uel, for example, had been a more than adequate channel for God's victory in war against the Philistines (chap. 7), implicitly obviating the need for a king. Samuel, too, had warned of the social inequities and self-aggrandizement that would come with kingship, and had twice criticized kingship as a rejection of Yahweh as king and savior (8:7; 10:19). These negative opinions, however, even in these pericopes (7:2–17; 8:1–22; 10:18b–19) are balanced by Yahweh's command to make a king in chap. 8:7, 22 and by the fact that these pericopes are interspersed with the positive ones discussed in the previous paragraph.

Chap. 12, then, draws a balance at the conclusion of this critical period. Samuel and Yahweh are shown to be innocent in two legal processes (vv 1–5; 6–15) and the request for kingship is categorized as a failure to look to Yahweh for help in time of need. Yet kingship is also a gift of Yahweh, as had been stressed in almost every pericope from chaps. 8 to 11. Life under an earthly king could have been blessed if Israel's conduct had been obedient and non-rebellious (v 14), or life under a king could have been cursed if the people had disobeyed and rebelled. The righteousness of Yahweh could adjust itself to the new condition of monarchy.

Yahweh's sending of a rainstorm during the dry season underscored the authority of Samuel and brought the people to explicit confession of their sin. But the innocent and newly authenticated Samuel kept the door into the future open for Israel, a future in which he—and the other prophets for whom he stands—would pray for the people and teach them the way in which they should live. By sending prophets like Samuel to pray and teach, Yahweh would again show his righteousness, just as he had by delivering Israel from every danger.

Kingship itself was not impossible under God's rule, however much the reasons that led Israel to opt for it were questionable. The rest of 1 Samuel is largely devoted to showing that Saul had to be rejected finally by Yahweh, although he once was under Yahweh's blessing even as king. Saul's rejection in this deuteronomistic interpretation did not lead to the rejection of kingship, but to the choice of David as Saul's replacement, to the positive words of the oracle of Nathan, and to the great effect on Israel's history those words of promise had (cf. *Israel in Exile* 30, 39–41).

Yet despite that promise and despite the prayers and teachings of the prophets, Israel and its king would be swept away if they disobeyed. In the context of the entire Dtr, that threat had become reality in 721 and 587. Even in that judgment, Yahweh had not displayed his weakness, his infidelity or his caprice. No, even those events were harmonizable with Yahweh's fidelity to his relationship with this people, that is, with the righteousness of Yahweh.

No Dynasty for Saul (13:1–23)

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Translation

1 *Saul was . . .* [a] *years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years* [b] *over Israel.*

2 *Saul picked for himself three thousand men* [a] *of Israel. Two thousand were with him in Michmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the troops he sent to their tents.*

3 *After Jonathan had attacked the garrison (or prefect) of the Philistines at Gibeah,* [a] *the Philistines heard* [b] [about it], *and Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land with this message: "Let the Hebrews pay attention."* [b] 4 *All Israel heard that Saul had attacked the garrison (or prefect) of the Philistines and that Israel had become odious to the Philistines. So the troops were called out to arms behind Saul at Gilgal.* 5 *Meanwhile, the Philistines gathered to fight with Israel,* [a] *coming up against them* [a] *with three* [b] *thousand chariots and six thousand charioteers, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore.* 6 *They came and encamped at Michmash, east of Beth-aven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in distress,* [a] *for the troops were hard pressed,* [a] *they hid in caves, in briar patches,* [b] *in rocks, in tombs, and in cisterns.* 7a *The Hebrews crossed over the Jordan* [a] *to the land of Gad and Gilead.*

8 *Saul was still in Gilgal, and all the troops following him were fearful. He waited seven days for the date which Samuel had set,* [a] *but Samuel did not come to Gilgal and the troops were scattering from him.* 9 *Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering and peace offerings"; and he carried out the burnt offering.* 10 *Just when he completed the burnt offering, Samuel showed up, and Saul went out to meet and greet him.* 11 *Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul replied, "I noticed that the troops were scattering from me, and you had not arrived within the agreed upon days and the Philistines were assembling to Michmash.* 12 *Now, I thought, the Philistines will come down to me at Gilgal, but I have not appeased Yahweh. So I forced myself and carried out the burnt offering."* 13 *Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly! If you had* [a] *kept the commandment of Yahweh your God, which he gave you, Yahweh would now have established your kingdom over Israel forever.* 14 *But now your kingdom will not endure. Yahweh has sought out for himself a man after his own heart and*

commissioned him to be prince over his people since you have not kept what Yahweh commanded." [15] *Samuel rose and went up from Gilgal* [a] *to go on his own way, but the rest of the troops went up after Saul to meet the men of war. They came from Gilgal* [a] *to Gibeah of Benjamin.*

Saul counted the troops who were present with him—about 600 men. [16] *Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people who were with them were staying at Geba of Benjamin, while the Philistines were encamped at Michmash.* [17] *The raiding parties set out for Michmash in three groups. One group turned toward Ophrah in the land of Shual.* [18] *A second group took a road toward Beth-horon, and a third went toward the hill which overlooks the Valley of the Hyenas.* [a]

[19] *There was no blacksmith in all the land of Israel for the Philistines said, "We must beware* [a] *lest the Hebrews make a sword or bow."* [20] *All Israel would* [a] *go down to* [b] *the Philistines so they could sharpen their plowshares, their mattocks, their axes, and their sickles.* [c] [21] *The price was a pim for the plows and the mattocks,* [a] *and a third of a shekel for sharpening the axes* [a] *and for setting the goads.* [22] *Whenever there were battles,* [a] *no sword or spear was found with any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son did have them.*

[23] *The Philistine garrison, meanwhile, marched out to the pass of Michmash.*

Notes

1.a. The number has dropped out. A few LXX mss, have "thirty," though this seems to be a secondary calculation (cf. 2 Sam 5:4). Since Jonathan was old enough to have 1,000 troops under his command in v 2, and since Saul had a grandson before his death (2 Sam 4:4), an age of forty or more is plausible. The whole verse is lacking in most LXX mss.

1.b. Josephus (*Ant.* 6,387; but in 10.143 he has twenty) and Acts 13:21 read forty, and modern commentators have suggested a wide range of numbers. The difficulties with the number two involve its peculiar spelling (see Driver) and whether it allows enough time for the various events that are reported about Saul in the Bible to take place. Noth argues that the number two was appropriate both for the deuteronomistic historian's chronology and for the historical circumstances. See *History of Israel,* 176–78.

2.a. Insert איש with LXX Syr.

3.a. So LXX Targ; cf. 10:5 where the Philistines are said to have a garrison at Gibeah. MT: "Geba." The words differ only by one letter in Hebrew and were frequently confused. Miller (*VT* 25 [1975] 145–66; see Bibliography at 9:1–10:16) argues that Geba, Geba of Benjamin, Gibeath, Gibeah of Benjamin, Gibeah of Saul, and probably Gibeath-elohim all refer to the same place: Geba.

3.b.-b. Some emend by conjecture and read: "this report, 'The Hebrews have revolted.' And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land." The principal reason for this emendation is the use of the word "Hebrews" by Saul in MT. "Hebrews" is normally used only by foreigners about Israel. Gottwald, *Tribes of Yahweh,* has recently proposed a satisfactory way to understand MT. See *Comment.*

5.a.-a. LXX; The words were lost in MT by homoioteleuton.

5.b. LXX^{L} Syr; MT LXX: "thirty."

6.a.-a. Many believe this to be a variant of the preceding three words in Hebrew ("that . . . distress"). If so, MT is conflate.

6.b. Often emended to ובחורים (in holes). Cf. 14:11.

7.a.-a. Some emend to remove the word "Hebrews" from the narrator's account: "They crossed over the fords of the Jordan." Again Gottwald's study clarifies MT: See *Comment* and cf. 3.b.

8.a. Four Hebrew mss. LXX Targ add אמר; other Hebrew mss. add שם. The loss of the latter from MT is explainable by homoioarchton.

13.a. Read לו "if" for לא "not." Perhaps, however, the protasis is only implied in MT: "You have not kept . . . you. [If you had kept it], Yahweh would now have established, etc." Such a condition may also be implied at the beginning of v 14: "But now [since you did not keep it] your kingdom, etc." See *PAIR,* Vol. 2, p. 173; *GKC* 159dd.

15.a.-a. The additional words, contained in LXX OL, are necessary to get Saul from Gilgal to Gibeah. They were lost from the Hebrew text when a scribe's eyes skipped from the first Gilgal to the second (homoioteleuton).

18.a. MT adds: "toward the wilderness."

19.a. For this construction see *GKC* 152w.

20.a. We point the verb as a perfect with waw consecutive and understand it as a frequentative.

20.b. Insert אל; cf. LXX.

20.c. חרמשו; cf. LXX; MT; מחרשתו "plowshares."

21.a.-a. ושלש שקל לשון הקרמים. Cf. NAB, Bewer. MT and LXX seem to have suffered somewhat different haplographies.

22.a. Vocalize the noun as a fem. pl.; MT: construct fem.sg.

Form/Structure/Setting

Chaps. 13 and 14 deal with Saul's and Jonathan's victorious conflict with the Philistines. They are set off from the deuteronomistic summary on the rise of kingship in chap. 12 by the regnal formula in 13:1, and from the conflict with the Amalekites in chap. 15 by the summary and genealogical verses in 14:47–51 (52). It is merely a matter of convenience that chaps. 13 and 14 will be discussed in this commentary as separate units.

