who would not help, and they came forth.
- Saul led the children of Israel, and they won a great victory to free Jabesh-Gilead.
- The Israelites wanted to kill the wicked men who had spoken against Saul, but Saul said that God had given them salvation, and so no man should die.



Saul's Disobedience and Rejection (chapters 12-15)

- Samuel again rebuked the Israelites for asking for a king, and God confirmed his rebuke by signs from heaven, but Samuel told them that God nor he had forsaken them, but that they needed to obey the Lord and his word, or else chastisement would be severe.
- Saul reigned two years and won a small victory over the Philistines, who then raised a huge army against him. Before battle, Saul waited for Samuel to offer sacrifice, and feared.
- Samuel was late, and Saul decided to offer sacrifice himself, which was a grievous sin.
- When Samuel arrived, he said that God would give the kingship to another family.
- The people of Israel were few, scared, and poorly armed.
- Saul's son, Jonathan, was camped elsewhere, and went up with only his armor-bearer to face the Philistines, trusting in God, and God gave him a great victory.
- Saul had proclaimed a fast under penalty of death.
- The Philistines began to run, and Israel rose up to pursue them, even though faint from hunger.
- Jonathan ate a little honey and was strengthened.
- Saul condemned him to death, but the people objected.
- God then commanded Saul to destroy the Amalekites.
- Saul won a victory, but spared the king and livestock.
- Samuel rebuked him for this disobedience to God, and as he turned, Saul grabbed his garment and tore it.
- Samuel stated that God had rejected him as king.
- Saul asked Samuel to go to worship with him, and Samuel agreed, but grieved over Saul's rejection.



David Anointed King the First Time (chapter 16)



- God told Samuel that he had chosen another king from among the sons of Jesse, who lived in Bethlehem.
 - Samuel was hesitant to go anoint him for fear of Saul, but God told him to go and offer sacrifice.
 - Samuel obeyed, and first thought Jesse's eldest son must be the one, because he looked like a king.
 - God said to disregard appearance, for God looks upon the heart.
 - All of Jesse's sons there were not the one, so they called in the youngest, named David, who kept the sheep.
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- God told Samuel that David was the one, so Saul anointed David among his brethren.
 - The Spirit of God came upon David, and left Saul, who was troubled by an evil spirit.
 - Saul's servants recommended to Saul that he call for a skilled musician to soothe him when he was afflicted by the evil spirit.
 - Some of these servants had found out that David was a skillful musician and brave young man, so they brought David to help Saul.
 - When the evil spirit troubled Saul, David would play, and it gave Saul some relief.

David and Goliath (chapter 17)

- The Philistines invaded Israel, and camped at Shochoh and Azekah, about 10 miles west of Bethlehem (David's home) and 5 miles east of Gath (Goliath's home).
- Although both armies were ready, Goliath challenged Israel to send a man to be their champion, so that the battle could be decided by single combat.
- No Israelite wanted to face the giant Goliath, and the challenge was repeated over and over, and each day the Philistines advanced.
- David's three oldest brothers were at the battle at Shochoh, and Jesse, their dad, sent David to take them some food and to see how they were. David got to them, and heard Goliath's challenge. He asked why a Philistine should be able to defy God's army.
- David's brothers were annoyed, but his questions made it to King Saul, who sent for him.
- David volunteered to fight Goliath. Saul said he was not able to fight, but when David told him how God had protected him against a lion and bear, Saul let him go to face the giant.



- Saul offered David his armor, but David refused for it was untested, so David took his sling and 5 smooth stones.
- David drew near to meet Goliath, who cursed him by his gods.
- David said the true God would give him victory, and slung a stone into Goliath's head, who fell down dead.
- David cut off Goliath's head, and the Philistines fled. The Israelites rose up, and pursued in triumph.

Saul's Growing Jealousy (chapters 18-19)

- After the defeat of Goliath, Saul's son Jonathan and David became friends. Saul drafted David into his army, so he could not go back home. David became a wise officer.
- Women singing "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David hath slain his ten thousands," made Saul feel jealousy and fear for his throne.
- One day, as David was playing his harp to ease Saul's trouble, Saul threw a javelin at him, so David avoided Saul. Saul deployed him to the field as a captain over a thousand.
- David was popular, and Saul promised David his older daughter Merab as a wife, but then gave her to another man.
- Saul's younger daughter, Michal, loved David, so David promised her to him if he would bring evidence that he had slain 100 Philistines.
- David brought evidence that he had slain 200 Philistines, so Michal married David.
- David became more popular, and so Saul commanded his servants to kill him.
- Jonathan spoke in defense, and Saul relented.
- Saul again threw a javelin at David, and David escaped home, so Saul sent assassins.
- Michal let David out a window, and he escaped to Samuel's house.
- Saul sent assassins to Samuel's and then went himself, but God protected David by causing the assassins and Saul to fall down and prophesy.



