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THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE EDITION.



THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
SAMUEL.

BY THE
REV. F. MARSHALL, M.A.

*(Late Exhibitioner of St. John's College, Cambridge),
Rector of Mileham, formerly Vice-Principal of the Training College, Carmarthen,
and lately Head Master of Almondbury Grammar School.*

First Edition, 1894.

Seventeen Editions and Impressions to 1932.

LONDON:
GEORGE GILL & SONS, LTD.,
MINERVA HOUSE, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.4.

PREFACE.

THE First Book of Samuel is one of a series of manuals on the books of the Old Testament, which are primarily intended for the use of Students preparing for the Local Examinations of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The Introduction treats fully of the several subjects with which the Student should be acquainted, comprising full Geographical and Biographical Notes, and other important details, which are clearly set forth in the Table of Contents. The special features in the narrative are fully commented upon.

The chief alterations of the Revised Version are pointed out in footnotes, the Student being referred to the Revised Version.

In the Appendix will be found (1) a Commentary upon the most important differences between the Authorised and Revised Versions, the alterations being pointed out and explanations given of the reasons for the changes; (2) an Explanation of words and phrases, thus avoiding constant reference to the text and notes

The general arrangement of the series will, it is believed, be found helpful to Teachers and Students. Each manual is illustrated with the necessary Maps.

Each volume is complete in itself, requiring from the Student no reference to Atlas, Biblical Dictionary, or other aids.

Works of Reference useful for Students, and referred to (among others) in this Work :

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.
The Holy Bible with notes (Bishop Wordsworth).
The Speaker's Commentary.
The Old Testament Commentary for English Readers (Ellicott).
Israel under Samuel, Saul and David (Dr. Edersheim).
Early History of the Hebrews (Sayce).
Bible Illustrations (Kitto)

The Land and the Book (Thomson).
Sinai and Palestine (Stanley).
Lectures on the Jewish Church (Stanley).
Keil's Commentary.
Pearson on the Creed (Art. ii.).
Undesigned Coincidences (Blunt).
Heroes of Hebrew History (Wilberforce).
History of Israel (Ewald).
The Land of Israel (Tristram).
Bible Research (Robinson).

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INTRODUCTION.

THE TITLE.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL, OTHERWISE CALLED, THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

To understand the double title we must consider the two Books of Samuel along with the two Books of Kings.

In the Hebrew MSS. we find *two* books, not *four*, viz. :

- I. and II. Samuel as *one* book.
- I. and II. Kings as *one* book.

And these books are under different names.

In the Septuagint the books are divided and regarded as *four* books on the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, *i.e.* :

<i>Hebrew.</i>		<i>Septuagint.</i>
First Book of Samuel	<i>becomes</i>	First Book of Kings.
Second Book of Samuel	<i>becomes</i>	Second Book of Kings.
First Book of Kings	<i>becomes</i>	Third Book of Kings.
Second Book of Kings	<i>becomes</i>	Fourth Book of Kings.

The Vulgate follows the same division as the Septuagint.

The Authorised Version follows the Septuagint in dividing the books into four, but retains the Hebrew names of Samuel and Kings.

Thus we get an explanation of the double title.

First Book of Samuel = the first portion of the Hebrew writing, styled in their MSS. the Book of Samuel.

First Book of Kings = the first portion of the four divisions into which the writers of the Septuagint divided the Hebrew books of Samuel and Kings.

Either title is appropriate, for as both Saul and David were anointed by Samuel, the books—or rather, book—of Samuel may appropriately bear the name of the great prophet : not because he wrote it, but because it describes his great work.

The title, "First Book of Kings," may also be regarded as appropriate if we view the work in the light of its being a record of the foundation of the monarchy.

N.B.—In dealing with many questions, such as Date, Authorship, etc., it will be necessary to regard the two books as a connected whole.

THE AUTHOR.

The Book must be regarded as a compilation from various sources. It cannot be the work of Samuel entirely, even if he wrote a portion of the book, for his death is recorded in chap. xxv. 1.

There is no indication to guide us in assigning the compilation to any particular writer, and it is not probable that Samuel himself wrote any portion of the book.

The Books of Samuel are evidently the work of one and the same writer.

THE DESIGN OF THE WRITER.

The history of Israel may be divided into three great periods :

I. The Theocracy.

Commencing with the call of Abraham (as a family), and by the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai (as a nation).

Ending with the overthrow of the worship at Shiloh by the Philistines.

II. The Monarchy.

Commencing with the establishment of the House of David upon the throne. Saul is the first to have the title of king, but the monarchy proper does not commence till the reign of David.

Ending with the destruction of Solomon's Temple by the Babylonian armies.

III. The Hierarchy.

Commencing at the return from the Babylonish Captivity.

Ending with the destruction of the last Temple of Jerusalem by the Romans.

The Books of Samuel, especially the First, deal with the transition period between the fall of the Theocracy and the establishment of the Monarchy.

It is the design of the writer to show how this came about according to the Divine plan.

He does not attempt to give a full historical account of the period, but contents himself by selecting events which illustrate his purpose, *e.g.* :

1. **Eli's Judgeship.** Nothing more is told us than the overthrow of the Tabernacle services at Shiloh and the causes which led to it, viz., the decay of the national and religious life, and particularly the degradation of the services of the Sanctuary through the greed and immorality of the sons of Eli.

2. **The Life of Samuel.** Very little is said of the details of his work. His early life is given fully, to show why and how he was called and prepared for his great work in reviving the *religious* feeling of the nation.

3. **Saul.** Much of his reign is purposely omitted. The circumstances of his election are given in detail, as being needed to illustrate the inauguration of the Monarchy. Sufficient of his exploits is recorded to show that the choice of Saul was a wise one for the purpose of leading the people to victory. He was worthy to be king, but he was a king *after the people's heart*.

The causes which led to his rejection are fully recorded, to show that such a king is not the ideal monarch *after God's heart*.

4. **David.** The latter part of Saul's reign may be regarded as a history of the preparation of David for the great honour of establishing the permanent dynasty. Saul is not mentioned in this period save in connection with David. Even the death of the king on Mount Gilboa is connected with his youthful rival. Saul's death opened the way to the throne for David.

The Second Book of Samuel deals with David's reign and the establishment of the Monarchy on a permanent basis.

Viewing the history in this light we can clearly grasp the design of the writer. He is concerned not with a history of the times, but in selecting events which point out the great purposes of Jehovah in guiding the fortunes of His chosen people.

DATE.

The Earliest Period that can be assigned is after the division of the kingdom.

Reasons:

1. There are various references to a period later than the recorded events, e.g.—
 - (a) The priests of Dagon do not "*tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day*" (v. 5).
 - (b) The stone Abel is said to remain "*unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite*" (vi. 18).
 - (c) David caused his decision on the division of the spoil taken from the Amalekites to become "*a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day*" (xxx. 25).
2. The mention of the Kings of Judah in connection with Ziklag. "*Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day*" (xxvii. 6).
3. The whole length of David's reign is mentioned. "*David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.*" (2 Sam. v. 5).
4. In the Septuagint text there are two allusions to events in the reign of Rehoboam.

Conclusion. The Books of Samuel must have been written after the death of David, and the reference to the Kings of Judah is almost conclusive that they were written after the division of the kingdom into Israel and Judah.

If the Septuagint text be correct, we have positive evidence on this point.

Latest Date cannot be long after the division.

Reasons:

1. There is no allusion to the decay of the Kingdoms.
2. There is no allusion to the Captivity.
3. The Hebrew is remarkably pure, and free from Chaldaisms and later forms of Hebrew, differing substantially from the language of the Books of Kings, where the Hebrew used evidently belongs to a later date.

We may reasonably conclude that the Books of Samuel were drawn up **not long** after the division of the kingdom.

SCOPE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

From the last days of the Judges to the death of Saul, the first king. The time included in the Books of Samuel cannot be exactly defined. The First Book may be roughly estimated to include a period of a little under a century, extending over the entire life of Samuel, whose death cannot have been many years before the death of Saul.

The only indications of time are the length of reigns of Saul and David, each of which is stated to be forty years.

"God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years" (Acts xiii. 21).

"And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem" (1 Kings ii. 11).

If we assume that Samuel lived fifty years before the accession of Saul, we get the following calculation:

Life of Samuel to the election of Saul	-	50 years.
The reign of Saul	- - - -	40 years.
The reign of David	- - - -	40 years.
		130 years.

This makes a period of ninety years for the First Book, and forty years for the Second Book.

It is suggested that the forty years of Saul's reign are intended to include the seven years and six months during which David was king at Hebron over Judah only (2 Sam. ii. 11). This makes Ishbosheth's reign to be included in Saul's reign, *Saul* meaning the house of Saul.

If we adopt this suggestion, eighty-five years would appear to be the limit of the First Book of Samuel.

SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE.

It is impossible to assign the sources from which the compiler drew his material, but reasonable conjecture may assume that the following sources were open to him:

1. **Contemporary Literature.** On this point there is a definite statement in 1 Chron. xxix. 29. "*Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.*"
2. "The Chronicles of King David," mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24.
3. "The Manner of the Kingdom," *i.e.* a document containing, we may assume, the details connected with the election of Saul, and prescribing the duties of the divinely appointed king, and limiting his powers. This has been well termed "*the Charter of the Kingdom.*" (See 1 Sam. x. 25.)
4. The National Songs and Poems, particularly the Book of Jasher. (See 2 Sam. i. 18.)
5. The Psalms of David.

6. **The National Collection of Genealogies.**7. **Prophetical Records, preserved in the Schools of the Prophets.**

As regards these different sources, we may fairly assume that we may assign to them somewhat as follows :

1. *To the Book (or Acts) of Samuel.* The sayings and doings of Samuel, which are evidently written from the point of view which Samuel would adopt. Thence may have been taken the story of Samuel's life, which includes the greater part of Saul's reign.
2. *The National Collection of Genealogies or Chronicles.* To these the compiler may be indebted for—
 - (a) Saul's genealogy (ix. 2).
 - (b) Saul's victory over the Ammonites (xi. 1-11).
 - (c) The statement as regards the length of Saul's reign (xiii. 1).
 - (d) The summary of Saul's wars, and account of his family (xiv. 47-52).
3. *Prophetical Records.* The visit of David to Nob, and the subsequent massacre of the priests (xxi., xxii.).
4. *The Book of Gad.* The story of David's flight from Saul and his adventures before he became king.
5. *National Songs and Poems—*
 - (a) The song of Hannah (ii. 1-10).
 - (b) The song of the women on the exploits of Saul and David (xviii. 7).

This source is strongly marked in 2 Samuel by the Elegy on Saul and Jonathan (taken from the Book of Jasher), and the Elegy on Abner (2 Sam. iii. 33, 34).
6. *Psalms.* On this heading see p. 129 ff.

THE ARK.

Contained originally :

1. The Two Tables of Stone (the Tables of the Covenant), on which were written the Ten Commandments.
2. A golden pot containing an omer of manna.
3. Aaron's rod which budded.

In the time of Solomon it contained only the Two Tables of Stone (1 Kings viii. 9).

History of the Ark.

- (1) It led the Israelites under Joshua across the Jordan on dry land (Josh. iv.).
- (2) It was carried round the walls of Jericho once a day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day, and then the walls of Jericho fell down (Josh. vi. 1-20).
- (3) On entering Canaan the Ark was set up at Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1).
- (4) In the judgeship of Eli the Ark was taken into the camp of the Israelites when they were advancing against the Philistines. The Israelites were defeated; Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were slain, and the Ark was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv)

- (5) The Ark was placed by the Philistines in the house of their god Dagon, at Ashdod. When Dagon's image fell before it, and the Philistines were smitten with emerods, they sent the Ark from Ashdod to Gath, from Gath to Ekron (1 Sam. v.).
- (6) Finally the Ark was sent back to Israel in a cart drawn by two milch kine, who of their own accord drew it to Beth-shemesh (1 Sam. vi. 1-18).
- (7) The men of Beth-shemesh were struck dead for looking into the Ark. So they conveyed it to the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam. vi. 19—vii. 2).
- (8) In the time of Saul the Ark is mentioned as being with Saul at Gibeah (1 Sam. xiv. 18). But this maybe an error, and for "*Ark*" we should read "*Ephod*" (see Note 2 below).
- (9) Afterwards it was again at Kirjath-jearim, whence David conveyed it in a new cart, but Uzzah being struck dead for touching it on the journey, it was taken to the house of Obed-edom (2 Sam. vi. 1-11).
- (10) David subsequently conveyed it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi. 12).
- (11) When David fled from Absalom, Zadok and Abiathar accompanied the king in his flight, and took the Ark with them, but David sent it back to Jerusalem (2 Sam. xv. 24-29).
- (12) It was finally placed by Solomon in the Temple.
- (13) Manasseh set a carved image in the house of God, and probably removed the Ark to make room for it (2 Chron. xxxiii. 7).
- (14) It was reinstated in the Temple by Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 3).
- (15) It was either destroyed or lost at the time of the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and was wanting in the second Temple.

Note 1.—On the length of time the Ark was at Kirjath-jearim.

From vii. 2, "*And it came to pass, while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.*"

It would appear that the Ark was at Kirjath-jearim for only twenty years.

This conveys a wrong impression, for:

The **Twenty Years** refers to period of Philistine domination after the sack of Shiloh, during which time Samuel was labouring earnestly in his work of the spiritual reformation of Israel. At the conclusion of the **twenty years**, he gained the great victory signalized by setting up the stone of **Ebenezer**.

The Ark was at Kirjath-jearim till removed by David (2 Sam. vi. 1-10). So it was at Kirjath-jearim during the twenty years of the Philistine oppression during the judgeship of Samuel, the forty years of Saul's reign, and some eight to ten years of David's reign, about **eighty years** in all.

Note 2. On xiv. 18, "*And Saul said to Ahiah, Bring hither the Ark of God.*"

If we follow the English translation we must believe that the Ark was with Saul at Gibeah, when he would have inquired of God on the occasion of Jonathan's feat in routing the Philistines at Michmash.

But the **Septuagint** reads, "*Bring hither the Ephod: for he wore the Ephod at that time before the children of Israel.*"

It is better to follow the Septuagint, for:

(1) "*Bring hither*" is never applied to the Ark, but regularly to the Ephod.

(2) The Ephod, with Urim and Thummin (not the Ark), was the proper instrument for inquiring of the Lord (S.C.).

We may conclude that the abode of the Ark at Kirjath-jearim was continuous from the sack of Shiloh till its removal by David.

THE GODS OF THE HEATHEN.

Baal. The word *Baal* signifies "lord," "owner of the land," and we find *Baalim* (plural) used to denote the many gods of the Canaanites.

But, when Baal is mentioned in conjunction with Ashtoreth, we must understand the Phœnician *Baal*, variously represented as the Sun, or the planet Jupiter.

Baal was the supreme male deity of the Phœnicians, and represented the active originative power in nature.

Ashtoreth or Ashtaroth. The supreme female deity of the Phœnicians, representing the receptive and productive power in nature. Ashtoreth has been identified with the Moon, or the planet Venus. Her worship was connected with the Asherah, and was of a licentious and impure character.

Asherah (rendered "grove" in A.V.) was the name of the image or symbol of Ashtoreth.

"*The house of Ashtaroth*" (xxx. 10) may refer to the famous Temple of Astarte at Askalon, described by Herodotus as the most ancient of the temples dedicated to the worship of Venus.

Dagon (see p. liv.). From xxx. 10, we gather that the Philistines worshipped Ashtoreth as well as Dagon.

Hence we may assume that :

Dagon was their male god of fertility.

Ashtoreth was their female god of fertility.

PROPHETS AND PROPHECYING.

Prophet. *It is a common error* to associate the name only with one who utters predictions of the future.

The Hebrew word "*nābî*" signifies "one who announces or pours forth" the declarations of God. The Greek word signifies one who speaks for another.

Thus Aaron is appointed as Moses' prophet (Ex. vii. 1). In Ex. iv. 16 he is termed the spokesman of Moses.

The prophets usually prefaced their utterances with "*Thus saith the Lord,*" and their messages are constantly called "*The word of the Lord.*"

They spoke then in the name of the Lord, and their utterances might contain predictions of the future, but foretelling future events was not necessarily the object of their message.

It is also a common error to regard the prophets as isolated individuals, inspired at some crisis in the history of the nation to come forward and declare the word of Jehovah. On the contrary, there was a trained Prophetic Order.

The Prophetic Order. Though there were prophets before the time of Samuel, yet to him belongs the honour of establishing systematic religious training of the prophets. He saw that the priesthood had

failed in the religious instruction of the people (see pp. xv.-xvi.), and determined to remedy the evil by a system of trained teachers.

So he gathered the students into bodies known as—

"*The sons of the Prophets*," i.e. the students under one teacher, the chief or instructor being styled "father." (Compare *Abbot* = father, as head of a monastery.)

"*Schools of the Prophets*," a title which can hardly have been known in Samuel's day. Schools, in the sense of Theological Colleges, belong to a later period, though Samuel appears to have gathered a band of students under his own personal teaching at Ramah. *Naioth* appears to be the name of the dwelling which formed their common residence, and we find Samuel at the head of the students directing their religious exercises (xix. 20).

Later we find prophets collected at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal, where schools or theological colleges appear to have been established (2 Kings ii. 3, 5; iv. 38).

Their training.

These students were instructed in sacred learning and religious exercises, and were led to cultivate, especially by psalmody and music, the devotional feelings which might fit them, when occasion called, to become the messengers of God and teachers of the people.

Some, after their period of training, returned to their own homes and to their ordinary occupation, and thus, as preachers and teachers, became the means of keeping alive the spiritual life of the nation in the villages and remoter districts.

Others were employed in keeping a record of events. To the writings of these prophets we owe the histories of Elijah and Elisha. The writings of Samuel, Nathan, Gad and others are specially mentioned as authorities consulted by the compiler of the Books of Kings.

Prophesying, as mentioned in the First Book of Samuel, has no reference to the prediction of future events. It is descriptive of the religious excitement bringing about an ecstatic condition under the inspiration of hymns, or other religious exercises. Even Saul's fit of frenzy in which he threatened David's life is described as "prophesying" (xviii. 10). The dervishes of the Arab tribes present a fair illustration of "prophesying."

But this ecstatic excitement was not the essence of Hebrew prophecy, and the latter soon divested itself of it.

Prophet and Seer. In the days of Samuel the title given to inspired men is changed. "*For he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer*" (ix. 9).

Seer. Heb. *Roeh* = seer, or *Hozeh* = gazer, denotes one who sees visions, i.e. receives the will of God by dreams or visions.

Prophet. Heb. *Nâbî*. The root of the word signifies "to boil or bubble over."

Its actual meaning is "to pour forth exciting utterances."

Biblical meaning, "to speak under Divine impulse," as the forth-teller, the expounder or interpreter of the Word of God.

The three methods of inquiry of God are mentioned in xxviii. 6 :

- (1) **Dreams**—this corresponds to the title "*seer*."
- (2) **Urim**—this would be the duty of the "*priest*."
- (3) **Prophets**—this would be the duty of the "*prophet*," as the interpreter of the Word of God.

The first two methods seem to have disappeared. The "*seer*" quickly disappears in the early monarchy. The "*Urim*" was lost at the destruction of the Temple, but the prophets remained as the recognised expounders of God's purposes.

In the transition period of "*seer*" and "*prophet*" we find :

Samuel, Gad and Heman (Samuel's grandson) called "*seers*."
Nathan and David are invariably referred to under the new name of "*prophet*."

SACRIFICES.

In the First Book of Samuel there are continual references to the sacrifices, particularly to the peace-offering, followed by the sacrificial feast.

Broadly speaking, the offerings may be divided into three classes, if the offering of incense be excluded, and they were offered in the following order, viz. :

1. **The sin-offering; the trespass-offering.** This was expiatory, and varied with the different offences against the law. The shedding of blood was an essential part of the sin offering, which represented the Covenant as broken by man, and as knit together by God's appointment, through the "*shedding of blood*."
2. **The burnt-offering.** The main idea was "*self-dedication*." The blood was sprinkled round about the altar, continuing the idea of expiation, but the main idea was the offering of the whole victim to God, representing (as the laying of the hand on its head shows) the devotion of the sacrificer, body and soul, to Him. The victim was wholly consumed.
3. **The thank-offering.** The main idea was the offering to God of His own best gifts as a sign of thankful homage, and as a means of maintaining His service and His servants.
 - (a) *Unbloody*, called the *meat-offering*, consisting not of "*meat*" in the modern sense, but solely of corn, flour and oil.
 - (b) *Bloody*, called the *peace-offering*. The offering consisted of three parts. The worshipper brought to the priest the fat of the victim, together with the breast and shoulder.
 - (1) The fat was burnt upon the altar as an offering to God (Lev. iii. 3-5).
 - (2) The breast and shoulder were "*waved*" and "*heaved*" before the Lord, and after being thus dedicated to Jehovah, became the priest's portion.
 - (3) The worshipper received the rest of the victim, and partook of it with his family and friends as a sacrificial feast.

It will be seen from the above that the characteristic ceremony in the peace-offering was the eating of the flesh by the sacrificer. It betokened the enjoyment of Communion with God (see Bible Dictionary).

We have several examples of the sacrificial feast connected with the peace-offering in the First Book of Samuel :

1. The sacrifice of Elkanah, at which he gave Hannah a double portion (I. 3-8).
2. The desecration of the offering by Hophni and Phinehas (ii. 12-17).
3. The sacrificial feast at which Samuel entertained Saul (ix. 19-24).
4. The feast at which Samuel anointed David (xvi. 2-13).
5. The sacrifice at Beth-lehem, to which David pretended that he had been called by his brother (xx. 6, 28, 29).

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

As has been pointed out (p. xciii.), the First Book of Samuel naturally divides itself into **four divisions**, corresponding to the four great personages of the Book, viz., **Eli, Samuel, Saul and David.**

Each of these periods is characterised by distinctive features, and is marked by special notes of God's method in working out His purpose of establishing the monarchy in Israel.

THE DAYS OF ELI.

Eli, High-priest and Judge.

He was a descendant of Ithamar, the younger of the two surviving sons of Aaron.

The high-priesthood was originally in the family of Eleazar, the elder of the two surviving sons of Aaron. Eli was the first of the family of Ithamar to attain the distinction of high-priest.

We can only conjecture reasons for the change from the family of Eleazar to the family of Ithamar.

It is probable that on the death of Eli's predecessor there was no one of the house of Eleazar equal to taking the office in such troublesome times, either because of youth or incapacity, and that Eli, a vigorous, able man, was elected to the double office of priest and judge.

He must have gained the post by merit, for there is no indication of any act of usurpation. Consequently we may conclude that in his younger days Eli must have been a man of vigour and ability.

We see him in the First Book of Samuel in his old age, when he appears to have handed over the active duties of the priesthood to his sons, Hophni and Phinhas.

Character.

1. *He could still be energetic.* Witness his rebuke of Hannah (I. 14). But his energy did not extend to a suppression of the sins of his sons.

2. *Benevolent and kindly, e.g.* his fatherly treatment of Hannah when he discovered his error, and his evident affection and care for Samuel.

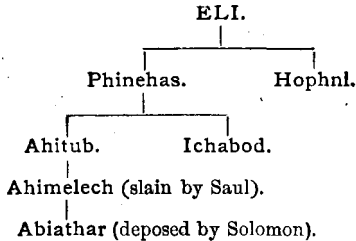
3. *Weak.* Shown by his leniency to his two sons. He rebuked them for their conduct, but did not depose them from their office.

He was unwilling to deprive his family of the emoluments attached to the office of high-priest.

4. *At heart a servant of the Lord.* He received the announcement of the fate of his house with humiliation and resignation.

But his faith is *passive* rather than *active*. He bows to the will of God, but takes no active steps towards a change of purpose and action, which alone could have shown true repentance.

THE FAMILY OF ELI.

**The Condition of the Kingdom.**

The history of the Judges is a record of the political decay of the nation, and of its religious retrogression. The bond of union between the tribes became continually looser, the incorporation of the Canaanite element had weakened the recollection of common descent, and the tribes on the east of Jordan had begun to lead a separate life. Religious life had also been dissociated from the sanctuary. Manasseh had gone astray after the ephod of Gideon at Ophrah; at Dan there was a separate worship, whilst the Baalim and the Ashtaroth of Canaan were tolerated in the land, nay, Baal-berith was the god at Shechem.

In Ephraim alone was there any indication of the old ideal and spirit of Israel. Ephraim was the heart and core of the nation; it was in the centre of the land, of purer blood, with less admixture of the Canaanite element, and at Shiloh was the tabernacle.

So the condition of Ephraim gives us the key to the state of the nation :

1. *Politically.* Ephraim had just emerged from the war against Jephthah. In that contest no less than 42,000 of its fighting strength had perished (Judges xii. 6).

Benjamin, too, had been nearly exterminated by the other tribes (Judges xx. 31).

Samson, the daring champion, was dead.

Thus the centre of the land was weakened of defenders. Now was the Philistines' opportunity. They were no longer content with raiding expeditions; they organized a great expedition for the conquest of the land.

2. *Religiously.* The worship at Shiloh was a prostitution of religion. The greed of the priests had brought the sacrifices into contempt. The Israelites began to shrink from bringing their yearly offerings to Shiloh. Nay, more, the wicked sons of Eli profaned the tabernacle by their immorality.

The Fall of the Theocracy.

The Theocracy had failed in its purpose. Under it the common worship of the one true God had been intended to be the bond that should unite the tribes. Religion and nationality were to be linked together. Religious decadence and national disintegration sank lower and lower on parallel lines,

National disunion and Ephraim's weakness left the land without any line of defence.

Decay of spiritual life had destroyed the religious fervour and enthusiasm that had nerved the Israelite armies to victory and conquest. So the nation deservedly pay the penalty of servitude to Philistia, and of the destruction of the national centre of religion.

Oppression by the Philistines. The victory at Ebenezer opened a way into the heart of the country.

They gained possession of the Ark, and pressed on and sacked Shiloh.

They occupied the country, securing the passes by forts and garrisons.

They left the Israelites without arms, hunted the smiths out of the land, so that no warlike weapons could be forged.

The people remained as cultivators only, paying tribute to their oppressors, and were compelled to go to the nearest Philistine garrison if they wished to sharpen their agricultural implements.

The Philistines gave their name to the land, and Israel almost ceased to be a nation.

The Fall of Shiloh (see Psalm lxxviii. 56-64 at p. 131). The fate was deserved.

The iniquities of the priesthood had called for the Divine vengeance.

Psalm lxxviii. tells us how thoroughly the Philistines did their work.

The Theocracy fell with a crash. The period of oppression was ever afterwards known as "*the captivity.*"

The Fate of Eli's House.

1. *The sin.* Greed, robbing the worshipper, and bringing the sacrifices into contempt.

Immorality. Eli, by not punishing his sons, made himself partner in their sin.

2. *The doom.*

(a) None of his descendants should reach old age.

(b) Constant humiliation in their office.

(c) His family should be deposed from the high-priesthood, which should be given to a more faithful priest.

(d) His deposed family would crave for the humblest offices in the priesthood to support existence.

(e) The two chief sinners, Hophni and Phinehas, should perish together, and their death should be a sign of the accomplishment of the remaining judgments.

3. *Fulfilment.*

Hophni and Phinehas fell at the battle of Ebenezer.

Saul put to death eighty-five priests of Nob.

Solomon removed Abiathar from the priesthood and appointed Zadok as the sole holder of the office.

THE DAYS OF SAMUEL.

A Transition Period. 1. The life of Samuel separates the age of the Judges from the Kings.

2. It marks the transition from a period of anarchy and disunion to one of order and organised unity under a single head (Sayce).

3. It unites the past, the present, and the future of the nation.

The sacred writer (see Design p. vi.) is concerned only with recording those facts in the histories of Samuel, Saul and David that illustrate the development of the kingdom of God.

Thus we have no strict chronological order, no complete account of Samuel's life, of the reign of Saul, or of the reign of David, but only a selection of events that bear upon the purpose of the writer.

Periods of Samuel's Life. There are five well-marked periods in the life of Samuel. The division gives a strong indication of the purpose of the writer.

- I. **First Period** (about 12 years). The birth, dedication and training of the boy in the service of the Tabernacle under the guardianship of Eli.

We may note :

1. *The dedication.* Samuel, as a Levite, would have taken part in the Tabernacle service, but for only a period of his life. He is dedicated by his mother to life-long service.

He is a *Nazarite. The vows included (see Num. vi. 2-21)—

- (a) Not to eat any production of the vine.
- (b) Not to drink wine, nor strong drink.
- (c) Not to eat any unclean thing, nor to approach any dead body.
- (d) Not to cut his hair.

There is no injunction as regards any of these things recorded in connection with the dedication of Samuel, so we may assume that the dedication was spiritual more than outward.

2. *The training.* Samuel was trained under Eli's personal superintendence, and, apart from his duties in the Tabernacle, appears to have been a personal attendant on the aged Eli.

- II. **Second Period** (about 15—20 years). Samuel is called by the Voice of God to be a prophet. Josephus tells us that this occurred in his twelfth year.

This period is ended by the capture of the Ark, the death of Eli, and the sack of Shiloh.

- Notable life-long Nazarites are : Samuel, Samson, John the Baptist.

Samuel compared and contrasted with Samson.

Samuel.

1. Birth divinely announced by prophecy.
2. Samuel granted in answer to prayer.
3. God-dedicated.
4. Dedication—spiritual rather than outward, for the restoration of the religious life of the nation.
5. Work, successful in the revival of the spiritual life of Israel.
6. Work completed in the establishment of the monarchy in David, the type of the Messiah.

Samson.

1. Birth divinely announced by angelic message.
2. Samson sent by God for His own purpose.
3. God-demanded.
4. Dedication—outward rather than spiritual, for the defence of Israel against the Philistines.
5. Work, distinguished by extraordinary feats of strength and valour.
6. Work ended in the self-indulgence, failure and death of the great hero.

The gradual stages of the training are specially noticed, *e.g.* :

- (a) *Physical*. With the visits of Hannah in his childhood it is said that "*the child Samuel grew before the Lord*" (ii. 21).
- (b) *Moral*. "*And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men*" (ii. 26).
- (c) *Spiritual*. "*And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel*" (iii. 19—iv. 1).

The progress of Samuel is continually contrasted with the moral and spiritual decline of Hophni and Phinehas, *e.g.*—

1. The sin of Hophni and Phinehas with regard to the sacrifices (ii. 12-17) is followed by the description of Samuel's ministry in the Tabernacle, ending with the record of his physical growth (ii. 18-21).
2. Their immorality and Eli's unavailing rebuke (ii. 22-25) is followed by the note of Samuel's moral progress (ii. 26).
3. The announcement of the doom of Eli's house through Samuel (iii. 11-18) is followed by the record of Samuel's spiritual progress (iii. 19—iv. 1). Thus we have :

Samuel.

Hophni and Phinehas.

Ministering in the Tabernacle, growing before the Lord.

By their greed profaning the sacrifice.

Growing in favour both with the Lord and the people.

Indulging in open immorality.

The messenger of God to Eli. Established as prophet to reveal God's will to the people.

Slain in the battle with the Philistines. Their family deposed from the priesthood.

III. Third Period (about 20 years). Steady, unwearied work in reviving the religious life of the people. Spiritual life in the soul as superior to the ceremonial forms of the law was evidently the line of teaching adopted by Samuel.

This period is ended by the gathering of the people at Mizpeh and the defeat of the Philistines, recorded by the erection of the stone of Ebenezer (vii. 1-12).

IV. Fourth Period (duration uncertain). Samuel as Judge. The period is marked by peace (vii. 13-15), but Samuel's jurisdiction appears to have been limited.

As a Seer the influence of Samuel extended throughout the land.

As a Judge his office was confined to a small district in the centre of Ephraim. He went on circuit each year to "*Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh*" (vii. 16). Later his sons judged at Beer-sheba.

This period ends with a notice of Samuel's extreme age, the corrupt conduct of his sons, and the demand of the people for a king (see p. xxii.).

V. Fifth Period. The Establishment of the Monarchy (duration uncertain).

This period is marked by three stages :

1. *The first part of Saul's reign.* Saul is king. Samuel is seer and judge, the friend and counsellor of Saul.
2. *The rejection of Saul.* A breach between prophet and king. "*Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death*" (xv. 35).
3. *The final years of Saul's reign.* Samuel anoints David (xvi. 13), and evidently gives his advice and support to David, who takes refuge with the aged prophet at Ramah (xix. 18). Gad may have been sent by Samuel to David in Moab (xxii. 5).

Clearly the prophetic order was in sympathy with David, and greatly strengthened his cause. They would not advocate nor countenance open rebellion against Saul, but used their influence, both in shaping David's conduct, and in leading the people to see that Saul's conduct manifestly showed that he was rejected by Jehovah.

This period concludes with the death of Samuel (xxv. 1).

His public funeral, and the mourning of the whole nation, indicate the high honour in which Samuel was held by the whole people.

His work did not end with his death, but with the final establishment of the kingdom under David, as recorded in II. Samuel, and this explains why the books which narrate this period of Jewish history bear the name of Samuel.

Samuel's Appearance and Character.

Appearance. The account of his apparition at Endor gives us some idea of how he must have been known in life.

Venerable, but awe inspiring. His appearance is thus described by the witch at Endor, "*I saw gods ascending out of the earth*" (xxviii. 13).

His long Nazarite hair marked him as the Seer:

His mantle, wrapped round him and reaching down to his feet, worn even in childhood, was his peculiar badge. On the skirts of this peculiar robe Saul had laid hold when he had last parted from Samuel at Gilgal. The prophet was recognised by his mantle at the vision of Endor (Stanley).

Character:

1. *A true Nazarite*—God-devoted, stern, unbending, true to his calling whithersoever it might direct him (Edersheim).
2. *Of scrupulous integrity*, evidenced by the testimony of the people when appealed to to point out any act of oppression or fraud. "*Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand*" (xii. 4).
3. *Independence of character*, evidenced in—
 - (a) His rebuke of national sin, and his call on the people to repentance at Mizpeh (vii. 3-6).
 - (b) His plain, outspoken words to the nation on their demand for a king (viii. 10-18), and in his farewell address (xii. 1-25).

- (c) His stern attitude towards Saul, in pointing out to the monarch the sins which caused God to reject him (xiii. 13, 14), and (xv. 22-28).
- (d) His defiance of royal authority when he slew Agag after Saul had spared his life (xv. 32, 33).

Characteristics :

1. **The Last of the Judges.** He is the last representative of the Judges who had been raised from Othniel downwards to effect special deliverances. His work is characterized by no deed of valour, though the Philistines were defeated under his rule (vii. 7-12). He revived the drooping fortunes of Israel by his spiritual work in effecting a religious reformation of the people.
2. **The First of the Prophets.** He is referred to specially as Samuel the Prophet. "*All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after*" (Acts iii. 24).
"*He gave them judges until Samuel the Prophet*" (Acts xiii. 20).
3. **He performed priestly functions.**
 - (a) *He offered sacrifice:*
 - (1) At Mizpeh on the alarm occasioned by the approach of the Philistines (vii. 9, 10).
 - (2) He built an altar at Ramah (vii. 17).
 - (3) At the high place at Ramah on the visit of Saul (ix. 12).
 - (4) At Gilgal on the confirmation of Saul in the monarchy (xi. 15).
 - (5) He was anticipated by Saul in offering sacrifice at Gilgal (xiii. 9).
 - (6) At Bethlehem on the consecration of David (xvi. 2-5).

The sacrifices were to be offered by priests alone; Samuel was a Levite but not a priest. The sacrifices were to be offered at one place only; Samuel offered sacrifices in various places. How can we explain the double breach of the Law?

The Act of Sacrificing may be explained by Samuel's special office, and by the degradation of the priesthood through the sins of Eli's sons.

Samuel is mentioned in Psalms along with Moses and Aaron. "*Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name*" (Ps. xcix. 6).

From the fall of Shiloh (iv.) till Saul would consult Ahiah (xiv. 3) there is no mention of a priest. From this it would appear that Samuel virtually put the priesthood aside, and took upon himself the duties of the office.

The various high places may be explained by remembering that the fall of Shiloh was the destruction of the long established centre of worship. The Ark was not restored to its ancient dignity, nor could a new centre of worship be decided upon till the monarchy was definitely established.

(b) *He made intercession:*

- (1) He prayed for the people at Mizpeh (vii. 5).
- (2) He cried unto the Lord for the people when threatened by the Philistine attack (vii. 9).

- (3) In his farewell address he promised not to cease to pray for the people (xii. 23).
- (4) He interceded with the Lord for Saul after the disobedience of the king in not destroying Amalek (xv. 11).
- (c) *He performed acts of benediction.* He blessed the sacrifice at Ramah when Saul met him (ix. 13).
- (d) *He performed acts of anointing, e.g.:*
- (1) Saul as king (x. 1).
 - (2) David as future king (xvi. 13).

His Work. The greatness of Samuel's work can be best grasped when we contrast the condition of the nation as he found it with the position that grew out of his work.

When he succeeded Eli the tribes were disunited, the worship of Jehovah neglected, and idol worship prevalent, so that the people were in danger of being incorporated with the nations of Canaan, and of thus losing their distinctive nationality. From this Samuel rescued the people

His work divides itself into three parts:

1. **Reformation.** The work of the first twenty years of his rule. Unwearied, steady work in impressing upon the people that their disasters were due to national sin. Samuel succeeded in eradicating idol worship, of which there is no hint in the times of Samuel, Saul or David. He also filled the people with the idea that they were God's chosen people.
2. **The Monarchy.** The reformation, amongst other effects, roused the people to a great national desire for unity. The Monarchy welded the twelve tribes into one.
3. **The Prophetical Order.** Not only to teach the people, but to be a check on the actions of the king. The Jewish king was, unlike other monarchs, merely the visible representation of Jehovah, the supreme head of the nation. The king was literally God's Vice-gerent. The Prophets, speaking in the name of the Lord, encouraged, guided, and fearlessly rebuked the king as occasion required. Henceforth, though Samuel's work is specially notable for the **Two Great Institutions of the Monarchy and the Prophetical**, we find three distinct orders during the monarchy, viz.: *Prophet, Priest, King*, each having a separate work, viz.:

- * *Prophet*, above both priest and king, divinely raised from time to time to declare the will of Jehovah.

The prophet represents the *spiritual life* of the people.

Early Indications of the Prophetical Order:

1. Abraham is referred to as a "prophet" (Gen. xx. 7).
2. The patriarchs are included in the title. "*Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*" (Ps. cv. 15). The verse refers to a period anterior to Jacob's going down into Egypt.
3. Moses is termed a prophet. "*There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses*" (Deut. xxxiv. 10), clearly infers that there were others.
4. Miriam is styled "*the prophetess*" (Ex. xv. 20).
5. Deborah, "*a prophetess*," judged Israel (Judg. iv. 4).
6. A prophet rebuked the idolatry of the people at the time of the Midianite oppression (Judg. vi. 8).
7. The character and duties of a prophet are defined in Deut. xiii. 1-5; xviii. 9-22.

Priest, the guardian of the Temple, the administrator of the ceremonial law, the offerer of the sacrifices.

The priest represents the *ceremonial life* of the people.

* *King*, the arbiter of justice, the ruler of the kingdom, the leader in war.

The king represents the *civil and military life* of the people.

Samuel's work did not end with his life. The monarchy was not established till the time of David, but as Samuel anointed David, the prophet's work may be said to have outlived him. It found its culmination in the advent of the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, the Prophet, Priest and King, foreshadowed in all Jewish history, but in no period so emphatically as in that recorded in the two Books of Samuel.

THE DAYS OF SAUL.

Demand for a King. We may note :

1. **By whom the demand was made.** It was made by the *elders of Israel*, no doubt after due deliberation. So the demand was not the outcry of the rabble, but an application made by those of influence and weight in the country.

2. **When it was made.** When Samuel was old. The conduct of his sons boded ill for the nation should they succeed Samuel.

So the elders desired to secure the government on a settled basis during the lifetime of Samuel, and under the sanction of his authority.

From the allusion to Nahash and the Ammonites in Samuel's farewell address (xii. 12), it would seem that the Israelites were threatened with an Ammonite invasion on the East of Jordan.

3. **The words of the application.** "*Make us a king to judge us like all the nations*" (viii. 5).

"*That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles*" (viii. 20).

The Demand Not Sinful. From the above we may gather that the demand was not an act of sin, for :

1. A monarchy had distinctly been contemplated and provided for (see Note below).

* Early Indications of a Monarchy:

1. The promise to Abraham, "*Kings shall come out of thee*" (Gen. xvii. 6; see also 16).
2. The monarchy prophetically assigned to Judah. "*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,*" etc. (Gen. xlix. 10).
3. The term is applied to Israel typically as a "*kingdom of priests*" (Ex. xix. 6).
4. Balaam prophesies that "*there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel*" (Num. xxiv. 17).
5. The people expected a monarchy, instanced, by the refusal of Gideon to become king and found a dynasty (Judg. viii. 22, 23), and by the abortive attempt of Abimelech to reign (Judg. ix.).
6. Moses anticipates the time when the people would ask for a king, and gives specific directions to regulate the choice, and to prescribe the duties of the future monarch (Deut. xvii. 14-20).

2. The system of Judges had failed. The end had been internal anarchy and decay, the destruction of the central sanctuary, and oppression by the Philistines.
3. Samuel was growing old, and his sons were not to be entrusted to administer justice.
4. A monarchy only could satisfy the rising national spirit, and weld the disunited tribes into a united nation.

The Sin. Wherein then lay the sin? We must seek for this in the words of the elders (see p. xxii.), in the action of Samuel, and the manner in which the request was received by Jehovah.

Samuel conceived that the demand for a king was a rejection of himself, in dissatisfaction with his rule. But the elders had made it clear that this was not the case. "*Thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways*" (viii. 5). So the demand was not a reflection on Samuel personally.

Jehovah clearly points out the sin. "*For they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them*" (viii. 7).

The sin lay then in the rejection of Jehovah as their king.

They wanted a "*king like other nations.*" But Jehovah was *their king*, and king in a manner entirely unlike a king of other nations. To ask for a king like other nations was to reject Jehovah.

"*Like other nations.*" They craved for an earthly sovereign with the usual attributes of power and state, giving dignity to the nation. The absence of a king made them appear inferior in the eyes of their neighbours. The want of a king may have been cast in their teeth by neighbouring nations.

So in the words of the elders we get the keynote to the sin of the people.

The king was to "*judge*" them. We must remember that this phrase in the minds of the Israelites did not convey the idea of civil administration so much as deliverance from their enemies.

Their deliverance had been *unseen*, they wanted it seen.

It had been only certain to *faith*, but quite uncertain to them in their present state of mind.

It was in *heaven*, they wanted it upon *earth*.

It was of *God*, they wanted it visibly embodied in a *man* (Eldersheim).

In fact they preferred the splendour and dignity of a visible monarch, and distrusted the invisible sovereignty of Jehovah, not appreciating the special and glorious privileges of the spiritual monarchy.

Acquiescence with the Demand. Samuel, by the command of Jehovah, did two things:

1. He pointed out to the people their great sin in rejecting Jehovah.
2. He described the tyrannies exercised by heathen kings, the like of which they now wished to rule in Israel.

As the people persisted in their demand, it remained only to await Divine indication of the person to be elected king.

At the election, Samuel drew up the Charter of the Kingdom and laid it up before the Lord (x. 25).

*** Saul, the First King.**

He is chosen on three occasions :

1. By Samuel privately (x. 1).
2. Elected by lot at Mizpeh (x. 17-27).
3. Confirmed in the kingdom at Gilgal, after his victory over the Ammonites (xi. 14, 15).

Tribe: Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel. "*There is little Benjamin with their ruler*" (Ps. lxxviii. 27). The selection may be regarded in two lights :

1. The territory of Benjamin included the passes that led from Philistia into the interior of the country. So Saul could always depend upon his own tribe to support him against the Philistines. He fought in country well known to his men, and, as long as he held it, barred raids into the interior.
2. When the monarchy was made permanent in the tribe of Judah, the inferiority of Benjamin prevented any serious opposition to the establishment of the dynasty in David's line. A powerful tribe like Ephraim would not have quietly sat down under such a change.

He justified his election, for :

1. He saved Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites.
2. He succeeded in rolling back the wave of Philistine supremacy for a time.
3. He displayed great military talent.
4. He was distinguished for courage and devotion to his people.
5. He welded the Israelites into a united nation.