Summary. After the (incomplete) regnal formula (v 1), we learn of the size of Saul's (standing) army stationed near Michmash and Gibeah (v 2). Jonathan and/or Saul attacked the Philistine garrison (or prefect) leading to a Philistine countermove and Saul's mustering of the rest of the troops. Fear caused Saul's followers to hide or flee (vv 3–7a). When Samuel was late for his rendezvous with Saul in Gilgal (cf. 10:8), Saul offered a sacrifice himself. His attempt at justification, however, did not satisfy Samuel, and he informed Saul that his kingdom would not endure. In fact, Yahweh had already commissioned a man in accord with his own heart. Samuel and Saul departed Gilgal, each in his own direction (vv 7b–15a). Upon arrival at Geba, Saul found he had only 600 troops. Philistine raiding parties fanned out from Michmash in three directions (vv 15b–18). Control of iron-working belonged exclusively to the Philistines in those days, and the Israelites had to turn to them for the manufacture and repair of agricultural instruments, presumably at considerable expense. Only Saul and Jonathan among the Israelites had (iron?) swords or spears (vv 19–22). A Philistine advance from Michmash set the stage for the ensuing battle (v 23).

Both Saul and Jonathan are credited in this chapter with an attack against the Philistine garrison (or prefect; vv 3 and 4). Considerable confusion also arises because of the inconsistent references to Gibeah and Geba in these chapters, and because of the strange and unsuccessful trip by Saul to Gilgal. Some clarity of understanding is achieved by identifying the following three traditions: a) An account of Saul's rejection in vv 7b–15a, which interrupts the battle account. This incident is parallel, at least in part, to a similar scene in chap. 15. Both involve Saul and Samuel, both take place at Gilgal, and both seem to involve violations of sacral traditions dealing with holy war. The insertion of this unit is prepared for by the reference to Gilgal in v 4. Chronology also indicates that this unit is secondary. According to 10:8, the

young man Saul was to go to Gilgal and wait seven days. But the battles in chaps. 13–14 seem to be conducted by a mature Saul, with a fully grown son, years instead of days after 10:8. The other traditions are: b) an account of Saul's attack against the garrison (or prefect) of the Philistines, in which he led Israel to victory by taking advantage of the confusion in the enemy's ranks (roughly: 13:4–7a, 16–18; 14:20–23, 31–35), and c) an account of Jonathan's defeat of the Philistine garrison (מצב) at Michmash (roughly: 13:23; 14:1, 4–19, 24–30, 36–45). These originally independent traditions (Stoebe) or parallel versions of a single tradition (Miller, *CBQ* 36 [1974] 157–74. See Bibliography at 9:1–10:16) have been connected by such redactional verses as 13:3; 14:2–3, 15b. Both traditions involve an attack upon a garrison (נציב or מצב); both heroes are accompanied by a servant or armor-bearer; both are performed near Gibeah/Geba. Stoebe associates the Saul tradition with Gibeah and the Jonathan tradition with Geba, attributing the inconsistent usage of these names in the two chapters to the composite nature of the narrative complex. No doubt text-critical factors contribute to the inconsistent usage (cf. LXX and the Notes). Miller goes beyond Stoebe in identifying both Gibeah and Geba with the modern Jebaʿ and by arguing that the heroic deed originally attributed to the young Saul was later assigned to Jonathan by storytellers in Judean circles. He also proposes, plausibly but conjecturally, that the Saul account (b above) is a continuation of the young Saul's search for his father's donkeys.

The remaining verses are to be understood as follows. 13:1 is the regnal formula for Saul, resembling those used in the books of Kings (e.g. 1 Kgs 14:21; 22:42) and is to be assigned to the deuteronomistic historian, or to an imitator of him if the verse's absence from LXX indicates its late origin. According to v 2, Saul established a standing army on one occasion when he was dismissing the mustered troops, only to call up the general muster again in the following verses. This establishment of a standing army may, however, record the outcome of the battle (cf. 14:52 and Miller) despite its present position. V 3 serves in part to harmonize traditions b and c, although it may contain quite old material. Vv 19–22, reporting the Philistine monopoly on metal working form a kind of excursus in the battle accounts.

Birch has underscored the annalistic style of 13:2–7a, 15b–18, 23, noting their concrete detail, lack of dialogue, and compact style. In vv 8–14 he finds a prophetic oracle of judgment against an individual (introduction, vv 8–10; accusation, vv 11–13a; announcement of punishment, vv 13b–14 [The announcement lacks the introductory messenger formula since it is imbedded in a narrative. See Westermann, 149]). It seems unlikely, however, that his typological arguments succeed in assigning this unit to a date in the late eighth century B.C. Pointing to expressions such as "a man after his own heart" and the connection of the dynastic promise to the keeping of Yahweh's commands, Veijola, (*Ewige Dynastie,* 55–57) has built a strong case for assigning the present form of vv 7b–15a to a deuteronomistic redaction (DtrN).

Comment

(V 1) Because of a textual gap, Saul's age at his succession is unknown. The objections to a reign of two years for him, as reported in MT, are not textual, but historical. Yet the unusually low figure, which *does* fit Dtr's chronological scheme (see Noth, *History of Israel,* 176–177) is not likely to have been invented just to fit a chronological scheme. The interpreter must decide if the historical events transmitted in 1 Sam 13–31 are conceivable in a two-year period. Noth (*History of Israel,* 176–7) and A. D. H. Mayes (*Israelite and Judaean History,* 329) say yes; Otto Eissfeldt (*Cambridge Ancient History* 575) says no. Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty when he became king and is likewise said to have ruled two years (2 Sam 2:10). The "Israel" over which Saul and Ishbosheth reigned may not have included Judah (cf. 2 Sam 2:4, where the men of Judah anoint David king only over the house of Judah; in 2 Sam 5:3 he is anointed king over Israel).

(V 2) Saul's selection of 3,000 men to serve with himself and Jonathan seems more like the creation of a standing body of retainers (as in 14:52) than a reference to the volunteers summoned for holy war. According to vv 3–4 Saul summoned the whole Israelite militia; in v 6 the troops are said to hide and flee; in v 15 their number reaches 600. Are we to suppose that Saul started with 3,000 in v 2, increased their number greatly by a general call to arms in vv 3–4, and then lost so many that he was left with only 20 percent of his original number of men (v 15)? The composite character of the whole account urges caution, but Miller's suggestion that v 2 represents conditions *after* the battle(s) of chaps. 13–14 merits consideration. Saul led the troops at Michmash (modern Mukhmâs; MR176142), a site about 4.5 miles northeast of Gibeah. Situated on the north side of the Wadi eṣ-Ṣuwēnīt, Michmash is about 1,980 feet above sea level (Driver). Bethel (cf. 7:16) is 4.5 miles northwest of Michmash and rises to a height of 2,890 feet (Driver). This relatively high elevation explains the reference to the "hill country" of Bethel. One thousand soldiers were assigned to Jonathan, who is mentioned here for the first time and, strangely, with no indication of the fact that he is Saul's son (though such a notice is added in Syr). Jonathan and his troops were at Gibeah of Benjamin, usually identified with Tell el-Fûl, just north of Jerusalem (cf. 10:5). Some (cf. *BHK,* Smith, Hertzberg) would locate him at Geba, a town about three miles away from Gibeah. Miller thinks that Gibeah is always an alternate spelling for Geba. Because the words Gibeah and Geba differ by only one letter in Hebrew, and because the sites are so close geographically, the extant records are often confused and contradictory. For the average reader, of course, very little is at stake.

(Vv 3–7a) MT assigns the defeat of the Philistine garrison (or prefect) to both Jonathan (v 3) *and* to Saul (v 4). This may be a sign of the composite character of chaps. 13 and 14, or the reference to Saul in v 4 may only mean that Jonathan's victories were naturally credited to the government led by his father, the king. For the discussion on whether garrison or prefect is the better translation for נציב, see 10:5. After the Philistines heard of their garrison's (or prefect's) defeat, Saul summoned the Israelite militia by sounding the ram's horn (cf. Judg 3:27; 6:34–35; 2 Sam 20:1; cf. von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg,* 6) and called for the Hebrews to pay attention. It is frequently objected that an Israelite would not call his fellow Israelites by the disparaging name "Hebrews." Consequently, the last three words in MT are often shifted to an earlier point in the sentence and the verb ישמעו "they heard" is emended to פשעו "they sinned" (cf. 3.b.). But Gottwald suggests that in asking the Hebrews to listen or pay attention Saul is appealing to a "third force" or

apiru warriors, who have been serving the Philistines, but are now invited to come over to the Israelite side (*Tribes of Yahweh* 423; cf. below on v 7 and on 14:21). The apiru/Hebrews, sociologically understood, were an outlaw category with a military subspecialization.