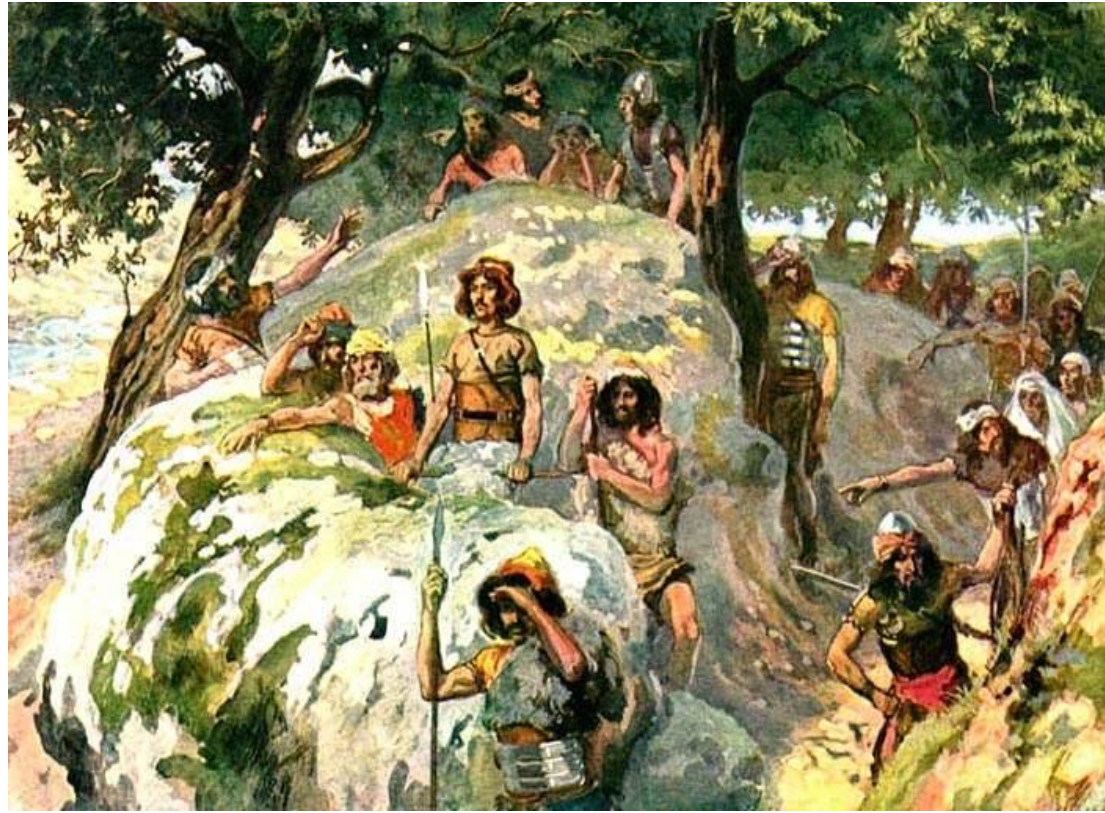
David Becomes a Fugitive (chapters 20-21)



- David got to Jonathan, and told him that Saul was trying to kill him.
 - Jonathan had a hard time accepting that, and told David to hide while he told Saul that David missed the next feast to go visit his family.
 - They agreed on a shot arrow sign whether David should stay or run.
 - When Jonathan reported David's absence to his father, Saul blew up in anger and threw a javelin at Jonathan.
 - Jonathan went to the field where David was hiding, and gave the arrow sign to run. When the lad who gathered the arrows departed, he and David said their farewell, with a covenant to treat Jonathan's kids well.
 - David went by the tabernacle as he fled.
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- David asked Ahimelech, the high priest, for some food and a weapon.
 - Ahimelech gave David the old shewbread, and the sword of Goliath stored there.
 - David escaped into the area of Gath, in the land of the Philistines.
 - The Philistines identified David as the slayer of Goliath, so he was afraid.
 - David pretended to be mentally ill, and scratched upon doors and let his spit run down into his beard.
 - The Philistine king did not want a madman around near him, so they drove David out of the Philistine territory .