His characteristics :

1. *Appearance.*

Young, handsome and tall ; his size, beauty and manly strength recommended him to the people.

2. *Character.*

(a) *Of simple life.* He is at work in the field when he hears the news from Jabesh-gilead (xi. 5).

The primitive court held at Gibeah in the open air (xxii. 6) is in strong contrast with the magnificent palaces at Jerusalem and the luxurious life of David and Solomon.

There is no trace of indulgence in polygamy.

(b) *A man of impulses.* Evidenced in his rash oath when pursuing the Philistines, and his quick changes of purpose towards David (1) through the arguments of Jonathan (xix. 1-7),

* Saul (Heb. *Shaul*). The name, = *asked*, thus representing that he was given in response to the demand of the people.

Other persons bearing this name are :

- (1) Saul of Rehoboth, one of the early kings of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 37).
- (2) Shaul, of the family of Kohath, mentioned in the genealogy of the Levites, and connected with the family of Samuel (1 Chron. vi. 24).
- (3) Saul of Tarsus, the Apostle, St. Paul. From the circumstance of the first king of Israel being named Saul, the name "became the most distinguished name in the genealogies of the tribe of Benjamin, to which the Apostle felt some pride in belonging" (Rom. xi. 1, "iil. iii. 5) (B.D.).

- (2) at the cave of Engedi (xxiv. 16-22), (3) on the hill of Hachilah (xxvi. 21).
- (c) *Vain-glorious and jealous.* Instances are :
- (1) The erection of a monument at Carmel to commemorate his victory over the Amalekites (xv. 12).
 - (2) His jealousy of David when the women celebrated his exploits in song as superior to the deeds of Saul (xviii. 8).
- (d) *Self-willed and headstrong.* Instances are :
- (1) Sacrificing at Gilgal without waiting for Samuel (xiii. 9).
 - (2) Sparing Agag and the best of the cattle of the Amalekites, in direct opposition to the explicit command of Jehovah (xv. 9).
 - (3) His violent rage against Jonathan, when he learnt that his son had connived at David's absence from the royal table (xx. 30-34).
- (e) *A born soldier.* "Saul was a born soldier, and he had a soldier's eye for detecting those who could best serve him in war. He added to his bodyguard all who were distinguished by strength and courage, and the border war with the Philistines kept them in constant employment." (Sayce.)

Court and administration :

- (1) *The King.* He was distinguished by the following marks of royalty :
- (a) A crown upon his helmet. The Amalekite "*took the crown that was upon his head*" (2 Sam. i. 10).
 - (b) A bracelet on his arm. "*And the bracelet that was on his arm*" (2 Sam. i. 10).
 - (c) * *His spear*, the symbol of royalty, equivalent to a sceptre. The spear was always with him.
 - (1) In the house. He cast it at David (xix. 10).
 - (2) At court (xxii. 6).
 - (3) At his meals (xx. 33).
 - (4) When sleeping (xxvi. 7).
 - (5) When in battle (2 Sam. i. 6).
- (2) *The Court.* There are indications of royal state :
- (1) In the court held at Gibeah (xxii. 6).
 - (2) In the feast held at Gibeah, where Saul sits in the place of honour, and special seats are assigned to Jonathan, Abner and David (xx. 25).
- (3) *The Army.* We have the first indications of a standing army—"the host"—over which Abner was appointed captain (xiv. 50).

* **On Saul's spear and on the cruse of water at his head (xxvi. 7), Thomson writes :**

"I noticed, at all the encampments which we passed, that the sheik's tent was distinguished from the rest by a tall spear stuck upright in the ground in front of it; and it is the custom, when a party is out on an excursion for robbery or for war, that when they halt to rest, the spot where the chief reclines or sleeps is thus designated."

"The cruse of water at Saul's head is in exact accordance with the customs of the people at this day. No one ventures to travel over these deserts without his cruse of water, and it is very common to place one at the 'bolster,' so that the owner can reach it during the night" (pp. 366-7).

- (4) *A royal bodyguard.* The servants (xvi. 15), his servants were standing about (xxii. 7), selected for their courage and strength (xiv. 52), commanded by David.
- (5) *Civil administration.* Doeg, the Edomite, is mentioned as "*the chief of the herdmen*" (xxi. 7), thus giving an indication of the establishment of the civil administration of the kingdom.

Saul's Reign. The record is only partial. It is not the design of the writer to give a full account of Saul's reign. He depicts Saul's monarchy in relation to the Kingdom of God in Israel, viz., how the king "after the people's heart" failed to become the king "after God's own heart."

In accordance with this design we can divide the narrative into **Four Parts**, viz.:

1. **Election of Saul. Establishment of the Monarchy.** This section is treated in detail as dealing with the great change from a pure Theocracy to a Monarchy.
 2. **Saul's Wars.** These are mentioned briefly (xiv. 47, 48), to show that Saul's successful generalship justified the choice of the nation.
 3. **The Causes of his Rejection.** The war with the Philistines, and the slaughter of the Amalekites are recorded fully, because they contain the reasons why Saul was rejected, and illustrate his rashness and self-will.
 4. **The Decline of Saul. The Rise of David.** From chapter xvi. till the end of the book, David occupies the chief place in the history. In no sense can the narrative in the concluding chapters be regarded as an account of the reign of Saul. It is the record of David's preparation to fill the high position for which he was destined. The moral decline of Saul, and the gradual weakening of the power of Israel, stand out in contrast with the individual development of David, and the growth of his power.
1. **His Election.** How full of detail is the account of Saul's promotion to the monarchy. We may note particularly:
- The private selection by Samuel* (ix.—x. 8). We may be sure that, in his communing with Saul (ix. 25), Samuel laid before him the responsibilities and duties of a king under Jehovah, and impressed upon him the necessity of subordination to God's will and of implicit obedience to the Divine commands.
- The three signs were given him also for this purpose (see p. 29). Briefly the lessons of those signs are:
- First sign. That his royalty was *from God*.
- Second sign. That his royalty was *under God*.
- Third sign. That his royalty was *with God*.
- If Saul had duly pondered upon Samuel's words, and the significance of these signs, the fateful history of his later days would never have been written.
2. **His Rejection.** Saul was subjected to two Tests, and he failed on each occasion.

(a) *First Test.* To await the coming of Samuel at Gilgal (xiii. 8). Samuel delayed his coming as long as possible to test the king, but came before the period allotted.

The sin. It is a common error to suppose that Samuel blamed Saul for assuming the priestly office by offering sacrifice. The contest lay with Samuel *the prophet* as against Saul *the king*.

The Prophet declared to the king the will of God. The king was commanded to wait the coming of the Prophet. The king disobeyed.

Therefore the sin is clearly disobedience and self-will. "*Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord*" (xiii. 13).

The punishment. His line was rejected. Saul personally was not rejected, but was deprived of the honour of establishing a dynasty, a royal house.

(b) *Second test.* To thoroughly extirpate the Amalekites. Not one was to be reserved.

Saul once more broke the command of God, and kept the best of the cattle to sacrifice to Jehovah, and Agag to grace his triumph.

Even if we accept the reason (*i.e.* for sacrifice) given for saving the cattle as absolutely true, Saul must be convicted of putting ceremonial observances before obedience to God's will. Samuel sums up the king's shortcoming "*To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams*" (xv. 22.)

The expedition against Amalek and the erection of the monument to celebrate the success, bring out clearly the vain-glorious, self-willed, imperious nature of his character, and present him as acting in a spirit of wilful insubordination.

The punishment. Saul himself is now rejected and the kingdom given to another.

Why then was Saul ever chosen by the Almighty to be king? Because it was necessary to show the nation that a king "*after their heart,*" and one "*like other nations*" must fail to attain to the ideal monarchy intended by Jehovah.

(a) *Saul a king after the people's heart.*

Saul, exactly represents the feeling of the nation, both outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly he represented the majesty and dignity associated with the regal state in other countries. He was an autocrat, yielding his will to no one. He ruled as a man, as a despot, owning no submission to Divine command.

Inwardly.

"Saul's going down to Gilgal to offer sacrifices, and yet not offering them properly.

His unwillingness to enter on the campaign without having entreated the face of Jehovah, and yet offending him by disobedience.

His trust in the help of Jehovah, and yet his distrust when his followers left him.

His evident belief in the absolute efficacy of sacrifices as an outward ordinance irrespective of the inward sacrifice of heart and will.

Are all exactly representative of the religious state of Israel." (Edersheim.)

So the election of Saul is sanctioned by Jehovah as an object lesson for His people.

(b) David, a king after God's own heart.

He is eminent for his personal qualities, but these alone would not have qualified him for the high distinction of establishing a dynasty.

His life is tainted with sin and immorality. But these in themselves are not a disqualification. In spite of his failings and sins his heart was right. He never lost hold of the principle of subjection to the will of God, e.g.—

(a) His conduct when his sin with Bath-sheba is brought home to him by Nathan (2 Sam. xii. 1-23).

(b) His submission to God's will when bidden by Gad to choose his punishment for his sin in numbering the people. "*Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man*" (2 Sam. xxiv. 14).

The Penitential Psalms tell us how real was David's contrition for his sins, contrasting strongly with Saul's attitude on the occasion of his sin against Amalek. Saul endeavoured to excuse himself by putting the blame on the people. He was more concerned about the punishment than the sin, and desired Samuel "to honour him before the people."

David's heart was right; his public principle was right; he recognised that the principle on which the monarchy of Israel was founded must be spiritual, Divine—a kingdom in which the will of the earthly king should be in avowed subjection to that of the heavenly King.

And so he and his kingdom were the type of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. Jesus came not to do His own will, but that of His Father in heaven.

We may remark another contrast between Saul and David :

<i>As king.</i> Saul put his will before the Divine will.	David subordinated his will to the Divine will.
<i>Prophet.</i> Saul rebelled against the advice and control of Samuel acting as prophet in telling him God's will.	David, himself a prophet, had Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer, as his counsellors and advisers.
<i>Priests.</i> Saul massacred the priests.	David established and organized the worship at Jerusalem.

Saul may be compared to Esau, David to Jacob. Esau, with his manly qualities, is a picture of the noble, valiant king. But he valued the birthright so little, and so despised the spiritual privileges of the chosen people, that he bartered his spiritual heritage for a mess of pottage. So Saul failed to grasp the spiritual principle of the Hebrew monarchy. Grasping at the shadow of an earthly kingdom, he missed the fundamental principle of the ideal kingdom.

Jacob, in his human frailty, compares with David and his sins. But, as Jacob never lost hold of the "promise," his faith in it being the principle of his life, so David never forgot the typical idea of the Kingdom of God.

Saul's Decline. We may note its stages :

1. Breach with the Prophetic Order. When Samuel abandoned Saul at Gilgal (xv. 34), the support of the prophetic order was lost to Saul. Not in open rebellion, but in their preaching, the

prophets would point out to the people that Saul had been rejected of Jehovah as not obedient to Divine will.

2. **The Evil Spirit.** The secession of the prophets was the outward sign of Saul's rejection.

"The evil spirit" was the inward sign that God had abandoned Saul.

What evil spirit? The evil spirit of his own passions uncontrolled and unrestrained by the Grace of God. We need only picture Saul brooding upon the denunciation of Samuel, with the feeling that his doom was certain, to imagine how the king's own thoughts were his evil spirit.

The following thoughts would be ever present in his mind :

1. No son to succeed to the kingdom. The dynasty to end with him.

We must bear in mind the deep distress which all Hebrews had at the prospect of having no son of theirs to succeed, if we wish to comprehend the feeling of Saul on this head.

2. **Anxiety for his personal safety.** Who was to be his successful rival? How was his own kingly power to be surrendered? The future was black and probably bloody.

Effect of the evil spirit. The terror of his thoughts, the certainty of his doom, with the uncertainty of the time and manner of its fulfilment, gradually caused his mind to give way. He became subject to

Fits of moody depression or melancholy, which at times became insanity. These fits would be regarded by his attendants as a Divine judgment; they would regard it that "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."

3. **His jealousy of David.** His noble heart had warmed to the shepherd lad in his bold defiance of Goliath. His soldier's eye discerned the qualities of the youth, so he took David to his court and made him his armourbearer.

Later, the achievements of David aroused his jealousy, and from that time the king loses ground with the nation, whilst David increases in favour.

4. **The massacre of the priests,** together with the unrecorded event of the slaughter of the Gibeonites, detached the priests from his cause. The priestly influence was now on David's side, and with it the religious party in the kingdom. But not in open revolt; they could leave the issue in Divine hands.

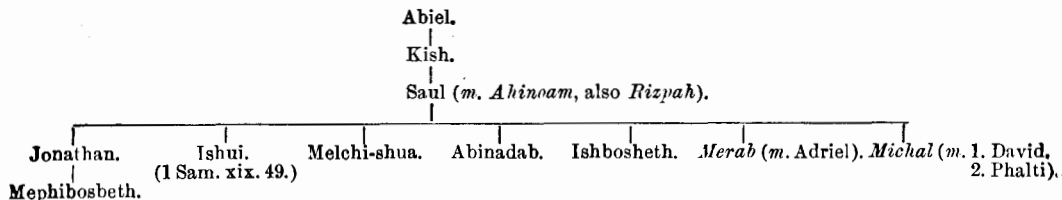
5. **All Saul's efforts against David lead to the latter's advancement.** We may note :

(1) He removes David from attendance on his person, and places him in command "*over a thousand*" (xviii. 13).

David, by his prudent conduct and daring exploits, becomes the darling of the army (xviii. 16 and 30).

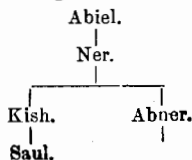
(2) Saul seeks David's destruction by the Philistines, when he offers his daughter to David as a reward if he slew a hundred Philistines

FAMILY OF SAUL, TO ILLUSTRATE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

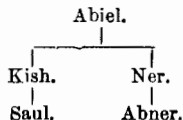


PEDIGREE OF ABNER.

(according to 1 Chron. viii.)



(according to 1 Sam. ix.)



According to 1 Sam. ix. Abner is the cousin of Saul, but according to 1 Chron. viii. Abner is Saul's uncle.

"*Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle*" (Sam. xiv. 50). Saul's uncle may refer to Abner, or to Ner.

In Saul's pedigree (1 Sam. ix. 1) Ner is not mentioned as one of Saul's ancestors.

So, considering that Abner survived Saul, and was the mainstay of Ishbosheth during the latter's short reign, it is difficult to conceive that Abner was Saul's uncle.

The argument is consequently strong in favour of considering Abner and Saul as first cousins.

David slays two hundred, marries the king's daughter, and thus becomes allied to the royal house.

- (3) Saul, in his insensate fury, massacres the priests. This act shattered his kingdom. Every pious Israelite saw that Saul's rule was doomed, and turned his eyes towards David.
- (4) His mad purpose to capture David led him to waste the resources of the kingdom in the pursuit of his rival, and thus gave the Philistines the opportunity to organize their last successful invasion of the land.
- (6) **The witch at Endor.** On Gilboa, Saul faces the Philistine array with the feeling :
 - (1) That he is rejected of Jehovah. "*The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets*" (xxviii. 6).
 - (2) That he was abandoned by the prophets.
 - (3) That he had alienated the priesthood.
 - (4) That he had lost the whole-hearted support of the nation.

He stood alone, save for the small band composed mainly of his family and his own tribesmen. His force was manifestly inadequate to meet the numerous and disciplined force arrayed against him.

His heart sank within him. Is the day of his doom at hand? Without response to his inquiries of God, he took refuge in consulting a woman with a familiar spirit.

She called up Samuel. From the departed seer the king learnt his doom.

He faced the foe with the battle lost ere it began, and perished with his sons on the fatal slopes of Gilboa.

THE FAMILY OF SAUL.

Jonathan. The eldest son of Saul, and one of the noblest figures in the Bible story.

His History.

His life may be divided into two great divisions :

1. His connection with the War with the Philistines.
2. His friendship for David.

1. The War with the Philistines.

- (a) He surprised the post of the Philistines at Geba, and gave the signal for a general revolt.
- (b) In response to the rising, the Philistines poured into Israel in greater numbers, and their oppression became more severe than before.

Jonathan and his armourbearer, by their daring feat at Michmash, threw the army of the Philistines into confusion. The panic arising from their onslaught, increased by an earthquake, degenerates into a rout, and Saul, joined by the Hebrews in the camp of the Philistines, and those who were in hiding, pursues his disorganized foes as far as the plain of Aijalon.

The circumstances connected with the pursuit, viz :

- (1) Saul's rash oath ;
- (2) Jonathan's unwitting breach thereof in eating of the honey ;
- (3) The sin of the people in eating of the flesh with the blood ;
- (4) The detection of Jonathan by casting lots, and the saving of his life by the action of the people ;

are told fully in Chapter xiv.

(c) He perished with Saul at the fatal field of Gilboa.

In connection with this side of Jonathan's life we may note :

1. That he is constantly present with his father :

- (a) At Gibeah he commands a detachment of 1000 men, out of the 3000 which composed Saul's standing army.
- (b) He occupies a special seat at Saul's table.
- (c) He is the intimate confidant of his father, for whom he entertains a deep affection. Though he knew that Saul was destined to fall, he does not desert his father's fortunes. "*Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided*" (2 Sam. i. 23).

2. His military prowess :

- (a) Displayed in the successful assault on the Philistine garrison at Geba, and later in his daring feat at Michmash.
- (b) His skill in the use of the bow, his favourite and constant weapon (xx. 20).

"*From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back*" (2 Sam. i. 22).

His skill in archery gave the name of "**The Bow**" to the elegy which David composed on the death of Saul and Jonathan (2. Sam. i. 17, 18).

2. His Friendship for David.

The friendship between David and Jonathan is one of the most touching incidents recorded in Scripture, and presents to us the unselfish, warm-hearted, genuine, noble character of Jonathan.

After the triumph of David over Goliath, it is recorded "*that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul*" (xviii. 1 and 3).

David describes their friendship in touching words : "*Very pleasant hast thou been unto me : thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women*" (2 Sam. i. 26).

Their mutual friendship has become proverbial. David and Jonathan are the Damon and Pythias of Scripture.

To this friendship David owed his life on two occasions :

- (1) When Jonathan dissuaded Saul from his purpose of taking David's life (xix. 1-7).
- (2) When Jonathan warned David at the stone Ezel that his life was no longer safe in the court of Saul (xx).

Firm faith and reliance upon Jehovah are notable traits in his character, shown :

1. In his exploit at Michmash.

He climbs the rock with these words, "*It may be that the Lord will work for us : for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few*" (xiv. 6).

2. In his last interview with David in the wood at Ziph.

Here he is said to have "*strengthened David's hand in God.*" "*Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee*" (xxiii. 17).

Jonathan encourages David by reminding him that the promises of God could not fail.

3. In the covenant he made with David, by which David pledged himself to shew kindness to the house of Jonathan, when he himself came to the throne. Here Jonathan also shows his belief that Jehovah would fulfil his word to David.

David remembered his oath, and on his accession sought out the survivors of the family of Saul, and protected Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan (2 Sam. ix. 1), especially when the Gibeonites demanded seven descendants of Saul to be put to death in propitiation for the slaughter of the Gibeonites, and to remove the famine which had been upon the land for three years (2 Sam. xxi. 1-7).

Ishui. Of him nothing more is known than that he was Saul's second son. It is conjectured that he may be identical with Abinadab, as the names of the three sons of Saul who fell at Gilboa are given in 1 Sam. xxxi. 2, and 1 Chron. x. 2, as Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchi-shua.

Melchi-shua. The third son; he perished with Saul on Mount Gilboa.

Abinadab. (See Ishui). If these two are not identical, we must suppose that Abinadab was the fourth son of Saul, and that he perished with his father on Mount Gilboa, whilst Ishui must have died previously.

Merab, the elder daughter of Saul. Saul promised her to David as wife, if David would fight his battles against the Philistines. The offer was made in the hope that David would be killed in battle, and thus be removed from Saul's path.

But Saul broke his word, and gave her to Adriel the Meholathite.

Five sons of Merab and Adriel were handed over to the Gibeonites and hanged in propitiation for the slaughter of the Gibeonites by Saul (2 Sam. xxi. 8, 9).

Michal, the younger daughter of Saul. She loved David, who won her for his wife by his slaughter of the Philistines (xviii. 20-29).

She assisted David to escape from the messengers sent by Saul to arrest him (xix. 12-17).

After David's flight, Saul gave Michal to Phalti to wife (xxv. 44).

When Abner would make a treaty with David, the latter insisted that Michal should be returned to him (2 Sam. iii. 13-16).

When David brought the Ark to Jerusalem, Michal despised him for lowering his dignity in dancing before the procession. She may also have been jealous of David's preference for Ahinoam and Abigail. As a punishment for her conduct, it is said that she "*had no child unto the day of her death*" (2 Sam. vi. 23).

Ishbosheth. He is not mentioned in 1 Samuel. The story of his reign at Mahanaim, on the east of Jordan, and his death, belongs to the period of David's reign at Hebron.

Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan, and grandson of Saul. He is not mentioned in 1 Samuel. The story of David's kindness to him is related in 2 Sam. ix. See also 2 Sam. xvi. 1-4, and 2 Sam. xix. 24-30, for his conduct during Absalom's rebellion.

THE DAYS OF DAVID.

HIS CHARACTER AND PERSONAL QUALITIES.

His Appearance.

1. **Of short stature.** This is implied in the contrast with his tall brother Eliab (xvi. 7).
2. **Ruddy,** *i.e.* with reddish or auburn hair, in contrast to the darkness of complexion generally associated with his country and race.
3. **Bright eyes.** The beauty of his eyes is specially mentioned, "*withal of a beautiful countenance*" (xvi. 12).
4. **Remarkable for his graceful appearance,** "*goodly to look to*" (xvi. 12).
5. **Of wonderful strength and activity.** Compared "to the wild gazelle with feet like hart's feet, with arms strong enough to break a bow of steel" (Ps. xviii. 33, 34). The family appear to have been noted for agility and speed of foot, *e.g.*:
Asahel, "*light of foot as a wild roe*" (2 Sam. ii. 18).
Joab was the first to scale the walls of Jerusalem (1 Chron. xi. 6).

His accomplishments.

He was accomplished in the arts of his age and country.

1. **A Poet.** As evidenced in the Psalms.
2. **A Musician.** His instrument was a "harp," so called, a light and portable stringed instrument, somewhat like a lyre.
To this instrument he sang the verses which he composed, and thus solaced the lonely hours spent in watching his flock. His remarkable skill on the harp was well known throughout the neighbourhood, and became the means of his introduction to the court of Saul.
3. **A student of God's Word.** "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*" He was known to be a man of God.

Some of his qualities:

1. A man of deep feelings, a faithful friend, and an affectionate father.
2. A born ruler, possessing the power of exerting an extraordinary influence over the minds and hearts of others.
3. He inspired a passionate loyalty in his subjects, for they felt that his own personal affection entered into his public life, and that he was devoted to his people.
4. He was emphatically a man "after God's own heart" (see p. xxviii.).
"He was a born king of Israel by his natural gifts. His immense activity and martial spirit united him by a natural succession to the earlier chiefs of Israel, whilst his accomplishments and genius fitted him especially to exercise a vast control over the whole future greatness of the Church and commonwealth" (Stanley).

HIS EARLY LIFE.

His occupation was :

The keeping of his father's flocks round Bethlehem, a task usually devolving on the slaves, females or the despised of the family [*e.g.* Rachel (Gen. xxix. 9), Zipporah (Ex. ii. 16), Jacob (Gen. xxx. 29), Moses (Ex. iii. 1)]. We see him as a shepherd in the camp of Saul—his wand in his hand, his wallet or shepherd's bag round his neck, and his sling to ward off beasts or birds of prey.

Such an occupation was attended with difficulty and danger. The sheep were pastured in the wild, desolate wilderness of Judæa. The sheep had to be protected from the depredations of robber bands, and from the attacks of fierce beasts of prey, and often to be rescued from serious straits in the mountains.

Amidst the rugged hills, David and his companions became thorough mountaineers, accustomed to exercise, inured to fatigue, and trained to perpetual watchfulness.

His training and knowledge of the district stood him in good stead when pursued by Saul.

Early he gave proof of his prowess in the rescue of his flock from the lion and the bear.

In his lonely watchings he learned to commune with God. The simple faith with which he ascribes his deliverance from the lion and the bear to the Lord, and with which he advances to meet the Philistine, sufficiently indicates the early piety of David.

LIFE AT COURT.

We have two accounts of his introduction to the court of Saul :

1. That he was sent for to play on the harp to Saul to soothe the monarch's fits of melancholy.
2. By his successful combat with Goliath.

(On the reconciling of these two different accounts see page 134.)

We notice his advancement in the court.

1. Saul's armourbearer.
2. His friendship with Jonathan.
3. Captain over a thousand.
4. Captain over the king's body-guard, second only to Abner the captain of the host.
5. The king's son-in-law.
6. Occupying a special seat at the king's table.

His popularity with the people, and his influence with the army, quickly aroused the jealousy of Saul. So David had a very difficult part to play. Throughout his behaviour was most discreet. He behaved himself wisely (xviii. 30).

He was distinguished for his prowess and modesty, whilst his integrity and loyalty to Saul were most marked.

His head was not turned by success. Even if his successes and rapid advancement appeared to indicate that he was the destined successor of Saul, he never shewed by deed, word or look that he had any designs on the throne.

The jealousy of Saul, though rightly fixing upon David as the future King foretold by Samuel, had no ground in the conduct of David, whose loyalty and integrity are confirmed by the action of Jonathan, first, in defence of his friend to his father (xix. 4, and xx. 32), and secondly, in his interview with David (xx. 1, 2).

This training in the court, and the spiritual discipline of self-restraint, were great factors in moulding the character of David, and in fitting him to fill the throne.

DAVID IN EXILE.

- Nob.** To obtain food and weapons, and to inquire of the Lord. The visit leads to the massacre of the priests, and its consequences are that the religious feeling of the nation is shocked, abandons Saul, and ranges itself on the side of David.
- Gath.** To Achish. David's life is in danger from the enmity of the Philistines. He feigns madness and escapes.
- Adullam.** David takes refuge in the cave of Adullam.
He is joined by his family and by many, viz.—
(a) Those suffering from the tyranny of Saul.
(b) Those hard pressed by the laws of usury.
(c) Those who saw that Saul's rule meant ruin to the nation, and who sought a leader under whom they might hope for the salvation of the kingdom.
- Moab.** David places his parents for safety with the king of Moab. A stay of some duration, ended by David obeying the command of Gad and returning to Judah.
- Hareth,** The forest of. Not far from Keilah.
- Keilah.** David saves Keilah from a Philistine raid. Saul prepares to advance against Keilah, hoping to catch David in the town. David discovers by inquiry of God that the men of Keilah would surrender him to Saul, so he abandons the city.
- Ziph.** Pursued by Saul. The last meeting of Jonathan with David. The Ziphites treacherously guide Saul in his pursuit of David.
- Maon,** Wilderness of. David is in great danger of being captured, but Saul is compelled to abandon the pursuit in order to meet a Philistine raid.
- Engedi.** David spares Saul's life in a cave at Engedi. Temporary reconciliation with Saul, who abandons the pursuit.
- Maon.** The episode of Nabal.
- Hachilah,** The hill of. } David enters the camp of Saul by night,
Ziph, The wilderness of. } and removes his spear and a cruse of water. Saul acknowledges his error and abandons the pursuit.

- Gath.** David and his six hundred men, with their families, take refuge in the land of the Philistines, and are favourably received by Achish king of Gath.
- Ziklag.**
1. At the request of David for a separate dwelling-place, Achish assigns Ziklag to him as a residence.
From Ziklag, David makes raids upon the nomad tribes of the south, and falsely represents to Achish that he had made incursions on the south of Judah.
 2. From Ziklag, David marches with the Philistine army to the north in their last great campaign against Saul.
The jealousy of the Philistine leaders causes Achish to dismiss David, who returns to Ziklag.
 3. Pursuit of the Amalekite horde, who had sacked and burnt Ziklag in the absence of David and his men.
Recovery of the spoil, and distribution of presents to the towns in the south of Judah.
 4. At Ziklag David hears of the death of Saul.
After inquiry of God, he marches to Hebron, where he is crowned king over Judah.

On the Exile of David we may remark :

1. **The scene.** With the exception of his visits to Moab and Gath, David's "wanderings were in a small bit of territory, rarely more than twenty miles in a radius from Bethlehem. He generally put that city between himself and Saul; from that place he probably received early information of all the king's doings." (Hunter.)
2. **His motive.** Simply to secure his own safety. David and his four hundred men were not in rebellion against Saul. This is proved by the following instances :
 1. David never attacked Saul. Humanly speaking, an appeal to the religious conviction of the nation might have rendered David a very formidable opponent to Saul. But David's faith in God kept him from this great mistake.
 2. Throughout his life David is loyal to Saul, and true in his allegiance to the "Lord's anointed" king.
 3. David twice spares Saul's life, when he had it in his power to kill him.
3. **The Object.** The training of David spiritually and outwardly.

Spiritually. David was being fitted for his calling by being taught constant dependence upon God.

Outwardly. David was being fitted to rule. The experience gained in controlling a band of men under such trying circumstances was of great service to the future king.

The military training, *e.g.* endurance of hardships, daring in battle, boldness in conception, swiftness in delivering a blow, all combined to train a force which later enabled David to do what

Saul, diverted by his murderous hate of David, was incapable of doing, viz., to meet and rout the enemies of Israel, and thus to firmly establish the kingdom.

"Thus in the Providence of God, the inward and outward training of David were the result of circumstances over which he had no control, and which seemed to threaten consequences of an entirely different character. How in those times of persecution outlaws became heroes, and of what deeds of personal bravery they were capable in the wars of the Lord, we learn from the records of their names (1 Chron. xii. 1) and of some of their achievements (2 Sam. xxiii. 13, etc., comp. 1 Chron. xi. 15)" (Edersheim).

His Band. There are three stages in the accumulation of this band :

1. *At Adullam.* Four hundred men, composed of—
 - (a) His family and near relatives, prominent among whom are Abishai, Joab and Asahel, the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister.
 - (b) Many suffering under the tyranny of Saul.
 - (c) Many to save themselves from being made bondmen by their creditors.
 - (d) Many dissatisfied with Saul's government.

2. *On his return to Judah from Moab.* Two hundred more joined David.

3. *At Ziklag.* In I. Chron. xii. 1-22, a list is given of those, who, for various reasons, made themselves voluntary exiles with David, and staked their prospects on his cause.

- (a) Several of Saul's own tribe, Benjamin, probably annoyed by his unpopular acts.

They are described as "*armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of a bow*" (1 Chron. xii. 2).

A valuable contingent in battle before coming to close quarters.

- (b) A party of Gadites, who crossed the Jordan in the time of flood, and cut their way through all opposition to David at Ziklag.

They are described as "*men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains*" (1 Chron. xii. 8).

Trained soldiers, exactly the kind needed for close action.

- (c) Men of Judah and Benjamin under Amasai (1 Chron. xii. 16-18).
- (d) Men of Manasseh, who appear to have joined David when he marched north with the Philistines (1 Chron. xii. 19-21).

4. **His occupation.** When not concerned with securing his own safety, David appears to have employed his men in protecting the south of Judah from the depredations of the marauding tribes, e.g. :

1. The relief of Keilah from a Philistine raid.
2. The protection of the flocks of Nabal (xxv. 15, 16).

These services appear to have been repaid by presents of food and other necessaries, enabling David to support his men.

His marriage with Abigail gave him wealth.

5. His Mistakes and their Consequences.

Whilst David's conduct in exile was, for the most part, admirable, the prominent features being faith and self-restraint, yet he committed several grave mistakes, for which he suffered severely.

These are :

1. *His first visit to Gath*, probably feeling that there was no safety for him in Israel, and reluctant to adopt an attitude of self-defence, which would possibly be regarded as an act of rebellion against Saul.

His mistake.

1. Distrust in the sufficiency of the Lord's protection.
2. Israel would regard the step as a desertion of their great leader to the cause of the Philistines.
3. Philistines, even if they sheltered him, would expect his services against Israel.

Its consequences.

His life was in danger, and he escaped by feigning madness.

2. *His residence in Moab*. David was justified in placing his parents in Moab, but his own place was in Judah, where his work lay. So he was commanded by "Gad the seer" to return into the land of Israel.

3. *His intention to punish Nabal*. Here David narrowly escaped falling. Hitherto he had refrained from personal vengeance when he spared the life of Saul, but, roused by the insulting, ungrateful message of Nabal, he narrowly escaped the sin of promoting private vengeance. He was saved by the prompt action, prudent counsel, and wise arguments of Abigail, who, by deterring David from his purpose, prevented him from having any stain of the bloodshed of his countrymen upon his hands.

How important was this for David as king. He was the unanimous choice of the nation; no one could point to any act, private or public, against any section of the nation.

4. *His second visit to Gath*.

We may note :

1. That it was made very soon after the death of Samuel. The removal of the great prophet deprived David of his powerful influence and support. No wonder that David was in despair for his safety. How could he escape from Saul, unless he raised the standard of open revolt?

His mistake.

1. Once more a want of faith; distrust in God's protection.
2. An abandonment of Israel, and the necessity of military service for the Philistines.

Its Consequences.

1. David managed to shirk military service under Achish, and to continue his good offices in protecting the south of Judah; but at what a price?

Deception. Whilst raiding the nomad tribes of the south, he lied to Achish, and pretended that he had been on forays against Judah.

Wholesale massacre. To cover his deception it was necessary for him to put to the sword all whom he captured—men, women and children, lest any should survive to disclose his real action.

2. After all, he is compelled to march against Saul. How he could have extricated himself from this difficult position we cannot say. He must either have deserted from the Philistines and arrayed himself on Saul's side, or have fought against his own countrymen.

Fortunately, in God's providence, the jealousy of the Philistine princes caused Achish to dismiss David, and to order him to return to Ziklag.

3. The sack of Ziklag in his absence. His enraged followers, doubtless already incensed at the position in which they were placed in Philistia, actually talked of stoning David.

Fortunately, once more through God's providence, David successfully regains the captives and recovers the spoil.

6. Effect on David's character.

1. A development of that ready sagacity, natural to one who had so long moved with his life in his hand.
The Psalms of this period of his life teem with images drawn from personal reminiscences.
2. The growth of his dependence upon God, nurtured by his hair-breadth escapes.
3. The confidence that he has been delivered from dangers and distress for some great purpose.

"The means by which this deliverance was achieved were, as far as we know, those which we see in the Books of Samuel—the turns and chances of Providence, his own extraordinary activity, the faithfulness of his followers, the unexpected increase of his friends. But the act of deliverance itself is described in the language which belongs to the descent upon Mount Sinai in the Passage of the Red Sea. It was the Exodus, though in a single soul, yet of a soul that reflected the whole nation. It was the giving of a second Law, though through the living tablets of the heart, deeper and vaster than the whole legislation of Moses. It was the beginning of a New Dispensation" (Stanley).

7. How the throne came to David. Partly by acts over which he had no control; partly through his own prudence and foresight.

1. His own acts:

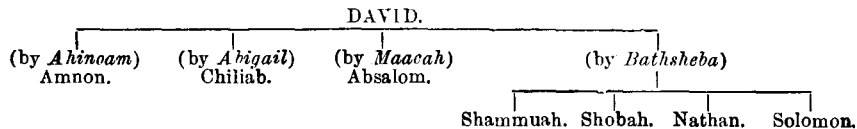
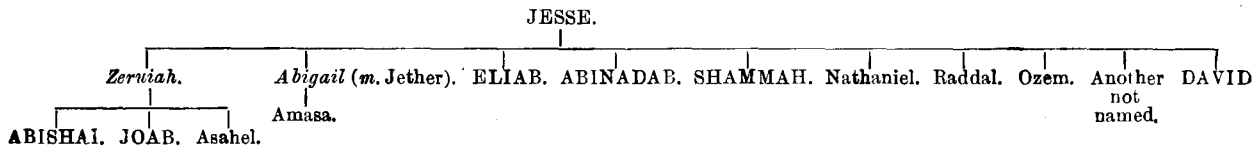
- (1) His wise conduct and daring exploits whilst at the court of Saul, winning the esteem of the people and the affection of the army.
- (2) His protection of the south of Judah against raids, and his conciliation of the people by presents.
- (3) His self-restraint in sparing Saul.
- (4) His execution of the murderers both of Saul and of Ishbosheth.

2. Acts beyond his control:

- (1) The persecution of Saul, which resulted :
(a) In giving David a band of devoted followers.

THE FAMILY OF JESSE.

The descent of Jesse from Judah is : Judah—Pharez, Hezron—Ram—Aminadab—Nahshon (*m. Rahab*)—Boaz (*m. Ruth*)—Obed—Jesse.



Names in capitals = men mentioned in 1 Samuel. Names in italics = women.

- (b) In the admirable training for government, and in the art of war, given to David in his exile.
- (c) In the alienation of the nation from the house of Saul.
- (2) The death of Saul and his sons at Gilboa, removing any *great rival* to his authority.
- (3) The deaths of Abner and Ishbosheth.

"And thus, at last, not by his own act, but through circumstances over which he had no control—allowed by Him who gives full liberty to each man, though he overrules even the darkest deeds of the wicked for the evolving of good. David was left undisputed claimant to the throne of Israel. Faith, patience and integrity were vindicated; the Divine promises to David had come true in the course of natural events; and all this was far better than even if Saul had voluntarily resigned his place, or Abner succeeded in his plans" (Ederheim, p. 162).

THE FAMILY OF JESSE.

Jesse, known as Jesse the Bethlehemite. The lineal descendant of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, and also descended from Ruth, the Moabitess, who married Boaz. As Nahshon, his great-grandfather, is styled prince of Judah, and, as captain of the host of Judah, led the march of the Israelites in the wilderness, it is conjectured that Jesse was the head of the tribe of Judah.

He is described as Jesse the Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah (xvii. 12).

He first appears in connection with the visit of Samuel to Bethlehem, when the prophet anointed David (xvi. 1-13).

He was an "old man" in the days of Saul (xvii. 12). For this reason Eliab, his eldest son, appears to have acted as head of the family (xx. 29).

Jesse, with David's brethren and all their families, joined David in the cave of Adullam after David's final breach with Saul (xxii. 1).

From Adullam David went with his parents into the land of Moab, and entreated the king of Moab to give them protection in his land.

Probably David took this step from the relationship of the family with Moab through his ancestress, Ruth the Moabitess.

It is generally supposed that the king of Moab betrayed his trust, and that David's severe measures towards Moab (2 Sam. viii. 2) were caused by the ill-treatment of his parents during their stay in the land of Moab.

Of Jesse's sons the three eldest only, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah, are mentioned in 1 Samuel. Their names occur as being passed over by Samuel on his visit to Bethlehem (xvi. 4-13). They were among Saul's army when Goliath challenged the Israelites, and David was sent from Bethlehem to the camp to enquire after their welfare. On this occasion Eliab rebuked David for his forwardness (xvii. 28).

The daughters of Jesse are better known than his sons, for :

1. Zeruiah was the mother of Abishai, Joab and Asahel, known as "the sons of Zeruiah."
2. Abigail was the mother of Amasa, the commander-in-chief of Absalom's army, who was made commander in place of Joab by David when he returned to Jerusalem. Amasa was murdered by Joab at the stone of Gideon during the pursuit of Sheba (2 Sam. xx. 8-10).



PALESTINE, PHYSICAL.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

THE LAND.

Extent. About 140 miles in length, forty in average breadth, and in area about the size of Wales.

Boundaries. The land of Canaan proper, *i.e.* the territory west of the Jordan, is hemmed in on all sides.

West. By the Mediterranean Sea.

East. By the gorge of the Jordan.

North. By the ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanus, and the ravine of the Leontes.

South. By the deserts to the north of the Sinaitic Peninsula.

And even if we include the Trans-Jordanic territory, we find a similar barrier to the East in the Arabian Desert.

A glance at the map (p. xliv.) shows a peculiar system of strips running almost parallel to each other from north to south. Thus, working eastward from the Mediterranean, we notice :

1. A maritime plain.

2. A tract of lowland country.

3. A central tract of hill country.

4. A deep river valley. (The valley of the Jordan.)

5. A further mountain range. (The mountains of Gilead.)

1. **The Maritime Plain** is broadest in the south and narrows towards the north, till it is suddenly interrupted by the ridge of Carmel, which strikes out from the central mass in a north-easterly direction, rises considerably above the general level, and terminates in a bold promontory at the very edge of the Mediterranean.

On the northern side of Carmel the plain stretches right across the country from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Jordan, forming the famous plain of Esdraclon or Jezreel, the battle-ground of Palestine.

Further north the plain resumes its course along the sea coast, till again interrupted by a mountain range extending to the sea.

2. **The Lowlands.** Bordering the central hills is a belt of lowland deep below the level of the hills, which rise abruptly, forming a formidable barrier. This tract divides the central hills from the maritime plain. The only means of communication from the lowlands to the highlands is up the beds of the torrents which discharge the rainfall of the hill country. The lower half of the lowlands south of Mount Carmel is the Plain of the Philistines, or *the Shephelah*. The upper part is the Plain of Sharon, famous for its fertility.

3. **The Central Range,** or the Highland. This is a mass of limestone forming what may be considered one range. In the north it is crossed by the Plain of Esdraclon. In the south it sinks gradually into the *Negeb*, the dry land. The southern portion was known as the hill

country of Judah, the central as Mount Ephraim, and the portion north of the Plain of Esdraelon as Mount Naphtali. The average elevation above sea level is about 2500 feet.

4. **The Valley of the Jordan.** *THE ARABAH.* An extraordinary depression considerably below the sea level, lying between the central range and the mountains of Gilead (the eastern range), and consisting of two parts, viz., the Upper Jordan from Mount Hermon to the Sea of Galilee, and the Lower Jordan from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea.
5. **The Eastern Range,** or the Mountains of Gilead, stretching from Mount Hermon to the south of the Dead Sea.

THE NEGEB—the south country. A tract of hill country, situated below Hebron, and lying between the hills of Judah and the desert. Being near the desert and removed from the drainage of the hill country, this district was drier and less productive than the north. (The name "*Negeb*" signifies dry land.)

"Almost sudden was the transition to the upland wilderness, the 'Negeb,' or south country, a series of rolling hills, clad with scanty herbage here and there, especially on their northern faces" (Tristram).

The student should carefully observe that "south" very often means the Negeb—the south land.

Instances in 1 Samuel are:

"*Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites*" (xxvii. 10) = those parts of the *Negeb* peopled by Judah, the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites respectively.

"*The Amalekites had invaded the south*" (xxx. 1) = the *Negeb*.

"*We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites . . . and upon the south of Caleb*" (xxx. 14) = the part of the *Negeb* belonging to the Cherethites and the district assigned to Caleb (see p. lxiv.).

"*To them which were in south Ramoth*" (xxx. 27) = *Ramoth-Negeb*, or Ramoth in the *Negeb*, to distinguish it from Ramoth Gilead.

The Revisers invariably distinguish the *Negeb* by printing "south" with a capital S.

The Wilderness of Judæa represents the portion of the Arabah within the territory of Judah. It is bounded by the hill country on the west, and by the Dead Sea on the east.

The configuration of the Land is of importance in explaining the Philistine campaigns, and in accounting for the fact that though the Israelites were often oppressed and made tributaries they were never totally conquered. It also explains much of the later history of Israel. The road by which the great Eastern Empires—Assyria and Egypt—could approach each other lay up through the maritime plain of Palestine, and onward through the plain of Lebanon to the Euphrates. An Egyptian or Assyrian army marching along the plain would have the abrupt mountain ranges of Judah and Ephraim on its flank. On this western side the steep declivities and the rugged ascents up the

torrent ravines rendered attack most difficult, and at the same time the advancing army could not venture to leave the formidable hill men of Judah on their flank as a menace to their communications. Thus it was essential for Egypt or Assyria to become masters of Judah ere venturing to pass further north or south respectively.

How far the extreme difficulty of the western passes affected the military aspect of the invasion of Judah can be gathered from the following facts in history:

1. Nebuzar-adan led the captive Jews northward from Jerusalem by way of Jericho.
2. Pompey attacked Jerusalem from Damascus by way of Jericho.
3. Vespasian led his troops from the plain of Lebanon eastwards, and advanced against Jerusalem through Jericho.

On the other hand, Bethhoron on the western side is the scene of two great Jewish victories over invading armies.