The attack on the Philistine garrison meant that Israel had become odious to the Philistines (2 Sam 10:6; 16:21; cf. 1 Sam 27:12), and so the people heeded Saul's summons and rallied behind him (cf. Judg 6:34) to Gilgal (cf. 10:8; 11:14). Even in its emended form, v 5 records an exceedingly large Philistine force of 3,000 chariots—Sisera had only 900 chariots (Judg 4:3)! The terrain in the vicinity of Michmash is not suitable for large chariot forces in any case. Six thousand charioteers (not horsemen) would be enough for a two-man crew for each chariot. Such two-man chariots are known from Egypt (*ANET*, 172, 183–184) although Yadin has shown that the Philistines had three-man chariots (*Art of Warfare* 250, 336), as did the Hittites. The overwhelming odds against Israel are indicated by the "troops as numerous as sand" (cf. Josh 11:4; Judg 7:12; 2 Sam 17:11). The Philistines occupied Michmash, where Saul had been stationed (v 2), unless the latter information indicates conditions after the battle (see *Form/Structure/Setting*). The exact location of Beth-aven (cf. 14:23) is unknown. Albright suggested *burqa* south of Bethel (cf. Stoebe); others have proposed Tell Maryam (*MBA* number 88, 89), or even Ai (*IDB* I, 388–389). In Hosea the name is a pejorative designation for Bethel (4:15; 5:8; 10:5; cf. Amos 5:5).

In distress (Judg 2:15; 10:9; 11:7), since they were under pressure from the enemy, the Israelite troops fled and/or hid in every conceivable hiding place (cf. 14:11). The word translated "tombs" denotes the narrow excavation for a body at the bottom of a grave in Arabic, though perhaps it is a less specific reference here to some kind of underground cavity (Driver). In Judg 9:46, 49 it refers to the cellar of a building. V 7a is often emended (cf. 7.a.), but Gottwald proposes that the "Hebrews" of this verse may refer to Israelites who normally give themselves into apiru/mercenary service to the Philistines, but in this campaign fought with Saul (*Tribes of Yahweh* 424). In any case, they fled to Gad (Josh 13:24–28) and Gilead (cf. 11:1) in Trans-Jordan, frightened like all the rest.

(Vv 7b–15a) According to 10:8, Saul was to wait in Gilgal seven days until Samuel would come to sacrifice and to give him further instructions. When Samuel missed his deadline and the people were abandoning him, Saul gave orders that the animals for the burnt offerings and peace offerings (cf. 6:14; 10:8) be brought, and he carried out the burnt offerings. Just then—does this mean before he had time to carry out the peace offerings or were peace offerings part of the burnt offerings (Birch, 126, n. 156)?—Samuel arrived and Saul went out to greet (literally bless; cf. 2 Kgs 4:29; 10:15) him. In response to Samuel's question, Saul tried to shift the blame for his actions onto Samuel. Not only were the troops scattering and the Philistines gathering, but Samuel—*you* (this use of the pronoun is emphatic)—had not come in the appointed time. Saul's defense seems perfectly pious, at least on the surface. With an enemy approaching, he realized he had not interceded with God, or as a literal translation would have it, he had not yet "put God in a gentle mood" by sacrificing to him (Exod 32:11; 1 Kgs 13:6; and Ps 45:13 [EVV. 12]). So, reluctantly ("I forced myself"), he had offered the sacrifice. Samuel brands this action as foolish (cf. 2 Sam 24:10), but the reader is

hardly prepared for the harshness of Samuel's retort, nor does the accusation itself in v 13 clarify the situation since no commandment of Yahweh to Saul had previously been mentioned. Sacrifices were normally offered before a holy war (1 Sam 7:9), and God's permission was frequently sought (cf. Judg 20:23, 27; 1 Sam 7:9; 14:8–10; 14:37; 23:2, 4, 9–12; 28:6; 30:7–8; 2 Sam 5:19, 23). G. Ernest Wright saw in vv 7b–15a a violation of the "Samuel compromise." Samuel's initial opposition to kingship had been tempered by a new system in which the charismatic savior's (or judge's) responsibilities were assigned to the king (in leading the troops) and to the prophet (who had to communicate to the king Yahweh's authorization for war). According to such an understanding of the relationship between king and prophet in the early monarchy, Saul was violating the principles of holy war (cf. 15:10–31), and Samuel's outrage is easily understood. The offense does not seem to be that the king merely usurped priestly sacrificial rights since his altar building and sacrifices are favorably noted in the next chapter (14:31–35). Saul's punishment consisted of a rejection of his dynastic succession. Had he obeyed, an eternal dynasty would have been possible for him as it was for David (cf. 2 Sam 7:16, and the conditions imposed on this promise in 1 Kgs 2:3–4; 8:25; 9:4–5; cf. 11:38). Only in 1 Sam 15:28 do we hear of the rejection of Saul's kingship itself. The man after Yahweh's heart (v 14; cf. Jer 3:15 and 2 Sam 7:21) is clearly David even if his anointing is recorded only three chapters later. That David will be the prince (נָגִיד; cf. 1 Sam 25:30; 2 Sam 6:21) to succeed Saul is mentioned in v 14 for the first time though David's coming kingship becomes a major motif in the second half of 1 Samuel as one person after another recognizes it (cf. *Israel in Exile* 29), including Samuel in 16:1 and 28:17. Samuel's appearance in chaps. 13–14 is limited to vv 7b–15a. After Samuel's departure, Saul and his troops move back to Gibeah of Benjamin, and the battle account, interrupted by the Gilgal rejection scene, continues.

(Vv 15b–18) Saul's troops now number 600 (cf. 14:2; contrast 13:2 and our discussion above); both Saul and Jonathan are now placed at Geba of Benjamin. Since this is just on the other side of the Wadi eṣ-Ṣuwēnīt from Michmash, where the Philistines are encamped, the geography in this verse is not in question. The Philistine demolition, or raiding, detachments (cf. Deut 20:19; Judg 6:4, where the verb is used of destroying produce or fruit trees in war), moved out in three directions from Michmash. The first took the road to Ophrah, a site four miles northeast of Bethel, usually identified with eṭ-Ṭaiyibeh (MR178151; *MBA* Maps 2, 10, 88). The location of the land of Shual is unknown (but see 1 Sam 9:4). The second contingent headed west on the road to Beth-horon, that is, Upper Beth-horon, to be identified with Beit 'Ûr el-Fôqa (MR160143; about ten miles west of Michmash, *MBA* Maps 10, 88). The third party set off toward the wilderness in the east. The hill (or MT: border) road overlooked the valley of the Hyenas. Some identify this valley with the Wadi Farah (so Driver); others prefer the Wadi el qalābis (Stoebe); still others the Wadi Abū Ḍabā' (McCarter).

(Vv 19–22) This section provides an interesting insight into the source of Philistine power even if textual problems cause a certain lack of precision in vv 20–21. The Philistines permitted no ironsmiths among the Israelites (here called by the pejorative term Hebrews; see Gottwald, *Tribes of Yahweh*

419) lest they use their skill for making weapons. This had the additional consequence that Israel was dependent upon the Philistines for repairing their agricultural tools (Ps 7:13; cf. Gen 4:22). For a discussion of the difficulties of working iron, with bibliography, see Gottwald, *Tribes of Yahweh* 761, n. 335. A number of iron plows have been discovered by archaeologists at Iron Age levels (cf. *BRL* 255–256 and *IDB* III 828). On mattocks, see *IDB* III, 314–315; on axes, *IDB* I, 323–324; on sickles *IDB* IV, p. 343. A pim was about two thirds of a shekel, as weights inscribed with the letters פים have demonstrated. Cf. "Pim," *IDB* 4, 832; also Dever, *HUCA* 40–41 (1969–70) 182, and Lane, *BASOR* 164 (1961) 21–23. The sharpening of axes and setting of goads cost half as much as the plows and mattocks. Such prices no doubt made iron weapons unaffordable for the average Israelite (v 21; cf. Stoebe). Yet Saul and Jonathan had weapons either because they were more affluent, or because the writer is trying to make more understandable the leading role of both men in chap. 14. In any case, the valuable historical information about the Philistine monopoly contained in these verses tends to heighten the miraculous character of the victories reported in chap. 14.

(V 23) The battle proper began when the Philistine garrison (מצב) moved south toward the pass of Michmash. Caird suggests that the garrison moved out while the three raiding parties of vv 17–18 were away from the central camp of the Philistines.

Explanation

Saul's reign began auspiciously with victories over Philistine forces who were conducting raids in the center of the land, not far from Saul's own city. An initial attack by either Saul or Jonathan led to mobilization by both sides, and the outcome of these battles is discussed in chap. 14. The Philistine iron monopoly brought with it a number of hardships. Israelites were dependent on the Philistine technology for acquiring and using agricultural weapons, and this dependency brought financial burdens as well. Because of the Philistine mastery of iron working, we can understand why they posed such a great threat to Israel, a threat which required the jettisoning of the tribal confederacy and the selection of a king. Their superiority in arms, by the same token, tends to magnify the theological importance of the victories Israel achieved against them.

Yet set into the midst of these stories of battle and success is an incident at the old sanctuary of Gilgal (cf. 11:14), involving Samuel and Saul. While the exact offense of Saul is not as explicit as we might like, he seems to have usurped the role assigned to Samuel in holy war. In any case, Samuel accused Saul of violating the commandment of Yahweh and spoiling the chance for a long-lasting dynasty. Coupled with this rejection is a much more positive note, again coming from the mouth of Samuel. Yahweh had sought out a man after his own heart and commissioned him as prince over Israel. After this judgment scene, other stories from Saul's reign follow in chaps. 14–15, but Yahweh's choice of and anointing of David in chap. 16 will come now as no special surprise.