David Leads the Outcasts (chapters 22-23)

- David came back into the land of Israel, into the cave Adullam.
- The men of his father's family, and men who were distressed, in debt, and discontented came to him.
- David took his mom and dad to the land of Moab for safety.
- The prophet Gad warned David to flee into the land of Judah, so he did.
- Saul heard David was in Israel, and went on the chase.
- He came to the tabernacle, where Doeg the Edomite herdsman told him that the high priest had fed David and given him help.
- Saul commanded Doeg, and he killed 85 priests that day.
- Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, escaped and ran to David, who asked him to join them.
- David and his men came to the town of Keilah, which was oppressed by the Philistines.
- They delivered the city to freedom, but God showed David that they would betray him to Saul, so he and his men left before Saul could capture them.
- They hid in the woods of Ziph, where Jonathan came to visit David.
- The people of Ziph informed Saul of David and Saul came and almost caught David.
- Just in time, the Philistines invaded, so Saul went to face them. David escaped to Engedi.



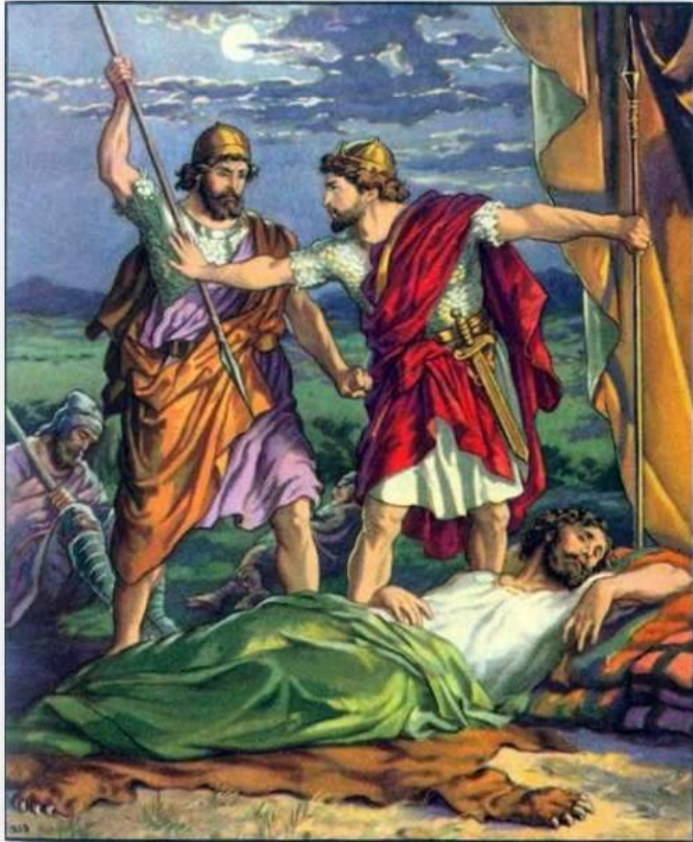
David Shows Mercy (chapters 24-25)

- Saul heard that David was hiding in Engedi, and resumed his search for David.
- David and his men hid in a cave, and Saul decided to go to the bathroom in that very cave.
- David's men encouraged him to kill Saul, but David would not kill "the Lord's anointed".
- Unknown to Saul, David cut a piece from Saul's robe, and followed Saul out of the cave.
- David showed Saul the piece of robe, and stated that he had spared Saul, and that he was not Saul's enemy.
- Saul admitted that David had showed him mercy, and asked for a promise that David would not cut off his family, and broke off chasing David for a while.
- The prophet Samuel died, and Israel mourned, and David moved to the area of Carmel.
- His men camped and protected the flocks of Nabal, a rich man who lived in the area.



- At shearing time, David sent men to ask Nabal to help them with food.
- Nabal not only refused, but grievously insulted David and his men.
- David's men rode to attack Nabal's house.
- Nabal's servants told his wife, Abigail, what had happened.
- Abigail gathered provisions, and stood in the way to appeal to David for mercy.
- David showed mercy.
- After Abigail told Nabal what had happened, he died.
- David sent to Abigail, and married her.

David and his Men Flee to Philistia (chapters 26-27)



- Once again, the men of Ziph told Saul where David was encamped, and Saul decided to take David.
- David's spies detected the forces of Saul coming.
- One night, David asked, and his nephew Abishai volunteered to sneak into Saul camp with David.
- The Lord put the men of Saul into a deep sleep, so David and Abishai came to where Saul slept.
- Abishai asked to kill Saul, but David held him back, and took Saul's spear and water bottle, and escaped.
- When they were at a safe distance, David shouted to wake up Saul's men, and criticized Abner, Saul's general, for not keeping a better guard around Saul.
- Saul knew David's voice, and said he would stop chasing David. He sent a man to get his spear and water bottle back.
- David did not trust Saul, and led his men to Gath.
- Achish, the king of the Philistine city of Gath, appointed the southern town of Ziklag for David and his men to dwell and to use for a headquarters.
- David's reported attacks against the south of Judah. Achish thought that David was attacking the people of Judah, but he actually was attacking Judah's enemies to the south.
- Achish believed that David would serve him forever, even in battle against Israel, and be outcast from his own people, but David and his men were helping to defend Israel.