NATIONS AND TRIBES MENTIONED IN I. SAMUEL.

Amalekites. A nomadic tribe, occupying the peninsula of Sinai and the wilderness between the South of Palestine and Egypt.

Previous History :

They attacked the Israelites at Rephidim, in the wilderness of Sinai, shortly after the Exodus from Egypt, and were totally defeated by Joshua (Ex. xvii.). Their object seems to have been to obtain the spring of water miraculously supplied to the Israelites.

Israel long remembered this attack and its object, and many years after Saul was commanded by Samuel to smite Amalek, as a punishment for their assault on Israel (1 Sam. xv. 3).

In Judges we find them :

1. In league with the Moabites, who, under Eglon, oppressed Israel (Judg. iii. 13).
2. In league with the Midianites, when they overran the plain of Esdraelon, and were defeated by Gideon (Judg. vi. 3—vii. 12).

Notices in I. Samuel :

1. Their defeat and slaughter by Saul (1 Sam. xv.).
2. Whilst residing at Ziklag David made a raid against them (1 Sam. xxvii. 8).
3. When David marched with Achish against Saul, a horde of the Amalekites swooped down upon Ziklag in his absence, captured and burnt the town, and carried away the women, children, cattle, and all valuables as spoil. On his return David pursued after them, overtook them, destroyed the band, and recovered all that had been captured (1 Sam. xxx.).

The last remnant of the Amalekites was destroyed by five hundred men of the Simeonites upon the mountains of Seir, in the reign of Hezekiah (1 Chron. iv. 42, 43).

Ammonites, descendants of Ben-Ammi, the son of the younger daughter of Lot (Gen. xix. 38). Moab was the son of the elder daughter. In Scripture history these two nations are always closely connected. The territory of Moab is clearly defined, but the territory of Ammon is not ascertainable. We may infer from this that the descendants of Lot were divided into two portions, the Moabites representing the settled and civilized section, whilst the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion of the nation.

Religion. Their god was Molech or Milcom, "*the abomination of the children of Ammon.*" Molech was a fire-god to whom the Israelites sacrificed their children in the valley of Hinnom.

The Ammonites are distinguished for cunning, cruelty, and their hatred of Israel.

The Ammonite or Moabite was precluded from joining the congregation of Israel to the tenth generation. The reasons given for this ban of exclusion are—

(a) Because they refused assistance to the Israelites on their approach to Canaan.

(b) Because they hired Balaam to curse Israel (Deut. xxiii. 3, 4).

These reasons are recapitulated in Neh. xiii. 1.

Evidently their share in the hiring of Balaam was the chief cause of the detestation in which the Ammonites were held by the Israelites. Their conduct was the less excusable, because, as regards the children of Ammon, the Israelites had been enjoined "*distress them not, nor meddle with them*" (Deut. ii. 19).

Previous Notices :

They oppressed the district of Gilead, on the east of Jordan, and were defeated by Jephthah (Judg. xi).

Notice in I. Samuel :

Saul rescued the men of Jabesh-gilead from Nahash, king of Ammon, and completely defeated the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi.).

Subsequent History :

1. Their war with David, in consequence of the insults offered to his ambassadors by Hanun, king of Ammon. This is the principal war in David's reign, and is famous for the siege and capture of Rabbah and the death of Uriah (2 Sam. x.—xii.).
2. War with Jehoshaphat, when they suffered so signal a defeat that three days were occupied in collecting the spoil (2 Chron. xx. 25).
3. Jotham prevailed against them, and made them pay tribute (2 Chron. xxvii. 5).
4. Later on we find them occupying the cities of Gad (on the east side of Jordan) from which the Israelites had been removed by Tiglath-Pileser (Jer. xlix. 1-6.)

In the days of Nehemiah we may note :

1. That they were still the bitter enemies of Israel, and led by Tobiah, the Ammonite, constantly opposed Nehemiah.
2. That the passage from Deuteronomy xxiii. 3-6, was read, in which it was "written that the Ammonite and Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever."

Amorites = the Mountaineers. The Amorite is given as the fourth son of Canaan (Gen. x. 16).

They are contrasted with the Canaanites (the Lowlanders).

Thus the Canaanites and the Amorites formed the two great sections of the inhabitants of Canaan.

The Amorites occupied the barren heights west of the Dead Sea.

At the time of the conquest of the land they had crossed the Jordan, for we find Sihon in possession of the country lying between the Arnon and the Jabbok.

Sihon was vanquished, and his land occupied by the Israelites under Moses.

The Amorites on the west of Jordan were dispossessed of their land by Joshua in his southern campaign.

Notice in I. Samuel:

"*And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites*" (vii. 14), *i.e.* in the days of Samuel.

Amorites, though properly signifying the original inhabitants of the highlands, may here mean "the original inhabitants" generally. It is possible that they found the yoke of the Philistines more oppressive than the rule of Israel, and so made common cause with the latter in resisting the Philistine invasion.

Anakim, a race of giants descended from Arba. They dwelt originally in the southern part of Judah, particularly near Hebron, which was anciently termed Kirjath-Arba (= the city of Arba, the progenitor of their race).

They are styled "*sons of Anak*" (Num. xiii. 33), but it is clear that Anak is the name of the race, and not of an individual.

Caleb captured Hebron, and is said to have driven out the Anakim, save a small remnant that took refuge in the Philistine towns of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod.

Goliath of Gath was probably a survivor of the Anakim. Other giants are mentioned in the account of David's wars with the Philistines in the early part of his reign (2 Samuel and Chron.).

Cherethites, manifestly the Philistines or some kindred tribe.

The Egyptian slave found by David in his pursuit of the Amalekites who had raided Ziklag, states that the troop of Amalekites had "*made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites*" (xxx. 14), whilst the Amalekites are described as feasting and carousing "*because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah*" (xxx. 16).

The Cherethites are mentioned in connection with the Philistines (Ez. xxv. 16) by Ezekiel, who speaks of them in connection with the towns of the Philistines (Zeph. ii. 4-7), thus confirming the notice of them in 1 Samuel.

The name is generally supposed to have been connected with Crete, and it has been conjectured that the Cherethites and Philistines were two allied tribes of whom the Philistines, as the more powerful of the two, gave their name to the country.

Later the name seems to have been applied to the bodyguard of David, for when he abandoned Jerusalem on the rebellion of Absalom it

is said that he was accompanied by "*all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath*" (2 Sam. xv. 18). It is probable that David, during his residence in the country of the Philistines, attached to himself a band of soldiers from that country. Ittai, the Gittite, seems to have been at the head of the Gittites, and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the commander of the Cherethites and Pelethites. The soldiers raised from Philistia appear to have been the first bodyguard of David, and the name "Cherethites and Pelethites" probably remained descriptive of the royal bodyguard long after the corps ceased to be recruited from Philistia.

Edomites, are descendants of Esau, the eldest son of Jacob. Edom = *red*, and was a name given to Esau from the red colour of the pottage for which he sold his birthright (Gen. xxv. 29-34).

Edom, known also as Mount Seir, and Idumæa, lay to the east of the valley of the Jordan, extending southward to Elath. Bozrah, near the northern border, was the ancient capital, but later Sela seems to have been the great stronghold. Elath and Ezion-Geber were the seaports.

The "brook Zered" seems to have been the eastern boundary separating Edom from Moab (Deut. ii. 13).

When Israel marched to the conquest of Canaan, the Edomites refused to allow them to pass through their land (Num. xx. 18-20).

Notice in I. Samuel:

Edom is mentioned among the conquests of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47), but no particulars are given.

Subsequent History:

1. David overcame them in the "Valley of Salt," and Joab completed the victory by destroying nearly all the male population (2 Sam. viii. 13, 14).
2. Hadad escaped from this massacre, and took refuge in Egypt. On the death of Joab he returned to Edom and endeavoured to rouse the Edomites against Solomon. Failing in the attempt, he made his way to the north, where he founded a kingdom in Syria, and became a persistent opponent of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 14-22).
3. Edom joined with Israel and Judah in suppressing the rebellion of Moab (2 Kings iii. 9).
4. Edom joined with Ammon and Moab in revolt against Jehoshaphat, but were miraculously destroyed in the Valley of Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 22-26).
5. Edom revolted against Jehoram, the successor of Jehoshaphat and regained their independence (2 Chron. xxi. 8-10).
6. Amaziah completely crushed them and captured Sela (2 Kings xiv. 7).
7. They assisted Nebuchadnezzar in his campaign against Jerusalem, and at the capture of the city appear to have received the whole south between Judah and Palestine, *i.e.* the modern Idumæa.

The Edomites appear to have acted with great cruelty to the inhabitants of Judah, and are the subjects of severe denunciation by the later prophets.

Geshurites. An ancient tribe dwelling in the desert between Arabia and Palestine, south of the land of the Philistines. They must have been near neighbours of the Amalekites, as David attacked them at the time he made a raid upon the Amalekites (xxvii. 8).

[They must be distinguished from the Geshurites who inhabited a district north-east of Bashan, and whose king, Talmi, gave his daughter Maachah to David as wife. This Maachah was the mother of Absalom.]

Gezrites. As Gezer is at least fifty miles to the north of David's raid upon the Geshurites, Gezrites and Amalekites, it is clear that the Gezrites mentioned cannot be the inhabitants of Gezer.

They must have been some tribe dwelling in the desert south of Philistia.

Their connection with the Amalekites, coupled with the mention of the Mount of the Amalekites in Mount Ephraim (Judges xii. 15) supports the conjecture that they gave their name to Mount Gerizim.

Hittites. Descended from Cheth or Heth, the second son of Canaan.

The Hittites were a numerous and widely spread tribe, for the Canaanites are generally described as Hittites (Josh. i. 4).

We find Hittites :

- (1) At Hebron in the time of Abraham, who bought the cave of Machpelah from Ephron, the Hittite.
- (2) At Hebron in the time of Joshua and the Judges.
- (3) Upon the mountains of Palestine (Num. xiii. 29).
- (4) On the north-west of Canaan on the borders of Syria, in the time of Solomon (1 Kings x. 29).

Two persons of this nation are subsequently mentioned as belonging to the body-guard of David, viz., Ahimelech the Hittite, invited by David to go with him secretly to the camp of Saul at night (1 Sam. xxvi. 6).

Uriah, the Hittite, the husband of Bath-sheba.

Jerahmeelites, a family or clan of Judah, settled in the south (*Negeb*) of Judah. They were descendants of Jerahmeel, the son of Hezron, the son of Pharez, the son of Judah (1 Chron. ii. 5-9).

Notices in I. Samuel :

1. They are mentioned by David to Achish as one of the districts of Judah against which he falsely reports that he had made a raid (1 Sam. xxvii. 10).
2. David sent presents of the spoil captured from the Amalekites "to them which were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites" (xxx. 29).

Kenites, a branch of the family of Midian. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a Kenite. The relationship of Moses to Jethro established a firm friendship between Israel and the Kenites.

They appear to have accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness.

Fond of nomadic life, the Kenites did not settle in towns, for at the conquest of the land we find them leaving the plains of Jericho for

"the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad" (Judg. i. 16). This will explain the references to their position in 1 Samuel.

One of their chiefs, or sheiks, Heber, went north, and in the times of Barak had "*pitched his tent into the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh*" (Judg. iv. 11). His wife, Jael, was the slayer of Sisera.

Rechab, the founder of the family or sect of the Rechabites, is said to have been of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55).

Notices in I. Samuel:

1. When Saul went against the Amalekites, he requested the Kenites to separate themselves from the Amalekites before he made the attack (1 Sam. xv. 6; see note p. 47).
2. They are mentioned by David to Achish as one of the districts of Judah against which he falsely reports "that he has made a raid" (1 Sam. xxvii. 10).
3. David sent presents of the spoil captured from the Amalekites "*to them which were in the cities of the Kenites*" (xxx. 29).

Moabites, the descendants of Moab, the son of Lot's elder daughter. Ammon was the son of the younger daughter. In Scripture history the two nations are closely connected. Moab appears to have represented the settled and civilized section of the descendants of Lot, whilst the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion.

The territory of Moab proper is definitely defined. It lay to the east of the Dead Sea, having the river Arnon as the northern boundary. This district is described as "the field of Moab" (Ruth i. 1, 2). Before the invasion of the Ammonites, Moab extended northwards along the Jordan to the hills of Gilead.

The Moabites were a pastoral people, rich in flocks. In the days of Ahab they paid an annual tribute of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams with the wool (2 Kings iii. 4).

Early History.

1. At the time of the conquest of the land the Ammonites had dispossessed the Moabites of the land north of the Arnon.
2. The Moabites refused the Israelites a passage through their land.
3. Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. xxii.—xxiv.).
4. Eglon, king of Moab, seized Jericho and oppressed Israel for eighteen years. Ehud relieved Israel from the oppression (Judg. iii. 12-30).

Notices in I. Samuel:

1. Moab is mentioned in the conquests of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47), but no particulars are given.
2. David went from the cave of Adullam to Mizpeh of Moab, taking his father and mother with him. He entrusted his parents to the care of the king of Moab, when he himself, at the bidding of God, returned unto the land of Judah (1 Sam. xxii. 3-5). David was descended from Ruth, the Moabitess (see p. xlii.), and this explains why he left his parents in the land of Moab.

Subsequent history.

1. David conquered Moab and dealt with the Mcabites with ferocious cruelty. It is conjectured that the king of Moab had killed the parents of David, and that David exacted this fearful penalty in revenge for the breach of trust (2 Sam. viii. 2).
2. At the division of the kingdom, Moab appears to have been subject to Israel, not to Judah, and to have paid the enormous tribute of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams annually.
3. At the death of Ahab they revolted against Jehoram, but were totally routed by the confederate kings of Israel, Judah and Edom, who were miraculously assisted by Elisha. The pursuit and carnage was stayed at the horrible sight of the king of Moab openly sacrificing his son as a burnt-offering on the wall of his capital (2 Kings iii.).
4. In the reign of Jehoiakim the Moabites acted in concert with the armies of Nebuchadnezzar in harassing Judah (2 Kings xxiv. 2).
5. Four or five years later, in the reign of Zedekiah, an alliance was made, or at least negotiated, between Judah, Edom, Moab, Ammon and Tyre, to form a confederation against Babylon (Jer. xxvii. 3).
6. After the captivity, Sanballat the Horonite, a Moabite, was a persistent adversary to Nehemiah.

THE PHILISTINES. A nation said to have come from Caphtor, "*the Philistines from Caphtor*" (Amos ix. 7). "*The Caphtorims which came forth out of Caphtor*" are said to have destroyed the Avims (Deut. ii. 23). Their name—"the strangers," points to their being settlers from some foreign country.

Modern research identifies Caphtor with the island of Crete.

Egyptian monuments tell us that they were pirates from the islands and coasts of the Greek seas, who took part in the invasion of Egypt in the reign of Ramesses III., and finally settled in the Shephelah and the southern part of Palestine.

Their Country. Their land consisted of the southern portion of the Shephelah (see p. xlv.), stretching from Ekron in the north to the river of Egypt (the *El-Arish*) in the south.

Their Wealth and Importance. They occupied an extremely fertile country. Dean Stanley writes thus of the country: "The cities are all remarkable for the extreme beauty and profusion of the gardens which surround them But the most striking and characteristic feature of Philistia is its immense plain of cornfields, stretching from the edge of the sandy tract right up to the very wall of the hill country of Judah" (Sinai and Palestine). They held the gateway of the great road from Egypt to the Euphrates valley, and gave their name to the route, which is described as "*the way of the Philistines.*"

The strength and importance of this nation is further indicated by the fact that they gave their name to the land of Canaan—**Palestine** = the land of the Philistines.

Their Towns and Government. Their chief towns were Gath, Gaza, Ekron, Askelon and Ashdod, which were ruled by chiefs known as the five lords of the Philistines. Clearly each lord had independent jurisdiction in his own district, whilst all were bound together in one confederation as an offensive and defensive alliance.

Their military organization was far superior to that of Israel. The plain was admirably adapted for the development of their military power, for it permitted of the use of chariots and cavalry, whilst the occasional elevations rising out of it offered secure sites for towns and strongholds.

These chariots made them extremely formidable to the Israelites, whose forces consisted of footmen, whilst their towns resisted all efforts to capture them in the early days of Israel.

It is probable that David gained much of his military skill during his residence in Philistia, and that he copied their military system in organizing his own army.

Their Religion. They were extremely superstitious. They carried their idols with them in their campaigns, and on one occasion David captured their images (2 Sam. v. 21).

They ascribed their victories to their gods, evidenced by :

1. They attributed the capture of Samson to their god, Dagon (Judg. xvi. 23).
2. They placed the Ark in the temple of Dagon (1 Sam. v. 2).
3. They placed the armour of Saul in the temple of Ashtaroth (1 Sam. xxxi. 10), and proclaimed their victory over the fallen monarch in the temples of their idols.

The principal idols were Dagon, Ashtoreth and Baal-zebul.

Dagon (*Dag* = fish), was the principal male deity of the Philistines. His chief temples were at Gaza (where Samson died) and at Ashdod (where the Ark was placed). The idol seems to have been a human body with the tail of a fish.

The fish-like form was an emblem of fruitfulness, and one often adopted as a representation of their gods by nations bordering on the sea-coast.

Ashtoreth (see p. xi.), a representation of the Moon or Venus. The temple in which the armour of Saul was hung was doubtless the famous temple of Venus at Askelon mentioned by Herodotus.

Baal-zebul. The Lord of Flies. There was a temple to this god at Ekron.

Elijah rebuked Ahaziah, king of Israel, for sending to enquire of Baal-zebul at Ekron (2 Kings i. 2-4).

Their Characteristics. Like the Cretans, they were employed as mercenaries (*vide* David's bodyguard of Cherethites and Pelethites, etc.).

Like the Cretans, they were distinguished for their strength and variety of armour (*vide* Goliath of Gath).

They appear to have been of vast stature.

Unlike the rest of the inhabitants of Canaan, they were uncircumcised, and the epithet "*uncircumcised*" is constantly applied to them as a term of contempt and reproach, and they also appear to have stood on a lower level of civilization.

"They were almost, it may be said, the laughing stock of their Hivellier and quicker neighbours from their dull, heavy stupidity; the easy prey of the rough humour of Samson, or the agility and cunning of the diminutive David" (Stanley).

Their early history. They first appear in the lives of Abraham and Isaac, both of whom had dealings with Abimelech, the sheik of the Philistines (Gen. **xxi.** 32-34, **xxvi.** 1-33).

Their territory, as having once belonged to the Canaanites, was assigned to Judah, but no conquest was made in the time of Joshua, nor did Judah get possession of their cities (Judg. **iii.** 3).

They soon began to attack Israel, and Shamgar (Judg. **iii.** 31) and Samson (Judg. **xiii.**—**xvi.**) are celebrated for their individual achievements against them.

The Wars in the time of Samuel.

This book of Samuel introduces us to the times of the great Philistine oppression, which lasted 40 years, and ended with Samuel's great victory at Ebenezer.

This period is marked by their great victory at Ebenezer, when they captured the Ark (**iv.**). This victory is followed by the sack of the sanctuary at Shiloh, and terminates the period of the Theocracy (see p. **xvi.**). The sojourn of the ark in Philistia was long remembered under the title of "*The Captivity*" (see p. **xvi.**). For many years the Israelites were practically subject to the Philistines, who deprived them of their arms and removed all smiths from the land, in order to prevent the manufacture of warlike weapons.

This was effected by placing garrisons or armed posts to command the passes.

The Israelites were relieved from this oppression by the great victory gained by Samuel at Ebenezer, although Israel suffered many subsequent disasters, including the terrible defeat at Gilboa.

The Wars of Saul.

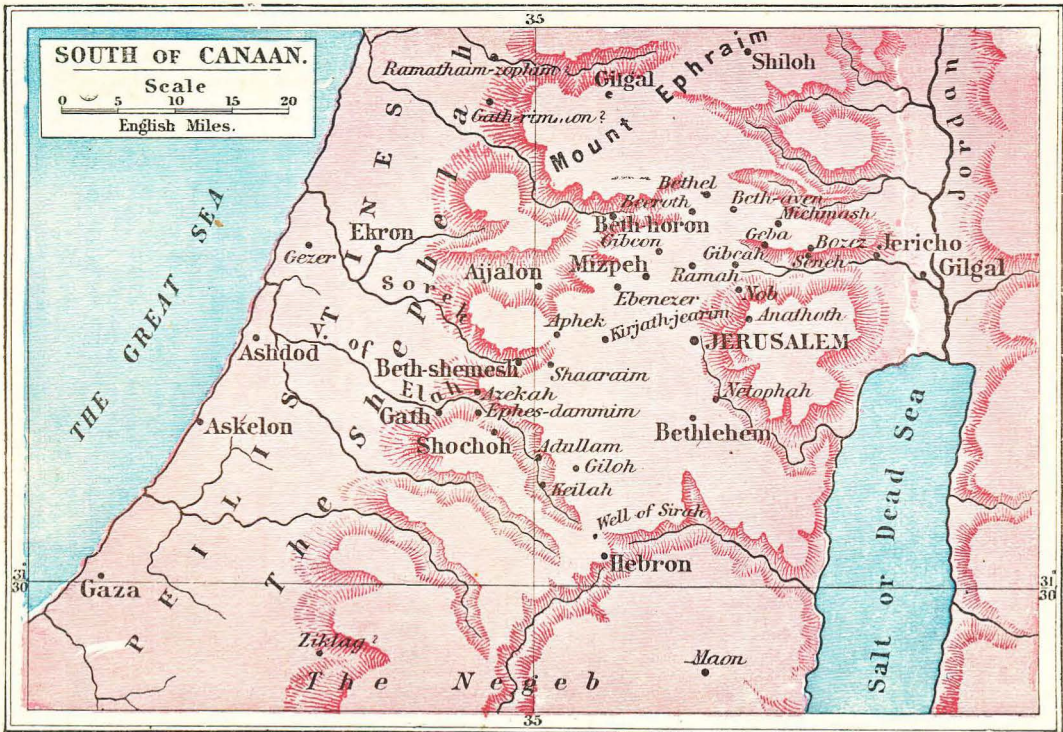
Whilst Saul was continually in conflict with the Philistines, his reign is marked by three great campaigns—one recorded in chapters **xiii.**—**xiv.**, another when David slew Goliath, and the last at the end of his reign.

First Campaign. The Philistines had evidently pressed far up the passes, and Saul with Jonathan held only the extreme eastern pass, which they defended by posting their slender force at Michmash, thus barring the passage to the descent to the Jordan valley.

The campaign is marked by the following events:

1. The capture of a Philistine garrison by Jonathan (**xiii.** 3), which roused the Philistines to a great effort (**xiii.** 5-7).
2. The exploit of Jonathan at the pass of Michmash, followed by the panic and rout of the Philistines (**xiv.**).

Second Campaign. The Philistines made a second attempt to force the western passes, and were met by Saul in the valley of Elah. It will be seen that the Israelites had recovered their hold on the central



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE WARS WITH THE PHILISTINES.

district, for they were meeting the Philistines at the western extremity of the passes, and not at the far east as in the previous campaign.

The struggle is marked by the combat of David with Goliath, and the subsequent rout of the Philistines, pursued by the victorious Israelites to the gates of Ekron and Gath.

From this time the contest between the two nations was a series of raids and small skirmishes, in which David highly distinguished himself (xviii. 30). It was in one of these raids that David won the hand of Michal, Saul's daughter. Other small engagements mentioned are :

1. The rescue of Keilah by David (xxiii. 1-6).
2. The relief of David from the pursuit by Saul, who was compelled to abandon his purpose in order to repulse an invasion by the Philistines (xxiii. 27).

The scene of all these encounters lies in the south-west of Palestine and in the passes from the west to the east, the same passes by which Joshua had advanced in the adverse direction from Jericho and Gilgal to the great battle at Bethhoron with the kings of the south.

The student should carefully follow the narrative in I. Samuel by means of the map (p. lvi.), and will then appreciate the difficulties which faced the Philistines. To win their way up the torrent beds was a serious task. They succeeded in the days of Eli in cutting their way to Shiloh, and established garrisons. At that time they held the country by means of fortified posts, but their heavy-armed men could not completely subdue the active mountaineers of Benjamin.

Third Campaign, in the plain of Esdraelon (see map, p. lxviii.).

Many circumstances led the Philistines to make their third great effort. Saul's power and influence in Israel were waning. He no longer had the heart of the people with him, for—

- (a) Samuel was dead ; the priests and prophets had been alienated by the massacre at Nob.
- (b) The religious section of the nation was not with him. The people saw clearly that, according to the word of Samuel, God had rejected Saul, and that under his rule there could be no pledge of success.

Thus Saul had no longer at his back the religious enthusiasm which inspired the armies of Israel to win their greatest victories.

- (c) David, his best and most successful general, was in exile, was even in the land of the Philistines, the leader of a band of free lances in the service of Achish.

Now, if ever, was the time to strike a blow.

They wisely determine to abandon the attempt to force the passes of the west, where a comparatively small force of active Israelite warriors could bar the ascent of even their great host, and where their chariots could not operate. So they march northwards along the maritime plain, strike eastward through the pass leading into the plain of Esdraelon (see map, p. lxviii.), and encamp at Aphek, with the mountains of Naphtali at their back. Saul hastens northward and faces them at Jezreel, with the slope of Gilboa in his rear. If the Philistines gained the heights of Gilboa, the road to the centre lay open to them. The disastrous defeat of Israel and the death of Saul gave them possession of the plain and

cities of Esdraelon, and from the circumstance that Abner set up the court of Ishbosheth at Mahanaim, it is probable that the table-land of Ephraim and Manasseh was abandoned to the Philistines. Sayce, "Early History of the Hebrews," regards David, during his reign at Hebron, as merely a vassal king of Philistia, owing allegiance to that nation. This agrees well with the fact that during the struggle between David and the last royal representative of the house of Saul there is no mention of his being engaged in war with the Philistines.

Subsequent History:

1. On the appointment of David to be king over the whole of the nation, the Philistines again invaded the land, and were twice defeated by David at Rephaim (2 Sam. v. 17-25).
On the first of these occasions the Philistines pushed forward as far as Bethlehem (1 Chron. xi. 16).
2. Subsequently David captured Gath (1 Chron. xviii. 1).
3. In the reign of Solomon, Philistia was included in his empire.
4. At the division of the kingdom, the Philistines revolted against Rehoboam, who fortified Gath against them (2 Chron. xi. 8).
5. The Philistines seized Gibbethon, one of their towns in the territory of Israel, and held it against the kings of Israel. Here Nadab was murdered by Baasha (1 Kings xv. 27, 28), and Omri was captain of the besieging force in the reign of Elah (1 Kings xvi. 15-17).
6. Hazael, king of Syria, captured Gath in the reign of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (2 Kings xii. 17).
7. Uzziah made war against them and captured Gath and Ashdod (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), but they again recovered their independence in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). They appear as enemies of Israel to the days of the Maccabees, and did not lose their nationality till the time of the Roman Conquest, when Syria became a Roman province.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Abel. The Stone. A great stone in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite. On this stone the men of Beth-shemesh sacrificed the kine that drew the Ark back to the land of Israel. The kine halted at the stone of their own accord (vi. 14-18).

Abel-meholah. In the plain of Jezreel, near Beth-shean.

It was the native place:

- (1) Of Adriel the Meholathite, to whom Saul gave his daughter Merab to wife, though he had previously promised her to David (xviii. 19).
- (2) Of Elisha, the prophet (1 Kings xix. 16).

Adullam, a city in the low country of Judah. Joshua captured it and slew the king thereof in his great southern campaign.

It was situated on a height commanding the road from Philistia, and was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7). In the neighbourhood are limestone cliffs containing many caves.

Notice in I. Samuel :

When David left Achish, king of Gath, on his first visit, he took refuge in the cave of Adullam, where he was joined by his brethren and his father's house, evidently because they did not feel themselves safe at Bethlehem from Saul's revenge.

It is not uncommon in the East for the offence of an individual to be visited by putting to death the whole of his family.

Here, too, David was joined by those of his countrymen who had grievances, viz., those who suffered under Saul's oppression, those oppressed with debt, and those dissatisfied with the government of Saul—400 men in all, who formed the nucleus of David's band, and ripened into hardened veterans under his command during his long exile.

Aijalon, "*the valley of the Gazelles.*" A valley running south-west from the lower Beth-horon into the great western plain of Philistia.

Notice in I. Samuel :

It marks the end of the pursuit by Saul when the Philistines were defeated at Michmash. He "*smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon*" (xiv. 31). (For battle, see Michmash, p. lxxiv., and Beth-horon, p. lxi.)

Other Notices :

1. During the battle of Beth-horon Joshua commanded the sun to stand still upon Gibeon and the moon upon the Valley of Aijalon (Josh. x. 12).
2. Rehoboam fortified Aijalon against attacks from the south (2 Chron. xi. 10).
3. In the reign of Ahaz we find the Philistines at Aijalon (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).

Aphek = "*stronghold.*" There are several places of this name. Two are mentioned in I. Samuel, and must be carefully distinguished.

- I. A spot denoting the encampment of the Philistines before the first battle of Ebenezer where the Ark was captured. Israel "*pitched beside Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek*" (iv. 1). Hence this Aphek cannot have been far from Mizpeh of Benjamin and Ebenezer, and near the western entrance of the pass of Beth-horon.
- II. A place in the plain of Jezreel, identified with *Afuleh*, about two miles to the north-west of Shunem.
Here the Philistines encamped on their invasion of Israel, which resulted in the defeat and death of Saul on Mount Gilboa (xxix. 1).
- III. A place on the direct road from Samaria to Syria, identified with *Fik*, six miles east of the Sea of Galilee. It was the scene of the second defeat of Benhadad by Ahab, when 27,000 Syrians were destroyed by the fall of the wall of the city (1 Kings xx. 26-30).

Aroer, some town in the south of Judah, mentioned among the places to which David sent presents from the spoil of the Amalekites (xxx. 28).

It must not be confused with the more famous Aroer, on the Arnon in Moab.

The ruins of an ancient town have been found in the Wady Arara on the road from Petra to Gaza. It is conjectured that these are the ruins of Aroer in Judah.

Ashdod (Azotus, Acts viii. 40) was one of the chief Philistine cities, Gaza, Gath, Askelon, Ashdod and Ekron. It was situated midway between Gaza and Joppa, about three miles from the southern frontier of Palestine. It owed its importance to the fact that it commanded the caravan route to Egypt. It was never subdued by the Israelites, and even in the time of Nehemiah retained its distinctiveness of race and religion (Neh. xiii 23, 24).

Notice in I. Samuel :

The Ark, when captured by the Philistines in the judgeship of Eli, was brought first to Ashdod and set in the house of Dagon (v. 1-7).

Other Notices :

1. It was besieged and captured by Tartan, the general of the Assyrians, in the reign of Hezekiah.
2. Philip the Evangelist preached at Azotus (Ashdod) (Acts viii. 40).

Askelon. One of the five cities of the Philistines next in importance to Gaza.

Samson went down from Timnath to Askelon, and slew thirty of the Philistines to obtain the changes of garments, wherewith to pay the wagers he had lost to those who had solved his riddle (Judges xiv. 19).

Herodotus names a famous temple of Venus at Askelon. This was probably "*the house of Ashtaroth*" in which the Philistines hung the armour of Saul (xxxi. 10).

David would not proclaim the deaths of Saul and Jonathan lest there should be rejoicing in Askelon (2 Sam. i. 20).

Askelon played an important part in the struggles of the Crusades.

Azekah. A strongly fortified town in the lowland of Judah. The position has not been identified, but it must have been near Shochoh, for when Goliath defied Israel, the Philistines were encamped between Azekah and Shochoh.

Other Notices :

1. After the battle of Beth-horon Joshua pursued the routed army of the five kings as far as Azekah (Josh. x. 11).
2. It was fortified and garrisoned by Rehoboam after the revolt of the Ten Tribes (2 Chron. xi. 9).
3. It was one of the last cities to be reduced by the Babylonians (Jer. xxxiv. 7).
4. It was one of the towns reoccupied by the Jews on their return from their captivity (Neh. xi. 30).

Beer-sheba, one of the oldest places in Palestine ; it formed the southern limit of the country. The name may have been derived from the "*seven ewe lambs*" set apart by Abraham, or from the seven wells, for there are at present there two large wells and five smaller ones. *Sheba* is the Hebrew word for "*seven*."

It is famous in the days of Samuel from the fact that he placed his sons Joel and Abiah as judges at Beer-sheba.

"**From Dan to Beer-sheba,**" became the general expression for the whole of the promised land, equivalent to our "from Land's End to John o' Groat's house" as signifying the whole of Great Britain.

This is the meaning in the statement that "*all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord*" (iii. 20).

Beer-sheba has a peculiar interest in the history of the Philistines as being connected with Abraham and Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Abraham dug a well at Beer-sheba. The servants of Abimelech seized the well, so Abraham met Abimelech and Phichol at Beer-sheba, and made a treaty, Abraham setting apart "*seven ewe lambs*" as a token of the ratification of their agreement (Gen. xxi. 25-32).

The agreement would seem to have been broken, for it was renewed by Isaac with Abimelech and Phichol (Gen. xxvi. 23-33).

Besor. The Brook. A torrent bed or wady in the extreme south of Judah, lying south of Ziklag. "It is supposed to be the wady *Sheriah* which enters the sea below Askelon."

It is mentioned in connection with David's pursuit of the Amalekite raiders who had sacked Ziklag. At this point 200 of his band of 600 were so dead beat that they could go no further, and were left at the brook. On the return of the rest of the band, some of them objected to share the spoil with the 200, arguing that, as they had taken no part in the fight, they were not entitled to a share of the spoil. David rebuked their selfishness, and the circumstance became memorable as establishing the military rule that the baggage guard should share equally with the fighting line in any booty that might be captured.

Beth-aven. A place near Ai, on the east side of Bethel (Josh. vii. 2), thus lying between Michmash and Bethel. It is mentioned as describing the exact position of the Philistine army at Michmash (xiii. 5). As we know from the account of Joshua's attack on Ai, this pass commanded the ascent from Gilgal to the central ridge. The capture of Ai gave Joshua a road into the interior.

Beth-car. Mentioned as the point to which the Israelites pursued the Philistines after their defeat at Mizpeh, *i.e.* the great victory under Samuel (vii. 11). It was therefore west of Mizpeh. They smote the Philistines "*until they came under Beth-car.*" Thus Beth-car seems to have been a hill overhanging the road from Philistia to Mizpeh.

Bethel (1). (*Beth*, house; *El*, God) = the house of God. Its ancient name was Luz. It was situated on the extreme south of Ephraim, and so was just on the border of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Notice in I. Samuel :

It was one of the three cities—Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpeh—to which Samuel went in circuit from year to year to judge Israel (vii. 16).

its History :

1. When Abraham entered Canaan he pitched his tent between Beth-el and Ai, and built an altar (Gen. xii. 8).
2. On his return from Egypt Abraham again encamped there (Gen. xiii. 3).

3. On his journey from Beer-sheba to Haran Jacob halted for the night at Beth-el. Here he had the vision of the ladder reaching from heaven, and the angels ascending and descending. So he named the place Beth-el. "*This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven,*" but "*the name of that city was called Luz at the first*" (Gen. xxviii. 17 and 19).
4. On his return from Haran Jacob visited Beth-el, in obedience to the command of God, built an altar, called the place El-beth-el, and received the name of Israel (Gen. xxxv. 6-10).
5. The king of Beth-el assisted the king of Ai against the Israelites (Josh. viii. 17), and is mentioned in the list of kings slain by Joshua (Josh. xii. 16).
6. If we take the words "house of God" to mean Beth-el (Judges xx. 18, 26, 31, xxi. 2) we may conclude that the Ark was at Beth-el under the charge of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, and that the Israelites went up to Beth-el to ask counsel of God in their dispute with the tribe of Benjamin.
7. Jeroboam, influenced partly by the sanctity of the spot, and partly by its situation on the southern border of his kingdom, selected Beth-el as one of the places where he set up a golden calf. Here he built a "*house of high places*" and "*an altar of incense*" (1 Kings xii. 29-33).
8. On the occasion of the inauguration of the great festival (on the fifteenth day of the eighth month) which was to take the place of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jeroboam was rebuked by "*the man of God from Judah*" (1 Kings xiii. : for the incidents see that chapter).
9. Beth-el was captured by Judah towards the close of Jeroboam's reign (2 Chron. xiii. 19).
10. Elijah visited Beth-el with Elisha before his translation to heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings ii. 2, 3).
11. There was a "school of prophets" at Beth-el (2 Kings ii. 3).
12. At Beth-el the children mocked Elisha, and forty-two of them were slain by bears (2 Kings ii. 23, 24).
13. After the desolation of the northern kingdom, the priest sent by the king of Assyria "*came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord*" (2 Kings xvii. 26-29).
14. Josiah, on his reformation of the kingdom, broke down the altar at Beth-el and burnt bones out of the sepulchre upon it. He "*burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove*" (2 Kings xxiii. 15-18), and thus fulfilled the prophecy spoken against Jeroboam by the man of God (1 Kings xiii. 2).

Bethel (2). Bethel, in Judah, originally allotted to that tribe, but afterwards assigned to Simeon.

It is mentioned in the list of towns to which David sent presents of the spoil taken from the Amalekites (xxx. 27).

Beth-horon, the name of two places, an "upper" and "lower," on the boundary line between Benjamin and Ephraim, and on the road from Gibeon to Azekah. They commanded the steep and difficult pass by

which the road from the lowland plain of Philistia ascended into the interior of Judah. Upper Beth-horon is at the top of the ascent, the lower stands on a low eminence at the edge of the plain.

Beth-horon is celebrated for three great victories in Jewish history :

- (1) The great victory of Joshua over the allied kings of the south (Josh. x.).
- (2) The victory of Judas Maccabæus over the Syrian forces (1 Macc. iii.).
- (3) The defeat of the Roman army under Cestus Gallius—the last victory of the Jews before the fall of Jerusalem.

Beth-horon is mentioned in 1 Samuel in connection with the raiding bands that went forth from the Philistine camp at Michmash (xiii. 18).

Bethlehem (of Judah) (*house of bread*), situated about five miles south of Jerusalem. Its ancient name was Ephrath or Ephratah. It is often called Bethlehem-Judah, to distinguish it from Bethlehem in Zebulun.

It was the birthplace of our Lord (St. Luke ii. 4).

Notices in I. Samuel :

- (1) It was the birthplace of David (xvii. 12).
- (2) Samuel anointed David at Bethlehem (xvi. 13).
- (3) David was sent from Bethlehem by his father Jesse to visit his brethren in the camp of Saul. The scene of David's encounter with Goliath was only about ten or eleven miles N.W. of Bethlehem.
- (4) The false excuse given by Jonathan to Saul to explain the absence of David from the feast was that David had been summoned by his eldest brother Eliab to attend a sacrificial feast at Bethlehem (xx. 6, and 28, 29).

Other Notices :

1. The Levite who became a priest in the household of Micah, and who afterwards accompanied the Danites to Laish, came from Bethlehem (Judg. xvii. 7).
2. The wife of the Levite (Judg. xix.) came from Bethlehem.
3. The history of Ruth is connected with Bethlehem.

Beth-shean, or **Beth-shan**, a town in the plain of Jezreel about four miles west of Jordan, just at the commencement of the steep descent into the Jordan valley. Though in the territory of Issachar, it was one of the cities assigned to Manasseh.

After their victory on Gilboa, the Philistines fastened the bodies of Saul and his sons to the walls of Beth-shan. The men of Jabesh-gilead crossed the Jordan by night, took the bodies from the walls of Beth-shan, burnt the bones, and buried the remains at Jabesh.

Beth-shemesh, one of the towns that marked the north boundary of Judah, and close to the lowland of Philistia. It was one of the towns allotted to the priests (Josh. xxi. 16).

* The kine that drew the Ark, on its return from the land of the Philistines, came to a halt at a great stone in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite. On this stone the people sacrificed the kine, using the wood of the cart for fuel.

The men of Beth-shemesh looked into the Ark, and God smote fifty thousand and seventy for this sin (vi. 19).

Jehoash, king of Israel, defeated Amaziah, king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh (2 Kings xiv. 11-14).

The Philistines captured Beth-shemesh in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18, 19).

Bezek. The rendezvous of the general body of Israel called together by Saul to relieve Jabesh-gilead. It was in the tribe of Issachar, near Bethshan, about seven miles west of Jordan. The route to Jabesh-gilead lay in a straight line across Jordan. The distance, not more than twenty miles, could be easily traversed in a night's march.

Bozez = *shining*. The name of the northern of the two cliffs, Bozez and Seneh, in the pass of Michmash, and mentioned in the attack made by Jonathan and his armour-bearer upon the Philistine post in the pass. In his account of his crossing the pass, Robinson mentions that he saw to the left "two hills of a conical or rather spherical form, having steep rocky sides, with small wadys running up behind so as almost to isolate them. One is on the side toward Seba, and the other towards Makhmas. These would seem to be the two rocks mentioned in connection with Jonathan's adventure."

The reason of the name is given by Conder. The valley runs east, and the southern cliff *Seneh* is in the shade, whilst the northern cliff, *Bozez*, receives the rays of the sun lighting up its limestone surface.

Caleb (The south of). We know that Hebron (see p. lxxii.) was assigned to Caleb in reward for his faithfulness. Hebron was later assigned to the priests as a city of refuge, but Caleb retained possession of the surrounding district. Part of his land, as we know, lay in the Negeb, so "The south of Caleb" means "Caleb's Negeb" or that part of the Negeb belonging to the family of Caleb.

Carmel, the name of a town in the hill country of Judah, famous in the history of Nabal, and apparently the native place of Abigail, "*the Carmelitess*," one of David's wives (xxvii. 3).

* I was never more deeply impressed with the simple, graphic truthfulness of the Scripture narrative, than on reading, first at Ekron, and then at Beth-shemesh, the story of the taking back of the Ark. Ekron, now a miserable village, is situated on the southern slope of a low, broad ridge, which separates the Plain of Sharon from that of Philistia. At the foot of the ridge is Wady Surár, a wide, rich tract of meadow and corn-fields lining the banks of a little torrent bed. And from the site of the old city the eye can follow the Wady in its easy windings up to the spot, some ten miles distant, where it contracts into a narrow glen, and disappears in the mountains of Judah. Just within the mouth of that glen, but hidden behind a projecting shoulder, lie the ruins of Beth-shemesh. We read that the kine which drew the new cart "took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh." The way lies straight up that valley. And we further read, that "they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley; and that they lifted up their eyes and saw the Ark": they saw it in the distance as it came up through the mouth of the glen into their more confined mountain territory, and they "rejoiced to see it" (Kitto).

Carmel is about a mile to the north of Maon. Nabal lived at Maon, and had his establishment (*possessions*) at Carmel. This signifies that his business was at Carmel, whilst he lived at Maon.

Saul erected a monument at Carmel as a record of his victory over the Amalekites (xv. 12).

Chor-ashan, probably the same place as Ashan, a city in the extreme south of the Negeb, originally allotted to Judah, and afterwards assigned to Simeon.

It is one of the places mentioned among the cities to which David sent presents after his successful pursuit of the Amalekites (xxx. 30).

Dan (the city), not the tribe of that name, but a town in the extreme north of Palestine. Its original name was Laish, and the story of its capture by the Danites is told in Judges xviii.—xix. After the capture the Danites gave the town the name of their own tribe.

"From Dan to Beer-sheba," was the common expression for the whole of the land (see Beer-sheba, p. lx.).

Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves at Dan, partly because it was the northern extremity of his kingdom, and partly because the Danites had established there a kind of religious worship, presided over by the young Levite, who had accompanied them from the house of Micah in Mount Ephraim, taking with him the ephod, the teraphim, the graven image and the molten image which Micah had made.

Eben-ezer = *the stone of help*. The stone set up by Samuel as a memorial of the great victory over the Philistines, and as a mark of the signal assistance of Jehovah. Its position is accurately defined as lying between "*Mizpeh and Shen*" (vii. 12). The position has not been identified, but it appears to have been at the western extremity of the valley down which the Philistines fled.

It is remarkable that the scene of Samuel's great victory is exactly at the spot where the Philistines crushed Israel and captured the Ark twenty years previously. The name was not given till after Samuel's victory, so that the mention of the name Ebenezer in iv. 1 must be regarded as anticipatory.

The effects of the victory at Ebenezer.