Military Exploits of Saul and Jonathan (14:1–52)

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Translation

[1] *One day Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to his weapon-bearer, "Come on, let's cross over to the garrison of the Philistines which is opposite here," but he did not tell his father.* [2] *Saul was sitting on the outskirts of Geba,*[a] *under the pomegranate tree*[b] *by the threshing floor,*[b] *and the troops with him numbered about six hundred.* [3] *Ahijah, son of Ahitub, brother of Ichabod, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, carried the ephod [for him]. The troops did not know that Jonathan had gone.* [4] *Within the pass through which Jonathan tried to cross to the garrison of the Philistines were stone crags on each side; the name of the one was Bozez and the name of the other Seneh.* [5] *The first crag was*[a] *on the north in front of Michmash while the second was to the south in front of Geba.* [6] *Jonathan repeated to his weapon-bearer, "Come on, let's cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. Perhaps Yahweh will act for us since he has no difficulty in winning a victory with many people or with few."* [7] *His weapon-bearer concurred, "Do whatever*[a] *your heart desires.*[a] *I'm with you. My desire*[b] *is the same as yours."* [8] *Jonathan continued, "We will cross over to the men and show ourselves.* [9] *If they say to us, 'Stay there until we reach you,' then we'll stand in our place and not go up to them.* [10] *But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up for Yahweh will have given them into our hand. Their answer will be a sign."* [11] *So the two of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines, and the Philistines said, "Here come the Hebrews out of the holes where they have been hiding."* [12] *The men of the garrison called out to Jonathan and his weapon-bearer, "Come up to us, and we'll show you some-*

thing." Jonathan said to his weapon-bearer, "Follow me up for Yahweh has given them into the hand of Israel." 13 Jonathan crawled up on his hands and feet, with his weapon-bearer right behind him. When [a] [the Philistines] fell before Jonathan,[a] the weapon-bearer would finish them off behind him. 14 In this first attack Jonathan and his weapon-bearer killed about twenty men [a] in about half a furrow length of an acre of field.[a] 15 Terror broke out in the camp and [a] on the field. [b] As for all of the troops [b]—the garrison and the raiding parties—they also trembled. When the earth quaked, a terror sent by God resulted. 16 Saul's watchmen at Geba [a] of Benjamin saw that the camp [b] was surging, going this way [c] and that. 17 Saul instructed the troops who were were him, "Count and see who has left us." When they had counted, it turned out that Jonathan and his weapon-bearer were not there. 18 Saul ordered Ahijah, "Bring near the [a] ephod" for he carried the ephod [a] at that time before [b] Israel. 19 While Saul was still talking [a] to the priest, the tumult in the Philistine camp kept growing larger and larger. Therefore, Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." 20 Saul and all the troops with him assembled and went out to the battle. Surprisingly, the sword of each man [of the Philistines] was turned against his companion—a very great confusion. 21 The Hebrews who [a] had been with the Philistines formerly when they came up with them to the camp, now turned [b] so that they could be with Israel under Saul and Jonathan. 22 All the men of Israel hiding in Mt. Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, and they too pursued after them in the battle. 23 So Yahweh delivered Israel on that day.

And the battle moved past Beth Aven.[a] 24 [a] All the troops, about 10,000 men, were with Saul, and there were scattered battles in every city of Mt. Ephraim. Saul committed a great error [a] on that day by causing the troops to make this oath: "Cursed is every man who eats bread before evening and [before] I take vengeance on my enemies." None of the troops ate a thing. 25 . . . [a] And there was a honeycomb on the ground.[a] 26 When the troops came to the honeycomb, [a] its bees had left,[a] yet no one brought [b] his hand to his mouth for the troops feared the oath. 27 Because Jonathan had not heard when his father made the troops swear, he stretched out the end of his staff which was in his hand and dipped it [a] into the honeycomb. When he brought his hand back to his mouth, his eyes brightened. 28 One of the troops said, "Your father made the troops solemnly swear, 'Cursed is the man who eats bread this day.' That's why the troops have become weak." 29 Jonathan replied, "My father has destroyed the happiness of the land. See how my eyes have brightened since I took a taste of this honey. Would that the troops had eaten this day of the spoil of their enemies when they found it, for [a] the blow against the Philistines would have been greater." [a]

31 They defeated [a] the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon,[a] and the troops were extremely weak. 32 Swooping down [a] on the spoil, the troops seized sheep, oxen, and calves, slaughtered them on the ground, and ate them with the blood. 33 Told that the troops were sinning against Yahweh by eating [meat] with blood, Saul said, "You have acted faithlessly. Roll a large stone here [b] to me." 34 In addition, Saul commanded, "Spread out among the troops and tell each man to bring to me his bull or his sheep, and slaughter and eat them here. Do not sin against Yahweh by eating [them] with blood." Each one of the troops brought [a] whatever was [a] in his hand, and they slaughtered them there. 35 Thus Saul constructed an altar for Yahweh; it was the first time he had constructed an altar for Yahweh. 36 Saul proposed, "Let's pursue after the Philistines tonight and plunder them until morning's light: Let's not leave a single survivor." The troops replied, "Do whatever is good in your eyes." But the priest said, "Let's consult God." 37 Saul inquired of God, "Shall I pursue after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" God did not answer him on that day. 38 So Saul said, "Bring here all the officers of the troops so that we may know and see how this sin happened today. 39 As Yahweh lives, who delivers Israel, even if this sin involves [a] my son Jonathan, he shall surely die!" Not one of the troops replied to him. 40 Then he said to all Israel, "You will be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side." The troops again said to Saul, "Do what is good in your eyes." 41 Saul said, "O [a] Yahweh God of Israel, [b] why have you not answered your servant today? If this iniquity is in me or Jonathan my son, O Yahweh, God of Israel give Urim. But if this iniquity is in your people Israel,[b] give Thummin." [c] The result was that Jonathan and Saul were taken while the troops went free. 42 Saul went on, "Make the lot fall between me and between Jonathan my son. [a] The one Yahweh takes shall die." Although the troops said it shouldn't be this way, Saul forced them and they cast between him and Jonathan his son.[a] The result was that Jonathan was taken. 43 Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what have you done." Jonathan answered, "I in fact ate a little honey with the end of the staff which is in my hand. For that I am ready to die." 44 Saul swore, "May God do thus and even more [a] [to me] if you don't in fact die, Jonathan!" [b] 45 But the troops said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan *die since he won this great victory in Israel? [a] As Yahweh lives, there shall not fall to the ground one hair from his head for he has acted with God today." Thus the troops redeemed Jonathan and he did not die. 46 Saul ceased pursuing the Philistines, and they returned to their place. 47 After assuming the kingship over Israel, Saul fought on every side with all his enemies—with Moab, with the Ammonites, with Edom,[a] with the king [b] of Zobah, and with the Philistines. Wherever he turned he was victorious.[c] 48 He acted with force, defeated Amalek, and delivered Israel from the hand of its plunderers.[a]*

49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua; as for his two daughters, the name of the first was Merab and the name of the younger Michal. 50 Saul's wife's name was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz; the name of the commander of his forces was Abner the son of Ner the uncle of Saul. 51 Kish the father of Saul and Ner the father of Abner were sons [a] of Abiel. 52 There was fierce conflict with the Philistines all the days of Saul. Whenever Saul saw any stalwart man or warrior he would take him into his standing army.

Notes

2.a. MT: Gibeah; but at 13:16 and 14:5 MT reads Geba, and this seems preferable topographically here as well. See 14:16 [a].

2.a.-b. MT: "in Migron." Cf. Isa 10:28, where it is a site north of the Michmash pass though the exact location has not been identified (cf. *IDB* 3, 377). Our translation results from a slight change in vocalization. For a list of proposals see *BHK*, n.2[b], and McCarter.

5.a. LXX; MT adds מצוק "firmly fixed" or "pillar", but it is probably a corrupt dittography of the following word.

7.a.-a. Read לי . . . לבבך for לך . . . בלבבך with LXX.

7.b. Add לבבי "my heart" to the end of the Hebrea sentence with LXX.

13.a.-a. LXX has an expanded and smoother text: "they turned before Jonathan and he smote them." MT is more difficult and therefore preferable.

14.a.-a. So MT. The text is very doubtful. The *Vorlage* of LXX seems to have read "with

arrows and with weapons made from flints of the field" (Wellhausen, McCarter). There is a considerable difference between the Hebrew for "flint weapons" and MT. McCarter follows LXX but moves the reading to the end of v 13, considering it a gloss that has been entered in the wrong place in all existing texts.

15.a. LXX; MT lacks "and."

15.b.-b. Read וכל עם (casus pendens) for ובכל העם "and with all the people." Cf. the versions.

16.a. MT: "Gibeah," but see 13:16; 14:2, 5.

16.b. המחנה. Cf. LXX; MT: "the confusion" (ההמון). Cf. v 19.

16.c. Insert הלם; cf. LXX.

18.a.-a. Read האפוד כי הוא נשא האפוד "the ephod for he carried the ephod" with LXX; MT: ארון האלהים כי היה ארון האלהים "the ark of God for the ark of God was." But the ark of God was stationed at Kiriath-jearim during Saul's reign. The verb נגש (bring near) is properly applied to the use of the ephod. Cf. 23:9; 30:7.

18.b. Read לפני "before," cf. LXX, for ובני "and sons of" in MT.