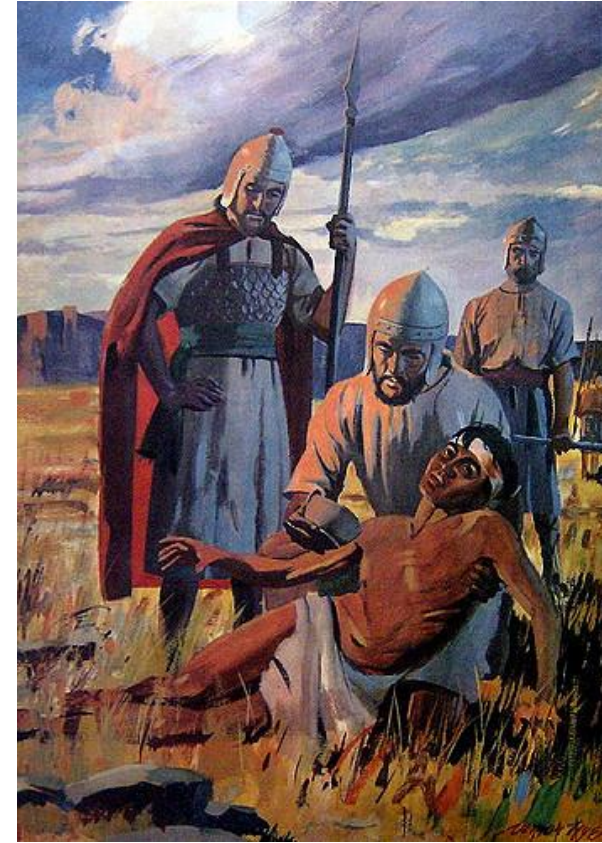
Saul Turns to Witchcraft (chapter 28)

- The Philistines gathered their forces for a major attack upon the Israelites.
- Saul was afraid, but received no answers from the Lord, not by dreams, or casting lot, or prophets. He had made witches and wizards illegal at an earlier time, but sought one now.
- In the town of Endor, Saul found a woman with a familiar spirit, and appealed to her.
- He disguised himself, pledged the woman's security, and asked her to bring up Samuel.
- She began, then cried out, for the matter seemed to be out of her control, and she was showed that her customer was king Saul, and Samuel appeared in the form of an old man.
- Saul told Samuel that he was afraid of the Philistines, and the Lord would not answer, and he wanted advice.
- Samuel told Saul that the Lord had become his enemy, and given the kingdom to David.
- Samuel said that Israel would lose the battle, and that Saul and his sons would be dead and with him tomorrow.
- Saul fell on the ground from hunger and distress.
- Saul's servants and the witch persuaded him to eat something, and he did.
- The Saul and his servants departed from the witch.



David Avoids Mutiny(chapters 29-30)

- David and his 600 men assembled with the Philistine armies before the attack on the armies of Israel.
- Achish was for David helping, but the kings of the other Philistine cities voted against it, because they thought David would turn on them in battle to gain popularity in Israel.
- So, David and his men returned to Ziklag, and found that Amalekites had burned the town and taken their families.
- David's men were mad, and spoke of stoning David.
- David prayed; the Lord told him to pursue the Amalekites.
- In the pursuit, 200 of the men grew faint, and he told them to guard their supplies while the rest gave chase.
- They found a young man who was a servant to the Amalekites, who had been left to die because he was sick.
- David's men gave him water and food, and promised his safety if he would guide them.
- The servant brought them to the partying Amalekite camp, and David's men attacked.
- They recovered their families completely, and much spoil also, and they destroyed the Amalekites except for some who escaped on camels.
- When they returned, some of David's men did not want to share any spoil with the 200 men who guarded the supplies, but David ruled against that, and gave them a share.
- Of some of the remaining share, David sent gifts to the elders of many towns in Israel.



Saul's Death (chapter 31)

- The Israelites met the Philistines, and fled, and many of them died in battle.
- The Philistines chased after Saul, and killed Jonathan and two more of his sons, and hit Saul with arrows.
- Saul asked his armor-bearer to kill so that the Philistines would not torture him.
- The armor-bearer was afraid to do that, so Saul fell upon his own sword and died. The his armor-bearer also committed suicide.



- The rest of the army of Israel gave up and left, and the Philistines occupied much of Israelite land.
- The Philistines took the body of Saul and stripped it, cut off his head, and nailed his body and his sons' bodies to the wall of the town of Beth-shan, and celebrated with their idols and people.
- Valiant men from Jabesh Gilead, which Saul had defended as a young king, broke through and stole the bodies from the walls, and gave them a decent burial, and fasted for a week.