The immediate results were the recovery of the towns and villages which, during the Philistine oppression, had been in the hands of the Philistines.

It marks the end of the Philistine domination. That nation never recovered their lost supremacy over Israel. Not even the battle of Gilboa gave them so great a hold as before. David may, and probably did, reign at Hebron as a tributary king to Philistia, but the grinding oppression of the military occupation of the land by the Philistines came to an end.

The spiritual life of Israel revived, giving rise to a new order—that of the Prophets—speaking in the name of God (see p. xi. ff.), and thus in a sense superior to the priesthood, which had failed in the great office of keeping alive the pure worship of Jehovah.

The people were also stirred to a great desire of national unity.

In fine, at Ebenezer was born a spirit of national and religious unity which reached its highest mark in the *prosperous* period of David's reign.

Ekron, the most northerly of the five cities of the Philistines. It was assigned to Judah, forming one of the landmarks on the northern boundary. It seems to have been afterwards given to Dan.

Notices in I. Samuel:

It is one of the cities which received the Ark when captured by the Philistines. Noting the plagues that visited Ashdod and Gath, the Ekronites made vehement, but unavailing, protest against receiving the Ark into their city.

The Ark was drawn by the kine from Ekron to Bethshemesh.

Other Notices:

Ahaziah, king of Israel, sent to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from the injuries sustained by falling through a lattice from his upper chamber (2 Kings i. 2).

Elah, Valley of = **the valley of the terebinth* (modern Wady-es-Sunt = *the valley of the acacia*). The valley which separated the armies of Israel and Philistia when Goliath challenged Israel. In this valley David met the giant, and picked the five smooth stones from the torrent bed. It marks the direct road from Gath to Hebron.

Endor (*the spring of Dor*), a place in the territory of Issachar, but belonging to Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 11). It is four miles south of Tabor, and distant seven or eight miles from the slopes of Gilboa.

It is famous for two notable events in the history of Israel:

1. It is connected with the great victory over Sisera and the Canaanites. "*Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison: Which perished at Endor*" (Ps. lxxxiii. 9, 10).
2. The visit of Saul to the witch of Endor. Saul made his way by night over the seven or eight miles of difficult ground, which lies between Gilboa and Endor, skirting the Philistine camp, making his way along the south-eastern slope of the hill under which their encampment lay at Shunem.

Engedi. In the wilderness of Judah. A lofty plateau some 2000 feet above the Dead Sea. Engedi itself, known as *Ain-jidy*, the Fountain of the Kid, is a beautiful oasis in the wilderness, in the middle of the western coast of the Dead Sea. Above it is "the wilderness," bare, round limestone hills rising from two hundred to four hundred feet, intersected by wadys running down in deep ravines to the sea. Here David took refuge, making his way from Maon, a journey of six or seven hours, when a Philistine inroad had caused Saul to relax his pursuit at a time when his forces had almost surrounded David and his men. "On all sides the country is full of caverns, which might well serve as lurking places for David and his men, as they do for outlaws at the present day."

* "The valley is about a quarter of a mile wide, and has a gently undulating surface of cultivated ground. The ridges along each side rise steeply, though not precipitously, to a height of some five hundred feet. Through the centre of the valley winds a broad torrent bed, now dry, but filled with smooth white stones, and fringed with shrubberies of acacia. Half-way up the ridge on the left bank lie the grey ruins of Shochoh, where the Philistines had pitched their camp. Along the crown and side of the ridge opposite, less than a mile distant, were ranged the tents of Saul. The encampments were in full view of each other; and the warriors of both sides could send shouts of defiance across the intervening valley."

The cave in which David cut off the skirt of Saul's robe is conjectured to be in the Wady Chareetun, and which is said to have once given shelter to 30,000 men. "Rocky, precipitous walls, which rise up one above another for many hundred feet from the sides of this defile. Stone upon stone, and cliff above cliff, without any sign of being habitable, or being capable of affording even a halting-place to anything but wild goats."

In this district mountain goats are still to be found, so it may be well said that Saul "*went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats*" (xxiv. 2).

Ephes-dammim, the modern Damim, between Shochoh and Azekah, the actual site of the Philistine encampment where David met Goliath. As the name signifies "*bound of blood*," and as the place lies near the ravine leading from Gath to Hebron, it is probable that it was so called because it was the scene of many encounters with bands of Philistine raiders.

Esdraelon, Plain of, known also as the Plain of Jezreel, extending across Central Palestine from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, separating the mountain ranges of Carmel and Ephraim from those of Naphtali.

It is celebrated as being the great battlefield of Palestine, and four great encounters are recorded in Scripture :

1. The battle of Kishon, in which Sisera's host was routed by Deborah and Barak (Judg. iv. 15).
2. The defeat of the Midianite horde by Gideon (Judg. vii).
3. The battle of Gilboa, in which Saul lost his life (1 Sam. xxxi.).
4. The battle of Megiddo, where Josiah fell in the endeavour to check the march of Pharaoh-nechoh as he advanced northwards to the Euphrates (2 Kings xxiii. 29).

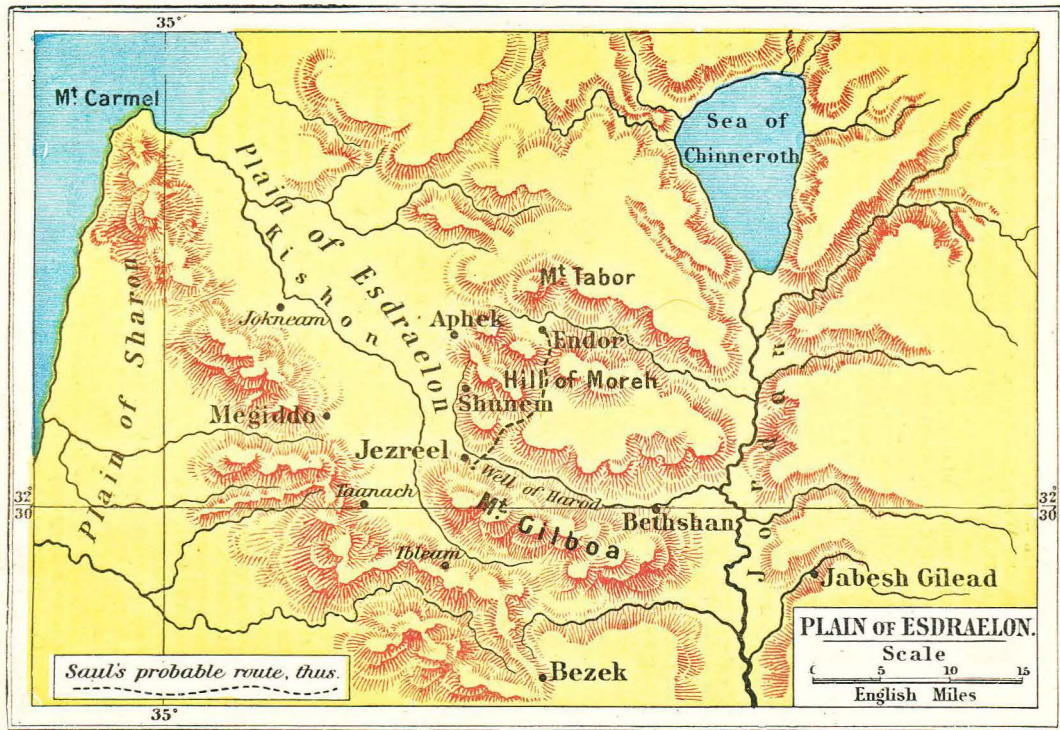
"The situation of the plain of Esdraelon may be compared with the plain of Stirling, situated in a similar manner at the entrance to the Highlands of Scotland. As the plain of Esdraelon was the battle ground of Palestine, so almost all the great battles of Scottish history were decided in the plain of Stirling" (Stanley).

The Site of the Battle of Gilboa.

The reason why the scene of the battle was laid so far north, distant alike from the cities of Philistia and the residence of Saul, was not, as many suppose, in order to gain supremacy in the north similar to that already obtained by the Philistines in the south. They had not overcome Saul in the south, and did not, at the conclusion of his reign, possess a supremacy over the land at all comparable to the oppression they had enacted in the days of Eli.

It is clear that Saul's military organization had been sufficiently strong to keep back any formidable invasion from the west. The Philistines may have held the towns immediately contiguous to their territory, but it is probable that their defeats at Ebenezer (Samuel) and in the valley of Elah had convinced them that Central Palestine was not to be won by an army advancing from the west.

Consequently they turned northward, and, marching along the coast, came through the pass dividing the hills of Manasseh from Mt. Carmel, and encamped in the plain of Esdraelon. A great victory there would



PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

not only cut the land, so to speak, in two, but give them the key both to the south and the north. This district they could hope to hold permanently with their chariots and cavalry. The slopes of Gilboa were not too steep for their horsemen and chariots. Here they would not have to ascend from the plain along the rocky ravines of the torrent beds. They pushed, therefore, across the plain to Shunem. At this point the great plain is broken by two mountain ridges. "On the southern side of the valley, which is here about three miles wide, are the mountains of Gilboa, and at their foot, or rather spur, lies Jezreel, where the spring which gushes down is gathered into a pool of considerable size," possibly the same as the well of Harod, where Gideon tested his men. On this ridge the Israelites pitched their camp.

On the northern side of the valley are the hill of Moreh and Mount Tabor. At Shunem and Aphek, to the south of Moreh, lay the Philistine host. Round the further side of the hill, distant some seven or eight miles from Gilboa, was the village of Endor. Saul's journey, the night before the battle, was doubly hazardous. Not only did the path lie over difficult ground, but caution was necessary if he were to slip past the Philistines unnoticed.

The Plain of Esdraelon is connected with many events in subsequent history.

Here Ahab built his capital, Jezreel, on the spur of Gilboa, abutting the plain, commanding the view to Jordan on the east, and visible from Carmel on the west.

On the ridge of Carmel Elijah slaughtered the priests of Baal, and ran before Ahab along the plain.

At Beth-shan, on the east, the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the city walls.

Past Beth-shan, from the east, came Jehu from the camp at Ramoth-gilead to execute vengeance on the house of Ahab.

From Jezreel fled Ahaziah, king of Judah, making for Judah by the western pass, and receiving his death wound at Megiddo.

The defeat inflicted upon Benhadad, king of Syria, by Ahab occurred at Aphek on the east of Jordan, on the military road to Syria, and not at Aphek in the plain of Jezreel.

Esh-temoa, a town in the hill country of Judah, about seven miles south of Hebron. It is connected with the exile of David. The inhabitants were friendly to him, and received a present from the spoil taken from the Amalekites (xxx. 28).

Ezel, the stone. A well-known stone in the open country near Saul's residence at Gibeah. Jonathan arranged with David to meet him at the stone Ezel, when David finally fled from court (xx. 19).

Gallim, a place between Gibeah of Saul and Jerusalem. It was the native place of Phalti, or Phaltiel, to whom Saul gave in marriage Michal, his daughter, David's wife, when David fled from court.

Gath, one of the five cities of the Philistines. It occupied a strong position on the border of Judah and Philistia, and from its strength and resources formed the key of both countries.

It is intimately connected with the history of David.

It was the native place of the giant Goliath (xvii. 4).

David fled from Saul to Achish, king of Gath (xxi. 10; xxvii. 3) (See Achish.)

Gaza, or Azzah, one of the five cities of the Philistines, and the last town in the south-west of Palestine on the frontier of Egypt. It occupied a position of great strength. Joshua was not able to subdue it, and though the tribe of Judah once obtained possession of it, they did not hold it for long. During the times of Samuel, Saul, and David it was in the hands of the Philistines, and appears to have been the capital. Solomon gained possession of it, and it is said that his territory extended from "*Tiphseh even to Azzah*" (1 Kings iv. 24).

It was the scene of one of Samson's exploits, viz., the carrying away of the gates of Gaza (Judg. xvi. 1-3).

Geba. The modern *Jeba*, standing at the south side of the passage or pass of Michmash, whilst Michmash is on the north. The Philistines had established a military post at Geba to command the pass. Jonathan commenced the war of independence by surprising the garrison holding this post (xiii. 3).

Gibeah (hill town) is a name given to many places in Palestine.

The Gibeah of 1 Samuel is Gibeah of Benjamin, or Gibeah of Saul. It was situated four miles north of Jerusalem, to the right of the road leading from Hebron to Jerusalem, and then northwards.

The strength of its position is indicated by the successful resistance which the Benjamites made against the attack of the united tribes. They were at last defeated by stratagem and the town taken (Judg. xx.).

It was the native place and home of Saul. Thence he went forth at his father's bidding to seek the asses that were lost.

Saul was at Gibeah when the messengers came from Jabesh-gilead to entreat for help against Nahash the Ammonite (xi. 4).

Jonathan sallied from Gibeah, and smote the garrison of the Philistines at Michmash (xiii. 2-4).

Jonathan passed over from Gibeah to Michmash, where he occasioned the panic which led to the flight and rout of the Philistines (xiv. 4-16).

Here Saul held his court, at which he held a special trial to discover who of his servants were in league with David, when Doeg the Edomite disclosed how Ahimelech had given assistance to David at Nob. The slaughter of the priests evidently took place at Gibeah, whither they had been summoned by the incensed king to explain their conduct (xxii. 6-18).

Gilboa (see Plain of Esdraelon). A mountain range at the east of the plain of Esdraelon, forming its southern boundary, and rising above Jezreel. It is the scene of the defeat and death of Saul.

Gilead, a mountainous district on the east of Jordan, bounded on the north by Bashan, and on the south by Moab and Ammon. Mahanaim, Jabesh-gilead, and Ramoth-gilead were the chief towns. The name is often applied to the whole district east of Jordan.

Gilead was the natural retreat of the Israelites from a western invasion. When the Philistines advanced against Saul, many of them "went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead" (xiii. 7).

On the death of Saul, Ishbosheth set up his court at Mahanaim in Gilead, and David fled to the same place of refuge to escape from Absalom.

Gilgal, situated on a hillock or rising ground in the plains of Jericho, about five miles from the Jordan and two miles from Jericho.

It was the site of the first camp of the Israelites after the crossing of the Jordan. The twelve stones which had been taken from the river were set up at Gilgal.

The word means "*the Rolling*," and thus kept in remembrance the "*rolling away of the reproach of Egypt*" (Josh. v. 9).

Joshua fortified "*the camp*," and made it the base of his military operations against the Canaanites, and a place of safety where the women, children, etc., could be left.

Notices in I. Samuel :

1. It was one of the three towns, Beth-el, Gilgal and Mizpeh, which Samuel visited in turn as judge of the people (vii. 16).
2. The Philistine hold upon the country caused Gilgal to become a centre of religious and national life. As long as Israel held the eastern side of the passes, Gilgal was safe from Philistine raiders.

So we find Samuel sacrificing at Gilgal (x. 8), holding a judicial court there (vii. 16), Saul publicly confirmed in his election as king (xi. 14, 15), and also mustering his army for his great war of independence (xiii. 4-7).

At Gilgal Saul first shows the wilfulness of his character in sacrificing without waiting for the arrival of Samuel, who had appointed to meet the king at Gilgal. His disobedience causes Samuel to pronounce the first sentence against Saul. "*Thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart*" (xiii. 14). Thus Gilgal has a melancholy connection with the fate of Saul.

Other Notices :

1. The rite of circumcision took place after the crossing of Jordan (Josh. v. 2-9).
2. The Passover was celebrated (Josh. v. 10-12).
3. The treaty was made with the Gibeonites, who came to the "camp at Gilgal" (Josh. x. 6).
4. From Gilgal Joshua hastened to the rescue of the Gibeonites when they were attacked by the southern kings (Josh. x. 7).
5. Joshua returned to Gilgal after the conquest of the south of Canaan (Josh. x. 43).
6. Caleb claimed Hebron as his inheritance before Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. xiv. 6).
7. After the conquest of the land, the Tabernacle was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1).
8. The angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim (Judg. ii. 1).
9. Ehud turned back from the quarries by Gilgal to assassinate Eglon (Judg. iii. 19).
10. The men of Judah came to meet David at Gilgal on his return to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom (2 Sam. xix. 15).

Hachilah, the Hill. A hill in the wilderness of Ziph, lying to the south of Jeshimon, or the waste. The wilderness of Ziph was David's first station in his wanderings. The hill of Hachilah commands a full view of the surrounding country, and from it the Ziphites could see David and his men moving about in the desert. Their knowledge of his haunts led them to betray his whereabouts to Saul. It appears to have been covered with thick brushwood, and in this wood David had his final meeting with Jonathan (xxiii. 16-18).

Hareth, the Forest of. Situated somewhere in the boundaries of Judah. When the prophet Gad told David to leave the land of Moab, he returned to Judah "*and came into the forest of Hareth*" (xxii. 5).

Havilah. Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah to Shur. These places were well-known landmarks once, but though Havilah must be in the Arabian desert it cannot now be identified (xv. 7).

Hazor. An important city in the tribe of Naphtali, situated between Ramah and Kedesh, on the high ground overlooking the waters of Merom.

Notices:

1. Joshua defeated Jabin, king of Hazor, and the northern confederacy of kings, and burnt the city (Josh. xi. 1).
2. Later it was the capital of another Jabin, whose host under Sisera was defeated by Deborah and Barak (Judg. iv. 2).
3. It was fortified by Solomon as commanding the great line of invasion from the north (1 Kings ix. 15).
4. It was captured by Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings xv. 29).

Samuel alludes to the oppression under Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and the deliverance by Barak (if Bedan means Barak) (xii. 9-11).

Hebron. A city of Judah, twenty-nine miles south of Jerusalem, and twenty miles north of Beer-sheba. The ancient name was Kirjath-arba, the city of Arba, so called from Arba, the father of Anak.

Notices:

- (1) Abraham pitched his tent "*in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron*" (Gen. xiii. 18).
- (2) Sarah died at Hebron; and there was the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham purchased as a burial-place from Ephron, the Hittite (Gen. xxiii.).
- (3) In the division of the land Hebron fell to the lot of Caleb (Josh. xv. 13). (See Caleb, p. lxiv.)
- (4) It was the capital of David on the death of Saul. There he reigned seven years and six months (2 Sam. v. 5).
- (5) It was the scene of the murder of Abner by Joab (2 Sam. iii. 27).
- (6) Here Absalom commenced his rebellion against his father David, going to Hebron under the pretence of fulfilling a vow which he had made whilst dwelling in exile at Geshur (2 Sam. xv. 7-12).

Hormah (or Zephath). A city in the south of Palestine, originally allotted to Judah, but afterwards assigned to Simeon.

It is chiefly memorable as the scene of the defeat of the Israelites by the Canaanites and Amalekites, when, after the return of the spies, the Israelites in their presumption advanced to conquer the land contrary to the express disapproval of Moses (Num. xiv. 45).

Hormah was one of the towns in the south which received presents from David of the spoil taken from the Amalekites (xxx. 30).

Jabesh-gilead. One of the chief cities of Gilead beyond the Jordan.

The history of Jabesh-gilead is intimately connected with the tribe of Benjamin and the house of Saul.

We read that Jabesh-gilead was the only town that had not taken part in the exterminating war against the tribe of Benjamin (Judges xxi. 9). At the conclusion of the campaign the survivors of Benjamin were supplied with wives by the sack of Jabesh-gilead (Judges xxi. 8-24).

Jabesh-gilead was the scene of Saul's first military exploit. He relieved Jabesh-gilead from the attack of Nahash, the Ammonite king. It is curious that their cry for help against Nahash should be responded to by Saul, the first king of the tribe of Benjamin.

The men of Jabesh-gilead remembered the promptness with which Saul had responded to their call. When the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and his sons on the walls of Beth-shan, the men of Jabesh, in gratitude for their deliverance from Nahash, came by night and took down the bodies, conveying them to Jabesh-gilead, and buried them there, after first burning them (xxxi. 11-13).

Jattir. A priestly city in the hill country of Judah, identified with the modern *Attir*, ten miles south of Hebron.

David sent to the men of Jattir part of the spoil taken from the Amalekites (xxx. 27).

Jeshimon = *the Waste*. It is not a proper name, but appellative, and is used to describe the dreary waste or steppe below the plateau of Ziph.

Jezreel (1). There are two places of this name mentioned in the First Book of Samuel.

Jezreel in the Plain of Esdraelon, which is also known as the Plain of Jezreel.

When Saul marched northwards to meet the Philistines, the "*Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.*" This fountain is the present *Ain Jalūd*, a very large fountain, which issues from a cleft in the rock at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern border of Gilboa, forming a limpid pool of about forty or fifty feet in diameter, and then flowing in a brook through the valley.

Jezreel in the passage simply signifies the Valley of Jezreel.

The city **Jezreel** is of later date. It was built by Ahab as his chief residence. The site was chosen because of its strong and commanding position. The city was situated on one of the eminences rising out of the Plain of Jezreel, "but with two peculiarities which mark it out from the rest, viz. :

Its strength. On the north-east the hill presents a steep rocky descent of at least 100 feet.

Its central position. It stands at the opening of the middle branch of the three eastern forks of the plain, and looks straight towards the wide western level, thus commanding the view towards the Jordan on the east, and visible from Carmel on the west" (B.D.). It is the scene of many notable incidents in Kings.

Jezebel (2). A town in southern Judah in the neighbourhood of Carmel. Thence David took his wife Ahinoam, who is known as Ahinoam *the Jezreelitess*, from the name of her native town (xxv. 43).

Keilah. A town in the *Shephelah*, or lowland of Judah, close to the frontiers of Philistia. It was a fortified place, with walls and gates and bars (xxiii. 7). It was rescued by David from the Philistine raiders, who had attacked the town at the time of harvest.

Abiathar, the sole survivor of the massacre at Nob, joined David either at Keilah, or shortly before he marched to relieve the place.

When Saul heard that David was within the town, he saw his opportunity to capture David, and immediately marched to besiege the place. The inhabitants, probably fearing a like vengeance to that which had befallen Nob, plotted to curry the favour of Saul by betraying David into his hand, but David, warned by God, left the town and betook himself to the wilderness.

Kirjath-jearim (*the city of the woods*). A town of Judah about nine miles to the north-west of Jerusalem, lying on the border of Judah and Benjamin. It was a Gibeonite city (Josh. ix. 17).

When the Ark was restored by the Philistines it came to Beth-shemesh. The men of Beth-shemesh were smitten for the sin of looking into the Ark, so they entreated the men of Kirjath-jearim to come and fetch it. The Ark was placed in the house of Abinadab on the hill at Kirjath-jearim, and his son Eleazer was sanctified as its keeper or guardian. The Ark rested at Kirjath-jearim for twenty years during the reign of Saul, and was brought thence by David (2 Sam. vi. 3).

Maon, a city of the tribe of Judah in the hill country. It is connected with Carmel and Ziph. The name still remains in *Tell Maïn*, a lofty conical hill about seven miles south of Hebron.

The wilderness of Maon is the district round the hill.

David was nearly captured by Saul in the wilderness of Maon, escaping down one side of the hill as Saul and his men climbed up the reverse slope (xxiii. 24-26).

Maon was the residence of Nabal (xxv. 2).

Michmash (modern *Mikhmas*), situated in the very centre of Benjamin, distant about seven miles north of Jerusalem, on the northern edge of the main pass of communication between the central highlands and the Jordan valley at Jericho.

Saul posted his army at this spot to resist the further advance of the Philistines, and the cliffs around are the scene of the famous exploits of Jonathan, culminating in the rout of the Philistines down the western passes from Michmash to Aijalon (xiii.—xiv.).

The Passage of Michmash, *i.e.* the pass of Michmash, is the modern *Wady Suweinit*, a deep ravine affording a steep and precipitous path from *Geba* at the southern extremity to *Michmash* at the northern outlet. These places are mentioned in Isaiah's description of the march of Sennacherib against Jerusalem. "*He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages: They are gone over the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba*" (Is. x. 28, 29). The difficulties of the pass caused the Assyrians to leave their baggage at Michmash until they had gained the southern opening at Geba, and had obtained full command of the pass.

The rocks *Bozez* and *Seneh* are at the entrance of one of the side ravines running down into the pass of Michmash.

Migron. We find Saul "*in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron*" (xiv. 2) at the time of Jonathan's heroic exploit. According to Isaiah x. 28, Migron is north of Michmash (see Michmash). So the Migron near Gibeah cannot be the Migron of Isaiah, for Gibeah is south of Michmash. As Migron means "precipice, or cliff," it may have been a name given to many places in this cliff district.

Mizpeh (1). Mizpeh of Benjamin, a town of Benjamin on the frontier, near Ramah and Gibeon.

Notices in I. Samuel:

In the time of Samuel Mizpeh was the place chosen for the meeting of the people on special occasions:

- (1) Samuel assembled the people to confess their sins and to pray for the assistance of Jehovah. The Philistines, probably viewing this gathering as intended to combine the people in an effort to throw off their yoke, marched against the assembled Israelites. Jehovah delivered his people by means of a great thunderstorm, and the Israelites gained a decisive victory (vii. 5-12).

This victory marks the conclusion of the forty years of the Philistine oppression.

- (2) Saul was chosen king at Mizpeh (x. 17-25).

Mizpeh was one of the three cities—Mizpeh, Beth-el and Gilgal—which Samuel visited in turn to judge the people (vii. 16).

Other Notices:

- (1) It was fortified by Asa with the stones and timber prepared by Baasha to fortify Ramah, which place he abandoned when compelled to retire to meet the invasion by Benhadad, king of Syria (1 Kings xv. 22). At the same time Asa seems to have made a cistern or reservoir in order to supply the fortress with water in case of a siege; "*the pit . . . which Asa the king, made for fear of Baasha, the king of Israel*" (Jer. xli. 9).
- (2) After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Mizpeh became the residence of Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed governor of the land. Here he was murdered by Ishmael, and his body was cast into the pit made by Asa (Jer. xl. 6—xli. 10).

Mizpeh (2). Mizpeh of Moab. Some mountain fastness on the high land on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. "It may have been Kir-Moab (the modern *Kerak*), a strong rock fortress, or even the great Mount Pisgah" (B.D.). It was the residence of the king of Moab, when David committed his parents to his care. David stayed some time in this mountain fort till bidden by Gad to return to the country of Judah (xxii. 3-5).

Mizpeh signifies watch-tower, and is the name of many places in Palestine.

Mount Bethel. Here "Mount" means hill country, or high ground. "*Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in Mount Bethel,*" i.e. Saul, with 2000 men, occupied Michmash and the hilly district round Bethel (xiii. 2).

Mount Ephraim. The title is misleading. It should be "the hill country of Ephraim." What is meant is the hilly part of the territory of Ephraim, one of the most fertile and beautiful regions of Palestine. Shechem and Samaria were situated in this district. The district was almost inaccessible on the western side. It was the highway for all roads from the south. It appears to have been successively invaded from the north from the Plain of Esdraelon.

Naioth. Naioth in Ramah. Naioth is not a proper name. It signifies "*dwellings.*" Naioth is generally considered to have been the residence of the sons of the prophets near Ramah, who dwelt together as in a college (see 2 Kings vi. 1, 2). It is natural that there should be some such college near Ramah under Samuel's personal superintendence. When David fled to Samuel at Ramah "*he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth*" (xix. 18), probably for greater safety.

Negeb. (See p. xlvi.)

Nob. A city of the priests, the residence of the high-priest in the reign of Saul. Here also was the Tabernacle during this period. Its site has not been definitely identified.

From Isaiah x. 30-32 we gather that it was to the north of Jerusalem, within sight of the city, lying between Anathoth and Jerusalem. This is confirmed in Neh. xi. 32, when Nob is mentioned in close connection with Anathoth.

Notices in I. Samuel:

After the final breach with Saul David fled first of all to Nob, to Ahimelech the high-priest, for the double purpose of inquiring of the Lord (xxii. 10-15) and of obtaining food. Under the pretext of having to perform a secret commission from the king in haste, he induced Ahimelech to give him the shewbread and the sword of Goliath also.

David's interview with Ahimelech was observed by Doeg the Edomite, then at Nob, who disclosed the adventure to Saul. The king took terrible vengeance upon the priests. Eighty-five were slain by Doeg at Gibeah whither they were summoned to explain their conduct, and then Nob was put to the sword, men, women, children and cattle being slain. Abiathar escaped the massacre and fled for safety to David.

Ophrah. Not the Ophrah of Gideon, which is in the tribe of Manasseh, but the Ophrah of Benjamin, five miles east of Bethel. It is mentioned as being the direction taken northwards from Michmash by one of the three marauding bands which went forth from the Philistine camp at Michmash (xiii. 17).

Paran, Wilderness of. The northern portion of the desert of Arabia which stretches up to the mountains of Judah.

David "*went down to the wilderness of Paran*" after the death of Samuel (xxv. 1). His stay there is marked by the circumstances connected with the history of Nabal (see p. xcii.).

Rachal. Mentioned as one of the cities to which David sent presents of the spoil of the Amalekites (xxx. 29). It is not mentioned elsewhere. The Septuagint reads "Carmel."

Rachel's Tomb. The site of the tomb is definitely fixed as on the way from Bethel to "*Ephrath, which is Bethlehem,*" and but a little way from Ephrath (Gen. xxxv. 16-20; xlviii. 7). The traditional site is *Kubbit Rahil* (dome of Rachel), about four miles south of Jerusalem and one mile north of Bethlehem.

Saul, when he left Samuel at Ramah, was told that he should meet "*two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah*" (x. 2).

Many suggestions have been made to reconcile these two passages, of which the principal are:

- (1) That Samuel did not receive Saul at Ramah, but at some place near Bethlehem.
- (2) That the tomb of Rachel is wrongly placed near Bethlehem, and must be sought for somewhere in Benjamin near the border.
- (3) That Samuel purposely sent Saul out of his way.

The last suggestion seems the most probable, for a distance of two miles from Jerusalem might well be described as "in the border of Benjamin," *i.e.* that Saul would only have to go a short distance beyond the border of Benjamin. Jerusalem was assigned to the tribe of Benjamin, whilst Dean Stanley suggests that "after the allotment of the country to the various tribes, the territory of the Benjamites was extended by a long strip into the south, to include the sepulchre of their beloved ancestress."

Ramathaim-Zophim (Ramathaim = *the two heights*, Zophim = *of the Zophites*) or **Ramah**. The full name is given to distinguish it from Ramah in Benjamin.

The town was situated in the hill country of Ephraim (i. 1).

Notices in I. Samuel:

1. It was the residence of Samuel's parents, and the birthplace of Samuel.
2. It was the residence of Samuel. "*There was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the Lord*" (vii. 17).

3. Samuel returned to Ramah after hewing Agag in pieces at Gilgal (xv. 34).

4. David fled from Saul, and went to Samuel at Naioth (the college) in Ramah (xix. 19).

The messengers sent by Saul to fetch David prophesied at Naioth, as did Saul himself, when he went in person to arrest David (xix. 18-24).

5. Samuel died at Ramah, and was buried in his house there with honour by all Israel (xxv. 1).

In xxii. 6 it is said that "*Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah.*" "Ramah" is an appellative, not a proper name. Translate "*under the tamarisk-tree on the height.*" In fact, Saul is holding a court at Gibeah in the open air, his spear as sceptre in his hand, surrounded by all his officers of state, among them Doeg the Edomite, the "chief of the herdsmen."

The site of Ramathalm-Zophim is a disputed point, and many modern critics regard it as identical with Ramah in Benjamin.

The chief arguments in support of this view are:

1. That the public life of Samuel appears to have been restricted to the tribe of Benjamin and to the neighbourhood of Gibeah.
2. That the term "Mount Ephraim" is an elastic phrase, and that the hill country extended into Benjamin, for Deborah is described as judging Israel "*between Ramah and Beth-el in Mount Ephraim*" (Judg. iv. 5).
3. That the name Ramathalm-Zophim is derived from the Levitical family of Zuph or Zophai.

Ramoth, styled South Ramoth (xxx. 27), better Ramoth-Negeb, *i.e.* Ramoth in the Negeb or south country, probably identical with Ramath in the south, a town allotted to Simeon. It is mentioned in the list of towns to which David sent presents of the spoil taken from the Amalekites (xxx. 27).

Shimei the Ramathite, the overseer of David's vineyards (1 Chron. xxvii. 27), may have been a native of this place.

Sechu. Some place lying between Gibeah and Ramath of Samuel; near it was some large well-known cistern (xix. 22). At this spot Saul inquired as to the whereabouts of Samuel and David.

Seneh (see Bozez, p. lxiv.), the crag on the southern side of a ravine running down into the pass of Michmash.

Sela-hammahlekoth. A cliff in the wilderness of Maon, where Saul nearly succeeded in capturing David and his men, who hurried down one side of the hill as Saul's men were climbing up the other (xxiii. 25-28).

The cliff received the name Sela-hammahlekoth = "*rock of divisions,*" or "*rock of escapes,*" as commemorative of being either the rock which separated David from Saul, or the rock where David so narrowly escaped the pursuit.

A raid of the Philistines called Saul away from any further pursuit for the time.

Shaaraim. A town in the lowland of Judah, connected with Azekah and Shochoh (Josh. xv. 35, 36). It is connected with the flight of the Philistines after the fall of Goliath. "*And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron*" (xvii. 52).

The place has been located as being situated on or near a hill in the valley down which the Philistines fled, and so exactly in the line of the pursuit,

Shalim. A district through which Saul passed in search of his father's asses (ix. 4). Its situation is not known.

Shalisha. Named as one of the districts in which Saul made search for the lost asses of his father Kish, described as lying between Mount Ephraim and the land of Shalim (ix. 4).

Shen. Some place near Mizpeh of Benjamin. It is mentioned as defining the stone of Ebenezer set up as a memorial of the victory. Samuel set the stone up "*between Mizpeh and Shen*" (vii. 12). The situation is not known. *Shen* (*tooth*) seems to indicate a projecting point of rock (K.).

Shiloh = rest. In Ephraim, situated in a central position in Palestine, and in consequence chosen by Joshua as the permanent abode of the Tabernacle and the Ark after the conquest of the land.

It was situated on the north side of Beth-el, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah (Judg. xxi. 19).

It has been suggested that this passage was added at a time when Shiloh was deserted, and its site almost forgotten.

The chief points of interest in its history are :

- (1) During the conquest of the land the Ark and Tabernacle were at Gilgal. They were placed at Shiloh at the completion of the conquest (Josh. xviii. 1).
- (2) At Shiloh the land was distributed among the tribes (Josh. xviii.—xx.).
- (3) The Benjamites were allowed to carry off the "daughters of Shiloh" at a religious feast held there (Judg. xxi. 19-24), thus furnishing wives for those survivors of the tribe who had not already been provided with wives from the sack of Jabesh-gilead.
- (4) In the days of Eli the Ark was carried from Shiloh into battle against the Philistines, by whom it was captured. Though the Ark was restored by the Philistines, it was never taken back to Shiloh.
- (5) The Tabernacle was subsequently removed from Shiloh, being found at Nob in the reign of Saul (1 Sam. xxi. 1-6), and at Gibeon in the reign of Solomon (1 Chron. xvi. 39).

From that time Shiloh sank into insignificance. Jeroboam chose Bethel in preference to Shiloh, when he decided to set up the golden calves.

- (6) Shiloh is mentioned in Jeremiah as one of the places from which the men, subsequently murdered by Ishmael, came with signs of mourning, to bring offerings and incense to offer them to the Lord on the site of the ruined Temple (Jer. xli. 4-9).

The Tabernacle at Shiloh. In the days of Eli, the city had sprung up round it. The man bearing tidings of the capture of the Ark is said to have come up "*into the city*" (iv. 13).

The Tabernacle itself was so surrounded with buildings as to give it the name and appearance of a "house" or "temple."

Whilst the ancient Sacred Tent remained the same in character, it had evidently been surrounded by a permanent wall. "There was a gateway with a seat inside the doorposts or pillars which supported it. It was 'the seat' or 'throne' of the ruler or judge, as afterwards in the palace of Solomon. Here Eli sat on days of religious or political solemnity, and surveyed the worshippers as they came up the eminence on which the sanctuary was placed" (Stanley).

The Fate of Shiloh.

There is a prophecy in Jeremiah that Jerusalem should suffer the fate of Shiloh. "*Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth*" (Jer. xxvi. 6).

Parallel.

<i>Shiloh.</i>	<i>Jerusalem.</i>
(1) Here was the Tabernacle.	(1) Here was the Temple of Solomon.
(2) The abode of the Ark.	(2) The abode of the Ark.
(3) The Ark removed never to return.	(3) The Ark disappeared with the capture of the city.
(4) The Tabernacle taken away and finally lost.	(4) The Temple of Solomon totally destroyed.

The fall of Shiloh was remarkable and complete. This leads us to conclude that after their victory the Philistines must have pressed on and sacked Shiloh. So great was the calamity that the period was known as "*The captivity*" (Judges xviii. 30).

Shochoh, the encampment of the Philistines when Goliath challenged Israel (xvii. 1), the camp being actually pitched between Shochoh and Ephes-dammim, the latter about three miles north-east of Shochoh. The Philistines were pushing up into the interior of Judah, up the valley of Elah, which would lead them to Bethlehem. At Shochoh they would be about ten miles to the south-west of Bethlehem. The Philistine army lay on the southern slope of the Wady, whilst Israel was camped on the northern slope.

At Shochoh the valley divides one branch leading westward to Gath, and the other northwards towards Ekron. Bearing in mind that the Philistines had advanced slightly beyond Shochoh, the description of their rout becomes intelligible.

They were pursued "*even unto Gath, and unto Ekron*" (xvii. 52), i.e. the fleeing host divided into two bands following the two branches of the Wady. Israel pursued them to the gates of both cities.

Shual (*foxland*) (xiii. 17), possibly the same as Shalim (ix. 4). It is mentioned as being the route of the band of Philistine ravagers, which went from Michmash northward to Ophrah (xiii. 17).

Shunem, situated on the south-west slope of the Hill of Moreh (now known as "Little Hermon"), and separated from Jezreel and Gilboa by the deep valley of Jezreel. Here was the encampment of the Philistines before the battle of Gilboa. As Shunem is only three miles north of Jezreel, and five from Gilboa, the whole camp of the Philistines would be visible to Saul posted on the high ground of Gilboa.

Shunem was the native place of Abishag, the Shunammite (1 Kings, i. 3), also the home of the Shunammite woman who was hospitable to Elisha, and whose son was raised to life by that prophet (2 Kings iv.).

Shur, that portion of the Arabian desert which borders upon Egypt. The Israelites entered the "wilderness of Shur" directly they crossed the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 22). "Shur," signifies "wall," so the wilderness may have received its name from the wall which crossed the north-east frontier of Egypt.

Saul "*smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt*" (xv. 7).

Telaim. The gathering place of the people when mustered by Saul to attack the Amalekites. Probably the same as *Telem* (Josh. xv. 24), one of the most southern cities of "Judah, toward the coast of Edom, southward." Such a position would be well adapted for the rendezvous of Saul's forces. It means *lamb*s, and was probably so named from the numerous flocks feeding on the pasture land in the surrounding district (xv. 4).

Zeboim, the Valley of. A ravine running east from Michmash, leading to the "wilderness" or district of uncultivated mountain land lying between the central district of Benjamin and the Jordan Valley.

When the Philistines sent out ravaging bands from Michmash, one went eastward by "*the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness*" (xiii. 18).

Zelzah. Samuel tells Saul that on his return home he would meet "*two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah*" (x. 2). Zelzah is not mentioned elsewhere, and it is impossible to identify the spot.

Ziklag. A town in that part of the territory of Judah allotted to Simeon. It was in the south or Negeb, and lay to the north of the brook Bezor, which was crossed by David and his men in their pursuit of the Amalekites.

In the reign of Saul it was in the possession of the Philistines, for it was, at David's request, bestowed upon him by Achish, king of Gath.

David undoubtedly desired to have some town assigned to him, so that he might remove himself from close supervision by the Philistines, and also avoid exciting their jealousy. He resided there one year and four months, and during this period no doubt exercised himself in governing and organising the numerous refugees.

From Ziklag David made raids upon the neighbouring tribes dwelling in the south, as far as the wilderness of Shur. He sent part of the spoil to Achish, and reported that he had made the raids against the south of Judah. In order that his deception might not be discovered, he left none alive to betray his proceedings.

During David's absence, when he was compelled to march northwards with the Philistine army, the Amalekites seized the opportunity of swooping down upon the defenceless Ziklag, burning the city, and carrying off the women and children as slaves. On his return David

and his men pursued, overtook, and slaughtered the Amalekites, recovering the spoil, and capturing much booty in addition.

David was at Ziklag when he heard of the death of Saul (2 Sam. i. 1-16).

The city seems to have become the private possession of the kings of Judah (xxvii. 6).

It is mentioned once again in connection with Beersheba as having been re-inhabited on the return of the Captivity (Neh. xi. 28).

Ziph. In the highland of Judah, connected with Carmel, Maon, and Juttah. In the time of Saul "it had near it a wilderness (waste pasture ground) and a wood. The latter has disappeared, but the former remains" (B.D.). *Tell-Ziph* (the hill of Ziph) is still found between Hebron and Carmel, about three miles south of Hebron, surrounded by a wood. It is a rounded hill standing by itself, about 100 feet high.

The district is memorable in the account of David's exile. Twice was his presence there betrayed to Saul by the Ziphites. On the first occasion David narrowly escaped capture, descending one side of the hill as Saul's men were climbing up the opposite slope. A Philistine raid called Saul from the pursuit, and enabled David to effect his escape (xxiii. 26).

On the second occasion David and Abishai entered the camp of Saul by night and carried off his spear and a cruse of water (xxvi. 5-12).

Zobah. The name of a portion of Syria, forming a separate kingdom in the times of Saul, David and Solomon.

Notice in I. Samuel:

Saul is said to have fought against "*the kings of Zobah*" (xiv. 47), but no particulars are given.

Subsequent history:

- (1) David defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah, taking from him a thousand chariots and other spoil (2 Sam. viii. 3). He also carried off the shields of gold and brought them to Jerusalem (2 Sam. viii. 7).
- (2) The Syrians of Zobah assisted the Ammonites in the great war of David's reign. Joab defeated the Syrians, whilst Abishai encountered the Ammonites (2 Sam. x. 6-14).
- (3) The Syrians of Zobah made a last effort, and were completely defeated at Helam (2 Sam. x. 16-19).
- (4) Rezon of Zobah was an adversary of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 23-25).
- (5) Solomon appears also to have been at war with Zobah itself. "*Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it*" (2 Chron. viii. 3).

Zuph, a district at which Saul and his servant arrived after passing through the land of Shalisha, the land of Shalim, and the land of the Benjamites (x. 5). It evidently contained the city in which they met Samuel (x. 6), and thus was near Ramah.

It may be connected with the name Ramathaim-zophim, and may have been called Zuph after the Levitical family of that name. Elkanah, the father of Samuel, was a descendant of Zuph.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Abiah, the second son of Samuel. Appointed with his brother Joel as judge at Beersheba. Both these young men are accused of taking bribes.

Abiathar, high priest; in succession to his father Ahimelech. He was fourth in descent from Eli. (See Table, p. xv.)

Notices in I. Samuel:

Abiathar escaped from the slaughter of the priests by Doeg the Edomite, and from the massacre at Nob (1 Sam. xxii.).

Abiathar thus became high priest, and joined David either at Keilah or just before David advanced to the relief of that city.

As Abiathar took an ephod with him when he made his escape from Nob, David was enabled to inquire of the Lord by means of Abiathar, viz.—

- (a) When David was in doubt as to the good faith of the men of Keilah (xxiii. 7-15).
- (b) For advice whether to pursue the Amalekites, who had sacked Ziklag in his absence (xxx. 7).

[David also inquired of the Lord to ascertain if he should deliver Keilah from the Philistines (xxiii. 4). It is not said that this inquiry was made through Abiathar, but as the account of Abiathar joining David at Keilah is recorded (xxiii. 6), it is probable that that statement is made in order to account for David having been able to make inquiry.]