19.a. Vocalize דַּבֵּר for MT's דִּבֵּר.

21.a. Read והיו "had been" or add אשר "who." MT: היו "were."

21.b. Read סבבו גם for סביב וגם "around and also," with LXX Syr.

23.a. LXX^{L}: Beth-horon. Either town would be on a pursuit route from Michmash to Aijalon (Driver).

24.a.-a. Instead of the first three words of MT, read with LXX: וכל העם היה עם שאול כעשרה אלפים איש והיה המלחמה נפצת בכל עיר בהר אפרים ושאול שגה שגגה גדולה. Cf. NAB and the extended discussion in Driver. No convincing explanation of how or why this reading was changed to that of MT has yet been offered, but for the latter see 13:6.

25.a. The verse is seriously corrupt. The editors of NAB offer the following partial reconstruction: ויהי יער על פני השה. Cf. Driver, Wellhausen, and our translation. McCarter offers an ingenious but not fully convincing reconstruction of the history of the corruption of this verse.

26.a.-a. Read הלך דברו for הלך דבש "He went seeking"; cf. LXX.

26.b. Read משיב (cf. v 27) or מגיש with LXX; MT: משיג "putting."

27.a. MT construes this with "hand." The proper antecedent is "staff."

30.a.-a. Read רבה המכה (4Q LXX); MT: לא רבתה מכה "the blow was not great."

31.a.-a. LXX: "some of the Philistines at Michmash." McCarter deletes "to Aijalon." But is not LXX trying to show that the Philistines remained a powerful foe throughout Saul's reign by downgrading the extent of his victory here?

32.a. Many Hebrew mss., the *Qere*, and the versions read ויעט "and he wrapped" for ויעש. "and he made."

33.b. הלם. So LXX; MT: היום "today."

34.a.-a. Read אשר "what" with LXX for MT's שורו "his bullock."

39.a. Read ישנה (Wellhausen) for יְשָׁנוֹ "its existence," but see also Stoebe who defends MT.

41.a. Delete אל "to" with LXX.

41.b.-b. This long expression has been lost in MT by homoioteleuton (Israel[1] to Israel[2]). Cf. Albrektson (*ASTI* 11 [1977/78] 1–10), Noort (*VT* 21 [1971] 112–16), Toeg (*VT* 19 [1969] 493–98). MT is defended by Lindblom (*VT* 12 [1962] 164–78), Stoebe.

41.c. Instead of תָּמִים MT reads תֻּמִּים "complete, perfect."

42.a.-a. LXX; MT is defective due to homoioteleuton. A scribe's eyes skipped from "Jonathan my son" to "Jonathan his son" and left out everything in between.

44.a. Many mss. and versions add "to me." Driver argues that this need not be expressly mentioned. Cf. 1 Kgs 19:2, where LXX again adds "to me."

44.b. LXX: "today." LXX also replaces "Jonathan" with "today" in v 45. MT preserves subtle nuances apparently intended by the author. See *Comment*. Is LXX attempting a harmonization with 1 Sam 31 where Jonathan actually dies?

45.a. So LXX; MT prefaces this clause with חלילה "Far be it," probably a corrupt dittography.

47.a. LXX^{L} adds: "and against Beth-rehob." Beth-rehob and Zobah were two Aramean cities from whom the Ammonites later hired soldiers (cf. 2 Sam 8:3, 12; 10:6). If Beth-rehob is correct, Edom should probably be emended to Aram.

47.b. Singular with 4Q LXX Josephus; MT Plural. Cf. 2 Sam 8:3–12.

47.c. יושע with LXX; MT: ירשיע "he acted evilly," or "he worsted them." Driver points out that it would be unusual for the verb in MT to lack a direct object.

48.a. So 4Q LXX; MT singular.

51.a. Cf. Josephus *Ant.* 6.130. Cf. also 1 Sam 9:1; MT 4Q LXX: singular. Hence: "Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel." See *Comment*.

Form/Structure/Setting

Chap. 14 continues the account of the battles between Saul and the Philistines. With the mention of the garrison מצב (the word occurs five times in chap. 14) of the Philistines in 13:23, we have a transition to the second phase of the conflict. At the conclusion of the battle account in v 46 a summary of Saul's reign is appended, listing his various wars, his family, and his method of selecting soldiers for his standing army.

Summary. As the battle opened the Philistines moved out to the Michmash Pass, while Jonathan, his weapon-bearer, Saul and his oracle priest Ahijah were located at various spots across the rugged terrain (14:1–5; cf. 13:23). Taking the Philistine response to their presence as a sign from Yahweh, Jonathan and his weapon-bearer surprised the enemy, killed twenty persons, and caused mass panic. Saul saw the commotion and rushed to join the battle even before his priest could obtain an oracle. Panic among the Philistines led to internecine killing; Hebrews and people who had been hiding joined the victorious forces of Israel (14:6–23a). Saul made his men swear not to eat until the battle was complete. Jonathan, who had not heard this command, however, ate some honey and incurred a reprimand from the soldiers. Jonathan noted his renewed strength and claimed that the victory would have been greater if only the others had eaten (14:23b–30). When the troops sinned by eating meat with blood, Saul took measures to insure ritual purity (14:31–35). After failing to receive a war oracle from Yahweh, Saul used the Urim and Thummim to discover whose guilt was preventing a divine answer. Jonathan was identified by lot and confessed his breach of the ban on eating. Saul ordered his own son's death, but the troops rescued Jonathan since he had acted with God in bringing victory for Israel (14:36–46). A listing of Saul's successful wars (vv 47–48), his family (vv 49–51), and his habit of recruiting soldiers (v 52) ends the account.

This chapter is linked to chap. 13, in several ways. Jonathan's initial attack (13:3) led the Philistines to bring up reinforcements for a battle with all Israel, and it anticipated his daring escapade in 14:1–23. The Israelites who had hid in 13:6–7a, came out of hiding in 14:22. Saul's 600 men are mentioned in both 13:15 and 14:2. Still, the accounts are formally quite different, as Birch has noted. Chap. 14 can be described as a battle report in which Jonathan and Saul appear as individuals. Use of dialogue and a deft listing of the cast of characters and topographical information in vv 2–5 show a high development of the narrator's art (for other stylistic details see Blenkinsopp and Schicklberger). Frequent holy war motifs are also found throughout the chapter: Yahweh's need for few men, the panic and confusion, formulas like "Yahweh has given the enemy into our hand" or "Yahweh has saved Israel." While chap. 13 comes from a different, annalistic tradition, it has been inte-

grated quite well into 14 by the devices listed at the beginning of this paragraph. Vv 31–35 of chap. 14 make no mention of Jonathan and interrupt the account of Jonathan's sin (vv 24–30) and his eventual identification and vindication (vv 36–46). Yet this incident with the blood is not inappropriate. Although the troops, hungry because of Saul's imposed oath, ate too hastily and without proper ritual care, Saul's actions freed them from ritual impurity. Later Jonathan, who had also been ensnared by the food ban, is delivered by the word of the troops themselves.

The stories of Israel's battles with the Philistines in chaps. 13–14 show Saul's superiority over them in the central hill country. Hauer (*CBQ* 31 [1969] 153–67) has seen in this a first step in the king's military strategy, to be followed by somewhat indecisive battles in the south and an unsuccessful attempt to secure the north (1 Sam 31). These chapters report at least a partial fulfilment of 9:16 ("he shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines"), but they also depict a troubled king. In addition, Jonathan, who replaces Saul as a leader in battle (13:3; 14:1–15) and in the affection of the people (14:45) serves as a transitional figure to David (so Jobling, *JBL* 95 [1976] 367–76).

The redactional function of vv 47–51 (52) seems evident. The real Saulide history, or at least its successful aspect, is now over. In chap. 15 comes his sharp rejection by Samuel, followed in 16:1–13 by the anointing of David. Beginning no later than 16:14 is the account which we call the History of David's Rise (HDR). Veijola has pointed to impressive evidence for attributing the addition of these verses to Dtr (*Das Königtum* 79–82). He cites the following expressions as having deuteronomistic counterparts elsewhere: "Saul fought on every side with all his enemies" (v 47; cf. 10:1b as reconstructed from LXX); "wherever he turned he was victorious" (v 47; cf. 2 Sam 8:6 and 14); "plunderers" (v 48; cf. Judg 2:14, where it is used in parallel to the enemies on every side, and Judg 2:16 where it is part of a savior formula as in 1 Sam 14:48); and "kingdom" (v 47; cf. 1 Sam 10:16 and 11:14). Just as Dtr included summaries of David's wars in 2 Sam 8:2, 3–5, 12–14, so he included such accounts here, perhaps even supplementing Saul's achievements from the information about David (see *Comment*). The redactor next added references to Saul's family though with David that information will be supplied *before* his battle accounts, that is, in 2 Sam 3:2–5; 15:13–16. Veijola even argues for the deuteronomistic character of v 52, claiming that v 52a implies Saul's preeminence over the Philistines, a conclusion which would fit Dtr's notion that every savior figure, including Saul (cf. 9:16), fully satisfied the military needs of his own time. The notice of Saul's selection of a standing army may be only one more summary item, but a number of scholars see in it a transition to 16:14–23 where David is selected to be Saul's weapon-bearer on a permanent basis.