Subsequent History:

(1) David inquired of the Lord, through Abiathar—

- (a) To decide if he should return to Judah after the death of Saul. In reply, Hebron was named (2 Sam. ii. 1).
- (b) On the occasion of his attack on the Philistines at Rephaim (2 Sam. v. 19).
- (2) Abiathar was with David whilst he reigned at Hebron (2 Sam. ii. 1-3).
- (3) He carried the Ark before David when it was brought up to Jerusalem (1 Kings ii. 26, 2 Chron. v. 2).
- (4) During the reign of David he was associated with Zadok in the priesthood.
- (5) He continued faithful to David during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24). Zadok and Abiathar would have carried the Ark with the king in his flight, but by David's orders took it back again (2 Sam. xv. 29). David bade them communicate with him by means of Jonathan the son of Abiathar, and Ahimaaz the son of Zadok (2 Sam. xv. 27, 36).
- (6) Abiathar and Zadok communicated to David the counsel given by Ahithophel to Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 15-22).
- (7) After the death of Absalom, Abiathar and Zadok were urged by David to suggest to the people that they should recall their king to Jerusalem (2 Sam. xix. 11).
- (8) In the closing days of David's reign, Abiathar took an active part in promoting the conspiracy of Adonijah, and was present, probably in his priestly character, at the feast at the stone of Zoheleth (1 Kings i. 7).

- (9) On the renewal of Adonijah's plot, Abiathar was banished to his native city of Anathoth. Solomon spared his life because he had been David's faithful companion in his wanderings (1 Kings ii. 26).

It is probable that Abiathar joined the conspiracy of Adonijah through jealousy of Zadok, who seems to have advanced in favour with David. Therefore Abiathar desired to secure the support of David's successor.

It is remarkable how two events,

- (1) The massacre of the family of Ahimelech at Nob,
- (2) The political error of Abiathar in joining the conspiracy of Adonijah,

led to the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the house of Eli (1 Sam. ii. 30-36).

Abigail. Known as *the Carmelitess*, from her residence at Carmel.

She was the wife of Nabal, a rich sheep farmer at Carmel. When Nabal churlishly refused the request of David, Abigail went to meet David, took the blame upon herself, supplied David with provisions, and by her wise and politic speech caused David to desist from his purpose of revenge. David was won by the beauty, intelligence and wisdom of Abigail, and when Nabal died ten days after, he sent for her and made her his wife. Abigail was with David in his subsequent wanderings, and was carried off captive by the Amalekites, when they sacked Ziklag. David recovered her in the pursuit.

She was with David during his seven years and a-half reign at Hebron, and there she bore him his second son, called Chileab in 2 Sam. iii. 3, but Daniel in 1 Chron. iii. 1.

Abinadab.

- (I.) The second son of Jesse, who followed Saul in his war against the Philistines (xvi. 8; xvii. 13). (See p. xlii.)
- (II.) A son of Saul (probably the same as Ishui), who was slain with his father and his brothers at the fatal battle of Gilboa (xxxii. 2). (See p. xxx.)
- (III.) A Levite of Kirjath-jearim. After the punishment of the men of Beth-shemesh for violating the sanctity of the Ark, it was taken to the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, where it remained till removed by David. Eleazar, the son of Abinadab, was appointed the keeper of the Ark (vii. 1).

Abishai, the eldest of the three sons of Zeruiah David's sister, and brother to Joab and Asahel. He is the first to be mentioned of the famous brothers, and was the companion of David in the night expedition to the camp of Saul, when, but for the restraint of David, he would have ended the quarrel between Saul and David by despatching the king with his own spear. They crept back from the camp as stealthily as they had come, carrying with them Saul's spear and the cruse of water which stood at his head (xxvi. 6-9).

Abishai was probably a close companion of David in his wanderings, and at one time rescued David from a gigantic Philistine, Ishbi-benob (2 Sam. xxi. 17), though this feat was probably accomplished during David's reign.

One time he fought single-handed against three hundred, and his exploits gained him the place as captain of the second three of David's mighty men (2 Sam. xxiii. 18).

In David's reign Abishai is notable :

- (1) As being present at the battle at the pool of Gibeon, when Asahel met his death whilst pursuing Abner (2 Sam. ii. 18).
- (2) As joining with Joab in the treacherous assassination of Abner (2 Sam. iii. 30).
- (3) In the war with the Ammonites, commanding one division of the army against the Ammonites and driving them headlong into the city, whilst Joab defeated the Syrians (2 Sam. x. 10-14).
- (4) As taking a leading part in the campaign against the Edomites in the valley of Salt, when 18,000 fell (1 Chron. xviii. 12).
- (5) As accompanying David in his flight from Jerusalem, when he offered to avenge the taunts of Shimei (2 Sam. xvi. 9). On David's return Abishai urges that Shimei should be put to death (2 Sam. xix. 21).
- (6) As commanding a third part of the army which defeated Absalom's army in the wood of Ephraim (2 Sam. xviii. 2, 5, 12).
- (7) As being summoned by David to collect troops to pursue after the rebel Sheba, when Amasa delayed pressing the pursuit vigorously.

Abner, the son of Ner, the brother of Kish, the father of Saul. Thus Abner was Saul's first cousin. From Chronicles it would appear that Abner was Saul's uncle (see Table, p. xxx.).

Notices in I. Samuel:

- (1) He was made commander-in-chief of the army by Saul (xiv. 50).
- (2) When David had slain Goliath, Abner was commissioned by Saul to inquire who David was and to bring him to the king (xvii. 55-58).
- (3) He had a seat at the royal table, and was present at the feast at which Jonathan drew Saul to openly declare his intention to slay David (xx. 25).
- (4) He was with Saul at Hachilah in pursuit of David, when David and Abishai entered the camp by-night and spared the life of Saul (xxvi. 3-14).

Subsequent History :

1. After the death of Saul, Abner espoused the cause of Ishbosheth, whom he crowned king at Mahanaim (2 Sam. ii. 8, 9).
2. He was defeated by Joab at Gibeon. In his flight from the battle he killed Asahel, the brother of Joab (2 Sam. ii. 12-32).
3. He gave great offence to Ishbosheth by his marriage with Rizpah, the concubine of Saul. As a result of the quarrel, Abner went over to David. He was favourably received by David at Hebron, and returned for the purpose of winning over the people of Israel to David's party. He was enticed back by Joab, and treacherously murdered by him and his brother Abishai, ostensibly in revenge for the murder of Asahel, but partly, no doubt, through jealousy, lest he should gain a high

place in David's favour. David grieved for the death of Abner, and ordered a public funeral, himself following the corpse as a mark of respect. Joab and Abishai were, however, too powerful for David to be able to punish them for the murder (2 Sam. iii. 7-39).

In his last charge to Solomon, David enjoined him to put Joab to death for his crimes in murdering Abner and Amasa (1 Kings ii. 5, 6).

Abner's Influence.

Abner held a position of great influence. He was "*captain of the host.*" Abner, Jonathan and David had special seats at the king's table.

David says to him "*Who is like to thee in Israel?*" (xxvi. 15).

His influence and power are shown by his being able to proclaim Ishbosheth king, and to maintain a lengthened contest with David.

It is generally supposed that Abner used his influence with Saul to the prejudice of David, and that David alludes to Abner with others when he appeals to Saul at Engedi, "*Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?*" (xxiv. 9).

Achish, a Philistine King of Gath, son of Maach.

(In the title to Ps. xxxiv. he is called Abimelech.)

David took refuge with him on two occasions when he fled from Saul.

First. David went straight from Nob to Gath. He was recognised by the servants of Achish as the champion of Israel, and was compelled to feign madness in order to save his life and get away from Gath. From Achish he fled to the cave of Adullam.

Second. Fearing that sooner or later he must fall into the hands of Saul, David again fled to Achish with 600 men. He was received kindly by Achish, obtained Ziklag as a residence, and remained in the land of the Philistines a year and four months (see p. lxxx.).

The principal differences between the two visits are:

- | <i>First visit.</i> | <i>Second visit.</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. David was alone or attended by few. | 1. David came with a band of at least 600 tried warriors. |
| 2. His quarrel with Saul was not generally known. | 2. His quarrel with Saul was well known. |
| 3. He was recognized as the champion of Israel. | 3. He was regarded as the enemy of Saul, and likely to fight against Israel. |
| 4. He was ill received, and in danger of losing his life. | 4. Achish received him gladly, and assigned him Ziklag as a residence. |
| 5. His stay was brief. | 5. He was in Philistia a year and four months. |
| 6. He feigned madness to effect his escape. | 6. He and his men were in such high favour with Achish as to be appointed body-guard to the king. |

Agag, generally considered to be the hereditary title of the kings of the Amalekites, like Pharaoh of Egypt. (The name appears in Num. xxiv. 7, and in 1 Sam. xv. 8, etc.)

When Saul was sent to utterly destroy the Amalekites, he spared the life of Agag and the best of the spoil, although specially commissioned to devote all living beings—men, women, children and cattle—to destruction.

For this act of disobedience Samuel was bidden to announce to Saul his rejection.

The prophet himself hewed Agag in pieces.

Ahiah, or **Ahijah**, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, so the grandson of Phinehas, and the great-grandson of Eli. (See Table, p. xv.)

He is described as being the Lord's priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod (xiv. 3). When the confusion amongst the Philistines, occasioned by the onslaught of Jonathan and his armour-bearer, was noticed at Gibeah. Saul "said unto Ahiah, *Bring hither the ark of God" (xiv. 18).

Ahiah is by some considered to be the same person as Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, put to death by Saul (xxii. 16).

Ahimelech (1), the son of Ahitub, and high-priest at Nob in the days of Saul. When David finally fled from the court of Saul he came to Nob, and, under the plea of being on a mission for the king, persuaded Ahimelech to give him the shewbread for himself and his young men, and the sword of Goliath for his own use. Ahimelech appears to have inquired of God for David (xxii. 13).

Doeg the Edomite disclosed the transaction to Saul, so Saul sent for Ahimelech and the priests to Gibeah to answer the charge. Despite Ahimelech's assurance of innocence, Saul commanded Doeg to put the priests to death. Eighty-five priests wearing the Ephod were put to death, and the whole population at Nob afterwards destroyed.

Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, alone escaped this massacre, and fled to David at Keilah.

Thus was the doom pronounced upon Eli's house fulfilled in a great measure. In the New Testament Abiathar is mentioned as the priest who gave David the shewbread (St. Mark ii. 26), (see p. 133).

Ahimelech (2), the Hittite, one of David's companions in his wanderings. David called upon Ahimelech and Abishai to go with him to enter the camp of Saul at night on the hill of Hachilah. Abishai volunteered to accompany him (xxvi. 6).

The Septuagint reads *Abimelech*.

Ahitub. Father of Ahimelech and Ahiah. He was the son of Phinehas, and elder brother of Ichabod, and so was of the house of Eli and of the family of Ithamar. There is no record of his high priesthood; he may have succeeded Eli, and been high-priest in the early days of Samuel.

Bedan. Mentioned by Samuel as being a judge in Israel. "*And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side*" (xii. 11). The name is not mentioned elsewhere.

There can be little doubt that *Barak* is the true reading, which is given by the Septuagint.

* There is a difficulty here, for in 1 Chronicles xiii. § it is stated that they inquired not at the Ark in the days of Saul.

The reading of the Septuagint is, "*And Saul said to Ahijah, Bring hither the Ephod: for he wore the Ephod at that time before the children of Israel.*" This reading, supported by the consideration that "Bring hither" is never applied to the Ark, but regularly to the Ephod, removes all difficulty.

If the Hebrew text be accepted, we must allow that the Ark had been brought from Kirjath-jearim to the camp of Saul, probably for safety, and was taken back there after the Philistine defeat.

It will be noted that Saul, in his eagerness to commence the pursuit, said to Ahiah, "*Withdraw thine hand*" (xiv. 19), and so no actual inquiry was made.

This theory is also supported by two facts :

1. Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel are mentioned together (Heb. xi. 32).
2. Barak is one of the most famous of the judges, and his victory over Sisera is one of the most notable events in the history of Israel.

Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdmen. Saul's wealth would lie chiefly in his flocks and herds, so Doeg held an important position among Saul's officers. He was at Nob when Ahimelech gave David the shewbread and the sword of Goliath (xxi. 7). He disclosed the transaction to Saul, and when Saul's other officers refused, he executed the king's orders to destroy the priests, and slew eighty-five of them (xxii. 9, 18, 22).

Doeg's presence at Nob is explained by the statement that he was "*detained before the Lord*" (xxi. 7). This may mean :

1. In fulfilment of a vow.
2. For the purposes of purification.
3. Under the laws of leprosy.
4. As a proselyte.

[According to Jewish tradition Doeg, the Edomite, was :

1. The servant who accompanied Saul in his search for his father's asses.
2. Saul's armourbearer at the battle of Gilboa.]

Eleazar, the son of Abinadab, who dwelt on the hill of Kirjath-jearim. When the Ark, on its return from Philistia, was brought to the house of Abinadab, Eleazar his son was sanctified to keep the Ark.

Eleazar was thus solemnly appointed the guardian of the Ark, not consecrated as priest.

Eli, see p. xiv.

Eliab, the eldest son of Jesse, and eldest brother of David. By his stature and commanding appearance he appears to have won the approval of Samuel, when visiting Bethlehem to choose out of the family of Jesse a successor to Saul. But the prophet was bidden to pass him by, for "*man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart*" (xvi. 7).

When David came to the camp Eliab was angry with him for his forwardness, and chided him sharply, reproving him for :

- (1) Neglect of duty in leaving the sheep to come to the camp.
- (2) "Pride and naughtiness of heart," *i.e.* presumption in venturing to meet the challenge of Goliath, and discontent with his occupation of sheep-tending.
- (3) An undue desire to shed blood in war.

Eliab was no doubt jealous of David, and his conduct towards his younger brother may be compared to the hatred entertained towards Joseph by his brethren.

David pretends that the cause of his absence from Saul's table is because of the command of his elder brother to be present at a family sacrifice at Bethlehem (xx. 29).

Elkanah, the father of Samuel. A Kohathite of the tribe of Levi, and dwelling at Ramah, in Mount Ephraim.

He had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah, and was a pious Israelite, going up each year to Shiloh to worship and to offer sacrifice.

He loved Hannah in preference to Peninnah, and at the sacrificial feast gave her a double portion as a proof of his affection, and as a solace to her in her childlessness.

On the birth of Samuel, he consented to Hannah's request that she might stay at home, and not accompany him on his yearly visit to Shiloh till the child was weaned.

He appears to have joined with Hannah in the vow dedicating Samuel to a life-long service at the tabernacle (i. 21).

Gad. Generally described as "the seer" or "the king's seer," *i.e.* David's seer. He is first mentioned as joining David when "in the hold" in Moab, *i.e.* at Mizpeh of Moab. Probably he was sent by Samuel, for he commanded David to leave Moab and go into the land of Judah (xxii. 5).

Other Notices :

1. When David committed the sin of numbering the people, Gad was sent to give him the choice of three punishments, viz. (a) Seven years' of famine. (b) Three months' defeat by his enemies. (c) Three days' pestilence (2 Sam. xxiv. 11-19).
2. He was one of the chroniclers of David's reign (1 Chron. xxix. 29).
3. Along with Nathan he assisted David in the arrangements for the musical service in the Temple (2 Chron. xxix. 25).

Gideon, known also as Jerubbaal. He is famous for the rout of the Midianites, which put an end to the Midianite oppression (Judges vi.-viii), and judged Israel for forty years.

He gained the name of Jerubbaal (= *lit.* *Baal pleat*) for his boldness in destroying the altar of Baal (Judges vi. 31, 32).

When Samuel recounts the deliverances wrought by Jehovah, he mentions the four great judges : Jerubbaal, Barak, Jephthah and Samuel, who had delivered Israel from the oppressions of the Midianites, Jabin, king of Hazor, the Ammonites, the Philistines respectively.

These judges are mentioned by Samuel to clinch his argument, viz., that a king was not necessary, that Israel's calamities were a consequence of their idolatry, and that when they repented God had always raised up a deliverer.

Goliath, the famous giant of Gath, who defied the armies of Israel for forty days (xvii). He was probably a descendent of the ancient race of *Anakim*, who, when expelled from Hebron by Joshua, took refuge in the Philistine towns of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod (Josh. xi. 21, 22).

His stature. Six cubits and a span, *i.e.* over ten feet in height.

His armour.

1. A helmet of brass.
2. A coat of mail, composed of metal plates overlapping like the scales of a fish, and weighing 5000 shekels = 157 pounds.
3. Greaves of brass upon his legs.
4. A javelin (see p. 113) slung upon his back.

5. A spear, with the shaft short, thick and heavy, comparable to a weaver's beam. The spear-head weighed 600 shekels = 19 pounds.
6. A sword.
7. A man went before him bearing a large shield to protect his body.

We may note :

- (1) *His boastfulness.* "Am not I a Philistine?" i.e. the champion of the nation (xvii. 8). He threatened to give the flesh of David to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field.
 - (2) *His contempt of David.* He despised him because he was a youth, and laughed contemptuously at his weapons.
 - (3) *His profanity.* He cursed David by his gods.
- (For particulars of the combat see chap. xvii.)

Hannah, the favourite wife of Elkanah and the mother of Samuel.

She was childless, and **Peninnah**, the other wife of Elkanah, jealous of her husband's affection for Hannah, taunted her rival with this fact.

She accompanied her husband to Shiloh at the yearly visit for worship and sacrifice. On these occasions Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion at the sacrificial feast as a sign of his affection, but she was so affected by the taunts of **Peninnah** that she could not join in the feast.

She therefore left the feast, and went to the entrance of the tabernacle, and prayed to the Lord, vowing that, if God would grant her a son, she would dedicate him to the service of the tabernacle for the whole of his life.

Eli, seeing her standing, and moving her lips in silent prayer, thought she was drunk, and reprov'd her. Hannah denied the charge, and told Eli that she was praying, whereupon he blessed her, expressing the wish that God might grant her petition.

On the birth of Samuel, Hannah did not accompany Elkanah on his yearly visits to Shiloh till the child was weaned. Then she took Samuel to Shiloh, and formally dedicated him to the service of Jehovah.

On this occasion she uttered the famous song which bears so strong a resemblance to the **Magnificat** of the Virgin Mary.

Ever afterwards at her yearly visits she took for Samuel a little coat, or priestly robe, which she had made for him.

She was blessed with three sons and two daughters.

Hophni. Hophni and Phinehas were the two sons of Eli the high-priest. They exercised their sacerdotal functions at Shiloh, and their conduct is notable as showing the degradation of the priesthood and of the religious life of the nation.

Their sin was marked by :

1. *Greed.* Not content with the share of the sacrifice allotted to them by the Law, they sent a servant at the time of the sacrificial feast, who thrust a three-pronged fork into the pot and carried off for the priest's use whatever the fork brought up. This was robbing the people.

But they went further in their rapacious greed by demanding raw flesh even before the sacrifice had been duly burnt upon

the altar. So their greediness led them to insult Jehovah and to degrade the sacrifice.

The consequences of their greed and profanity were that they brought the sacrificial services of the sanctuary into contempt. The people were so disgusted that they refrained from coming up to Shiloh to worship.

2. *Immorality.* They openly indulged in gross immorality, which was as notorious as their profanity.

The Conduct of Eli. He expostulated with his sons, but weakly refrained from punishing them by dismissal from their sacred office.

Their punishment. They provoked the curse that was pronounced against their father's house; first, by an unknown prophet (ii. 27-36), and then by Samuel (iii. 11-14).

They went out with the Ark against the Philistines, and both perished in the flower of their age in the slaughter of the Israelites (iv. 10, 11).

Their sin involved not only their own destruction, but the rejection of the house of Eli from the office of the high priesthood.

The history gives the cause of the fall of Theocratic Government (see p. xvi.).

Ichabod, the son of Phinehas, named Ichabod by his mother when she heard of the capture of the Ark by the Philistines. The name means, "*The glory of the Lord is departed,*" i.e. meaning that the Glory of God was departed from Israel with the Ark of God.

Ishui, son of Saul, probably identical with Abinadab, who fell on Mount Gilboa (see p. xxxiii.).

Jephthah, one of the greatest of the judges of Israel. He delivered the tribes east of Jordan from the oppression of Ammon. The incident of Jephthah's daughter is well known.

For reasons why he is mentioned in I. Samuel, see Gideon, p. lxxxix.

Jerubbaal. See Gideon, p. lxxxix.

Jesse. See p. xliii.

Joab, the most famous of the three sons of David's sister Zeruiah. The three brothers—Abishai, Joab and Asahel are constantly referred to as "the sons of Zeruiah."

Joab is mentioned in I. Samuel in connection with Abishai, who is described as "*Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab*" (xxvi. 6), probably because of the greater fame of Joab.

There is no exploit of Joab's mentioned in I. Samuel.

Joel, the eldest son of Samuel. Samuel appointed his sons, Joel and Abiah, as judges at Beersheba, thus assigning the south to them, whilst he judged in the centre. They took bribes, and did not act straightforwardly in the administration of justice. Their wrong conduct is mentioned in immediate connection with the request of the elders of Israel for a king, and is evidently one of the causes of the demand for monarchical government. The people had confidence in Samuel, but they could not trust his sons,

Jonathan. See p. xxxi.

Joshua, the Beth-shemite, *i.e.* an inhabitant of Beth-shemesh. The kine drawing the cart containing the Ark came to the field of Joshua and halted there by the stone Abel. The people of Beth-shemesh "*clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord*" on this stone on Joshua's land.

Kish. See p. xxx.

Merab. See p. xxxiii.

Michal. See p. xxxiii.

Melchishua, a son of Saul. He fell in the fatal battle of Gilboa.

Nabal, the husband of Abigail, and a rich sheep-master, residing at Maon, and having his business at Carmel in the south of Judah, bordering on the desert. He is described as a churlish, passionate man. His history gives us some insight into David's doings during his wanderings in the south of Judah. It would appear that David and his men were a protection against the predatory tribes of the desert.

Once a year, at the time of sheep-shearing, Nabal held a great banquet at Carmel, "*like the feast of a king.*" At this festive occasion David sent ten of his young men to bid him greeting, and to ask some return for the service he had rendered in protecting his flocks from the raiding bands of the desert.

Nabal, in a fury, denied the request in a most insulting manner, referring to David as if he were a runaway slave of Saul. His servants recognized the danger that threatened them from this angry, rash reply. With Nabal himself they dared not remonstrate, but one of the shepherds hastened to acquaint Abigail with the state of affairs. She, with the offerings usual on such occasions, loaded some asses, herself mounted one of them and hurried to meet David. She pleaded the case with such force and piety that David, struck by her beauty, and her persuasive eloquence, accepted the presents and abandoned his purpose. On her return, she found Nabal in the height of a drunken orgy, and dared not tell him either of his danger or of his escape. In the morning she told him the story. Nabal, in an outburst of passion, appears to have had a fit of apoplexy. He remained insensible for ten days, when a second stroke ended his life. David married Abigail, his widow (see Abigail, p. lxxxiv.).

Nahash. "Nahash the Ammonite," king of Ammon in the time of Saul. Saul's first military expedition was against the Ammonites.

Nahash, apparently in an endeavour to win back the territory east of Jordan, attacked Jabesh-gilead.

The men of that city agreed to surrender and submit to the loss of their right eyes, if they were not relieved in seven days. This threat of cruelty inflamed the wrath of Saul, who called the nation to action, assembled the people at Bezek, and then, making a night march across the Jordan, fell upon the Ammonites in three divisions. The invaders were routed, and Jabesh-gilead was relieved.

He was probably the father or grandfather of the Nahash who is mentioned as having showed kindness to David in his days of exile (2 Sam. x. 2).

It is conjectured that "Nahash" is a title of the king of Ammon, rather than the name of an individual.

Phalti, or Phaltiel. The son of Laish of Gallim, to whom Saul gave his daughter Michal, David's wife, in marriage, after David had been driven to take refuge in the south of Judah.

When David compelled Abner to restore Michal as a condition of peace, it is said that "*her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bakurim.*"

Phinehas. See Hophni, p. xc.

Peninnah. One of the wives of Elkanah, Hannah being the other. Hannah was childless, whilst Peninnah had children. Peninnah, jealous of Elkanah's affection for Hannah, taunted Hannah so bitterly as to make her fret. (See Hannah, p. xc.)

Samuel. See p. xvi.

Saul. See p. xxiv.

Shammah (see p. xlii.), brother of David and third son of Jesse. He was with Saul's army when David encountered Goliath (xvii. 13).

Sisera, the captain of the host of Jabin, king of Hazor. His host was defeated by Barak and Deborah in the plain of Jezreel. Sisera escaped from the battle on foot, and took refuge in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. Jael murdered him as he slept, by driving one of the tent pegs into his temples.

Sisera is mentioned by Samuel in recounting the deliverances of the Israelites in the days of the Judges. The rout of Sisera's armies is one of the notable events in the history of Israel.

Zeruiah, the mother of Abishai, Joab and Asahel, the nephews of David. Zeruiah was the half-sister of David (see p. xlii.).

ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

The First Book of Samuel naturally divides itself into four great divisions, distinguished by the leading figure of the period.

I. **The Days of Eli,** dividing itself into two parts:

1. The Tabernacle at Shiloh. The early life of Samuel.
2. The Fall of Theocracy. The sack of Shiloh.

II. **The Days of Samuel,** in three parts:

1. Samuel's work of reforming the nation.
2. The rout of the Philistines at Ebenezer.
3. The judicial work of Samuel.

III. **The Days of Saul**, in five sections :

1. The demand for a king.
2. The election of Saul.
3. The establishment of his kingdom.
4. His wars.
 - (a) Against Ammon.
 - (b) Against the Philistines.
5. His Rejection.

IV. **The Days of David**, in three sections :

1. David's early life. Chosen as Saul's successor.
2. David at court.
3. David in exile.

THE DAYS OF ELI.

PART I.	The Tabernacle at Shiloh. The early life of Samuel	i.—iv. 1.
DIV. I.	<i>Samuel's birth and infancy.</i>	
	1. The parents of Samuel	i. 1-8.
	2. Hannah's prayer and the answer	i. 9-19.
	3. The birth of Samuel	i. 20.
	4. The dedication of Samuel	i. 21-23.
	5. The Song of Hannah	ii. 1-11.
DIV. II.	<i>Samuel at Shiloh.</i>	
	1. The godless sons of Eli	ii. 12-17.
	2. The ministry of Samuel in the Tabernacle	ii. 18-21.
	3. Eli's rebuke of his sons	ii. 22-26.
	4. The doom pronounced on Eli's house by the prophet	ii. 27-36.
	5. The call of Samuel	iii. 1-10.
	6. The doom pronounced on Eli's house through Samuel	iii. 11-18.
	7. Samuel established as a prophet of the Lord	iii. 19—iv. 1.
	Characteristics of the period:	
	1. The decline of Religion.	
	2. The culpable leniency of Eli to the sins of his sons.	
	3. The indications of the gradual growth of Samuel.	
	4. Samuel's progress contrasted with the moral decline of Hophni and Phinehas.	
PART II.	The Fall of the Theocracy. The Sack of Shiloh	iv. 1—vii. 1.
DIV. I.	<i>The national disaster. The death of Eli.</i>	
	1. The Philistines defeat Israel and capture the Ark	iv. 1-11.
	2. The death of Eli	iv. 12-18.
	3. The death of the wife of Phinehas	iv. 19-22.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK.

- DIV. II.** *The Ark in the land of the Philistines.*
1. The plagues on the Philistines ... v. 1-12.
 2. The Philistines decide to send back the Ark vi. 1-9.
 3. The Ark restored to Israel vi. 10-18.
 4. The men of Beth-shemesh punished for irreverence vi. 19-20.
 5. The Ark placed at Kirjath-jearim ... vi. 21.—vii. 1.
- Characteristics of the period:**
1. Superstitious reliance on the material Ark has supplanted religious belief in the might of the invisible Jehovah.
 2. The complete overthrow of the Israelite power.
 3. The destruction of Shiloh, though not specifically mentioned.
 4. The interference of Jehovah to protect the Ark.

THE DAYS OF SAMUEL. vii. 2—vii. 17.

- PART I.** **The work of Samuel in reforming the nation** vii. 2-17.
1. Repentance and Reformation under Samuel vii. 2-6.
 2. Defeat of the Philistines at Ebenezer vii. 7-12.
 3. Result of the victory at Ebenezer. Samuel as Judge vii. 13-17.

Characteristics of the period:

1. The Philistine domination.
2. The steady, silent work of Samuel in reforming the religious life of the people.
3. The Revival of Religion is accompanied by the Defeat of the Philistines.

THE DAYS OF SAUL.

- PART I.** **The National demand for a king** ... viii. 1-22.
1. The bad government of Samuel's sons; the people desire a king viii. 1-5.
 2. The Reply of Jehovah to their request viii. 6-9.
 3. The Prerogative of a king viii. 10-18.
 4. The people still desire a king viii. 19-22.

PART II. **The Election of Saul.**

- DIV. I.** *Saul chosen privately by Samuel.*
1. The genealogy of Saul... .. ix. 1, 2.
 2. His search for his father's asses ... ix. 3-10.
 3. Saul and his servant inquire for the seer ix. 11-14.
 4. Samuel entertains Saul ix. 15-24.
 5. Samuel anoints Saul, and gives him three signs ix. 25—x. 8.
 6. The signs fulfilled x. 9-16.

- DIV. II.** *The public election of Saul at Mizpeh.*
1. The assembly at Mizpeh x. 17-19.
 2. Saul chosen by lot x. 20-23.
 3. Saul accepted as king x. 24-27

PART III.	The establishment of Saul's kingdom xi. 1—xii. 25.
	1. Defeat of Nahash, king of Ammon ... xi. 1-11.
	2. Saul confirmed in the kingdom at Gilgal xi. 12-15.
	3. Samuel's farewell address to the people xii. 1-25.
	(a) An assertion of his judicial integrity.
	(b) A rebuke of the faithlessness of the people.
	(c) Warning and encouragement.
	Characteristics of periods I., II., III.:
	1. The premature demand for a king.
	2. The opposition of Samuel and his warnings.
	3. The persistence of the people.
	4. Samuel's ready, willing resignation of his office as judge.
	5. The people are given a king after their own heart.
	6. The three stages of Saul's elevation to the monarchy.
PART IV.	War against the Philistines ... xiii. 1—xiv. 46
	1. The Israelites revolt against the Philistines xiii. 1-7.
	2. Saul's disobedience to Samuel ... xiii. 8-10.
	3. The penalty of disobedience ... xiii. 11-16.
	4. Invasion by the Philistines ... xiii. 17, 18.
	5. The disarmament of the Israelites ... xiii. 19-23.
	6. The feat of Jonathan xiv. 1-15.
	7. Rout and flight of the Philistines ... xiv. 16-23.
	8. Saul's rash oath, which is broken by Jonathan xiv. 24-30.
	9. Transgression by the people xiv. 31-35.
	10. Result of Jonathan's breach of the oath xiv. 36-46.
PART V.	Epitome of Saul's reign xiv. 47-52.
	1. Saul's wars xiv. 47, 48.
	2. Saul's family xiv. 49-52.
PART VI.	The Rejection of Saul.
	1. War with Amalek xv. 1-9.
	2. Saul's disobedience and the penalty ... xv. 10-23.
	3. Rejection of Saul xv. 24-31.
	4. Samuel executes Agag... .. xv. 32, 33.
	5. Samuel parts from Saul xv. 34, 35.
	Characteristics of periods, IV., V., VI.:
	1. Increased royal power is followed by increased wilfulness on the part of Saul.
	2. The tests of Saul's obedience. Saul <i>will not</i> subordinate his kingship to the Kingship of Jehovah.
	3. The fall of Saul due to his disobedience.
	4. The continued invasions of the Philistines. The hard struggle of Saul against them.
	5. Samuel, though no longer Saul's confidential friend and adviser, still continues his work, especially in the training of the prophetic order.
THE DAYS OF DAVID.	
PART I.	David's early life xvi.
	1. Samuel sent to Bethlehem xvi. 1-5.
	2. Jesse and his family xvi. 6-11.
	3. Samuel anoints David... .. xvi. 12, 13.

PART II.	David at Court	xvi. 14—xx. 42
Div. I.	<i>David sent for to the court of Saul.</i>	
	1. Saul is troubled with an evil spirit ...	xvi. 14-18.
	2. David is sent for to play on the harp to Saul... ..	xvi. 19-23.
Div. II.	<i>David's rapid rise.</i>	
	1. The Philistines again invade the land	xvii. 1-3.
	2. Goliath challenges Israel	xvii. 4-11.
	3. David arrives in the camp	xvii. 12-31.
	4. David takes up the challenge of Goliath	xvii. 32-37.
	5. Preliminaries of the combat	xvii. 38-47.
	6. David slays Goliath. The Philistines routed	xvii. 48-54.
	7. Saul enquires concerning the paren- tage of David... ..	xvii. 55-58.
	8. The friendship of Jonathan for David	xviii. 1-5.
Div. III.	<i>Saul's jealousy of David.</i>	
	1. David's successes arouse Saul's jealousy	xviii. 6-9.
	2. Saul's first attempt to kill David ...	xviii. 10, 11
	3. The advancement of David	xviii. 12-16.
	4. Saul offers his daughter Merab to David	xviii. 17-19.
	5. The marriage of David and Michal ...	xviii. 20-27.
	6. David's continued popularity and pru- dence	xviii. 28-30.
	7. Saul resolves to kill David	xix. 1-3.
	8. Jonathan intercedes for David	xix. 4-7.
	9. Saul attempts to take David's life ...	xix. 8-11.
	10. David makes his escape through the assistance of Michal	xix. 12-17.
	11. David seeks refuge with Samuel at Ramah... ..	xix. 18-24.
	12. David's interview with Jonathan ...	xx. 1-10.
	13. Renewal of the covenant between David and Jonathan... ..	xx. 11-23.
	14. Jonathan tests Saul's intentions to- wards David	xx. 24-34.
	15. David is warned by Jonathan	xx. 35-40.
	16. The parting of David and Jonathan... ..	xx. 41, 42.
PART III.	David in Exile.	
	1. David visits Nob	xxi. 1-9.
	2. David takes refuge with Achish, king of Gath	xxi. 10-15.
	3. David takes refuge in the cave of Adullam and gathers a band of followers	xxii. 1-5.
	4. Saul's vengeance on the priests at Nob	xxii. 6-19.
	5. Abiathar escapes to David	xxii. 20-23.

6. David delivers Keilah from the Philistines	xxiii. 1-6.
7. Treachery of the men of Keilah ...	xxiii. 7-15.
8. The last meeting between David and Jonathan	xxiii. 16-18
9. The treachery of the Ziphites ..	xxiii. 19-26.
10. A Philistine raid compels Saul to abandon the pursuit... ..	xxiii. 27-29.
11. David spares the life of Saul in the cave at Engedi	xxiv. 1-8.
12. David asserts his innocence	xxiv. 9-15.
13. Temporary reconciliation of Saul with David	xxiv. 16-22.
14. Death and burial of Samuel	xxv. 1.
15. The churlish behaviour of Nabal to David	xxv. 2-13.
16. Abigail appeases David's anger ...	xxv. 14-35.
17. The death of Nabal	xxv. 36-38.
18. David marries Abigail	xxv. 39-44.
19. Saul renews the pursuit of David. The Ziphites again act treacherously ...	xxvi. 1-4.
20. David visits the camp of Saul by night	xxvi. 5-12.
21. David taunts Abner and expostulates with Saul	xxvi. 13-20.
22. Saul and David once more reconciled	xxvi. 21-25.
23. David at Gath	xxvii. 1-12.
(a) He takes refuge with Achish.	
(b) Achish assigns Ziklag to David.	
(c) David's raids upon the tribes of the South.	

Characteristics of the period:

1. The decline of Saul. The rise of David.
2. David's hardships are a discipline to his character, and a training for the future king.
3. David's faith and self-restraint.
4. All Saul's designs against David increase the popularity and influence of his rival.

Conclusion of Saul's reign xxviii.—xxxl.

1. David compelled to join the Philistines in the campaign against Israel ... xxviii. 1, 2.
2. Saul visits the Witch of Endor ... xxviii. 3-25.
3. David sent back from the Philistine army xxix. 1-11.
4. The Amalekites sack Ziklag in David's absence xxx. 1-6.
5. The pursuit and rescue xxx. 7-20.
6. The spoil divided xxx. 21-31.
7. The Battle of Gilboa; death of Saul xxxi. 1-7.
8. Burial of Saul and his sons xxxi. 8-13.

Characteristics of the period:

1. The final hardening of Saul. He is totally abandoned by Jehovah.
2. David's error in taking refuge in Philistia is providentially overruled.
3. The kingdom falls naturally to David (see p. xli.).

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

TEXT AND NOTES.

The Parents of Samuel.

1. Now there was a certain man of ¹Ramathaim-zophim, ²of *amount Ephraim*, and his name was ³Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, ⁴an *Ephrathite*:
2 And he had two wives; the name of the one was ⁵Hannah, and the name of the other ⁶Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.
3 And this man ⁷went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the ⁸LORD of hosts in ⁹Shiloh. And the two sons of ¹⁰Eli, ¹¹Hophni and ¹²Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were ¹³there.
4 And when the ¹⁴time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, ¹⁵portions:
5 But unto Hannah he gave ¹⁶a ¹⁷worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.
6 And her ¹⁸adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.
7 And as he did so ¹⁹year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so ²⁰she provoked her; therefore she wept, and ²¹did not eat.
8 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, ²²why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?

¹ Intro. p. lxxvii.

² Intro. p. lxxvi.

³ Intro. p. lxxxviii.

⁴ A man of Ephraim, denoting his dwelling place, not his tribe. He was a Levite.

⁵ Intro. p. xc. = grace, or favour.

⁶ Intro. p. xciii. = coral, or pearl.

⁷ To the Feast of Passover.

⁸ First mention of this title of Jehovah. Jehovah Sabaoth (see p. 128).

⁹ Intro. p. lxxix.

¹⁰ Intro. p. xiv.

¹¹ Intro. p. xc.

¹² Intro. p. xciii.

¹³ *i.e.* at Shiloh.

¹⁴ *i.e.* in the sacrificial feast, portions of the sacrificed victim.

¹⁵ A double portion. The eldest son received two portions, whilst the others received one portion. So Elisha asked Elijah for a "double portion" of his Spirit (2 Kings ii. 9).

¹⁶ *i.e.* Peninnah. She was jealous of Elkanah's preference for Hannah.

¹⁷ He gave Hannah a double portion on the yearly visits to the tabernacle.

¹⁸ Peninnah took occasion to taunt Hannah on those visits.

¹⁹ *i.e.* did not take part in the sacrificial feast.

²⁰ To be childless was considered a great calamity.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 105.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 105.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 105.

^d see R.V. and comment p. 105.

Hannah's Prayer and the Answer.

9 So Hannah ¹rose up after they had ²eaten in ³Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a ⁴seat ⁵by a post of the ⁶temple of the LORD. 10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11 And she vowed a ⁷vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD ⁸all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. 12 And it came to pass, as she continued ⁹praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been ¹⁰drunken. 14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. 15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. 16 Count not thine handmaid for a ¹¹daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and ¹²grief have I spoken hitherto. 17 Then Eli ¹³answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find ¹⁴grace

^a see R. V. and comment p. 105. ^b see R. V. and comment p. 106.

Instances of Vows:

1. Jacob at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 20-22).
2. Jephthah's vow (Judges xi. 30).
3. Hannah's vow (1 Sam. i. 11).
4. Absalom's vow (2 Sam. xv. 7-8).
5. St. Paul's vow at Cenchræ (Acts xviii. 18).

- ¹ *i.e.* left the feast.
- ² Referring to the sacrificial feast.
- ³ Intro. p. lxxix.
- ⁴ At the doorpost.
- ⁵ The tabernacle.

* The vow was twofold:

1. That the son should be dedicated to the Lord, and serve Him at the tabernacle.
2. That he should be a Nazarite (see p. xvii.).

- ^{*} As a Levite Samuel would serve at the tabernacle, but only for a part of his life, *i.e.* from the age of thirty to fifty. Hannah dedicates him to a life-long service.
- ^{*} Long continued, earnest prayer.

- ^{*} Apparently a common offence at these sacrificial feasts.

- ¹⁰ Worthless, wicked woman (see p. 119).

- ¹¹ Vexation resulting on the provocation by Peninnah.
- ¹² Eli perceives that he had misjudged Hannah.

- ¹⁴ Favour.

in thy sight. So the woman ¹⁴went her way, and ¹⁵did eat, and her ¹⁶countenance was no more sad. 19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

- ¹⁴ Hannah's prayer had relieved her soul.
- ¹⁵ She partook of the feast.
- ¹⁶ And her cheerfulness was apparent.

The Birth and Infancy of Samuel.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, ¹Because I have asked him of the LORD. 21 And the man Elkanah, and all his ²house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and ³his vow. 22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be ⁴weaned, and then I will ⁵bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. 23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

Samuel may mean:

1. Heard of God.
2. Asked of God.
3. Name of God.

¹ These words give the reason why Hannah called the child Samuel, and do not explain the meaning of the name.

² Household.

³ So Elkanah had made a vow as well as Hannah.

⁴ Which would occur at the age of two or three years.

⁵ To fulfil her vow of the life-long dedication of her son to the service of Jehovah.

The Dedication of Samuel.

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with ¹three bullocks, and one ²ephah of flour, and ³a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and ⁴the child *was* young. 25 And they slew ⁵a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, Oh my lord, ⁶as thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that ⁷stood by thee here, praying unto the

¹ One for a burnt offering, one for a peace offering. These are the usual sacrifices. The third bullock was a sacrifice on the completion of the vow.

² About 4½ gals. (see p. 122).

³ A wine skin (see p. 119).

⁴ *Lit.* "the child was a child."

⁵ **The bullock,** *i.e.* the one brought specially for the dedication of Samuel.

⁶ An oath found only in the books of Samuel and Kings.

⁷ The usual attitude of prayer.

LORD. 27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: 28 Therefore also I have ^{as}lent him to the LORD; ^{as} long as he liveth he shall be ^{as}lent to the LORD. And ¹⁰he worshipped the LORD there.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 106.

- * Given.
- * i.e. given to God for his life, not to be returned to me. The dedication is complete.
- * "He" may mean Samuel, but more probably refers to Elikanah. The Vulgate reads "they."

ATTITUDES OF PRAYER. The Jews had three attitudes.

1. Standing.

- (a) Abraham "*stood before the Lord*" when pleading for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xviii. 22).
- (b) Hannah at the door of the Tabernacle (1 Sam. i.).
- (c) The Parable of the Pharisee and Publican (St. Luke xviii. 11-13).
- (d) Our Lord refers to this attitude:
 - (1) Referring to the Pharisees "*they love to pray standing in the synagogues, etc.*" (St. Matt. vi. 5).
 - (2) In His injunction to His disciples, "*when ye stand praying*" (Mark xi. 25).

2. Kneeling.

- (a) Solomon at the Dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 54).
- (b) Ezra (Ezra ix. 5).
- (c) Daniel "*kneeled upon his knees three times a day*" (Dan. vi. 10).
- (d) At the raising of Tabitha, Peter "*kneeled and prayed*" (Acts ix. 40).
- (e) St. Paul "*kneeled down and prayed*" with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus (Acts xx. 36).
- (f) St. Paul "*kneeled down on the shore and prayed*" at Tyre (Acts xxi. 5).

3. Prostration. The most solemn posture.

- (a) Moses and Aaron, when God threatened to destroy the congregation for the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Num. xvi. 22).
- (b) Elijah on Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 42).
- (c) The people after the reading of the Law (Neh. viii. 6).
- (d) Our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane "*fell on his face and prayed*" (St. Matt. xxvi. 39).

The Song of Hannah.

Compare this song with the *Magnificat* (St. Luke i. 46-55) (Appendix p. 130). Also read *Psalms cxviii.* (Appendix p. 130).

2. And Hannah ¹prayed, and said, My heart ²rejoiceth in the Lord, mine ³horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is ⁴enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy ⁵salvation. 2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither *is* there any ⁶rock like our God. 3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not ⁷arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of ⁸knowledge, and by him actions

- * Her words are both a prophecy and a song.
- * Exalteth.
- * The symbol of strength, dignity, and honour (see p. 124).
- * Opened wide. Hannah is no longer silent in the presence of Penuinah.
- * Deliverance, help, wrought by Jehovah.
- * Representing the majesty, strength, and unchangeableness of Jehovah; symbolical of shelter and protection.
- * Undue assumption—proud boasting of the *lofty* things which they have done or intend to do.

* (Plural) = seeing and knowing everything.

are weighed. 4 The ¹⁰bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that ¹¹stumbled are ¹²girded with strength. 5 They that were ¹³full have ¹⁴hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ¹⁵ceased: so that the barren hath born ¹⁶seven; and she that hath many children is ¹⁷waxed feeble. 6 The LORD ¹⁸killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the ¹⁹grave, and bringeth up. 7 The LORD ²⁰maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8 He raiseth up the poor out of the ²¹dust, and lifteth up the ²²beggar from the ²³dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the ²⁴pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them. 9 He will keep the feet of ²⁵his *saints*, and the wicked shall ²⁶be *silent* in darkness; for by ²⁷strength shall no man prevail. 10 *The* ²⁸*adversaries* of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge ²⁹the ends of the earth; and ³⁰he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the ³¹horn of his anointed. 11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child ³²did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 106.

^b see R. V. and comment p. 106.

^c see R. V. and comment p. 106.

* Estimated at their true and exact value. The vicissitudes of human affairs are under the control of the Almighty.

¹⁶ Mighty heroes are overthrown.

¹¹ The feeble and tottering are strengthened for battle.

¹² See p. 123.

¹³ The rich and well to do.

¹⁴ Now compelled to toil for their daily bread.

¹⁵ Are at rest, i.e. do not toil laboriously for bread, or, cease to be hungry.

¹⁶ The full number of the Divine blessing in children (Ruth iv. 15).

¹⁷ By the death of her children. According to a Jewish legend two of Peninah's sons died for every child born to Hannah.

¹⁸ Life and death are in the hand of Jehovah.

¹⁹ Sheol, or Hades, the abode of departed spirits.

²⁰ Ps. lxxv. 7. Ps. cxlii 7-9.

²¹ Metaphorical of utter misery and humiliation (Job ii. 8), see p. 125.

²² The needy, not necessarily one who begs.

²³ Ps. lxxv. 3. Columns, foundations. The figure is taken from a palace or temple.

²⁴ His chosen, elect.

²⁵ Be put to silence; perish.

²⁶ i.e. his own strength, as opposed to trust in God.

²⁷ Those that contend with the Lord and strive against him.

²⁸ The world to its utmost extremities, i.e. the whole world: Prophetic of the Kingdom of God.

** Prophetic

1. Of the times of David and Solomon.

2. Of the Messiah King

³⁰ See p. 124.

** i.e. employed in the service of the tabernacle, especially attached to the service of Eli.

ANALYSIS:

1. Hannah's joy at the salvation which had reached her (ver. 1).
2. The theme of her song—viz., Jehovah (ver. 2-8).

- (a) The only Holy One.
- (b) The only rock of the righteous.
- (c) The omniscient Almighty ruler of the Universe

Who (1) Humbles the proud, exalts the humble,
 (2) Killeth and maketh alive,
 (3) Maketh poor and maketh rich.

3. This Mighty Governor will—

- (a) Keep His Saints,
- (b) Destroy the wicked,
- (c) Judge the earth,
- (d) Exalt the power of His King (ver. 9-10).

The Song of Hannah is a prophetic psalm. It is poetry, and it is prophecy. Whilst based upon the incidents of her own life, it branches off into a magnificent description of the Kingdom of Christ, of which those incidents are a type (see S.C.).

The Godless Sons of Eli.

12 Now the ¹sons of Eli were ²sons of Belial; they ³knew not the LORD. 13 And the ⁴priest's custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in ⁵seething, with a ⁶fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; 14 And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; ⁷all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither. 15 ⁸*Also* before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have ⁹sodden flesh of thee, but raw. 16 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat ¹⁰presently, and then ¹¹take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. 17 Wherefore the sin of ¹²the young men was ¹³very great before the LORD: for ¹⁴men abhorred the offering of the LORD.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 106.

¹⁰ *Lit.* they caused men to abhor.

These abuses were practised in connection with the thank-offerings, with which was associated a sacrificial meal.

Directions for the thank-offerings are given in Lev. vii. 29-34.

The order of proceedings was as follows:

1. The fat was consumed upon the altar of the Lord.
2. The breast and the shoulder were then assigned to the priest as his share, after they had been waved before the Lord.

- ¹ Hophni and Phinehas.
- ² Worthless fellows (see p. 119).
- ³ *i.e.* as He should be known; they did not understand His character, *i.e.* did not fear Him, or regard Him.
- ⁴ *i.e.* the custom introduced and established by these wicked sons of Eli. Priest's should be priests' (plural).
- ⁵ **Boiling.**
- ⁶ A three-pronged fork.
- ⁷ Thus taking from the sacrificer more than was due to the priest, hence a robbery from the person sacrificing.
- ⁸ **Even,** *i.e.* before it was placed upon the altar. A second and greater sin, equivalent to a robbery of God. The word "*even*" indicates the enormity of the offence.
- ⁹ **Bolled.** The priest insisted upon having raw flesh with all the juice and freshness in it.
- ¹⁰ Immediately, *i.e.* let it be offered at once.
- ¹¹ The worshipper desired to keep the law: he did not object to give the priest as much as the latter might desire, but he was unwilling to dishonour the sacrifice. He was compelled by the priests' servant to yield the point.
- ¹² *i.e.* Hophni and Phinehas.
- ¹³ Not the sin itself, but its effects. They brought the offering into contempt. The people despised both the priests and the sacrifice.

3. The remainder of the carcase was returned to the offerer, to be eaten as a sacrificial meal by himself and his friends. (N.B.—It was at this sacrificial meal that Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion, chap. i. 4.)

The sin of Hophni and Phinehas was dictated by avarice and greediness.

1. Not content with the breast and shoulder, they desired a further portion. So they introduced the custom of sending a servant round with a three pronged fork, which he plunged into the pot or kettle in which the flesh was boiling, and claimed, as the perquisite of the priest, whatever the fork brought up.
2. But this did not satisfy them. The extra quantity of meat thus obtained was partly boiled, and probably the fork thrust in at a venture did not always furnish the choice morsels. So now they demanded raw flesh, and made the demand before the fat had been burnt. Thus they demanded this extra portion before the offering had been made to the Lord.

So their sin was twofold:

1. In demanding more than their portion they robbed the worshipper.
2. In taking the flesh before the fat was burnt, they put themselves before Jehovah and thus dishonoured the whole sacrifice.

The Ministry of Samuel in the Tabernacle.

18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home. 21 And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD.

^a Robe. ^b for the petition which was asked for the Lord (*margtn*).

In view of the profligacy of his own sons, Eli may have regarded Samuel as his successor.

* We may note three stages in the growth of Samuel:

1. *Physical*, as in this verse.
2. *Moral* (see ii. 26).
3. *Spiritual* (see iii. 19-21).

Eli's Rebuke of his Sons.

22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assem-

¹ See ver. 11. Note how ver. 18-21 contrast the bringing up of Samuel with the evil conduct of Hophni and Phinehas (ver. 12-17).

² The distinctive dress of the priests. It consisted of two parts, back and front, clasped together on the shoulders. It was fastened about the body with a girdle.

³ Resembling the tunic or long robe (*Heb mēl*) worn under the ephod by the High Priest alone. It had openings for the head and for the arms, but was without sleeves. Thus Samuel, though not of the tribe of Levi, was in some way attached to the priesthood. The unusual dress marked Samuel out as destined for some great work.

⁴ The writer mentions his age in condonation of his weakness towards his sons.

* Used to hear, i.e. reports were constantly brought to him.

¹ **Did service.** They were in some way connected with public worship (Ps. lxxviii. 11).

bled at the door of the ⁴tabernacle of the congregation. 23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings ⁵by all this people. 24 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress. 25 If one man sin against another, ⁶the ⁶judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall ⁷intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD ⁸would slay them. 26 And the child Samuel ⁹grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 107.

The Doom of Eli's House.

27 And there came a ¹man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I ²plainly appear unto the house of ³thy father, when they were in Egypt in ⁴Pharaoh's house? 28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, ⁵to offer upon mine altar, ⁶to burn incense, to wear an ⁷ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father ⁸all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? 29 Wherefore ⁹kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the ¹⁰chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? 30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that ¹¹thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 107.

* The tent of meeting.

* **From**, i.e. everyone spok of their evil-doings.

* **Eli's fault**. Expostulation with his sons was not sufficient. It was his duty to dismiss or degrade them from their office.

* **God**.

* **Intercede**.

If a man offends against his fellow-man God settles the dispute by means of the appointed judge, but if a man offends against God, no one can interpose as arbitrator.

* **Was pleased to slay them**.

* The moral progress of Samuel contrasted with the immorality of Hophni and Phinehas.

¹ A prophet (p. xi.).

² Reveal myself.

³ Aaron, i.e. when he was appointed to be the spokesman of Moses, and later appointed High Priest

⁴ i.e. in bondage to the Egyptians.

⁵ To ascend upon, go up to = the ordinary sacrifice.

⁶ The principal service in the Holy Place was to burn incense daily on the altar of incense.

⁷ Worn when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies.

⁸ Lev. x. 12-15. A part of all the offerings was assigned to the priests for their maintenance. So the action of Hophni and Phinehas was without excuse.

⁹ "*Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*" (Deut. xxxii. 15). A well-fed beast often becomes unmanageable.

Kick, tread with your feet, i.e. trample upon, treat contemptuously (see note p. 9).

¹⁰ Choicest, best part. The sons of Eli took the best for themselves.

¹¹ Refers to the family of Eli and the house of Ithamar, not to the whole priesthood.

saith, ¹²Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that ¹³despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine ¹⁴arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be ¹⁵an old man in thine house. 32 And *“thou shalt see ¹⁶an enemy in my habitation, in all the ¹⁷wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an ¹⁸old man in thine house for ever. 33 And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, ¹⁹shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the ²⁰increase of thine house shall die ²¹in the flower of their age. 34 And this shall be a ²²sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; ²³in one day they shall die both of them. 35 And I will raise me up a ²⁴faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a ²⁵sure house; and he shall walk before ²⁶mine anointed for ever. 36 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and ²⁷crouch to him for a ²⁸piece of silver and a ²⁹morsel of bread, and shall say, ³⁰Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.*

c see R.V. and comment p. 108.

This prophecy must mean that none of the house of Eli attained to any high position in the priesthood. They were thankful to be appointed to the lowest offices.

v. 29. *“Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice.”*

A reference to Deut. xxxii. 15. *“Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked . . . then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.”*

The people leading a pastoral life would readily understand this image. The well-fed ox becomes unmanageable, refuses the yoke, and does not obey its master.

So Hophni and Phinehas, instead of gratefully receiving the ample provision made for them by the lawful offerings of the people, in their pride of luxury broke the laws of God which ruled the offerings, and broke out into unrestrained covetousness and unbridled immorality.

Kick = trample under foot, treat with contempt, well describes the disdainful indifference with which they brushed aside the regulations of the Law to satisfy their greed.

¹² A revocation of God's favour to the house of Eli.

¹³ The conduct of Hophni and Phinehas had dishonoured the tabernacle and its worship.

¹⁴ The symbol of strength.

¹⁵ Note the massacre of the priests at Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 18-22).

¹⁶ May refer either to the deposition of Abiathar by Solomon, or to the sack of Shiloh by the Philistines (see Intro. p. lxxix. and comment on R.V. p. 108).

¹⁷ Well-being, prosperity.

¹⁸ A great punishment. Length of days was regarded as a sign of honour.

¹⁹ “Those who are not cut off in the flower of their youth shall be worse off than those who are, for they shall have to beg their bread” (v. 36; (S.O.).

²⁰ Offspring, descendants.

²¹ As soon as they attain to manhood.

²² The usual prophetic sign given as a pledge that the prophecy will be fulfilled.

²³ Slain in battle with the Philistines (iv. 11).

²⁴ Either Samuel, who succeeded Eli in the government; or Zadok, who took the place of Abiathar as high priest (see note p. 101).

²⁵ **Lasting.**

²⁶ Either Saul, or more probably David, and Christ, the son of David, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

²⁷ Bow down as a beggar.

²⁸ The smallest Hebrew coin, such as would be given to beggars.

²⁹ Loaf or cake of bread.

³⁰ Appoint me to.

v. 29. "Honourest thy sons, etc."

This verse gives us an insight into the sin of Eli.

He was influenced not only by fatherly partiality for his sons, but by an unwillingness to depose them from their lucrative position as priests. He was reluctant to deprive them of the rich offerings of the worshippers at the tabernacle.

v. 35. "A faithful priest." Is Samuel or Zadok here indicated?

Arguments for Samuel:

1. The faithful priest is contrasted with the faithless sons of Eli. Samuel was consistently faithful to God throughout his life.
2. Samuel was the successor of Eli, and—
 - (a) as prophet became the head of the nation—the judge,
 - (b) performed the priestly functions,
 - (c) anointed Saul, and acted as his adviser.
3. He acquired a strong house in his numerous prosperity. The grandson of Samuel was Heman, "the king's seer in the word of God," who was placed by David over the choir at the house of God, and had 14 sons and 3 daughters (1 Chron. vi. 33, xxv. 4, 5).
4. He fulfilled the prophecy "He shall walk before mine anointed for ever," by being the adviser of Saul, who after the prophet's death summoned up his spirit by means of the witch of Endor, to advise him in the serious position brought about by the invasion of the Philistines.

The weak point.—Samuel was not succeeded by his sons—either in the priesthood or the judgeship. In reply it is argued that the "sure house" does not necessarily imply succession to the priestly office, and that, even if it did, the sins of Samuel's sons would entail a forfeiture of the privilege.

Arguments for Zadok:

1. Zadok obtained the sole priesthood on the deposition of Abiathar by Solomon (1 Kings ii. 27) where it is stated that the King did so in fulfilment of the prophecy spoken against the house of Eli.
2. The descendants of Zadok held the priesthood as long as the monarchy lasted.
3. A spiritual fulfilment is hinted at in Ezekiel's vision of a new temple of which the "priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar, these are the sons of Zadok" (Ez. xl. 46.). See also Ez. xliii. 19, xliiv. 15, xlviii. 11.

Note.—If Samuel be the "faithful priest," then the "anointed" must be Saul.

If Zadok be the "faithful priest," then the "anointed" must be David, and the Son of David, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom (K).

Dr. Edersheim's view appears most sound, viz., that the "promise should be applied unpersonally rather than personally. Thus it includes, indeed, Samuel and afterwards Zadok, but goes beyond them, and applies to the priesthood generally, and points for its final fulfilment to the Lord Jesus Christ" (Vol. iv. 12).

The Call of Samuel.

3. And the ¹child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the ²word of the LORD was ³precious in those days; there was ⁴no open vision. 2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax ⁵dim, that he could not see; 3 And ere the ⁶lamp of God went out in the ⁷temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; 4 That the LORD called Samuel:

¹ Twelve years old according to Josephus. Samuel appears to have been a personal attendant to Eli.

² The word as announced by prophets.

³ Dear, rare.

⁴ Either no open manifestations as to Abraham, Moses, Joshua; or, no open publication of God's will.

⁵ Not with sleep, but with old age. *Lit.* "and his eyes had begun to grow dim."

⁶ The golden candlestick, the seven lamps being lighted in the evening and extin-

guished in the morning. Thus the time is early, but before dawn,

⁷ i.e. the tabernacle.

and he answered, ⁸Here am I. 5 And he ⁹ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for ¹⁰thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. 6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou ¹¹didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. 7 Now Samuel did not yet ¹²know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. 8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou ¹³didst call me. And Eli ¹⁴perceived that the LORD had called the child. 9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 And the LORD came, and ¹⁵stood, and called ¹⁶as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

- * The usual reply to a call = Behold me.
- * Quick to hasten to the assistance of the aged priest.
- ¹⁰ A natural inference. Samuel would think that the aged Eli required assistance.

¹¹ *Lit.* "calledst" (as in v. 5).

¹² *i.e.* by personal, direct revelation, not that he had not been instructed, or was without piety.

¹³ *Lit.* "calledst" (v. 5, 6).

¹⁴ *i.e.* understood that it was no dream of the boy, but that the Lord had called him.

¹⁵ Samuel not only heard a voice but saw a form, the personal presence of Jehovah.

¹⁶ *As before*, *i.e.* called this time in the same manner as before.

The Doom pronounced on Eli's House.

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do ¹a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall ²tingle. 12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I ³have spoken concerning his house: ⁴*when I begin I will also make an end.* 13 For I have told him that I will ⁵judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons ⁶*made themselves*

¹ The blow included:

1. The defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines.
2. The capture of the Ark.
3. The death of Eli's sons.
4. The death of Eli.
5. The devastation of Shiloh.

² As if struck by a sharp blow.

³ *i.e.* by the man of God (ii. 27-36).

⁴ Will do the work thoroughly from first to last.

⁵ Visit with punishment.

⁶ Accursed, *i.e.* brought curses upon themselves.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 108.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 108.

vile, and he ¹restrained them not. 14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be ²purged with ³sacrifice nor ¹⁰offering for ever.

¹ Eli should have dismissed his sons from office; he contented himself with expostulation, so he is included in the sentence.

² Be expiated.

³ Sacrifice = a victim slain.

¹⁰ Offering = meat offerings.

Thus including every kind of sacrifice.

v. 11. **Both his ears shall tingle.**

This expression occurs in 2 Kings xxi. 12, and Jer. xix. 3, in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

It is remarkable that Jeremiah compares the destruction of Jerusalem to the destruction of Shiloh. "Then will I make this house like Shiloh" (Jer. xxvi. 6).

Samuel tells the Message to Eli.

15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and ¹opened the ²doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel ³feared to shew Eli the vision. 16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. 17 And he said, 'What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee. 18 And Samuel told him ⁵every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, ⁶It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

¹ Part of his duties. Thus Samuel performed the minor duties of a Levite, as well as being an attendant upon Eli.

² The tabernacle was a tent, so these must be the doors of the court in which the tabernacle stood.

³ Naturally reluctant to impart the dreadful tidings.

⁴ Eli first asks for information, then begs for a full account, and at last adjures Samuel to keep nothing back.

⁵ Everything, i.e. every word the Lord had spoken.

⁶ Eli submits to God's will, leaving all in His hands.

Samuel established as a Prophet of the Lord.

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and ¹did let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from ²Dan to ³Beer-sheba knew that Samuel *was* established to be a prophet of the LORD. 21 And the LORD ⁴appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD

¹ Left no words unfulfilled which He spoke through Samuel.

² Intro. p. lxxv.

³ Intro. p. lx. The usual expression for the whole of the land. From the far north to the extreme south all the people recognised that Samuel was approved as a permanent prophet.

⁴ Manifested himself in visions.

Contrast *ver.* 1. Then the prophetic declaration of God's word was rare. Now it is revealed to Samuel, and Samuel declares it to Israel. i.e. Samuel published abroad the Divine Revelation.

revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD. 4. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

iv. 1. **And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.**

Take these words with Chapter III. as describing how the revelation of God's word through Samuel was spread among the people. The position of the words in the A. V. as part of Chapter IV. conveys the impression that the Israelites went out to battle against the Philistines in obedience to the word of the Lord uttered through Samuel. This is not the case.

The Philistines Defeat Israel and Capture the Ark.

I.—THE FIRST BATTLE.

Now Israel went out against the ¹Philistines to battle, and pitched beside ²Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in ³Aphek. 2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army ⁴in the field about four thousand men.

On the causes and occasion of this war see Intro. p. xv.

¹ Intro. p. liii.

² Intro. p. lxxv. = *the stone of help*. The name was not given till after the victory of Samuel (vii. 12).

³ Intro. p. lix. = *the fortress*.

⁴ In the battle array, i.e. in line of battle. The Israelites were defeated in the field, but retired to their camp.

II.—THE ARK IS BROUGHT TO THE CAMP OF ISRAEL.

3 And when ¹the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, ²Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. 4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, ³Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. 5 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel ⁴shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again. 6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout,

¹ The defeated army.

² They rightly ascribed the defeat to the absence of Divine aid.

They remembered the former successes of Israel when the ark was with them, so they sent for it.

They forgot that past victories were due not to the presence of the ark, but to the presence of Jehovah.

They erred in not inquiring into the causes of the withdrawal of the Divine protection.

They superstitiously relied on the outward symbol of the presence of Jehovah, instead of devoutly entering upon the work of reform.

Note how David, in his flight from Jerusalem, refused to take the ark with him (2 Samuel xv. 25.)

³ Hophni and Phinehas were in charge of the ark, and accompanied it to the camp.

⁴ Anticipating a renewal of the marvellous victories under Moses and Joshua.

they said, What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the ⁶Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp. 7 And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing ⁶heretofore. 8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these are the Gods ⁷that smote the Egyptians with ⁸all the plagues in the wilderness. 9 Be strong, and ⁹quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not ¹⁰servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight.

- The name by which the Israelites were known to foreigners (see p. 123). Note how the Philistines comport themselves.
- First.** They are *astounded* at the shouting in the camp of Israel.
- Secondly.** They are *smitten with fear* when they learn of the arrival of the ark.
- Thirdly.** They do not *despair*, but brace themselves to *resolutely fight* against the invisible foe. So the presence of the ark stimulated them to fight more courageously.
- Never till now.
- The Philistines remember the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.
- All kinds of plagues.
- *Acquit*, i.e. behave yourselves.
- Tributaries.

III.—DEFEAT OF ISRAEL AND CAPTURE OF THE ARK.

10 And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man ¹into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. 11 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, ²were slain.

- i.e. to his home. The defeat was a complete rout, and every man fled to his own home.
- The "Sign," named by the man of God as the pledge that the sentence proclaimed against Eli's house should be carried out (ii. 34).

The Death of Eli.

12 And there ¹ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the ²same day with his ³clothes rent, and with ⁴earth upon his head. 13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat ^aupon ³a seat by the wayside watching: for his ⁴heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told *it*, all the city ⁵cried out. 14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he ⁶said, What

- Tidings were generally conveyed by runners. So Oushi and Ahimaaz conveyed the news of the death of Absalom and the defeat of his army (2 Sam. xviii. 19-32).
- i.e. the day of the battle.
- Signs of grief and disaster (see p. 124).
- Upon his seat or throne (see i. 9).
- His heart was with the ark, and he was fearful for its fate.
- i.e. in lamentation. The usual wail of Orientals.
- i.e. to those about him.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 108.

meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man ⁷came in hastily, and told Eli. 15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and ^bhis eyes ⁸were dim, that he could not see. 16 And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled ⁹to day out of the army. And he said, ¹⁰What is there done, my son? 17 And the messenger ¹¹answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. 18 And it came to pass, when ¹²he made mention of the ark of God, that he ¹³fell from off ^cthe ¹⁴seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 108.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 108.

The Death of the Wife of Phinehas.

19 And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. 20 And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it. 21 And she named the child ¹Ichabod, saying, The glory is ²departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. 22 And ³she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.

* Came quickly through the city to the gateway of the tabernacle enclosure.

* Were set, i.e. he was totally blind. (Not the same word as that translated, "dim," iii. 2.)

* So the scene of the battle was not far distant. The battle had taken place in the morning.

¹⁰ How went the matter?

¹¹ A fourfold disaster.

1. Israel is fled.

2. A great slaughter.

3. Thy two sons are dead.

4. The ark of God is taken.

¹² The loss of the ark was the climax of the disaster.

¹³ Overwhelmed by the shock of the news.

¹⁴ The seat was without a back, and was placed inside the gate, so that the gateway was clear, yet everyone going through the gate must pass before Eli.

This gate cannot be the gate of the city, but the gate of the house of the Lord.

This incident is mentioned:

1. As part of the doom of Eli's house.

2. As an illustration of how deeply the loss of the ark affected the Israelites. The wife of Phinehas is more affected by the capture of the ark than by the deaths of her husband and her father-in-law.

¹ = there is no glory, or Where is thy glory?

² Lit. Is gone into captivity.

³ She did not repeat her words. It is the writer who repeats them in emphasis of the magnitude of the disaster.

The Ark in the Land of the Philistines.

5. And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from ¹Eben-ezer unto ²Ashdod. 2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it ³into the house of Dagon, and set it by ⁴Dagon. 3 And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen ⁵upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and ⁶set him in his place again. 4 And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the ⁷head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only ⁸the stump of Dagon was left to him. 5 Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, ⁹tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod ¹⁰unto this day. 6 But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with ^a¹¹emerods, even Ashdod and the ^b¹²coasts thereof. 7 And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is ¹³sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god. 8 They sent therefore and gathered all the ¹⁴lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto ¹⁵Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel ¹⁶about thither. 9 And it was so, that,

^a see R.V. and comment p. 108.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹ Intro. p. lrv. Where the battle had been fought.

² Intro. p. lx.

³ As a votive offering to Dagon, as having given them success against Israel.

⁴ The national god of the Philistines. The fish god with the body of a man and the tail of a fish (see Intro. p. liv.).

⁵ Prostrate before the ark, paying homage to Jehovah (see Ps. xvii. 7. "*Worship Him all ye gods*"). This is the lesson intended to be conveyed by the fall of Dagon.

⁶ Probably thinking that it was an accidental fall.

⁷ The parts of Dagon that were like a man were broken off.

⁸ The fishy part, *i.e.* the lower part in the form of a fish, alone was left standing.

⁹ They stepped over the threshold, so that they might not tread upon and so defile the place where the pieces of their god had lain. The fall of Dagon revived their former dread of the God of Israel, but did not lessen their devotion for their own idolatry.

This custom continued to the time of Zephaniah. "*In the same day I will punish all those that leap on (or 'over') the threshold*" (Zeph. i. 9). The custom led to a lasting memorial of the fall of Dagon in the presence of the ark.

¹⁰ *i.e.* at the time when the narrative was written.

¹¹ Hemorrhoids, or boils, or tumours.

¹² Borders.

¹³ Severe, heavy.

¹⁴ Intro. p. liv. A state council called to decide upon what to do.

¹⁵ Intro. p. lix. Perhaps chosen because there was no temple to Dagon in that city. The Philistines were unwilling to part with the token of their victory.

¹⁶ The ark was apparently placed in the open fields. Hence the second plague, *viz.*, that of field mice.

after they had carried it about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very ¹⁷great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both ¹⁸small and great, and ^cthey had emerods in their secret parts. ¹⁰ Therefore they sent the ark of God to ¹⁹Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites ²⁰cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people. ¹¹ So they sent and ²¹gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to ²²his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a ²³deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. ¹² And the men that died not were smitten with the ^demerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 108.

^d see R.V. and comment p. 108.

¹⁷ Great alarm, *i.e.* alarm produced by so many sudden deaths. Gath was more severely dealt with than Ashdod.

¹⁸ Young and old, poor and rich.

¹⁹ Intro. p. lxxi.

²⁰ They had learnt what had happened at Ashdod and Gath.

²¹ Their appeal was not regarded by the lords of the Philistines, who were reluctant to give up the ark, the great sign of their signal victory over Israel.

²² His=*its*.

²³ Deadly alarm, *i.e.* alarm produced by so many sudden deaths.

Ekron was dealt with more severely than Ashdod and Gath. The longer the Philistines refused to see the hand of God, the more severely were they punished. Note the similarity of these plagues with those of Egypt. These plagues at last humbled the Philistines, as the plagues of Egypt had humbled Pharaoh.

The Philistines decide to Send Back the Ark.

6. And the ark of the LORD was ¹in the country of the Philistines ²seven months. ² And the Philistines called for the priests and the ³diviners, saying, 'What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place. ³ And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not ⁴empty; but in any ⁵wise return him a ⁶trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you. ⁴ Then said they, What shall *be* the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They

¹ In the territory. *Lit.* in the fields. Probably the Ark was in the open country.

² From October till May.

³ Soothsayer.

So Pharaoh summoned his magicians.

⁴ What shall we do in reference to the act of Jehovah? With what (offering) shall we send it back?

⁵ *i.e.* without a propitiatory gift.

⁶ Manner.

⁷ In order to propitiate the God of Israel; an acknowledgment of their sin.

answered, ⁸Five golden ^a*emerods*, and five golden mice, ⁹according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords. 5 Wherefore ye shall make images of your ^a*emerods*, and images of your mice that ¹⁰mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: ¹¹peradventure he will lighten his hand from ¹²off you, and from off ¹³your gods, and from off ¹⁴your land. 6 Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, ¹⁵as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed? 7 Now therefore ¹⁶make a ¹⁷new cart, and take two ¹⁸milch kine, on which there hath come ¹⁹no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves ²⁰home from them: 8 And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the ²¹jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering, in a coffer ²²by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. 9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of ²³his own ^{b24}*coast* to ²⁵Beth-shemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but ²⁶if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it *was* a chance that happened to us.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 108.

^b see R. V. and comment p. 109.

^{**} Intro. p. lxiii. The nearest town in Israel.

^{**} If the cows strange to the yoke drew the cart of their own accord, and if, contrary to their instincts, they abandoned their calves and made their way direct to the land of Israel, it would be clear that they were acting under the influence of the Jehovah of Israel. They adopt this plan to decide if the plague was by the hand of God or a chance visitation.

The Ark Restored to Israel.

10 And the men did ¹so; and took two milch ²kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves ³at home:

* Golden images of the plagues by which they had been afflicted. A common heathen custom, of offerings of gold, representing that wherein or whereby they had suffered. The custom has even been adopted in the Christian Church.

* The offering is to correspond with the number of the lords of the Philistines.

¹⁰ **Damage, spoil.** "It is a well-known fact that field mice, with their enormous rate of increase and extraordinary voracity, do extraordinary damage to the fields. In southern lands they sometimes destroy entire harvests in a very short space of time" (K.).

¹¹ Perchance, perhaps.

¹² The emerods.

¹³ The fall of Dagon.

¹⁴ The field mice.

¹⁵ Another allusion to the plagues of Egypt. The Philistines, occupying the great highway from Egypt to Central Asia, were well informed of the events connected with the Exodus of Israel from Egypt.

¹⁶ Set to work at once and make.

¹⁷ So unpolluted by previous use.

¹⁸ Cows in milk.

¹⁹ Not used before as draught animals.

²⁰ *i.e.* shut them up in their stalls, and thus separate them from their mothers.

²¹ Ornaments, gifts.

²² Not inside the ark. The Philistines clearly had not ventured to open the ark.

²³ Refers to the ark, personified as the representation of Jehovah.

²⁴ Border.

¹ See *ver.* 7.

² Plural of "cow."

³ In their stalls.

11 And they ⁴laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their ⁵emerods. 12 And the kine ⁶took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, ⁷lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines ⁸went after them unto the ⁹border of Beth-shemesh. 13 And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their ¹⁰wheat harvest in the ¹¹valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. 14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and ¹²stood there, where there was ¹³a great stone: and they ¹⁴clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the LORD. 15 And the ¹⁵Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered ¹⁶burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD. 16 And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they ¹⁷returned to Ekron the same day. 17 And these are the ¹⁸golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a trespass offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one; 18 And the ¹⁹golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of ²⁰fenced cities, and of ²¹country villages, even unto the great stone of ²²Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the LORD: which stone ²³remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite.

q see R.V. and comment p. 108.

* See ver. 4. 9.

⁴ Went straight along the road on the road to Beth-shemesh (S.O.).

⁵ *i.e.* calling for their calves. Yet they take an opposite direction, thus giving a plain indication that they were acting under a Divine impulse, causing them to act contrary to their natural instincts.

⁶ Watching what happened to the ark. It has been pointed out that this "made it impossible for the Israelites to practise any deceit."

⁸ The Philistine lords did not venture to enter the land of Israel.

⁹ A mark of time—late in May or early in June.

¹⁰ Lying in front of the town of Beth-shemesh, which stands on a hill beyond it (p. lxiv.).

¹¹ The cows halted of their own accord.

¹² Suggesting an altar and a sacrifice.

¹³ So David sacrificed on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. xxiv. 25), and so Elisha on his call by Elijah (1 Kings xix. 21).

¹⁴ Some of whom would be residing in Bethshemesh, a priestly city.

¹⁵ These would be sacrifices in addition to the sacrifice of the two kine.

¹⁶ Now convinced as to the source of the plagues.

¹⁷ Five golden emerods for each of their five principal towns. This plague had fallen upon the inhabitants of the towns to which the ark had been taken.

¹⁸ The mice correspond in number to all the towns and villages of Philistia, this plague having visited and desolated the whole land.

¹⁹ Cities fortified by walls.

²⁰ Open and unprotected by walls.

²¹ = lamentation (see p. lviii.).

²² *i.e.* a witness of the return of the ark and of the sacrifices.

The Men of Bethshemesh Punished for Irreverence to the Ark.

19 And ¹he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had ²looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people ³fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. 20 And the men of Bethshemesh said, 'Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us? 21 And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of ⁴Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; ⁵come ye down, and fetch it up to you. 7. And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of ⁷Abinadab ⁸in the hill, and ⁹sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

¹ Jehovah.

² Out of curiosity to see what it contained. Possibly the intention of placing the coffer in the ark gave them an excuse for removing the lid.

Contrast the irreverence of the men of Bethshemesh with the reverence of the Philistines.

³ Manifestly an error in numbers (see p. 134).

⁴ They acknowledge the cause of the punishment, and desire to remove the ark to avert further judgments.

⁵ The city of the woods (Intro. p. lxxiv.).

⁶ *i.e.* from the higher ground of the hills where Kirjath-jearim was situated.

⁷ No doubt a Levite.

⁸ On the hill; Kirjath-jearim is situated on a hill.

⁹ Consecrated.

Similar punishments for like acts of irreverence are:

1. **Nadab and Abihu** (priests) consumed by fire for offering strange fire to the Lord, *i.e.* not the holy fire which burnt continually upon the altar of burnt-offering (Lev. x. 1).
2. **Korah, Dathan, and Abiram**, Levites, feeling aggrieved at being excluded from the priesthood, limited to the family of Aaron, and being confined to the inferior service of the tabernacle, headed a revolt against Moses and Aaron. They and their followers perished by an earthquake and fire from heaven (Num. xvi. 1-35).
3. **Uzzah**. When David first attempted to bring the ark from the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, it was conveyed in a cart. The oxen drawing the cart stumbled, and Uzzah put forth his hand to steady the ark. For this act of irreverence he was smitten with immediate death (2 Sam. vi. 1-10).
4. **King Uzziah** sacrilegiously attempted to offer incense in the Temple, and was smitten with leprosy (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21).

Repentance and Reformation under Samuel.

2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was ¹twenty years: and all the house of Israel ²lamented after the LORD. 3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away

¹ Not the whole time that the ark was at Kirjath-jearim, for it was not removed till David's reign. It means that the reformation under Samuel took twenty years.

² As one person follows another with earnest solicitations and complaints till he at last assents. So the Syrophenician woman followed Jesus till He granted her request and healed her daughter (St. Matt. xv. 22-28).

lowed Jesus till He granted her request and healed her daughter (St. Matt. xv. 22-28).

⁶the strange gods and ⁴Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. 4 Then the children of Israel did put away ⁵Baalim and ⁶Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only. 5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to ⁷Mizpeh, and ⁸I will pray for you unto the LORD. 6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and ⁹drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and ¹⁰fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel ¹¹judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

- * The Baalim of ver. 4 (Intro. p. xi.).
- * Intro. p. xi.

- * The Baalim.
- * The Ashtaroth (p. xi.).
- * Intro. p. lxxvi. = watch-tower, on the western boundary of Benjamin.
- * On Samuel as an intercessor (see p. xx.).

- * Symbolical of their purification from sin.
- ¹⁰ As on the great Day of Atonement.

- ¹¹ Marks the commencement of Samuel's office as judge.

Defeat of the Philistines at Ebenezer.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to ¹Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines ²went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they ³were afraid of the Philistines. 8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, ⁴that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. 9 And Samuel took a ⁵sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering ⁶wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. 10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD ⁷thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and ⁸discomfited them; and they ⁹were smitten before Israel. 11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until

- ¹ Intro. p. lxxvi. = watch-tower.
- * Roused by the destruction of the Baalim, and hearing of the national gathering at Mizpeh, they gather a force to crush the national rising.
- * The poorly armed Israelites would be no equal match for the well armed, disciplined forces of the Philistines.
- * The Israelites place their trust in Jehovah, and their faith is rewarded.
- * A lamb still sucking, probably 7 days old (Lev. xxii. 27).
- * Whole, entire, undivided. The lamb represents the new life of the nation.
- * Josephus adds that there was an earthquake, causing gaps in the ground, into which the Philistines fell.
- * Compare.
 1. The hailstones in the battle of Bethoron when Joshua defeated the Southern Kings (Josh. xii.).
 2. The storm which brought about the destruction of the host of Sisera (Judges v. 20-22).

* The Philistines fled panic-stricken. The Israelites pursued a disorderly rabble.

they came under ¹⁰Beth-car. 12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between ¹¹Mizpeh and ¹²Shen, and called the name of it ¹³Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

signal victory in the days of Eli, when they captured the ark.

¹⁰ Intro. p. lxi. = the house of the lamb.

¹¹ Intro. p. lxxvi.

¹² Intro. p. lxxix.

¹³ The scene of the Philistine defeat is the same as their This is a remarkable fact.

The Result of the Victory at Ebenezer.

13 So the Philistines were ¹subdued, and they ²came no more into the ³coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines ⁴all the days of Samuel. 14 And the ⁵cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, ⁶from Ekron even unto Gath; and the ⁷coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. 15 And Samuel judged Israel ⁸all the days of his life. 16 And he went from year to year ⁹in circuit to ⁹Beth-el, and ¹⁰Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. 17 And his return was to ¹¹Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built ¹²an altar unto the LORD.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹ Brought low. The victory marks the end of the 40 years of the Philistine oppression (Judges xiii. 1).

² There was a cessation of invasion for some time.

³ i.e. during Samuel's personal rule as judge, before the time of Saul.

⁴ The border cities of the tribe of Dan.

⁵ Does not mean that Ekron and Gath were occupied by Israel, but that the Israelite frontier facing those cities and stretching between them was regained.

⁶ Borders, i.e. the territory of Israel bordering on these towns.

⁷ Sharing with his sons during his later years, and retaining civil and religious authority even in the days of Saul.

⁸ As our judges now go on circuit.

⁹ Intro. p. lxi.

¹⁰ Intro. p. lxxi.

¹¹ The place of his birth. Here was his official residence.

¹² Thus making Ramah a centre of religious life.

Amorites = The mountaineers, as the name implies (Intro. p. xlix.). Here means the original inhabitants of Canaan occupying the highlands. Possibly the Amorites, finding the oppression of the Philistines unendurable, made common cause with Israel against them.

THE EFFECT OF THE VICTORY AT EBENEZER.

1. The power of the Philistines to oppress Israel was broken. The end of the 40 years oppression.
2. All attempts to regain their lost supremacy were ineffectual in the days of Samuel's judgeship.
3. The Philistines were not only expelled from the interior of Israel, but were attacked in their own land, and deprived of those cities and their surrounding territory which belonged to Israel but which the Philistines had captured.
4. Peace between Israel and the native races occupying the highlands.

THE MONARCHY OF SAUL FROM HIS ELECTION TO HIS FINAL REJECTION (viii.—xv.).

The People desire a King.

8. And it came to pass, ¹when Samuel was old, that he made his sons ²judges over Israel. ³Now the name of his firstborn was ⁴Joel; and the name of his second ⁵Abiah: they were judges in ⁶Beer-sheba. ⁷And his sons walked not in his ways, but ⁸turned aside after ⁹lucre, and ¹⁰took bribes, and perverted judgment. ¹¹Then all the ¹²elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, ¹³And said unto him, ¹⁴Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now ¹⁵make us a king to ¹⁶judge us like all the nations.

¹ Two reasons for desiring a King:

1. The increasing age of Samuel.
2. The corrupt conduct of his sons.

¹¹ Appoint. ¹⁵ Not merely to lead them in war, but to exercise judgment in civil cases.

- ¹ Some time, probably at least twenty years, after the victory at Ebenezer.
- ² Assistant judges, subordinate to himself.
- ³ Jehovah is God.
- ⁴ Jehovah is my father.
- ⁵ Intro. p. lx. At the extreme south of the land; probably they judged over the portion regained from the Philistines.
- ⁶ Did not deal honestly and straightforwardly as Samuel had done.
- ⁷ Money—generally in a bad sense = illgotten money.
- ⁸ A common sin in the East, specially denounced in the law (Deut. xvi. 19).
- ⁹ The representatives of the people, so a deliberate application, not the outcry of the ignorant populace.

The reply of Jehovah to the Request for a King.

6 But the thing ¹displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel ²prayed unto the LORD. ³And the ⁴LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have ⁵rejected me, that I should not ⁶reign over them. ⁷According to ⁸all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have ⁹forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. ¹⁰Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet ¹¹protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the ¹²manner of the king that shall reign over them.

¹² The rights and prerogatives which the king would claim.

- ¹ He was naturally hurt at a request which showed mistrust in Samuel and forgetfulness of his past services.
- ² Laid the matter before the Lord in prayer.
- ³ God approves. The time had come for the appointment of a king.
- ⁴ In rejecting Samuel they rejected Jehovah and His rule.
- ⁵ Be king.
- ⁶ Ungrateful as they now are to Samuel, this is but in keeping with their ingratitude to Jehovah since the exodus.
- ⁷ The sin of the people was not in asking for a king, but in their distrust of the invisible Jehovah, and their desire for a visible monarchy.
- ⁸ First make a solemn protest against their request, and then sketch for them the privileges of a monarch.

The Prerogative of a King.

10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. 11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. 12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ^arear ²his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. 13 And he will take your daughters to be ³confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. 14 And he will take your fields, and your ⁶vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. 15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his ⁶officers, and to his servants. 16 And he will take your menservants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest ⁷young men, and your asses, and ⁸put them to his work. 17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his ⁹servants. 18 And ye shall ¹⁰cry out in that day ¹¹because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not ¹²hear you in that day.

a see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹ Rights and prerogatives which the king would claim, viz.:

1. Service in his retinue (*ver.* 11).
2. Military service as officers in the army (*v.* 12).
3. Service in cultivating the royal lands: "*reap his harvest.*"
4. Workmen in the manufacture of arms (*v.* 12).
5. Domestic service in the royal household (*v.* 13).
6. Forcible service of their lands to be bestowed on his courtiers (*ver.* 14).
7. Regular taxation of a tenth of their produce for royal expenses (*ver.* 15-17).
8. Compulsory impressment of their slaves and their cattle for the royal service.

⁶ Ear = plough (*p.* 122).

³ Confectionaries = perfumers (*p.* 120).

⁶ So David handed over the lands of Mephibosheth to Ziba (2 Samuel xvi. 4).

⁶ So Ahab confiscated the vineyard of Naboth (1 Kings xxi.).

³ Chamberlains.

⁷ The reading of the Sept. is "your best oxen."

⁸ So Solomon employed forced levies to build the Temple and his palaces (1 Kings v. 13-18).

⁹ Slaves.

¹⁰ The revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam was primarily caused by the excessive taxation of Solomon (1 Kings xii. 4).

¹¹ Appeal to Jehovah against the tyranny of the king.

¹² Answer, *i.e.* will leave you to the choice you have deliberately made.

The Reply of the Elders.

19 Nevertheless ¹the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, ²Nay; but we will have a king over us; 20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may ³judge us,

¹ The elders representing the people.

² Though warned of the rights which the king would exercise, they repeat the demand.

³ The duty of a king in time of peace.

and ⁴go out before us, and fight our battles. 21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he ⁵rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. 22 And the LORD said to Samuel, Harken unto their voice, and ⁶make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, ⁷Go ye every man unto his city.

* The duty of a king in time of war—viz., to lead the people to battle.

* Repeated (p. 126).

* Appoint.

* i. e. till I summon you together for the purpose of appointing a king.

The Genealogy of Saul. His Search for his Father's Asses.

9. Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was ¹Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a ²mighty man of power. 2 And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a ³choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people. 3 And the ⁴asses of Kish Saul's father ⁵were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses. 4 And ⁶he passed through ^amount Ephraim, and passed through the land of ⁷Shalisha, but they found them not: then they passed through the land of ⁸Shalim, and there they were not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not. 5 And when they were come to the land of ⁹Zuph, Saul said to his ¹⁰servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and ¹¹take thought for us. 6 And he said unto him, Behold now, there is ¹²in this city a man ¹³of God, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith

* On the family of Saul (see p. xxxi.).

* Either "Valiant" or wealthy, probably both.

* Saul had all the physical qualities that would recommend him to the people as their king; viz., great stature, strength and beauty. In ancient times size and beauty were held in high estimation as qualities desirable in a king. They were signs of manly strength.

* Used for riding and agriculture. The Israelites were forbidden by the law to use horses.