Comment

(14:1–5) The stage for the battle was set when the Philistines moved south from Michmash toward the relatively deep valley which separated them from Saul and Jonathan at Geba (cf. 13:23). Jonathan's secret proposal to his

weapon-bearer appears both in vv 1 and 6; in between the author provides background information. The weapon-bearer seemed to be much more than a caddy; he and Jonathan fought as a team. Note the nine references to him in vv 1–17. David was later selected as Saul's weapon-bearer (1 Sam 16:21) while another of Saul's weapon-bearers died with him (1 Sam 31:5). Weapon-bearers are also mentioned for Abimelech (Judg 9:54), Joab (2 Sam 18:15; 23:37) and perhaps Gideon (Judg 7:10).

Saul's location under the pomegranate tree by the threshing floor and the reference in v 3 to his oracle priest fit nicely with parallel royal descriptions. The kings of Israel and Judah, for example, sat enthroned by a threshing floor at Samaria when they consulted the prophets (1 Kgs 22:10). Similarly, Daniel in the Ugaritic texts judged widows and orphans while sitting under a mighty tree on the threshing floor. There theophany and divination also took place (CTCA 17.5.4–8; 19.1.19–25; McCarter). The shrublike pomegranate would hardly earn the adjective mighty, but trees of various kinds are often associated with sacral sites (cf. 1 Sam 10:3). Interestingly a rock of Rimmon (Pomegranate) is located in the vicinity of Gibeah (Judg 20:45). The reference to Saul's six hundred troops (cf. 13:15) corresponds well to the holy war theology. What could so few men do against the Philistine thousands?

As bearer of the ephod, Ahijah is asked later in the chapter to seek an oracle (v 18). Perhaps we are to infer that Saul was already seeking one in vv 2–3. In priestly texts an ephod was an elaborate ceremonial garment worn by the high priest on the day of atonement (Exod 28:1–43). Samuel (1 Sam 2:18) and David (2 Sam 6:14) are said to have been girded with *linen* ephods, apparently also some kind of cultic vestment though associated neither with the high priest nor with the Day of Atonement. Gideon set up an ephod which was a kind of worship object made of gold (Judg 8:24–27; cf. Judg 17:5). But eight times in 1 Samuel the ephod is an object to be carried (not worn!), by which a divine oracle is sought (2:28; 14:3; 21:10 [EVV. 9]; 22:18 LXX; 23:6, 9; 30:7; cf. also our translation of 14:18).

In charge of the ephod was Ahijah, who traced his lineage, through his uncle Ichabod (cf. 1 Sam 4:19, 21), the grandson of Eli, to the Shiloh tradition. Ahijah is sometimes identified with Abimelech the son of Ahitub, who was in charge of the priests of Nob and who gave David the sword of Goliath when he was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam 21:2–10 [EVV. 1–9]; 22:9–20; cf. 2 Sam 8:17), and the name change is attributed to the putting away of a Canaanite divine name (so *IDB* 1, 67). But it is by no means clear that מלך- is necessarily Canaanite; if it were, the younger of the two stories has the least orthodox name! Abijah and Abimelech could just as well be brothers. Compare the other pairs of priestly brothers, Hophni and Phinehas, and Ahitub and Ichabod.

The rocky crags Bozez and Seneh are mentioned to emphasize the accomplishment of Jonathan and his weapon-bearer. The paths to the top were partially blocked by outcroppings of rock. The names of the crags would seem to mean something like the Gleaming or Slippery one (Bozez) and the Thorny one (Seneh). All attempts to identify them in the rugged terrain around Michmash have proved futile. Since Jonathan had not told his plans

to his father (v 1), nor did any of the troops know them (v 3), the stage was well set for his secret adventure.

(Vv 6–23a) Using the word "uncircumcised" as a kind of ethnic slur and to express, by mockery, confidence of victory (cf. David's attitude toward Goliath in 1 Sam 17:26 and 36). Jonathan began his assault. Samson's parents degraded their daughter-in-law's parents with the word "uncircumcised" (Judg 14:3), and both Samson and Saul feared death at the hands of the uncircumcised (Judg 15:18; 1 Sam 31:4). While it seems evident that the Philistines did not practice circumcision (see 2 Sam 1:20 and especially 1 Sam 18:25, 27 and 2 Sam 3:14!), one of the Megiddo ivories portrays warriors of the Sea Peoples, of whom the Philistines were part, without foreskins (cf. Strobel, *Seevölkersturm* 181, 250). A terra cotta phallus in natural size was discovered recently in Philistine levels at Gezer—and it too was circumcised (cf. Dever, *BA* 34 [1971] 131)!

Jonathan expressed the pious hope in v 6 that Yahweh would act, though he protected God's freedom with the word "perhaps" (cf. Gen 32:21 [EVV. 20]). And Yahweh did in fact act, and Jonathan with him, as the troops attest in v 45. This parallel use of vocabulary makes unlikely the emendation of the verb יעשה "act" in v 6 to יושיע "save." (McCarter is the most recent scholar to propose this emendation). That God can save by "few"—in this case by only two!—recalls Gideon's paring down of his army for holy war (Judg 7:2–8). Thus Jonathan's heroics are reported in such a way that they point to Yahweh's holy war. In his only speech, the otherwise silent weapon-bearer professes his total commitment to help carry out his master's desires.

The sign (v 10) formed by the Philistines' response to Jonathan and his weapon-bearer brings with it additional emphasis on holy war ideology. We are reminded of the way God put dew alternately on Gideon's fleece and on the ground as a sign that he would deliver Israel through him (Judg 6:37–40; cf. also 1 Sam 6:7–9; 10:1, 7, 9; 12:17). In a similar fashion, a barley cake rolling into the camp of Midian was a sign for the enemies of Gideon that God had given them into the hand of Israel (Judg 7:13–15). Why was it only the second Philistine reply, and not the first, that indicated that Yahweh had given the Philistines into Israel's hand? Perhaps the distinction between the two replies is as arbitrary as whether the fleece or the ground is wet, but anyone attacking on the basis of the second reply would have to go against an enemy that had invited the attack and which occupied the superior strategic position. If Jonathan and his aide could win by crawling up on all fours against a more numerous, well-prepared, and strategically well-placed enemy, then surely credit for such a victory would belong to Yahweh. "Yahweh will have (or has) given the enemy into the hand of Israel" is one of the most characterstic cliches of holy war (cf. Josh 6:2; 8:1, 7; 10:8, 12, 19; Judg 11:30, 32; 12:3; cf. von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg,* Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag [1951] 7–8).

Although the Philistines mockingly described their attackers as Hebrews coming out of their holes (cf. 13:6), their invitation to "come on up" was soon shown to be false bravado. It is not clear from the Hebrew whether the Philistines offered to "tell them something" or to "show them something" (v 12), but there is no mistaking the fact that they gave the sign Jonathan

was looking for. Jonathan appropriately designated the forthcoming victory as only apparently his; it would in reality be the deed of Israel (v 12; cf. v 23). Still, Jonathan led the attack, and his weapon-bearer finished off those who had fallen (for a similar use of מות in the Polel, see Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 17:51; and 2 Sam 1:9, 10, 16). If the text at the end of v 14 is correct (cf. 14.a.), the two Israelite heroes killed twenty men in a space equal to about half the distance across an acre field, or 15–20 yards (cf. Driver 109). That was enough to send terror through all parts of the Philistine garrison, including the raiding parties which had formerly terrorized Israel (cf. 13:17). As the earthquake showed (cf. 1 Sam 4:5; Amos 8:8; Joel 2:10), God was involved in this attack. Fear *sent by him* (v 15) riddled the Philistine forces (cf. Gen 35:5; Exod 23:27; von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg* 12). While the word "God" may at times designate the superlative, or an intensifying usage (fear of God = an awesome fear; cf. McCarter), the earthquake and the use of fear of God in other holy war contexts favor the interpretation given by our translation. Saul's lookouts in Geba just across the valley from Michmash, saw great disturbances in the Philistine army. The camp was surging (so Wellhausen); literally, it was melting away. When the king checked his forces to see which of his men might be precipitating such disarray, he learned to his surprise that Jonathan and his aide were missing. The secret had been kept (cf. v 1, 3)! In the confusion it may not have been clear whether the Philistines were dispersing or whether his own men were under strong attack.

Saul's piety is emphasized time and again in this chapter, but it is a piety that keeps him from resolute action (as here) or that is counterproductive (as in the ban on food), or that seems to be jinxed. As he sought to obtain an oracle via Ahijah, the disarray among the Philistines grew constantly larger. Suddenly, he could delay no longer. He told Ahijah to withdraw his hand. Had the priest reached into the ephod for the Urim and Thummim in an attempt to discover a positive or negative answer?