Evidently Kish was a man of substance, and in a good position.

* Had strayed away.

* **Saul's route:**

Leaving Gibeah he journeyed north-west into the hill country of Ephraim, passing through the land of Shalisha, then turned eastward to Shalim, passing through the land of Benjamin, till he reached the land of Zuph, in which Ramah was situated.

* Intro. p. lxxix.

* Intro. p. lxxix.

* Intro. p. lxxxii.

* A trusty dependant of the family, not a slave.

¹¹ Be anxious about us.

¹² Referring to the town in front of them upon a hill.

¹³ One held in honour.

cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; ^bperadventure he can shew us our way ¹⁴that we should go. 7 Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a ¹⁵present to bring to the man of God: what have we? 8 And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the ¹⁶fourth part of a shekel of silver: that will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way. 9 ¹⁷(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: ¹⁸for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.) 10 Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto ¹⁹the city where the man of God was.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 109.

Saul and his Servant Inquire for the Seer.

11 And as they ¹went up the hill to the city, they ²found young maidens ³going out to ⁴draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here? 12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now, for he ⁵came to-day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place: 13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall ⁶straightway find him, before he go up to the high place ⁷to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall ⁸find him. 14 And they went up ⁹into the city:

¹⁴ Lit. "Have gone and still go," i.e. to find the asses.

¹⁵ The usual method of approaching a great man—the respectful homage paid to a superior.

So Jacob sent spices to Pharaoh (Gen. xliii. 11). Jesse sent ten cheeses to the captain of the band in which his sons were enrolled (1 Sam. xvii. 17).

¹⁶ About 6d.

¹⁷ In former times.

¹⁸ A verse inserted by a later writer to explain that in the days of Samuel the title "seer" was used to describe a prophet of the Lord. (On "seer" and "prophet" see p. xi.)

¹⁹ The name of the city is not given, but it was probably Ramah, Samuel's usual residence.

¹ Were ascending the slope of the hill on which the city stood.

² Met.

³ The wells were usually out side the city. In this case at the foot of the hill.

⁴ The usual duty of the women to fetch water for their homes.

⁵ On his return from his circuit (vii. 16).

⁶ Immediately.

⁷ The sacrifice would be followed by the festival of the sacrificial feast.

⁸ Meet.

⁹ Into the midst of the city.

and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel ¹⁰came out ¹¹against them, ¹²for to go up to the high place.

- ¹⁰ Came out of his house.
- ¹¹ Opposite to them.
- ¹² For the purpose of going.

Instances of Women drawing water :

1. Rebekah drew water for the camels of Eliezer (Gen. xxiv. 20).
2. Rachel drew water for her father's sheep (Gen. xxix. 9, 10).
3. The daughters of Jethro drew water for their father's sheep (Ex. ii. 16).
4. The woman of Samaria came out of the city to draw water when Jesus was sitting by Joseph's well (St. John iv. 7).

Samuel Entertains Saul.

¹⁵ *Now the LORD had ¹told Samuel in his ear* a day before Saul came, saying, ¹⁶ To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be ²captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the ³hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me. ¹⁷ And when Samuel ⁴saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same ⁵shall reign over my people. ¹⁸ Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is. ¹⁹ And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: ⁶go up before me unto the high place; for ⁷ye shall ⁸eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is ⁹in thine heart. ²⁰ And as for thine asses that were lost ¹⁰three days ago, ¹¹set not thy mind on them; for they are found. *And ¹²on whom is all the desire of Israel?* Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house? ²¹ And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the ¹³smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my

¹ *Lit.* "had uncovered his ear"—a figure of speech taken from the custom of pushing aside the head dress for convenience in whispering words in the ear.

² Prince or leader.

³ So at this time the Philistines were pressing Israel very hardily. They were making a fresh attempt to recover their ascendancy over Israel.

So the time is appropriate for the appointment of a king.

⁴ Struck by the stature and beauty of Saul, Samuel mentally asks the question, "Is this the man?" and receives an answer from Jehovah in the affirmative.

⁵ *Lit. restrain, control.* A settled government would not permit of "every man doing that which was right in his own eyes" (Jud. i. xxi. 25). The people would be controlled by fixed laws for the future.

⁶ Addressed to Saul alone. He is given the post of honour, and takes precedence of Samuel.

⁷ Including Saul and his servant.

⁸ At the festival.

⁹ Saul may have already been meditating on some scheme for delivering his country from the Philistines.

¹⁰ So Saul had been absent three days.

¹¹ Do not be troubled about them.

¹² "Whose shall be all the desirable things of Israel" (see p. 109). Compared with this the loss of the asses was but a trivial matter.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 109.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 109.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹³ The tribe of Benjamin, originally weak in numbers, had been almost wiped out of existence in the days of the Judges (see Judges xx. 46). So the statement is literally true.

family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? ¹⁴wherefore then speakest thou so to me? ²² And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the ¹⁵*parlour*, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which were about ¹⁶thirty persons. ²³ And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the ¹⁷portion which ¹⁸I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, ¹⁹Set it by thee. ²⁴ And the cook ²⁰took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which ²¹is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto ²²this time hath it been ²³kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

^d see R. V. and comment p. 110.

Samuel Anoints Saul.

²⁵ And when they ¹were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel ²communed with Saul upon the ³top of the house. ²⁶ ⁴And they arose early: and it came to pass about the ⁵spring of the day, that Samuel ⁶called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, ⁷abroad. ²⁷ And as they were going down to ⁸the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still ⁹a while, that I may ¹⁰show thee the word of God. **10.** Then Samuel took a ¹¹vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and ¹²kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath ¹³anointed thee to be ¹⁴captain over his inheritance? **?** When thou art departed

- ¹⁴ Saul clearly grasps Samuel's meaning, viz., that he (Saul) is to be the future king, and naturally wonders why such an honour should be conferred on so insignificant a tribe as that of Benjamin.
- ¹⁵ **Chamber or Hall** (p. 110) = the room in which the sacrificial feast was usually held. Saul sat in the place of honour at the head of the table.
- ¹⁶ The principal men of the city.
- ¹⁷ i.e. of the sacrifice (see i. 4).
- ¹⁸ Samuel had (warned by Jehovah, ser. 15) made every preparation for the honouring of Saul.
- ¹⁹ Reserve it.
- ²⁰ **Heaved**—the word is a sacrificial one. The shoulder was the "heave offering" (Ex. xxix. 27). The right shoulder was the portion of the priests (Lev. vii. 32).
- ²¹ Has been reserved for thee.
- ²² The appointed time.
- ²³ Reserved, set aside.

- ¹ i.e. had descended the hill.
- ² For private talk, and yet so that it might be seen by the people that Samuel was paying honour to Saul.
- ³ The roof of the house was flat (see p. 124).
- ⁴ **The Septuagint has** "They spread a couch for Saul on the housetop, and he lay down."
- ⁵ **Rising. Lit.** "As the morning arose."
- ⁶ Called to Saul on the top of the house. Samuel had slept in the house, Saul had slept upon the house-top.
- ⁷ i.e. out of the house into the street.
- ⁸ The extremity of the town before going out of the gate.
- ⁹ Now—at this time.
- ¹⁰ Cause thee to hear.
- ¹¹ A narrow-necked vessel, from which the oil would come by drops (E).
- ¹² A token of respectful homage.
- ¹³ On anointing (see p. 118).
- ¹⁴ Prince or leader.

from me to day, then thou shalt ¹⁵find two men by ¹⁶Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at ¹⁷Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son? ³ Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou ¹⁸shalt come to the ¹⁹plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-el, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a ²⁰bottle of wine: ⁴ And they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands. ⁵ After that thou shalt come to the ²¹hill of God, where is the ²²garrison of the Philistines: ²³and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a ²⁴company of prophets coming down from the high place with a ²⁶psaltery, and a ²⁶tabret, and a ²⁷pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall ²⁸prophesy: ⁶ And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and ²⁹shalt be turned into another man. ⁷ And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou ³⁰do as occasion

his own city, he would meet a band of prophets with musical instruments, prophesying. The Spirit of Jehovah would seize upon him, and he would prophesy along with them.

MEANING: Royalty not only from God (1st sign), and under God (2nd sign), but with God (3rd sign) (E.).

Briefly, the three signs signify that Saul's monarchy was:

1. From God. *First Sign.*
2. Under God. *Second Sign.*
3. With God. *Third Sign.*

^{**} A band of prophets from one of the schools of prophets (p. xi.).

^{**} A kind of lyre (p. 126). ^{**} A kind of tambourine (p. 128). ^{**} A kind of flute (p. 126).

^{**} Not foretelling the future, but an ecstatic utterance of religious feelings to the praise of God.

^{**} i.e. in thought and mind. God bestowed upon him the spirit of capacity to rule, filled him with the idea that he was the man chosen to work the will of God for the glory and future of Israel.

^{**} Do what thy hand findeth—act independently as a sovereign.

1st FIRST SIGN:

Saul would meet two men at Rachel's tomb, who would tell him—

(a) Of the finding of the asses.

(b) Of his father's anxiety on his account.

MEANING: A pledge that God had appointed him king.

His royalty was from God (E.).

^{**} Between Bethel and Bethlehem (Gen. xxxv. 16-20. See p. lxxvii.).

^{**} Intro. p. lxxxii.

2nd SECOND SIGN:

When he arrived at the oak of Tabor he would meet three men going to Bethel bearing sacrificial gifts.

They would salute him, and unasked give him two loaves, probably one for himself, one for his servant. They do not give him all the sacrificial gifts.

MEANING: An unconscious act of homage on the part of the godly in Israel to the newly-appointed King. As God's representative he receives a part of the sacrificial offerings, but not all.

Saul's royalty is therefore in subordination to God (E.).

^{**} The oak of Tabor.

^{**} A wine skin (p. 1.9).

^{**} Lit. Gibeah of God.

^{**} A military post, probably one of a series of forts erected to command the passes.

3rd THIRD SIGN:

When he arrived at Gibeah,

serve thee; for God is with thee. 8 And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: ⁸¹seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.

⁸¹ This command to meet Samuel at Gilgal cannot refer to xiii. 8-13, which is connected with events occurring some years later.

The Signs Fulfilled.

9 And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass ¹that day. 10 ²And when they came thither to ³the hill, behold, ⁴a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. 11 And it came to pass, when all that ⁵knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then ⁶the people said one to another, ⁷What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets? 12 And ⁸one of the same place answered and said, ⁹But who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, ¹⁰Is Saul also among the prophets? 13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the ¹¹high place. 14 And Saul's ¹²uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were no where, we came to Samuel. 15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you. 16 And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he ¹³told him not.

¹ As Saul left Samuel early in the day he could easily reach Gibeah before night (see *verse 6*).

² The third sign is fully described because it made a great impression at Gibeah.

³ On which Gibeah was situated.

⁴ A band of prophets from one of the schools of the prophets (see p. xi.).

⁵ Indicative that Gibeah was Saul's native place.

⁶ Oeasily Saul's previous life and habits had been very different from those of the sons of the prophets.

⁷ What has happened?

⁸ A fellow citizen.

⁹ *i.e.* the prophetic inspiration is not hereditary, but comes from God. Why should not Jehovah bestow this spirit upon Saul if it so please Him?

¹⁰ A proverb used to express astonishment at any extraordinary change in the life and habits of a man opposed to his former life and habits.

¹¹ The high place at Gibeah. Doubtless to worship.

¹² Was this *Ner* or *Abner*? (see p. xxx.).

¹³ Either from modesty or because Samuel had enjoined him to keep the matter secret.

Saul publicly elected King.

17 And Samuel ¹called the people together unto the LORD to ²Mizpeh; 18 And said unto the ³children of Israel, "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you: 19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by ⁴your tribes, and by your thousands. 20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. 21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, ⁵he could not be found. 22 Therefore they ⁶enquired of the LORD further, ⁷"if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the ⁸stuff. 23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was ⁹higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward. 24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, ¹⁰God save the king. 25 Then Samuel told the people the ¹¹manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and ¹²laid it up before the LORD.

a see R.V. and comment p. 110.

Verse 19. Thousands. Moses divided the people into *thousands, hundreds* and *hundreds*, but the expression here is equivalent to "*families*."

¹ In accordance with the implied promise of viii. 22.

² Intro. p. lxxv. The Mizpeh of Benjamin. Implying the presence of the ark, or the tabernacle, or the high priest's ephod (S.C.) (see v. 22).

³ The national assembly, styled "*the congregation*" (p. 120).

⁴ Samuel once more reminds the nation of the folly and ingratitude in voluntarily rejecting Jehovah as their king.

The time and circumstances called for a king, *but* this change would not have been necessary had the people been faithful to the covenant God.

⁵ The divisions of the people are:

1. The nation into tribes.
2. The tribes into families or clans.

3. The families into houses.

4. The houses into men.

The selection was by lot:

1st lot. Tribes. Benjamin selected.

2nd lot. Families. The family or clan of Matri selected.

3rd lot. Houses. The house of Kish selected.

4th lot. Men. Saul selected.

⁶ With true modesty, Saul, though he knew that he would be chosen, did not put himself forward.

⁷ By means of the Urim and Thummim.

⁸ **Baggage**, i.e. of the people assembled at Mizpeh. The baggage of the whole camp would probably be collected in one place with the carts and waggons.

⁹ Saul's magnificent physique and handsome appearance immediately impressed the people, and they hailed him as king with acclamation.

¹⁰ Let the king live.

¹¹ Law or principles—the constitution.

¹² Placing it beside the ark with the Book of the Law

And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. 26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him ¹⁸a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. 27 But the ¹⁴children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no ¹⁵presents. But ¹⁶he held his peace.

¹⁸ The men of valour.

¹⁴ Worthless fellows (see p. 119).

¹⁶ Tokens of homage and allegiance.

¹⁶ Lit. was as though he were deaf, i.e. took no notice. In the early part of his reign Saul showed prudence and sagacity.

INSTANCES OF CASTING LOTS:

1. The scape-goat was selected by lot (Lev. xvi. 8-10).
2. Achan was detected by the casting of lots (Josh. vii. 14-18).
3. The conquered land was divided amongst the tribes by lot (Josh. xviii. 10).
4. The force selected to attack the Benjamites was chosen by lot (Judges xx. 9, 10).
5. Saul was chosen king by lot (1 Sam. x. 20, 21).
6. Jonathan's innocent breach of Saul's oath was detected by casting lots (1 Sam. xiv. 42).
7. The priestly functions were divided amongst the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar by lot (1 Chron. xxiv. 5).
8. The priests served in the Temple in order regulated by lot (St. Luke i. 9).
9. Matthias was chosen by lot to be an apostle in place of Judas (Acts i. 26).

The Invasion of Nahash, King of Ammon.

11. Then ¹Nahash the ²Ammonite came up, and encamped against ³Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will ⁴serve thee. 2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may ⁵thrust out all your right eyes, and ⁶lay it for a reproach upon all Israel. 3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers ⁷unto all the ⁸coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to ⁸save us, we will come out to thee. 4 Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings ⁹in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept. 5 And, behold, Saul ¹⁰came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth

¹ Intro. p. xcii.

² Intro. p. xlviii.

From xii. 12 it is clear that this invasion was one of the causes which led the people to demand a king.

³ Intro. p. lxxiii.

⁴ Become tributaries to you.

⁵ Dig out.

⁶ In revenge for the defeat inflicted upon the Ammonites by Jephthah (Judges xi. 33), and also to incapacitate them for war.

⁷ Not directly to Saul, probably they had not heard of his election as King.

⁸ Deliver.

⁸ They did not inquire for Saul; another proof that Saul did not hear of the matter till he came home.

¹⁰ He was ploughing in the field.

Compare the offer of the dictatorship by the Roman Senate to Cincinnatus whilst he was engaged in ploughing (see Livy iii. 26). Gideon was called at the threshing floor.

the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh. 6 And the ¹¹Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly. 7 And he took a ¹²yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and ¹³sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after ¹⁴Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. 8 And when he ¹⁵numbered them in ¹⁶Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To morrow, ¹⁷by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have ¹⁸help. And the messengers came and shewed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad. 10 Therefore the men of Jabesh ¹⁹said, ²⁰To morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you. 11 And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people ²¹in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host ²²in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, ²³so that two of them were not left together.

Saul Confirmed in the Kingdom.

12 And the people said ¹unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death. 13 And Saul said, ²There shall

¹¹ As upon the Judges, inspiring him to energetic action with sudden impulse.

¹² Probably the oxen with which he had been ploughing.

¹³ A signal for the gathering of the people. So the Highland clans used to be assembled by the sending round of the Fiery Cross.

¹⁴ The name of Samuel strengthened the authority of Saul. Samuel accompanied the expedition (see *ver.* 12).

¹⁵ Not trained soldiers, but an armed rising of the people.

¹⁶ Intro. p. lxiv. In the tribe of Issachar, near Bethshan, directly opposite the ford for crossing to Jabesh-gilead, and distant twenty miles in a direct route.

Already we may notice Judah as distinct from the other tribes.

"Strange that Saul's first march should have been by night from Bethshan to Jabesh, the same route by which they carried his dead body at night" (E.) (see xxxi. 11-13)

¹⁷ About noon, but Saul anticipated the time (see *ver.* 11).

¹⁸ Deliverance.

¹⁹ *i.e.* to the Ammonites.

²⁰ A statement intended to deceive the Ammonites, so that the attack by Saul might take them unawares.

²¹ In three divisions, attacking from three different quarters.

²² Between two and six o'clock in the morning.

The Jewish division of the watches was *three*:

1st. Sunset to 10 p.m.

2nd. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. (the middle watch).

3rd. 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. (the morning watch).

²³ Significant of the complete dispersion of the Ammonites.

¹ So Samuel took part in the expedition.

² Saul wisely adopts a moderate and conciliatory policy.

not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought ³salvation in Israel. 14 Then said Samuel to the people, 'Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and ⁶renew the kingdom there. 15 And all the people went to ⁶Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

³ Deliverance.

⁴ This may be the visit referred to in x. 8.

⁵ We get three elections of Saul as king:

1. Privately by Samuel at Ramah (God's choice).

2. Election by lot at Mizpeh, only partially accepted by the people.

3. Full acknowledgment by the whole nation at Gilgal.

⁶ Intro. p. lxxi.

Saul now assumed the royal state and authority of king.

Samuel's Farewell Address to the People.

12. And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. 2 And now, ¹behold, the king ²walketh before you: and I am old and greyheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my ³childhood unto this day. 3 'Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his ⁴anointed: whose ⁶ox have I taken? or whose ⁶ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? ⁷or of whose hand have I received any ⁸bribe to ⁹blind mine eyes therewith? and ¹⁰I will restore it you. 4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ¹¹ought of any man's hand. 5 And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, ¹²He is witness. 6 And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that

This address was probably delivered at Gilgal after the renewal of the kingdom (xi. 14, 15). Samuel formally lays down his judgeship, hands over the monarchy to Saul.

PART I.

He appeals to the people before the Lord as witnesses of his integrity.

¹ Perhaps pointing to Saul.

² Is your leader not only in war but in directing the government.

³ His ministry had begun as a child (i. 24). The word of the Lord had come to him whilst but a youth (iii. 1-19).

⁴ Samuel challenges trial. Can the people accuse him of wrong? God and the king. His anointed, are the judges.

⁵ Saul, the anointed king.

⁶ **Ox; ass** = possessions or property. There was but little money in use.

⁷ Referring to his conduct during his office as judge.

⁸ *Lit. ransom* = a fine payable in place of imprisonment or death.

⁹ To cover my eyes so as not to see the fault committed by the accused.

¹⁰ So Zaccheus (St. Luke xix. 8).

¹¹ Anything.

¹² So the people admit that there has been nothing in the conduct of Samuel as Judge to warrant them casting aside the order of Judges.

brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. 7 Now therefore ¹³stand still, that I may ¹⁴reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers. 8 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place. 9 And when they forgot the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of ¹⁵Sisera, captain of the host of ¹⁶Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the ¹⁷king of Moab, and they fought against them. 10 And they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served ¹⁸*Baalim* and ¹⁹*Ashtaroth*: but now deliver us out of ¹⁹the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee. 11 And the LORD sent ²⁰Jerubbaal and ²¹Bedan, and ²²Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe. 12 And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king. 13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have *desired!* and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you. 14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey

- a see R.V. and comment p. 110.
 b *The Baalim and the Ashtoreth.*
 c *Asked for.*

D. *As soon as the Ammonites invaded Gilead ye called for a king.*

[Clearly the Ammonite invasion was one of the causes why the people clamoured for a king.]

E. *A king was unnecessary. Repentance from sin and faith in Jehovah would have effected deliverance.*

F. *Behold your king. If king and people are steadfast in allegiance to Jehovah—Well, i.e. it will be well with you.*

PART II.

Samuel shows the people their ingratitude in electing a king.

A. *The same Lord that appointed Moses and Aaron is witness (ver. 5) between you and me to-day.*

¹³ As in a court of justice.

¹⁴ Plead, contend, i.e. as the advocate of Jehovah.

Samuel now reverses the position, though still arguing as if in a trial in a court of justice.

Samuel = the accuser.

The people = the accused.

B. *Samuel specifies acts of deliverance on the part of Jehovah.*

1. From oppression in Egypt, and giving the people possession of the land (v. 8).

2. Deliverances from:
 (a) Jabin, King of Hazor.

(b) The Philistines' oppression.

(c) Eglon, King of Moab

C. *These deliverances were always effected when Israel repented and abandoned idolatry.*

He notifies the names of great deliverers, viz.:

1. Jerubbaal = Gideon, from the Midianites.

2. Bedan = Barak, from Jabin, King of Hazor.

3. Jephthah, from the Ammonites.

4. Samuel, from the Philistines.

¹³ Intro. p. xciii.

¹⁴ Intro. p. lxxii.

¹⁷ Intro. p. lii.

¹⁸ Intro. p. xi.

¹⁹ Intro. p. xi.

²⁰ Intro. p. xci.

²¹ Intro. p. lxxxvii.

²² Intro. p. xci.

his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, ²³then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God: 15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers. 16 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes. 17 Is it not ²⁴wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king. 18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD ²⁵sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel. 19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins ²⁶this evil, to ask us a king. 20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart; 21 And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after ²⁷vain things which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain. 22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. 23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the

Let God's great works on their behalf encourage them to serve Him.

But, if they continue in wickedness, they will surely perish.

²⁷ *Empty*: refers to the idols of the heathen

²³ [Translate "and will be, both you and the king that reigns over you, followers of God—well" (S.O.).]

G. But if not, do not think that a king will save you from your enemies. Destruction will come upon king and people, as in former times, when oppression by foreign nations was God's doing as a punishment for your sins.

ver. 11. Bedan is variously supposed to be either *Barak* or *Samson*, as *Ben-dan*, the son of D n, i.e. of the tribe of Dan.

PART III.

A thunderstorm in harvest time is an indication that the people stand condemned by Jehovah.

¹⁸ From the middle of May to the middle of June. During this period rain hardly ever falls. The storm of thunder and rain was therefore a sign, miraculously vouchsafed in answer to Samuel's prayer, as an attestation of the truth of his indictment of the people.

²⁵ A proof that Jehovah pronounced the people guilty, and also symbolical of punishment that would follow future disobedience.

"In ordinary seasons from the cessation of the showers in Spring until their commencement in October and November, rain never falls, and the sky is usually serene" (Robinson).

"I have never seen rain in the end of June, or in July, in Judea" (Jerome).

²⁶ Act of wickedness.

PART IV.

Samuel encourages the people.

Though they are guilty, God will not forsake them if they continue to serve him.

He (Samuel) will continue to pray for them, and to teach them.

good and the right way: 24 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how²⁸ great things he hath done for you. 25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

* Not merely the great storm they had just witnessed, but all the mighty works wrought on behalf of His people.

The Israelites under Saul Revolt against the Philistines.

13. Saul reigned¹ one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, 2 Saul chose him² three thousand *men* of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in³ Michmash and in⁴ mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in⁵ Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people⁶ he sent every man to his tent. 3 And⁷ Jonathan⁸ smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul⁹ blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the¹⁰ Hebrews hear. 4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had¹¹ smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also¹² was had in abomination with the Philistines. ¹³And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal. 5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, ¹⁴thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and ¹⁵people as the sand which is on¹⁶ the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from¹⁷ Beth-aven. 6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in¹⁸ a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in¹⁹ high places, and in pits. 7 And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the²⁰ land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him²¹ trembling.

¹ On this verse see R.V. and comment p. 111. Also on Saul's reign (p. 135).

² Forming the nucleus of a standing army.

³ Intro. p. lxxiv.

⁴ The high ground near Bethel.

⁵ Intro. p. lxx.

⁶ Saul does not intend a great campaign at present, merely to attack the post at Geba.

⁷ Intro. p. xxxi.

⁸ Jonathan stormed the fort at Geba held by a Philistine garrison.

⁹ To announce the victory, and to summon the people to arms.

¹⁰ The special name of Israel as distinct from foreigners.

¹¹ Utterly defeated, put to the sword.

¹² Made themselves to stink: *ie.* were the objects of intense hatred.

¹³ Saul retreats to Gilgal to gather his forces.

¹⁴ Generally considered to be a mistake for 300.

¹⁵ Foot soldiers.

¹⁶ The usual figure for an indefinitely large number.

¹⁷ Intro. p. lxi.

¹⁸ In a tight corner, hemmed in on all sides, and not having forces sufficient to meet such an invasion.

¹⁹ Not the places for worship, but strongholds or towers.

²⁰ The usual refuge of Israelites on an invasion from the west.

Jonathan must have been left to hold Gibeah and the passes leading from Gilgal to the central highlands.

²¹ Without confidence in their leader.

Saul Disobeys the Orders of Samuel.

8 And he tarried seven days, according to the set time ¹that Samuel had appointed; but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. 9 And Saul said, *"Bring hither ²a burnt offering to me, and ³peace offerings.* And ⁴he offered the burnt offering. 10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to ⁵meet him, that he might salute him.

a see R.V. and comment p. 111.

¹ This must be some unrecorded command. It cannot refer to the command in x. 8.

The command was given to test the king, and Samuel deliberately delayed his coming for the purpose of the test.

² **The.**—The article is definite, indicating the burnt offering and peace offering that awaited the arrival of Samuel.

³ The sin did not consist in usurping the priestly office, but in not waiting the full time appointed by Samuel.

⁴ Out of respect to the great prophet.

The Penalty of Disobedience.

11 And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, ¹Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; 12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and ²offered a burnt offering. 13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done ³foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel ⁴for ever. 14 But ⁵now thy ⁶kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man ⁷after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be ⁸captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee. 15 And Samuel arose, and ⁹gat him up from Gilgal unto

¹ The test of obedience was a hard one, for—

1. Within a few miles was an overwhelming host of Philistines.

2. Saul's forces were melting away.

The excuse is very plausible.

² Saul does not appear to have had time to complete the peace offering.

³ Not only committed sin, but acted foolishly. The strength of Israel lay in their religious feeling that they were acting in obedience to Jehovah. Saul had deprived himself of this strong factor on his side.

⁴ **Permanently.** The permanence was dependent upon the character of the king.

⁵ A severe punishment, but necessary. The monarchy must be subordinate to the Divine command.

⁶ Dynasty—not that Saul personally was yet rejected.

⁷ Who would subject his earthly will to that of the Heavenly King. So Jesus subordinated His will to that of His Father in Heaven. *"Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done."* (St. Luke xxii. 42.)

⁸ **Captain**—prince or leader.

⁹ **Ascended from** the plain of Gilgal to the high plateau of Benjamin.

Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about ¹⁰six hundred men. 16 And Saul and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in ¹¹Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

¹⁰ The disobedience of Saul had weakened the confidence of the people, and had led to further defections.

¹¹ The best post for resisting further invasion.

The Invasion of the Philistines.

17 And the ¹spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: ²one company turned unto the way that leadeth to ³Ophrah, unto the land of ⁴Shual: 18 And ⁶another company turned the way to ⁶Beth-horon: and ⁷another company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the ⁸valley of Zeboim toward the ⁹wilderness.

¹ The devastators sent out to plunder and clear the country. These raids may have been intended to draw Saul out of his fastnesses to protect the country.

² This band went northwards. Intro. p. lxxvii.

³ Intro. p. lxxx.

⁴ This band went westwards.

⁵ Intro. p. lxii.

⁶ This band went eastwards.

⁷ Intro. p. lxxxii.

⁸ The Jordan valley—the Arabah.

Saul and Jonathan at Gibeah and Geba barred the southern route.

The Disarmament of the Israelites.

19 Now ¹there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: ²for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: 20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to ³sharpen every man his ⁴share, and his ⁵coulter, and his ⁶axe, and his ⁷mattock. 21 Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads. 22 So it came to pass in the day of battle, ⁸that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found. 23 And the ⁹garrison of the Philistines went out to the ¹⁰passage of Michmash.

¹ So the Israelites were without arms, and could make no resistance to these devastating raids.

² The Philistines cleared all smiths from the land to prevent the forging of military weapons.

³ i.e. in a forge. For all work in a forge they had to go to the Philistines, but they were allowed a file for the casual sharpening of blunt tools.

⁴ Different agricultural instruments which cannot be precisely distinguished.

⁵ This passage may be taken to mean that only Jonathan and Saul were fully armed, not that they alone had a sword or spear. It expresses the unarmed condition of the Israelites compared with the fully equipped Philistines (see Description of Goliath xvii. 4-7).

⁶ An outpost. It was this outpost which Jonathan attacked.

⁷ The crossing place, the pass (see p. lxxv.). The Philistines pushed forward a company, to hold the pass and prevent an attack upon their camp.

The Feat of Jonathan.

14. Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. ²But he told not his father. 2 And Saul tarried in ³the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in ⁴Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men; 3 And ⁵Ahiah, the son of ⁶Ahitub, I-chabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh, wearing ⁷an ephod. And the people ⁸knew not that Jonathan was gone. 4 And between the ⁹passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, there was a ¹⁰sharp rock on the one side, and a ¹⁰sharp rock on the other side: and the name of one was ¹¹Bozez, and the name of the other ¹²Seneh. 5 The forefront of the one was situate northward over

- Personal attendant, equivalent to the esquire attendant on knights in the days of chivalry.
- Lest he should be forbidden to essay his desperate enterprise.
- At the extreme north end.
- Intro. p. lxxv.
- Intro. p. lxxvii.
- Intro. p. lxxvii. The mention of Ahiah is an additional proof that the period is connected with the later days of Saul's reign.
- The official garment worn when inquiring of the Lord by means of the Urim and Thummim (p. 129).
- The people also are ignorant of Jonathan's intention.

• Passes. ¹⁰ Rocky crag.

¹¹ Intro. p. lxxiv.

¹² Intro. p. lxxviii.

In the pass were two rocky crags, Bozez and Seneh.

The Philistine outpost was on the top of Bozez.

Jonathan proposed to climb Seneh.

The district was thickly wooded.

Jonathan and his armour-bearer proposed to discover themselves on Seneh to the Philistines.

Jonathan proposes a sign or test to ascertain if Jehovah was with them.

If the Philistines, when they saw them, challenged them to stay and await their coming, then Jonathan determined to abandon the enterprise.

If the Philistines, on the other hand, challenged them to cross over, Jonathan would regard this as a sign that Jehovah would aid his enterprise.

The test was well chosen, for—

1. If the Philistines crossed over to attack they would show courage.

2. If they awaited attack, and taunted Jonathan to come on, it would show they were lacking in courage.

The sequel justified the test.

The two men showed themselves.

The trees prevented the Philistines ascertaining the real number of their opponents.

Fearing an unknown force they hesitated to attack.

So they mockingly challenge Jonathan to cross over.

Jonathan and his armourbearer accept the challenge, convinced that God had delivered the Philistines into their hands.

They crept up on their hands and knees, choosing the steepest part, where their approach would be least expected.

The top was evidently so narrow that only one could fight along the ridge.

Jonathan went first, and as he struck an opponent down the armourbearer despatched the prostrate foe.

They slew twenty at the first onslaught in this confined space.

Then a panic seized the Philistines.

The narrow ledge would make it impossible for them to know the number of the attacking Israelites.

An earthquake added to their terror.

The confusion spread into the camp of the Philistines.

against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah. 6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these ¹⁸uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: ¹⁴for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few. 7 And his armourbearer said unto him, ¹⁵Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart. 8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. 9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. 10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us. 11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves. 12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, ¹⁶Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel. 13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and ¹⁷they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him. 14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within *as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.* 15 And there was

¹⁸ An epithet generally applied to the Philistines.

¹⁴ Note the faith of Jonathan.

¹⁵ The armourbearer is the equal of his master in faith and courage.

¹⁶ Either "tell you a word," "give you some information," or "teach you a lesson." Probably the latter, as the words are uttered in mockery. Yet they had not the courage to cross themselves.

¹⁷ Jonathan struck them down, the armourbearer despatched them.

trembling ¹⁸in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

The Rout and Flight of the Philistines.

16 And the ¹watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, ²behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another. 17 Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, ³Number now, and ⁴see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armourbearer were not there. 18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, ⁵Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel. 19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, ⁶that the noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, ⁷Withdraw thine hand. 20 And ⁸Saul and all the people that were with him ⁹assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, ¹⁰every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture. 21 Moreover the ¹¹Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan. 22 Likewise ¹²all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in ¹³mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle. 23 So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto ¹⁴Beth-aven.

§ see R. V. and comment p.

¹⁸ The main body in the great camp, disquieted by what they saw, unable to clearly distinguish what was going on, and confused by the arrival of fugitives, who would magnify the disaster.

¹ The armies were separated by a deep ravine, but the distance between them was not more than 2 miles.

² The confusion in the camp of the Philistines could be seen.

³ Muster.

⁴ Saul can see the panic, and desires to ascertain the cause.

⁵ To inquire of God before going into battle.

An error: the ark was at Kirjath-jearim. The Sept. has "*Bring hither the Ephod.*" Clearly the Ephod is intended.

⁶ Saul watches the Philistine host. He sees the confusion increasing. Now is the time for his little band to attack, so he delays no longer, orders the priest to abandon the inquiry—and leads his men to the attack.

⁷ Desist from the inquiry.

⁸ Had Saul not been so eager to attack, but have awaited Divine guidance, we may well assume that the victory would have been equally complete, and that he would not have made the mistake of ver. 24.

⁹ Sept. gives "*shouted,*" i.e. uttered the terrible battle cry of Israel.

¹⁰ Slaying each other in the confusion and panic. The sudden onslaught of Saul's compact little body of men must have had tremendous effect.

¹¹ Prisoners or levies compelled to join the ranks of the Philistines. They turned their arms against their masters.

¹² All the refugees come out of their places of refuge and join in the battle and pursuit.

¹³ Intro. p. lxi. Gives the direction of the battle and rout.

Saul's Rash Oath. It is Broken by Jonathan.

24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had ¹adjured the people, saying, ²Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted *any* food. 25 And all they of the land came to ³a wood; and there was ⁴honey upon the ground. 26 And when the people were come into the wood, ⁵behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his ⁶mouth: for the people feared the oath. 27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore ⁷he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes ⁸were enlightened. 28 Then ⁹answered one of the people, and said, Thy father ¹⁰straitly ¹¹charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth any food this day. ¹²And the people were faint. 29 Then said Jonathan, My father ¹³hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, ¹⁴how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. 30 How much more, ¹⁵if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

The Transgression of the People.

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to ¹Aijalon: and the people were very faint. 32 And the people ²flew upon the spoil, and took

route by which Joshua drove the Five Kings of southern Canaan (Josh. x. 10).
 • Fell greedily.

¹ Caused the people to take an oath.

² A rash oath taken with the idea of pressing the pursuit. It brought about three disastrous results:

1. The famished, weary soldiers could not continue the pursuit.

2. Jonathan ignorantly broke the oath.

3. The people in the eager desire for food broke the Mosaic law by eating of the blood of the slain animals.

³ Woody country.

⁴ The honey of wild bees. Palestine is described as "*flowing with milk and honey.*"

⁵ Behold a stream of honey.

⁶ *i.e.* to eat of the honey.

⁷ Not stopping in the pursuit.

⁸ Became bright, showing that his strength revived.

⁹ Probably in reply to Jonathan's suggestion that they also should partake of the honey.

¹⁰ Strictly.

¹¹ Made the people swear.

¹² "And the people *are* faint" —part of the soldier's reply.

¹³ Brought the land into trouble. Jonathan condemns Saul.

¹⁴ How bright mine eyes have become.

¹⁵ Had the people not been so exhausted for want of food they would have pressed the pursuit more effectually.

¹ Intro. p. lix. We get the line of pursuit. From Michmash north-west to Bethaven, then across the heights down the pass of Bethoron to Aijalon to the plain of Philistia. It is the same

sheep, and oxen, and calves, and ⁸slew them on the ground: and the people did ⁴eat them with the blood. 33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people ⁵sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, ^a*Ye have ⁶transgressed*: roll a great stone unto me ⁷this day. 34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, ⁸Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay them ⁹here, and eat; and sin not against the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with him that night, and slew them there. 35 And Saul built an altar unto the LORD: the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 112.

The Result of Jonathan's Breach of the Oath.

36 And Saul said, ¹Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, ²Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest, ³Let us draw near hither unto God. 37 And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But ⁴he answered him not that day. 38 And Saul said, Draw ye near hither, ⁵all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. 39 For, *as* the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him. 40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side,

* Thus the slain animals lay in their own blood.

* Thus breaking the Law (Lev. xix. 26). "*Ye shall not eat anything with the blood*"

* A sin occasioned by his own rash oath.

* Acted faithlessly towards the covenant.

* Immediately.

* The animals were slain upon the stone, and thus the blood ran down to the ground. So the flesh was separated from the blood.

* On the stone.

* Now that the people were refreshed, Saul would take up the pursuit. Rightly from a military point of view.

* His soldiers express their readiness to follow.

* The priest rightly advises the taking counsel of God.

* No reply is vouchsafed, so Saul suspects some sin on the part of the people.

* All the chiefs of the people

and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee. 41 Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, ^a*Give a perfect lot.* And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people escaped. 42 And Saul said, ^cCast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken. 43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And ^dJonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, ^eI must die. 44 And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan. 45 And the ^fpeople said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not. 46 Then Saul ^gwent up ^hfrom following the Philistines: and the Philistines ⁱwent to their own place.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 112.

- * On instances of lots see p. 32.
- * Jonathan confesses his involuntary sin.
- * A true patriot, he is ready to die if his death will benefit his country.
- * The people intervene and rescue Jonathan from death. The hero who, inspired by Divine impulse, had wrought the great victory, must not perish merely that the king should keep a rash oath. The daughter of Jephthah must be sacrificed in accordance with her father's rash vow. (Judges xi. 31.) Herod executed John the Baptist "for his oath's sake" i.e. to keep the promise rashly made to Salome (St. Mark vi. 23-28).
- The people exhibit a better, more tolerant spirit.
- * Ascended from Aijalon in the plain to the highland of the centre of the land.
- ** He dared not continue the pursuit without Divine approval.
- ** Retired to their own country unpursued. And thus a campaign entered upon in disobedience to God and distrustfulness of Him, ended in sorrow and disappointment (K).

Note the similitude between Achan's sin and the sin of Jonathan :

ACHAN.

Joshua cursed Jericho and all pertaining to it.
Achan took of the spoil.
Israel was defeated before Ai.
Achan was detected by casting lots.
Achan confessed his sin.

JONATHAN.

Saul laid the people under an oath not to touch food.
Jonathan ate of the wild honey.
Jehovah refused to answer when consulted.
Jonathan was detected by casting lots.
Jonathan acknowledged his involuntary breach of the oath.

Many other similarities to the Book of Joshua can be found in this narrative :

- v. 24. "*Cursed be the man, etc.*"=the exact form of curse pronounced by Joshua (vi. 26). "*That I may be avenged of mine enemies.*" Almost the same words as Josh. x. 13. The scene was the same, viz. the Valley of Aijalon (comp. Josh. x. 12 with 1 Samuel xiv. 31).
- v. 29. "*My father hath troubled the land.*" So Joshua addresses Achan "*Why hast thou troubled us!*" (Josh. vii. 25).

The Wars and Family of Saul.

47 So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them. 48 And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them. 49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the firstborn ²Merab, and the name of the younger ³Michal: 50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his host was Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. 51 And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel. 52 And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any ⁴strong man, or any valiant man, he ⁵took him unto him.

¹ *i.e.* began to rule over a considerable portion of the land. Previously the Philistines had confined him to the mountain fastnesses round Gibeon.

His Wars.

1. *Moab*, who may have been in alliance with Nahash, king of the Ammonites (xi. 1).
2. *Ammon*, *i.e.* against Nahash in the relief of Jabesh-gilead (xi.).
3. *Edom*. Not specifically recorded.
4. *Zobah*. Not specifically recorded.
5. *Philistines*, throughout the whole of his reign (xiv. 52).
6. *Amalekites*. See chap. xv.

On these nations see Intro. p. xlvii. *f.*

- * Promised to David, but married to Adriel the Meholathite (xviii. 19).
- * The wife of David (xviii. 27). On the family of Saul see Intro. p. xxxi. *f.*

* *Mighty man*.

- * *i.e.* enrolled him in his standing army—the permanent company of picked men. So Saul took David (xviii. 2; xvi. 19).

The War with Amalek.

15. Samuel also said unto Saul, the LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore ²hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. ² Thus saith the LORD of hosts, ³ *I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.* ³ Now go and smite

^a see R.V. and comment p. 112.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 112.

¹ There is no note of time. Amalek had probably raided the south of Judah.

The incident is selected to show why God rejected Saul.

* A special injunction. The command is given primarily to punish Amalek, but mainly to test Saul's obedience.

* The Amalekites fought against Israel at Rephidim after Moses had brought water out of the rock. They were signally defeated by Joshua, and the Lord caused Moses to record the following judgment against

Amalek: *I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven*" (Ex. xvii. 8-16).

Amalek, and 'utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. 4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in ⁶Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah. 5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait ⁶in the valley. 6 And Saul said unto the ⁷Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ⁸ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from ⁹Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. 8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed ¹⁰all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people ¹¹spared Agag, and the ¹²best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not ¹³utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

* "Devote to destruction," as Jericho was devoted (Josh. vi. 17, 18).

* Intro. p. lxxxi. **Telem.** on the south border of Judah.

* A ravine, or bed of a torrent.

* Intro. p. li. The descendants of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses.

* See Ex. xviii., Num. x. 29-32. Hobab, the son of Jethro, probably acted as guide to the Israelites in the wilderness.

* Intro. p. lxxii.

¹⁰ *i.e.* all whom they captured.

¹¹ Intro. p. lxxxvi. To grace Saul's triumph—to gratify his pride, that he might show his captive to the people.

¹² From sheer selfishness and covetousness. They wished to enrich themselves by the booty.

¹³ Devote to destruction.

Samuel Reproves Saul, and Slays Agag.

¹⁰ Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, ¹¹ It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is ¹²turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. ^aAnd ²it grieved Samuel; and he ³cried unto the LORD all night. ¹² And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to

The sin. Saul desired to be absolute ruler, *i.e.* would not subordinate his will to that of Jehovah.

¹ Turned round from following God, in order to go his own ways.

² Samuel was angry or displeased.

³ In prayer, making intercession for Saul.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 112.

‘Carmel, and, ^bbehold, he set him up ^aa place, and is ⁶gone about, and passed on, and gone down ⁷to Gilgal. 13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, ‘Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD. 14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this ⁹bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? 15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for ¹⁰the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. 16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, ¹¹Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me ¹²this night. And he said unto him, Say on. 17 And Samuel said, When thou wast ¹³little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel? 18 And the LORD sent thee ¹⁴on a journey, and said, Go and ¹⁵utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. 19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst ¹⁶fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD? 20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the ¹⁷people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the ¹⁸things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal. 22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of

^a Intro. p. lxiv. A city in the hill country of Judah.

^b A memorial or monument of his victory.

^c Turned and gone further.

^d At Gilgal Saul was confirmed in his kingdom (xi. 15). At Gilgal the warning of the consequences of disobedience is pronounced (xiii. 13, 14). At Gilgal sentence of deprivation is pronounced.

^e A feigned greeting of welcome to hide his fault.

^f The cries of the cattle convict Saul of falsehood.

^g Saul endeavours to lay the blame upon the people.

^h Leave off making these excuses.

The attitude adopted by the king convinces the prophet of the justice of the sentence pronounced against him.

ⁱ Gilgal is 15 miles from Ramah.