Saul and his troops followed the symbolic summons to battle raised by the turmoil in the Philistine camp. The turmoil may have implied that Jonathan was in distress, but by the time they got to the battle site, an exceedingly great confusion had arisen (cf. Exod 14:24; Deut 7:23; Josh 10:10; Judg 4:15; 1 Sam 5:9, 11; 1 Sam 7:10; Ezek 38:21; cf. von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg* 12), and the Philistine forces were killing one another off, just as the enemy did in the days of Gideon (Judg 7:22). Sensing the major proportions of the Israelite victory, Hebrews, presumably *apiru*-like mercenaries who were fighting with the Philistines, came over to the Israelite side. Note that "Hebrews" is used in two senses in this chapter, a) as a pejorative designation for Israelites when Philistines are speaking (14:11; cf. 13:19) and b) as a designation for mercenary outlaws who could choose to fight for hire with either Israel or the Philistines (14:21; cf. 13:3, 7). Victory had a bandwagon effect. Other Israelites, who had earlier hidden on Mount Ephraim (13:6), joined in pursuit of the fleeing Philistines. Stoebe notes that the reference to Ephraim indicates that Saul's leadership power affected people well beyond the limits of Benjamin. While many joined in for the mop-up action, the real champion is noted in v 23: *Yahweh* saved Israel on that day (cf. v 12). What had been implicit in the God-sent terror, earthquake, and confusion now is affirmed with this

savior formula drawn from the tradition of Holy War (cf. 1 Sam 4:3; 7:8 and Judg 2:18; 6:37; 7:7; 10:12).

(Vv 23b–30) Once past the neighboring city of Beth-aven, the battle entered a new phase in the size of the forces and territory covered, and in the misguided oath imposed by Saul. Saul's 600 men grew to 10,000 as Hebrews and Israelites showed their loyalty to Yahweh by joining in the fray. The expression "hill country of Ephraim" is too general to locate it with precision on a map, but clearly it implies a highly expanded campaign.

Because of the wide distribution of troops, Jonathan did not hear the oath his father laid on the people. Saul's piety, paradoxically, is again the source of difficulty. Sexual abstinence (1 Sam 21:6 [EVV. 5]), refraining from sleep (Ps 132:3–4), and vows to sacrifice (Judg 11:30–31) are elsewhere part of warrior's commitments in Israel. Yet Saul's vow was a blunder (so McCarter) or sin of inadvertence (v 24) as subsequent events were to prove. Perhaps a blunder is also implied in a double entendre implicit in ויאל (v 24). If derived from אלה, it would mean "he made them take an oath," as in our translation; but if derived from יאל, it might also mean, "he played the fool" (Jobling, *JBL* 95 [1976] 374). Saul's expecting his men to refrain from eating calls to mind Yahweh's preference for those soldiers in Gideon's army who lapped up the water instead of kneeling down to drink (Judg 7:4–8). The king's desire to use the whole day for gaining vengeance over his enemies resembles Joshua's stopping the sun in the valley of Aijalon "until the nation took vengeance on their enemies" (Josh 10:13). A negative note was sounded for Saul in chap. 13 when he was denied dynastic succession. Now even the day of his greatest military victory, filled as it was with his own zeal for Yahweh's war, left him with something less than a completely satisfying outcome because of his errant oath.

Despite all this, the soldiers feared the curse Saul had laid upon them and did not eat. They refrained even when they came upon an abandoned honeycomb, from which all the bees had left. But Jonathan, presumably because of the wide-ranging extent of the battlefield, had not heard his father's oath. His too would be a sin of inadvertence! Good soldier that he was, he did not stop to eat, but dipped his staff in the honey. Like the lappers in Gideon's army, he did not waste time (cf. Stoebe). His brightened eyes were a sign of renewed vigor. Compare Ps 13:4 (EVV. 3): "Lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death," cf. Ezra 9:8.

Just then a fellow soldier told Jonathan the gist of his father's oath (cf. the wording of the curse in v 28 with that in v 24). That's why, he explained to Jonathan, the people are now so faint. This last comment is frequently deleted as a gloss anticipating v 31 (so Wellhausen, McCarter), but there is no textual evidence for this and the comment does set the context for Jonathan's reply in vv 29–30 where he lays a serious charge against his father for troubling the land. Such troublemaking had been the accusation against Achan for violating the provisions of holy war (Josh 7:25), and Jephthah's vow to sacrifice whatever met him caused him great trouble (Judg 11:35). Interestingly both Jonathan (in v 43) and Jephthah's daughter (Judg 11:36) willingly accepted the death sentences that result from these mistaken vows. For now, however, Jonathan made no confession. Rather, he criticized the

oath of his father. His own strength had been restored by a taste of honey and he wished that the people had eaten of their enemies' spoil. That would have brightened their eyes and made the defeat of the Philistines even greater. Ironically, when the people finally ate the spoil of their enemies in the next section, it led only to ritual sin.

(Vv 31–35) However great the victory might have been, the actual battle swept on to Aijalon, modern Yâlō (MR152138), some twenty miles to the west of Michmash, on the edge of the hill country. Note that this site and the references to a day-long fight and to taking vengeance on one's enemies (in v 24) provide three points of contact with Josh 10:12–13 in this passage. By this time in the day the people were extremely weary and famished. They swooped down on the spoil and slaughtered several kinds of domestic animals right on the spot, without an altar. In their desperate hunger, the troops ate the flesh with the blood (for על meaning "with" see Exod 12:8). When Saul was informed that the troops had eaten meat with blood (cf. Gen 9:4; Lev 17:11; Deut 12:23), he accused them of acting faithlessly and ordered that a great stone be brought. Such a great stone served as an altar for sacrifice at Beth-shemesh when the ark was returned from the Philistines (1 Sam 6:14). Saul arranged, therefore, for the slaughter to take place on an altar as a sacrifice. It was on the altar that the blood belonged according to the regulations of the Holiness Code (Lev 17:6, 11). It is only in deuteronomistic legislation that secular slaughter was permitted provided that the animal's blood was poured out on the ground (Deut 12:15–24). But the account in vv 31–35 is older than Deuteronomy since Saul's building of an altar in v 35 is related without any trace of criticism (cf. Samuel's altar in 1 Sam 7:17). The writer notes that this was Saul's first altar. We can assume that tradition remembered others which could be attributed to his hand.

(Vv 36–46) Saul's zeal for combat against the Philistines continued unabated, and his proposal to wipe them out totally in accord with the ban of holy war (cf. 1 Sam 15:3 and von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg* 13) was readily agreed to by the troops. The priest, however, suggested that God's permission be sought first (cf. v 18). David later sought God's approval for a specific battle via the ephod, which was then watched over by Abiathar, Ahijah's nephew (or son? cf. 1 Sam 30:7). Saul—just as David in 30:8—asked two questions, which would permit a yes or no answer, but to his surprise he received no answer at all (v 37), which presumably was as good as a "no." The author of HDR uses David's frequent success in obtaining an oracle and God's silence toward Saul (cf. 1 Sam 28:6) as a way of showing who was God's favored or elect one. In this case, however, Saul recognized that the inquiry had failed because of some hidden sin. This is the second time a sin is mentioned in this chapter and both of them are consequences of Saul's impetuous oath. In his zeal he threatened the unknown offender with capital punishment even if that person should turn out to be his own son Jonathan, underscoring his commitment with an oath. For the form-critical links of this verse to Exod 21:12, see Koch, 121. Again Saul's apparent piety involved him in tragic consequences: Jonathan was in fact the one. And the troops, who knew of Jonathan's violation of the food ban, though they had not known of his reckless secret assault (v 3), did not respond to Saul's threat. Their silence echoed

that of God. Saul assembled the officers (literally "corners"; cf. Judg 20:2; Isa 19:13) and arranged for a lot-casting ceremony whose form and technical vocabulary resemble that used with Achan (Josh 7:16–18) and with Saul's own election in 10:19–21. When the first binary division was proposed with the troops lined up on one side and Saul and Jonathan on the other, the troops told him to do what he wanted (v 40), just as they had agreed with his proposal to wipe out the Philistines (v 36). In this approval, as in their silence in v 39, they provide a dramatic literary moment: they know and the reader knows what will happen, but Saul must be allowed to go the full course.

The decision this time is to be made by Urim and Thummim, a form of lot-casting in early Israel, which was apparently not practiced after David (Mettinger 243; De Vaux, 353). Urim and Thummim are mentioned in the priestly legislation of Exod 28:30 and Lev 8:8, which commands that they be placed in the high priest's baglike breastplate of judgment, in Deut 33:8 where they are assigned to the tribe of Levi, according to which there were no priests to handle Urim and Thummim after the exile, in the parallel passages Ezra 2:63 = Neh 7:65, which speaks of a future priest who will consult them—and in our passage. Urim alone are mentioned in Num 27:21, where they were entrusted to Eleazar, and 1 Sam 28:6. According to Exod 28:28 Aaron was to wear the breastplate of judgment on top of his ephod understood as an elaborate vestment. Does that mean the Urim and Thummim in 1 Sam 14 were placed in the ephod *carried* by Ahijah? While this is a plausible proposal, the text is fully silent on whether the ephod or Ahijah were involved in this matter.

Our text is really the only description of how these lots were used, and the understanding of the words themselves remains conjectural. Did Urim and Thummim mean respectively "accursed, condemned" and "pronounced whole, acquitted" (cf. McCarter)? Or is there some significance in that Urim begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and Thummim with the last? In any case the lot Urim is assigned to Saul and Jonathan; Thummim for the troops. This sounds much like our "heads" or "tails," yet the casting of these lots is seen as the way Yahweh himself discloses his verdict. The royal pair was "taken" (cf. 1 Sam 10:20; Josh 7:16) while the people "went free." That is, the lot indicated that the sin lay in Saul or Jonathan. Saul immediately wanted to throw the lots again, but the troops this time demurred—they knew what would happen! When Saul forced the issue, Jonathan was indeed taken. Jonathan, whose heroism had earlier led to his successful assault, readily admitted that he violated the food ban and obediently accepted the consequences. In the present context there is a sharp contrast between the sterling qualities of Jonathan—a man fit himself to be king!—and the preceding chapter where Samuel had announced to Saul that there would be no dynastic succession. Invoking a curse upon himself (cf. 1 Sam 3:17), Saul ratified the death warrant. But whereas previously the king had always addressed Jonathan as "Jonathan, *my son*" (vv 39, 40, 42), he now is merely "Jonathan" (v 44).

Now the troops came to the fore once more: "Shall *Jonathan* (note the stress) die?" They were not proposing that no one could be put to death,

as in 11:13 and 2 Sam 19:23, [EVV. 22], but Jonathan had brought victory to Israel and did not deserve such a fate. What's more, as they now underlined with an oath, that balanced Saul's own threatening oath in v 39, he had acted "with God" today (God's act is referred to in v 6). If he had been with God, so the argument seems to go, surely God had been with him and would continue to be so. Not one hair should fall (cf. 1 Kgs 1:52 and 2 Sam 14:11). Was their successful insistence on his deliverance all that the writer meant by their "redeeming" him? Or are we to imagine that they paid money (Exod 21:30; Num 3:46–51), or that they provided an animal substitute (Exod 13:13, 15; 34:20), or even another man (Budde, Ewald, Wellhausen) as a substitute? In any case, the battle against the Philistines broke off, not quite the ultimate triumph it might have been.

(Vv 47–48) As we observed in *Form/Structure/Setting*, this summary of Saul's battles shows linguistic linkage to Dtr. Of the specific nations against whom Saul fought, the Bible contains records of his victory over the Ammonites (1 Sam 11; cf. 12:12) and of his battles with the Philistines, both in chaps. 13–14 and in subsequent chapters in HDR. Since there are no biblical records of his clashes with Moab, Edom, and the king of Zobah, many scholars believe that these countries have been supplied from the list of nations against whom David fought in 2 Sam 8 (especially vv 2 and 12 for Moab, vv 12–14 for Edom, and vv 3–8 for the king of Zobah). The Lucianic recension of LXX, which adds Beth-rehob to the list of enemies (cf. LXX) seems to result from just such a comparison with the list of David's battles. Because Saul was not in fact victorious wherever he turned, some (e.g. Birch) believe that vv 47–51 were added before chaps. 13–14 were linked to chaps. 15ff. But the deuteronomistic historian may have wanted to indicate that before kingship was removed from Saul in chaps. 15–16, he was an adequate savior figure, just as David is recorded to have been (cf. 2 Sam 8:6–14). Amalek's separate listing in v 48 and arguments about the literary history of chap. 15 have led some commentators to suspect the originality of this nation in v 48 (Veijola). There is some tension, of course, between the positive report of Saul's smiting Amalek and the account of the war itself in chapter 15.

According to v 48 Saul acted with force (cf. Num 24:18; Deut 8:17–18; Ps 60:12). In the deuteronomistic introduction to the period of the judges a redactor noted: "Yahweh raised up judges who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them" (Judg 2:16). Such a savior also was Saul—so these verses remind us, even if the rest of 1 Samuel will chronicle his weakness, jealousy and final failure.

(Vv 49–52) In v 49 Saul's sons are listed as Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua; in 31:2 we learn of the death of Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua while a fourth son, Ishbosheth, survived his father and succeeded him for a time as king of (North) Israel (2 Sam 2–4). The Chronicler has a similar list of four sons: Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal (1 Chr 9:49). We do not know why Abinadab goes unmentioned in v 49. Was he the son of a woman other than Ahinoam? Ishvi is mentioned only in v 49. Was Ishvi the same as Eshbaal/Ishbosheth (the bosheth variation comes from the substitution of the Hebrew word shame for the word Baal)? Does the spelling of the name in LXX, which many believe presupposes an original Ishyo, indicate

a Yahwistic version of the son's name? If so, MT may result from metathesis: ישיו became ישוי. Saul's two daughters will later be offered in marriage to David (18:17–27); their names and life histories will be discussed at that point. About Ahinoam and Ahimaaz we know only what v 50 tells us (but see 20:30 and 25:43). Saul had at least one other wife or concubine, Rizpah (2 Sam 3:7; 21:1–14).

His commander was Abiner, v 50, or, as his name is spelled elsewhere, including v 51, Abner (cf. 17:55, 57; 20:25; 26:5, 7, 14, 15; 2 Sam 2:89; 3:27). There are two versions of Abner's genealogy in the Bible. In one version Abner is the brother of Kish and therefore the uncle of Saul (1 Chr 8:33; 9:39 and possibly 1 Sam 14:50–51 MT). But Ner must then be inserted between Kish and Abiel in 1 Sam 9:1. According to the second version, Abner and Saul are cousins, sons respectively of Ner and Kish, both of whom are sons of Abiel/Jeiel (1 Chr 9:36; Josephus, *Ant.* 6.130 and presumably 1 Sam 9:1). To maintain this version one must emend "son" to "sons" in 1 Sam 14:51. Note that the word uncle in 14:50 may have either Ner or Abner as its antecedent. No certain decision seems possible. Only one state official is mentioned for Saul, a simplicity that stands in sharp contrast with the burgeoning number of officials under David and especially Solomon. Saul chose a close relative to lead his troops, a policy followed also by David, whose leaders Amasa, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel may all have been his nephews. The positive summation continued in v 52: the fierce (חזק) struggle against the Philistines may mean he held the upper hand in his war with them all the days of his life (cf. Veijola, *Das Königtum,* 81 and n. 59). The brief notice about Saul's recruiting policy, which closes the chapter, marks a major shift from the emergency tribal levy which had served Israel heretofore. Already after the assembly at Mizpah, certain soldiers followed Saul to Gibeah (10:26). His selection of powerful or vigorous (so Smith) men for his standing army prepares us also for 16:18 where David's credentials, in addition to his musical ability, are listed as his being a stalwart man (גבור חיל) and a warrior (איש מלחמה). David eventually became Saul's weapon-bearer (16:21) and fought in numerous battles for him.

Explanation

Jonathan's daring attack on the Philistine garrison was really an expression of Yahweh's action for Israel. His initial blow was supplemented and magnified by a terrifying confusion sent from God. Saul, though seemingly motivated by piety throughout this chapter, finds that his good intentions often keep him from resolute action or they seem to be counterproductive. One could almost say his piety is jinxed. Seeing the confusion among the Philistines, he sought an oracle to find out if he should join the fight, only to break off the protracted oracle-seeking process and hurry to the battlefield where he discovered that the Philistines were already killing one another, thanks to Yahweh's hand.

Saul laid an oath on the people not to eat until the task of gaining vengeance over the Philistines was done, but the oath weakened the troops, and their desperate hunger led them to eat meat with blood when they finally did

take spoil. Jonathan sinned too, if inadvertently, because of his father's oath. He ate honey on the run like a good soldier. Admonished about his misdeed by a soldier, Jonathan complained that Israel's victory could have been greater if the troops had eaten, and he accused his father of destroying the happiness of the land. Jonathan's own strength had been revived by his sinful eating.

Despite the jinx that dogged his steps, Saul acted resolutely to deliver his troops who had eaten blood. He had the presence of mind to build an altar where the animals could be slaughtered and their blood properly discarded. Tradition remembered this as his first altar; no doubt there had been a number of others.

When Saul proposed to wipe out the Philistines, his troops readily agreed to the chase, but when Yahweh's permission was sought, he gave no answer. Saul attempted to find the person whose sin prevented God from answering. Invoking Yahweh by oath, he threatened capital punishment even if that person should be Jonathan. The troops fell silent at this threat. Though they had not known of Jonathan's secret attack against the Philistines at Michmash (v 3), they obviously knew of his guilt now. Again Saul turned to Yahweh, this time resorting to the lot-casting procedure of Urim and Thummim. The troops went along with the king's plan, but when the choice narrowed down to either Saul or Jonathan, they tried to dissuade him from one more cast of the lots. Saul forced the issue, and the lot pointed to his son Jonathan, who readily admitted his guilt and expressed his readiness to die. Jonathan has credentials fit for a king in this chapter—he won a daring victory; he ate of honey only on the run; he sinned, but openly confessed and was willing to take the consequences like a man; the troops rescued him from the danger of death. But the reader knows that, after chap. 13, any thought of his succeeding Saul is impossible.

Saul invoked a curse on himself should Jonathan not be killed, but the troops objected, pointing to the young man's victory and his partnership with God. "As Yahweh lives," they swear, "he shall not be harmed" (v 45). Saul had sworn, "As Yahweh lives, the guilty one shall die" (v 39). His oath, therefore, was overturned by a similar oath by his own troops. Paradoxically, the troops' redeeming of Jonathan put Saul under the curse of his own oath of v 44.

The turbulent events of the chapter ended indecisively as Saul broke off the pursuit and the Philistines went home. Yet the (deuteronomistic) redactor used this occasion to sum up the many battles through which Yahweh fulfilled the promise of 9:16 and through which Yahweh had showed his own righteousness. With a listing of Saul's family and a short note about his standing army, the positive, if already ambivalent, account of Israel's first king comes to an end. From chap. 15 on, Saul himself is rejected, and the remainder of the book is full of his paranoid and ultimately unsuccessful struggle with David.