^j A simple tribesman of Benjamin, the least of the tribes of Israel.

^k On a special mission, viz., an expedition against Amalek.

^l Devote to destruction.

^m In greedy eagerness to enrich himself with the booty.

ⁿ Saul once more lays the blame upon the people, and once more endeavours to defend the sparing of the cattle as the fulfilment of a religious duty.

^o The things devoted to destruction.

the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to ¹⁹hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of ²⁰witchcraft, and ²¹stubbornness is as ²²iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected ²³thee from being king.

c see R.V. and comment p. 113.

The Rejection of Saul.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, ¹I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and thy words: because I feared ²the people, and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and ³turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD. 26 And Samuel said unto Saul, ⁴I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. 27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, ⁵he laid hold upon the ⁶skirt of his mantle, and it rent. 28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee ⁷this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. 29 And also ⁸the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent. 30 Then he said, I have sinned: yet ⁹honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God. 31 So ¹⁰Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD.

Samuel Executes Agag.

32. Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him ¹delicately. And

¹⁸ Attending to God's word.

²⁰ Soothsaying, divination.

²¹ Intractableness, self-willed opposition to God.

²² Vanity, i.e. false gods.

²³ That thou mayst be no longer king.

¹ Saul confesses his sin. The fear of punishment daunted him.

² Still he attributes the sin to the people; he would make his sin appear as small as possible.

³ Shows the true motive of Saul's confession. He feared open disgrace. He would avoid a public scandal.

⁴ Samuel refuses to grant the request of the king and repeats the sentence of rejection.

⁵ Saul, who endeavours forcibly to detain the prophet.

⁶ The *lappet*, which might easily be torn off. The rent garment becomes a sign that the kingdom is rent from Saul (see Abijah to Jeroboam, 1 Kings xi. 30, 31).

⁷ For the downfall of Saul commenced from this day. As yet Samuel did not know that David was the intended successor.

⁸ "A phrase which occurs only here. The word means *perpetuity, truth, glory, victory, and trust or confidence*" (S.O.).

⁹ Saul feared disgrace more than sin.

¹⁰ Samuel grants his request and returns.

1. Not to bring too great an indignity on the monarchy.

2. To inflict punishment upon Agag.

¹ Cheerfully, joyfully.

Agag said, ²Surely the bitterness of death is past. 33 And Samuel said, ³As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel ⁴hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal. 34 Then Samuel ⁵went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul. 35 And Samuel ⁶came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

- * He quite expected that his life would be spared.
- * Agag had probably carried on his wars with great cruelty. If so, his life was forfeited according to the *lex talionis*.
- * Refers, perhaps, to some form of execution similar to quartering.
- * Samuel and Saul separate.
- * From this time Samuel ceases intercourse with a king whom Jehovah had rejected.
- The execution of Agag
 1. Was a punishment for his own cruelty.
 2. Removed the guilt from the nation of having disobeyed God's command.
 3. Was an example to the king that obedience to God must be perfect.

David Anointed as Saul's Successor.

16. And the LORD said unto Samuel, ¹How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill ²thine horn with ³oil, and go, I will send thee to ⁴Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. 2 And Samuel said, ⁵How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, ⁶I am come to sacrifice to the LORD. 3 And call Jesse ⁷to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee. 4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town ⁸trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably? 5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: ⁹sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, ¹⁰and called them to the sacrifice. 6 And it came to pass, when they were ¹¹come, that he

- ¹ Samuel may not yet have been reconciled to the rejection of Saul.
- * The horn kept for the priests.
- * The oil of consecration.
- * Intro. p. xliii.
- * Samuel naturally fears the jealousy of Saul. An open consecration of David might have led to the death of both the prophet and the intended king.
- * Possibly Samuel often sacrificed in various towns. Samuel concealed his true object by ostensibly setting forth to fulfil another purpose.
- * To the sacrificial feast following on the sacrifice.
- * Filled with anxiety when they saw the aged seer come in such a manner. They may have feared to excite the anger of Saul by receiving Samuel.
- * *i.e.* with the usual ceremonies.
- ¹⁰ Nothing unusual. Jesse was the head of the village, and would be the proper person to be present at the sacrificial feast.
- ¹¹ To the sacrificial feast. So David was anointed at the feast.

looked on Eliab, and ¹²said, Surely the LORD's anointed is before him. 7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; ¹⁸for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him ¹⁴pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. 9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. 10 Again, ¹⁵Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these. 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: ¹⁶for we will not sit down till he come hither. 12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ¹⁷ruddy, and withal of a ¹⁸beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. 13. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him ¹⁹in the midst of his brethren: and the ²⁰Spirit of the LORD came upon ²¹David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

David sent for to the Court of Saul.

14 But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an ¹evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. 15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. 16 Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is

¹² To himself.

The whole village would witness the sacrifice. Only Jesse and his sons were invited to the feast. Hence the consecration of David would be known to the family only.

¹³ The people had chosen Saul for his manly qualities, God will choose His king for his moral and religious qualities.

¹⁴ A phrase that may mean that each son was presented singly and privately to Samuel.

¹⁵ On Jesse's family, see p. xliii.

¹⁶ *i. e.* will not turn round to sit down to partake of the sacrificial feast.

¹⁷ Auburn, reddish hair, and of a fair skin.

¹⁸ With beautiful eyes. Possibly David's brothers were tall, dark men.

¹⁹ In the presence of his brethren.

It is clear that neither Jesse nor David was told the purpose of the anointing.

The object of the consecration was to bid David prepare himself as set apart for some great work.

²⁰ To qualify him for his work.

²¹ **Beloved, darling**, given to him perhaps as the youngest child.

¹ Spirit of melancholy.

a cunning player on an harp : and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. 17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. 18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him. 19 Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, 10Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep. 20 And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul. 21 And David came to Saul, and stood before him : and he loved him greatly ; and he became his armourbearer. 22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me ; for he hath found favour in my sight. 23 And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand : so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

* Skilful (see p. 121).

* It is well-known that music has a wonderful influence in certain mental disorders.

* Everything depended upon the skill of the player to adapt his music to the varying moods of the king.

* Skilful.

* Evidenced by his encounter with the lion and the bear (xvii. 34).

* David may have distinguished himself in resisting marauders seizing the flocks of Jesse.

* Discreet in speech.

* Of manly beauty.

* Saul exercises his right as king of demanding the services of any of his subjects.

* The present is the usual Eastern form of acknowledging homage to the king.

* Wine skin.

* As a squire attendant upon a knight.

* The usual term for one attending court. The time spent in the court was a valuable education to David.

* i.e. when Saul was seized with a fit of melancholy it was the custom for David to play upon the harp. The music had the effect of dispelling the melancholy fit.

The Philistines Again Invade the Land.

17. Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammin. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. 3 And the Philis-

* Intro. p. lxxx.

* Intro. p. lx.

* Intro. p. lxxvii.

* Intro. p. lxxvi.

The Philistines advanced by the usual route, endeavouring to pierce into the centre of the land.

tines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side; and there was ⁶a valley between them.

The description gives the scene of David's encounter with Goliath with great exactness.

* The ravine.

Goliath Challenges Israel.

4 And there went out a ¹champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named ²Goliath, of Gath, whose ³height was six cubits and ⁴a span. 5 And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a ⁶coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was ⁷five thousand shekels of brass. 6 And he had ⁸greaves of brass upon his legs, and ⁹a ⁹target of brass between his shoulders. 7 And the ¹⁰staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed ¹¹six hundred shekels of iron: and one ¹²bearing a shield went before him. 8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I ¹³a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9 ¹⁴If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be ¹⁵your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be ¹⁶our servants, and serve us. 10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. 11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, ¹⁷they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

* See p. 120.

* One of the ancient race of Anakim, the survivors of whom took refuge in Gath, Gaza, and Ashdod when driven out of Hebron and the hill country of Judah (Josh. xi. 21, 22).

* Over ten feet in height.

* From 18 to 21 inches (p. 121).

* Half a cubit (p. 128).

* Breastplate of scales, overlapping like the scales of a fish.

* About 157 lbs.

* Metal armour rounded to the legs and feet.

* A javelin slung behind his back (see p. 115).

* A short heavy shaft.

* About 17 or 18 lbs.

* Carrying a great heavy shield to protect the giant from missiles. A usual custom.

* The Philistine, the famous champion of the nation.

* Goliath would place the issue of the campaign as dependent upon a single combat between himself and a selected warrior from the camp of Israel.

* Tributary to you.

* Tributary to us.

* The formidable appearance and boastful language of the Philistine struck them with terror.

α see R.V. and comment p. 113.

David Arrives in the Camp.

12 Now David was the son of ¹that ²Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name *was* Jesse; and he had eight sons:

* Already mentioned (xvi. 1).

* A man of Ephrath or Ephratah, which was the ancient name of Beth-lehem-judah.

^aand the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul. 13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14 And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul. 15 But David ^awent and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem. 16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and ^bpresented himself forty days. 17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ^cephah of this ^dparched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; 18 And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and ^elook how thy brethren fare, and ^ftake their pledge. 19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. 20 And David ^grose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to ^hthe ⁱtrench, ^jas the host was going forth to the fight, and ^kshouted for the battle. 21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army. 22 And David left his ^lcarriage in the hand of the keeper of the ^mcarriage and ran into the army, and came and ⁿsaluted his brethren. 23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 113. ^b see R. V. and comment p. 113.

^c see R. V. and comment p. 113.

^{*} And the man was an old man in the days of Saul, well stricken in years. The age of Jesse explains why he was not with the army.

^{*} Went to and fro. When not wanted at court he went back to his father at Bethlehem. At the time of the invasion he was at Bethlehem tending the sheep.

^{*} Stationed himself in front of the Israelites issuing his challenge.

^{*} See p. 122.

^{*} Roasted corn; the common food of the country now as then.

Run—Take them quickly.

^{*} Inquire after their welfare.

^{*} A token that they were alive and well.

¹⁰ David started from Bethlehem early in the morning, leaving the sheep in charge of one of his father's servants.

¹¹ The waggon-rampart.

¹² David arrived just as the army fled out to take position.

¹³ Raised the war-cry.

¹⁴ Baggage (see p. 119).

¹⁵ Fulfilling the commission of inquiring after their health

24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, ¹⁶fled from him, and were sore afraid. 25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and ¹⁷will give him ¹⁸his daughter, and make his father's house ¹⁹free in Israel. 26 And David ²⁰spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this ²¹uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the ²²living God? 27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. 28 And ²³Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou ²⁴down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the ²⁵wilderness? I know thy pride, and the ²⁶naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. 29 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a ²⁷cause? 30 And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner. 31 And when the ²⁸words were heard which David spake, they ²⁹rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

David Takes up the Challenge of Goliath.

32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of ³him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. 33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able

¹⁶ God had departed from Saul; there was no religious enthusiasm in the army. Contrast this lethargic apathy with the eager zeal of David, who regards the challenge as a defiance of the God of Israel, whom he styles "the living God."

¹⁷ So Caleb promised his daughter to the man who should capture Debir (Josh. xv. 16).

¹⁸ We hear nothing more about this promise.

¹⁹ *i.e.* from taxes and public burdens, such as forced service for the king.

²⁰ David makes further inquiry, and apparently is ready to take up the challenge himself.

²¹ So not one of God's people.

²² In contrast to the false gods of the heathen.

²³ Eliab may have been jealous at the honour done to David in the court of Saul.

²⁴ *i.e.* from the high ground at Bethlehem.

²⁵ Uninhabited land, and not cultivated. Not necessarily barren. It describes open pasture land.

²⁶ Wickedness.

Eliab charges David with:

1. Neglect of the sheep.
2. Presumption, discontent with his shepherd life.
3. Desire to look upon bloodshed.

²⁷ A reason for my coming. My father sent me. Another reading is, "*It was only a word,*" *i.e.* a very natural inquiry under the circumstances.

²⁸ No doubt David said much more than is recorded, and had probably expressed a wish to meet the giant.

²⁹ Repeated.

³ Courage.

³ This Philistina.

to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a ³youth, and he ⁴a man of war from his youth. 34 And David said unto Saul, ⁵Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a ⁶lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by ⁷his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine ⁸shall be as one of them, ⁹seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37 David said moreover, ¹⁰The LORD that delivered me out of the ¹¹paw of the lion, and out of the ¹²paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

- * David was about 20 years of age.
- * So trained to the use of arms.
- * The story is not told boastingly, but to assure Saul of David's courage and resource.
- * David is speaking of two different events. In the days of Saul these animals were common in the densely wooded districts.
- * The throat.

- * The same thing shall happen to him.
- * The reason why the giant must fall. He is fighting against God.
- ¹⁰ David ascribes his success over the wild beasts to the help of the Lord. The same Divine assistance will be with him against Goliath. This is the secret of David's courage and success.
- ¹¹ Paw = hand, the same word as below = power.

The Preliminaries of the Combat.

38 And Saul armed David with ¹his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. 39 And David ²girded his sword upon his armour, and he ³assayed to go; for he had not ⁴proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. 40 And he ⁵took his staff in his hand, and chose him ⁶five smooth stones out of the ⁷brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a ⁸scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the

- ¹ His own armour. This refers to the military coat worn under the coat of mail. Saul supplies David with the best armour and weapons in the camp of Israel.
- ² The sword and heavy coat of mail were buckled on to the "armour," the military coat.
- ³ Endeavoured.
- ⁴ Tried them, *i.e.* both armour and sword. He found that the suit of armour impeded the freedom of his movements.
- ⁵ A wise choice on the part of David. He chose the weapon with which he was familiar, and in which he had great skill. The combat is now between agility and skill as against size and strength cumbered with

heavy armour. The issue, provided that David aimed straight, was no longer doubtful. The Philistine, in heavy armour, had no chance of coming to close quarters with David. David was like one armed with a rifle against one with a spear and sword. So the English archers, and later the use of firearms, reduced the heavily armoured knights of the Middle Ages to comparative helplessness.

- * Carefully selected for accurate slinging = stones worn smooth and nearly round.
- * The wady or torrent running down the ravine. The bag may have been dry.
- * Bag, or wallet (see p. 127).

Philistine. 41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him. 42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he ⁹disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. 43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a ¹⁰dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I ¹¹will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. 45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a ¹²spear, and with a ¹³shield: but I come to thee ¹⁴in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and ¹⁵I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the ¹⁶carcases of the host of the Philistines this day ¹⁷unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know ¹⁸that there is a God in Israel. 47 And ¹⁹all this assembly shall know that the LORD ²⁰saveth not with ²¹sword and spear: ²²for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands.

* Regarded him contemptuously.

** An epithet of contempt.

Dogs are held in great contempt in the East (see p. 121).

** Will kill thee and leave thy dead body on the field to be devoured.

** The heavy spear.

** i.e. the javelin carried at his back (see xvii 6).

** Not trusting to earthly weapons.

** Not a rash boast, but expressive of David's conviction that, through Divine aid, he would succeed. It was uttered prophetically.

** Dead bodies.

** David predicts not only the death of Goliath, but the slaughter of the Philistine host.

** That Israel hath a God.

** The two armies.

** Bringeth deliverance or victory.

** By human weapons.

** David bases his confidence of success upon the God of Israel. The Philistine trusts to his weapons.

David Slays Goliath. The Philistines Put to Rout.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and ¹came and drew nigh to meet David, that David ²hasted, and ran toward ³the army to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and ⁴smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead;

* Descending the hill to cross the valley.

* Hastened, not shirking the encounter.

* Army of the Philistines drawn up in battle array.

* Either killing him outright or at least stunning him.

and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with ^aa sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was ^eno sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, ^fand cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their ^gchampion was dead, they ^hfled. 52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and ⁱshouted, and pursued the Philistines, ^juntil thou come to ^kthe valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to ^lShaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. 53 And the children of Israel returned from ^mchasing after the Philistines, and they ⁿspoiled their tents. 54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to ^oJerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 114.

* On slinging see p. 127.

* He had gone to the fight as little encumbered as possible, depending upon his agility and his skill in the use of the sling.

* Completing the work ere the giant could recover.

* Mighty man.

* Seized with panic.

¹⁰ Their war-cry, and immediately rushed upon the Philistines.

¹¹ Cannot be the ravine which separated the two armies. If the reading is correct it must be some valley in the land of the Philistines.

¹² Intro. p. lxxviii.

¹³ Pursuing hotly.

¹⁴ Plundered the camp of the Philistines.

¹⁵ The Jebusites held only the citadel, but as Nob is near Jerusalem so Nob is possibly the place where David placed the head. We know the sword was there later (xxi. 9).

Saul inquires Concerning the Parentage of David.

55 And when Saul saw ¹David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, ²Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. 56 And the king said, Enquire thou whose son the ³stripling is. 57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner ⁴took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58 And Saul to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-le-hemite.

On the difficulty in reconciling this passage with xvi. 14-23, see p. 133.

¹ Whilst David goes to the combat Saul makes inquiry about his family. Intro. p. lxxxv.

* Diminutive of *strip*, as if a small *strip* or *slip* from the main stock = a mere youth, not of full age.

* Called him aside.

* The victory of David over Goliath was a turning-point in his life, which opened the way to the throne" (K.).

The Friendship of Jonathan for David.

18. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that ¹the soul of Jonathan ²was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. ² And Saul took ³him that day, and would let him go no more ⁴home to his father's house. ³ Then Jonathan and David made ⁵a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. ⁴ And Jonathan ⁶stripped himself of the ⁷robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and ⁸his garments, even to his sword, and to ⁹his bow, and to his ¹⁰girdle. ⁵ And David ¹¹went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and ¹²behaved himself ¹³wisely: and Saul ¹⁴set him over the men of war, and he was ¹⁵accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

¹¹ The first mark of David's power to win the hearts of men.

Saul's Jealousy of David.

6 And it came to pass as they came, ¹when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women ²came out ³of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with ⁴tabrets, with ⁵joy, and with ⁶instruments of musick. ⁷ And the women ⁸answered one another as they played, and said, ⁹Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. ⁸ And Saul ⁹was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and ¹⁰what can he have more but the kingdom? ⁹ And Saul ¹¹eyed David from that day and forward.

Goliath was a clear proof that the Lord was with him.
¹¹ Looked aſkance at him with ſuſpicious jealousy.

- ¹ On the friendship of Jonathan and David see p. xxxii.
- ² **Bound to**—chained itself to. (See the love of Jacob for Benjamin, Gen. xlv. 30.)
- ³ David.
- ⁴ David no longer went to and fro between the court and Bethlehem, but took up his abode permanently at court.
- ⁵ *i.e.* of friendship.
- ⁶ This gift of personal dress was not only a pledge of friendship but also a mark of high honour and esteem.
- ⁷ Long outer cloak of ordinary dress.
- ⁸ His military coat.
- ⁹ His famous bow; Jonathan was a skilful archer.
- ¹⁰ To which the sword was buckled.
- ¹¹ *i.e.* to battle; on whatever expedition Saul might send him.
- ¹² Conducted himself.
- ¹³ Discreetly, prudently.
- ¹⁴ Made him commander of a band of troops.

- ¹ *i.e.* when they returned from the victory over the Philistines at the time of the death of Goliath.
- ² According to the custom of the times.
- ³ From every city through which the victorious army passed on its return.
- ⁴ Tambourines (see p. 128).
- ⁵ Songs of joy and triumph.
- ⁶ Triangles, or three-stringed instruments.
- ⁷ Sang in alternate choruses.
- ⁸ This chorus became a song sung throughout the land, and marked David's popularity. It spread even to the land of the Philistines (xxi. 11; xxix. 5).
- ⁹ From this time Saul is envious of David, and, fearful of his rival, endeavours to remove him from his path.
- ¹⁰ Saul regards the popular praise as indicating that David was his probable successor. His victory over

Saul's First Attempt to Kill David.

10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the ¹evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he ²prophesied in the midst of the house: and David ³played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a ⁴javelin in Saul's hand. 11 And Saul ⁵cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

- ¹ The spirit of melancholy.
- ² Was in a frenzy, unable to control himself. (Here means "a fit of madness," not as being under Divine inspiration.)
- ³ David played to dispel the fit.
- ⁴ The symbol of royal authority.
- ⁵ Aimed, poised it as if about to throw.

The Advancement of David.

12 And Saul ¹was afraid of David, ²because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. 13 Therefore Saul ³removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he ⁴went out and came in before the people. 14 And David ⁵behaved himself ⁶wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. 15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he ⁷was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because ⁸he went out and came in before them.

- ¹ Jealous of.
- ² Conscious that the power which had once been with him was now with David.
- ³ Discharged him from his office as armourbearer, and as personal attendant upon himself.
- ⁴ Performed his duties as captain.
- ⁵ Conducted.
- ⁶ Discreetly, prudently.
- ⁷ Stood in awe of him.
- ⁸ Performed his duties so admirably as to win the confidence of the troops.

Saul Offers his Daughter Merab to David.

17 And Saul said to David, ¹Behold my elder daughter ²Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD's battles. For Saul ³said, ⁴Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him. 18 And David ⁵said unto Saul, Who am I? and ⁶what is my life, or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son in law to the king? 19 But it ⁷came to pass at the time when Merab Saul's daughter should have been given to David, that she was given unto ⁸Adriel the ⁹Meholathite to wife.

- ¹ Perhaps in fulfilment of the promise (xvii. 25).
- ² Intro. p. xxxiii.
- ³ Said to himself.
- ⁴ The offer was not genuine. It was made in the hope that David might fall in combat with the Philistines.
- ⁵ David expresses himself as unworthy of the honour.
- ⁶ Or, who are my kinsfolk?
- ⁷ No reason is given for this change of purpose; perhaps Adriel had offered to present a large dowry to Saul.
- ⁸ Intro p. xxiii.
- ⁹ Of Abelmeholah (p.lviii). The five sons of Merab were put to death to satisfy the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 8).

The Marriage of David and Michal.

20 And Michal Saul's daughter loved David : and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21 And Saul said, ²I will give him her, that ³she may be a share to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son in law ⁴*in the one of the twain*. 22 And Saul ⁵commanded his servants, saying, ⁶Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee : now therefore be the king's son in law. 23 And Saul's servants spake those words ⁷in the ears of David. And David said, ⁸Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son in law, seeing that I am a ⁹poor man, and ¹⁰lightly esteemed? 24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner spake David. 25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any ¹¹dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought ¹²to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. 26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son in law : and ¹³the days were not expired. 27 Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines ¹⁴two hundred men ; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full ¹⁵tale to the king, that he might be the king's son in law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 114.

David's continued Popularity and Prudence.

28 And Saul ¹saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal

¹ So David's bravery and prudent conduct had won the love of Michal, as well as the affection of the people.

² He saw the opportunity of entrapping David.

³ She shall be a snare, a cause of ruin, *i.e.* the lure to entice David into undertaking an expedition in which he may lose his life.

⁴ A second time, *i.e.* Saul gives David a second chance of becoming his son-in-law.

⁵ David had probably taken no heed to Saul's hint. The king's word was not to be trusted.

⁶ Converse, talk.

⁷ *i.e.* privately.

⁸ David's reluctance proves that he did not at this time know that he was destined by Jehovah to become the successor of Saul.

⁹ And so unable to pay a large dowry.

¹⁰ Of humble position, so not fit to wed a king's daughter.

¹¹ On dowry see p. 122.

¹² This repetition shows distinctly that Saul was aiming at the death of David. His death in war would remove the sin of blood-guiltiness from the king.

¹³ Possibly referring to the former contract with Merab. The period allowed to David wherein to do some valiant deed had not expired.

¹⁴ David doubles the number stipulated by Saul, and fulfils his part of the bargain twice over.

¹⁵ Count, number (p.128). Full tale=the complete number.

Note how all Saul's plans for the destruction of David result in making David more powerful and more popular, therefore a more dangerous rival.

¹ The failure of his plan convinced Saul that David was under the protection of Jehovah.

Saul's daughter loved him. 29 And Saul was yet ²the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy ³continually. 30 Then the princes of the Philistines ⁴went forth: and it came to pass, ⁵after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much ⁶set by.

^a see R. V. and Note 4 above.

- * David's marriage with Michal connected him with the royal house, and made him more formidable as a rival to the throne.
- * His previous fears now become a life-long enmity.
- * *i.e.* to war; it may be to avenge the slaughter lately inflicted by David (*see* 27).
- * **As often**, *i.e.* in all these contests David distinguished himself by his bravery and skillful generalship.
- * Held in great honour.

Saul resolves to kill David. Jonathan warns David.

19. And Saul ¹spake to ²Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, ³that they should kill David. 2 But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, ⁴take heed to thyself ⁵until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: 3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in ⁶the field where thou art, and I will ⁷commune with my father of thee: and what I see, that I will tell thee.

- * Saul now openly expresses his intention of putting David to death.
- * Fortunately for David Saul reveals his purpose to Jonathan.
- * *Lit.* "that he intended to kill him."
- * Necessary for David to hide, for the hint given by the king might well inspire some of his servants to assassinate one whose death would be acceptable to Saul.
- * *Lit.* **In the morning.**
- * Some open place where the king was wont to resort.
- * **Converse**, talk to his father about David. The conversation may have been overheard by David, or at least David was so near that

Jonathan could communicate to him the import of the conversation without exciting suspicion.

Jonathan Intercedes for David.

4 And Jonathan ¹spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because ²his works have been to thee-ward very good: 5 For he ³did put his life in his hand, and slew ⁴the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a ⁵great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and ⁶didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against ⁷innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? 6 And Saul ⁸hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan;

- * Reviewed the past deeds of David, and shewed Saul that if he was put to death the king would lose one of his staunchest supporters.
- * David had always acted in the best interests of the king. He had not plotted against Saul.
- * He had risked his life in combat with Goliath.
- * Goliath.
- * The death of the giant had been followed by a great victory.
- * Saul had triumphed at the time.
- * David had committed no fault.
- * The eloquence and truth of Jonathan's words convinced the king.

and Saul ⁹swore, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain. 7 And Jonathan ¹⁰called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he ¹¹was in his presence, ¹²as in times past.

- * Saul is always ready to take a rash oath. Saul, a creature of impulse, admits for the time that he is in the wrong.
- ¹⁰ After his interview with Saul.
- ¹¹ As a courtier at court.
- ¹² Received on the old terms of intimacy.

Saul Attempts to take David's Life.

8 And there ¹was war again : and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him. 9 And ²the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his ³javelin in his hand: and David ⁴played with his hand. 10 And Saul ⁵sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David ⁶fled, and escaped that night. 11 Saul also sent ⁷messengers unto David's house to watch him, and to slay him ⁸in the morning: and ⁹Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain.

- * The reconciliation was but brief. A fresh war with the Philistines, and another success on the part of David, revive Saul's jealous feelings.
- * Another fit of moody melancholy.

- * See p. xxv.
- * David again plays to Saul to remove his gloomy thoughts.
- * The king in his mad frenzy hurls his spear at David. David slips aside, avoids the javelin, which strikes the wall, and remains sticking there.
- * The commencement of David's life as a fugitive.
- * A band of soldiers to surround the house, and prevent David making his escape.
- * As he should leave his house.
- * Michal acquaints David of his danger. She may have noticed the soldiers in the street.

David Makes His Escape.

12 ¹So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped. 13 And Michal took ²an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a ³pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with ⁴a cloth. 14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, ⁵He is sick. 15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him ⁶up to me ⁷in the bed, that I may slay him. 16 And when the messengers were ⁸come

- * So Rahab let down the spies at Jericho (Josh. ii. 15).
- * So Paul escaped from Damascus (Acts ix. 25). The house may have been upon the city wall.
- * **Teraphim** (p. 128), probably a life-size figure. This represented David's body.
- * Some arrangement to imitate a man's hair.
- * The bed-clothes.
- * A falsehood, intended to give David time to escape.
- * Saul resided in the upper part of Gibeah, David in the lower part of the town.

- * Saul insists upon their bringing David. The messengers are commanded to carry him on his bed if he is too ill to walk.
- * i.e. into the room where David was supposed to be lying ill.

in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster. 17 And Saul ⁹said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, ¹⁰Let me go; why should I kill thee?

- Saul upbraids his daughter for her deceit, and for conniving at the escape of David.
- Michal represents David as having threatened her life. ▲ second falsehood.

David Seeks Refuge with Samuel at Ramah.

18 So David fled, and escaped, and ¹came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in ²Naioth. 19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah. 20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets ³prophesying, and Samuel ⁴*standing as appointed over them*, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and ⁵they also prophesied. 21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. 22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to ⁶a great well that is in ⁷Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah. 23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and ⁸prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he stripped off ⁹his clothes also, and prophesied before ¹⁰Samuel in like manner, and lay down ¹¹naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?

• For safety and advice.

• Intro. p. lxxvi., probably the college of the prophets.

• Singing an inspired chant, and dancing.

• At the head of the prophets as their leader.

• Were overcome with religious enthusiasm and joined with the prophets.

• The great well, some well-known spot.

• Intro. p. lxxviii.

• All three embassies and also Saul himself are seized with the spiritual influence.

• Outer garments.

¹⁰ Still acting as leader in the inspired chant.

¹¹ Not without clothes, but having stripped off his outer garments; so a knight in the middle ages going into battle without defensive armour is described as a "naked" man. (See x. 12.)

a see R. V. and comment p. 114.

THE INTENTION AND EFFECT OF THIS INCIDENT OF SAUL'S MESSENGERS AND SAUL HIMSELF FALLING UNDER SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE AND PROPHECYING.

The facts. Three separate sets of messengers are sent to arrest David.

Saul then goes in person for the same object.

Messengers and king come under spiritual influence and prophecy.

The Lesson. "That there was a Divine power engaged on behalf of David, against which the king of Israel would vainly contend, which he could not resist, and which would easily lay alike his messengers and himself prostrate and helpless at its feet." (Edersheim.)

The Effect.

1. *On Israel.* All the people knew of the occurrence, for it caused the repetition of the proverb: "*Is Saul also among the prophets?*" Consequently the nation would regard Saul's persecution of David as an attempt to combat the design of Jehovah. Saul's persistence in seeking David's life must have alienated the support of all men of religious feeling.
2. *On Saul.* The king must have been struck by this exhibition of the influence of God. He must have been reminded of the former occasion at the commencement of his career when he was marked out by Jehovah to be the king of Israel. The first occasion was to *qualify* him for his work. The second occasion was to *warn* him, and, if possible, *reclaim* him.
3. *On David.* This extraordinary event at the commencement of his life of wandering must have convinced him that he was under Divine protection. The memory of it must have given great encouragement to his faith during the long years of exile.

David's Interview with Jonathan.

20. And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and ²came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what *is* my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life? ² And he said unto him, ³God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either ⁴great or small, but that ⁵he will shew it to me: and why should my father ⁶hide this thing from me? it is not so. ³ And David swore moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, ⁷Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, ⁸there is but a step between me and death. ⁴ Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will do it for thee. ⁵ And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the ⁹new moon, and I should not ¹⁰fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the ¹¹field unto the third day

¹ While Saul was in his ecstasy.

² In order to have an interview with Jonathan. David's purpose is to definitely learn Saul's real attitude towards him.

³ Jonathan endeavours to persuade David that Saul had no real intention of killing him. All the attempts upon his life had taken place whilst Saul was in one of his fits of gloom.

⁴ Not the smallest thing.

⁵ Jonathan was thus the trusted confidant of his father in state matters.

⁶ If the king really meant taking David's life, Jonathan would know it.

⁷ David suggests that Saul would keep his purpose secret from Jonathan, lest the latter should reveal it to David.

⁸ I am on the verge of death, like one standing on the edge of a precipice.

⁹ With which many religious ceremonies were connected (Num. x. 10) (p. 125).

¹⁰ Ought to be present at the feast connected with the new moon.

¹¹ In the open country, not in a town or even a house.

at even. 6 ¹²If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might ¹³run to Beth-lehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family. 7 If he say thus, ¹⁴It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him. 8 Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, ¹⁵slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father? 9 And Jonathan said, ¹⁶Far be it from thee: for ¹⁷if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, ¹⁸then would not I tell it thee? 10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what if thy father ¹⁹answer thee roughly?

¹² David suggests a plan to ascertain Saul's real intent;

1. He will absent himself from the feast.

2. If Saul notices his absence, Jonathan is to make the agreed upon excuse.

3. If Saul is satisfied with the excuse it will show he has no murderous designs.

4. If he is angry, David will know that his death is determined upon.

¹³ Make a hurried journey.

¹⁴ *i.e.* that Saul has no intent to kill David.

¹⁵ David unreservedly places his life in Jonathan's hands if he is worthy of death.

¹⁶ A strong expression of Jonathan's belief in David's loyalty to Saul.

¹⁷ So convinced is he of David's integrity of purpose, that he would not allow his life to be taken by Saul.

¹⁸ *i.e.* how Saul receives the excuse.

¹⁹ *i.e.* take measures to prevent your communicating with me.

Renewal of the Covenant between David and Jonathan.

11 And Jonathan said unto David, ¹Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field. 12 And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have ²sounded my father about to morrow any time, or ³the third day, and, behold, if there be ⁴good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee; 13 The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father. 14 And thou shalt not only while yet I live ⁵shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not: 15 But *also* thou shalt not cut off thy

¹ Before replying, Jonathan takes David into the open country, and arranges a place for communication.

² Tried to find out my father's intentions.

³ On the day after.

⁴ Any good news for David.

⁵ Jonathan sorrowfully foresees the downfall of the house of Saul and his own early death, and desires David's protection on behalf of his children.

kindness from my house for ever : no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. 16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies. 17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him : for he loved him as he loved his own soul. 18 Then Jonathan said to David, To morrow is the new moon : and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. 19 And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself ¹⁰when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the ¹¹stone Ezel. 20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as ¹²though I shot at a mark. 21 And, ¹³behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. ¹⁴If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou : for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the LORD liveth. 22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way : ¹⁵for the LORD hath sent thee away. 23 And as touching the ¹⁶matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be ¹⁷between thee and me for ever.

* Kindness to my descendants. David, when king, befriended Mephibosheth, the sole surviving son of Jonathan (2 Sam. ix. 7).

⁷ **Require.** May David's enemies punish the house of David for any unfaithfulness to this covenant.

* Renewed the oath that David would show kindness to his posterity. The Eastern custom is that the king of a new dynasty generally put to death all the family of his predecessor in order to ensure the stability of his own dynasty. (So the houses of Jeroboam, Baasha and Ahab perished. 1 Kings vi. 29; xvi. 11; 2 Kings x. 6.) Jonathan fears some such fate for his descendants.

* Seat at the table.

¹⁰ *Lit.* "on the day of the business." Probably referring to Jonathan's previous intercession (xix. 1-7).

¹¹ = Stone of departure (Intro. p. lxi.).

¹² Jonathan would aim at some mark as if practising archery.

¹³ To call David's attention to what he was about to say. Jonathan now gives the sign.

¹⁴ The sign is simple.

If the arrows fall short, all is well; David can return to court.

If the arrows are beyond the mark, David's life is in danger. David must escape.

¹⁵ It is God's will that you should go away.

¹⁶ Covenant made between us (*ver.* 16).

¹⁷ As witness of the covenant. Jonathan thus appeals to Jehovah to avenge any breach of the covenant.

Jonathan Tests Saul's Intentions.

24 So David hid himself in the field : and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat. 25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall : and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's

* The open country.

* See p. 126.

* Food (see p. 124), *i.e.* at the special feast.

* The place of honour opposite the door.

side, and ⁵David's place was empty. 26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is ⁶not clean; surely he is not clean. 27 And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to day? 28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David ⁷earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem: 29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and ⁸my brother, he hath commanded me to be there; and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, ⁹let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table. 30 Then Saul's ¹⁰anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious ¹¹woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own ¹²confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be ¹³established, nor thy ¹⁴kingdom. Wherefore now ¹⁵send and fetch him unto me, for ¹⁶he shall surely die. 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? ¹⁷what hath he done? 33 And Saul ¹⁸cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that ¹⁹it was determined of his father to slay David. 34 So Jonathan arose from the table in ²⁰fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done ²¹him ²²shame.

* Each of the chief personages had an appointed place.

* Ceremonially unclean, and so debarred from joining in the feast.

* Jonathan puts the case as strongly as possible.

* Jesse was still alive (see xxii. 3). He must now, however, have been of a very great age (see xvii. 12), and probably the active duties of the head of the family had fallen upon Eliab.

* Release me from my duties that I may go to Beth-lehem.

* Evidently the king had intended to seize the person of David should he attend the feast. So David correctly surmised the intention of the king (xx. 1).

* To reproach his mother is a great insult to an Oriental. The insult is, of course, intended for Jonathan, but the mention of his mother makes it all the more glaring. The phrase is equivalent to "Thou perverse rebellious fellow."

* Shame. The accession of David meant that Jonathan would not succeed Saul.

¹² Firm upon the throne.

¹⁴ Dynasty in succession to thee.

¹⁵ By these words Saul betrays what his purpose was. He intended to murder David at the feast.

¹⁶ Lit. "He is the son of Death," i.e. condemned to die.

¹⁷ Equivalent to a declaration that David was an innocent man.

¹⁸ Poised the javelin as if to throw it (see xviii. 10).

¹⁹ That Saul had a fixed determination.

²⁰ His anger is greater at the wrong done to David than at the insult to himself.

²¹ Him = David.

²² Wrongfully accused him of disloyalty before the company.

David is Warned by Jonathan.

35 And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field ¹at the time appointed with David, and a ²little lad with him. 36 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow ³beyond him. 37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan ⁴cried after the lad, and said, ⁵Is not the arrow beyond thee? 38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, ⁶Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. 39 But the lad knew not ⁷any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the ⁸matter. 40 And Jonathan gave his ⁹artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city.

* Better "to the place appointed."

* Not old enough to detect the real purpose of this shooting.

* Making it pass over him.

* Loudly, that David might hear.

* This has no reference to the actual position of the arrow. It was the sign agreed upon between David and Jonathan.

* These words addressed to the lad are also intended as a hint to David.

* *i.e.* about the secret sign.

* The secret sign.

* His bow and quiver of arrows.

The Parting of David and Jonathan.

41 *And* as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place ¹towards the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and ²bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David ³exceeded. 42 And Jonathan ⁴said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan ⁵went into the city.

* *Lit.* from the side of the south. David's place of concealment was on the south side of the rock. Thus he was in a position to escape at once had Jonathan not been alone.

* As a token of homage to Jonathan the king's son.

* His emotion exceeded that of Jonathan. Exile and wanderings were to be his lot for many years.

* The parting words are brief. Jonathan simply repeats the covenant made between them (vv. 16, 17).

* They met once more for the last time in a brief interview in the wilderness of Ziph.

David Visits Nob.

21. Then ¹came David to ²Nob to ³Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech

* David's visit is for a double purpose:

1. To obtain food and weapons.

2. To inquire of God.

* Intro. p. lxxvi. A city of the priests, the residence of the High-priest, and the present abode of the tabernacle.

* Intro. p. lxxxvii. In St. Mark i. 26, he is called "Abiathar."

was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, 'Why art thou alone, and no man with thee? 2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place. 3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present. 4 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women. 5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel. 6 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away. 7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD; and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul. 8 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with

a see R.V. and comment p. 114.

* Ahimelech, seeing David is alone, is suspicious of the truth and afraid of offending Saul.

* This deception on the part of David led to the slaughter of the priests. David confessed later to Abiathar that he was the cause of it (xxii. 22).

* Sent me on some confidential mission.

The reply, though false, satisfied the scruples of Ahimelech.

* The young men, i.e. those who accompanied David.

* David had left them at some spot near at hand.

* Unconsecrated = ordinary, as opposed to holy.

¹⁰ Holy.

Our Lord quotes this giving of the shew-bread in defence of His disciples plucking and eating the ears of corn on the Sabbath, as illustrating the principle that the ceremonial law must give way to man's necessity (St. Matt. xii. 34; St. Mark ii. 25, 26; St. Luke vi. 3, 4). The shew-bread was the only bread available, and Ahimelech breaks the ceremonial law, and gives to David bread lawful for priests alone to eat.

¹¹ The bags or wallets in which they would carry the bread.

¹² A most difficult passage, on which see R.V. and comment, p. 115.

¹³ Holy.

¹⁴ See p. 127.

¹⁵ Newly baked. This change of the bread shows that David arrived on a Sabbath. Therefore the bread given to David was not taken from the table. It had been set aside for the priests, by whom alone could it be consumed.

¹⁶ Compelled to remain in consequence of some religious ceremony, which may have been:

1. Admission as a proselyte, for he was an Edomite.

2. Because of a vow.

3. Some legal purification.

¹⁷ Overseer. An important position when flocks and herds constituted the chief wealth of the country.

¹⁸ David now asks for his second need to be supplied. He was not only without food, but without weapons.

¹⁹ He dared not return to Gibeah to arm himself.

me, because the king's business required haste. 9 And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the ²⁰valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped ²¹in a cloth behind the ephod : if thou wilt take that, take it : for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none ²²like that ; give it me.

David Takes Refuge with Achish, King of Gath.

10 And David arose, and ¹fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to ²Achish the king of Gath. 11 And the servants of Achish said unto him, ³Is not this David the ⁴king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, ⁵Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? 12 And David ⁶laid up these words in his heart, and was ⁷sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 And he changed his behaviour before them, and ⁸feigned himself mad in their hands, and ⁹scrabbled on the doors of ¹⁰the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. 14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad : wherefore then have ye brought him to me? 15 ¹¹Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow ¹²come into my house?

¹ Do I lack? The courtiers may have seized the person of David.

¹² Be taken into the royal service.

²⁰ Intro. p. lxxvi.

²¹ Rather "in the cloak." Goliath's military cloak, which was part of the dedicated trophy (S.C.). Significant of how highly this trophy was valued. It was placed with the sacred ephod.

²² Not expressive of the quality of the sword, but denoting David's feeling that this sword, the trophy of his victory gained through Divine aid, was a pledge of His protecting hand for the future.

¹ David must have been in extreme peril when he took refuge among the Philistines.

² Intro. p. lxxxvi. David may have offered to take service under Achish thinking that so notable a warrior would find a ready welcome, or he may have thought that he would not be recognised.

³ The courtiers recognise him, and remember his prowess against the Philistines.

⁴ The great leader of Israel against us, more formidable than Saul himself.

⁵ The song commemorative of David's exploits was well known among the Philistines.

⁶ Was deeply impressed by these sayings, and saw the danger of his position.

⁷ Expecting that he would be put to death.

⁸ Pretended to be mad.

⁹ Lit. "made marks," scratched.

¹⁰ The gate of the court of the palace of Achish where the courtiers would be assembled.

David Takes Refuge in the Cave of Adullam, and Gathers a Band of Followers.

22. David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave ¹Adullam; and when ²his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they ³went down thither to

¹ Intro. p. lviiii.

² All his relations, now in peril through Saul's hatred of David.

³ i.e. from the higher country.

him. 2 And every one that was ⁴in distress, and every one that was ⁵in debt, and every one that was ⁶discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became ⁷a captain over them: and there were with him about ⁸four hundred men. 3 And David went thence to ⁹Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the ¹⁰king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, ¹¹and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. 4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him ¹²all the while that David was in the ¹³hold. 5 And the ¹⁴prophet Gad said unto David, ¹⁵Abide not in the ¹⁶hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the ¹⁷forest of Hareth.

* Persecuted by Saul.

* Oppressed by creditors under the unsettled rule of Saul.

* Dissatisfied with the Government.

* Organised them into a disciplined band.

* By degrees the force increased; later it rose to 600 men.

On these men and their achievements see 1 Chron. xii. and p. xxxix.

* Intro. p. lxxvi.

* David placed his aged parents in Moab, because Jesse was the grandson of Ruth, the Moabitess. It has been suggested that the signal punishment inflicted by David on the conquest of Moab (2 Sam. viii. 2) was in vengeance on the Moabites for the murder of Jesse.

¹¹ David was there some considerable time.

¹² David evidently intended staying in the land of Moab till exile was no longer necessary.

¹⁰ On the mountain height or fastness. This would be in Moab.

¹¹ Intro. p. lxxxix. The first mention of this prophet from now the friend and counsellor of David and chronicler of his reign.

¹² Gad is inspired to convey to David that refuge in Moab was not in accordance with the will of God.

¹³ The mountain height.

¹⁷ Intro. p. lxxii.

Saul's Vengeance on the Priests at Nob.

6 When Saul ¹heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul ²abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having ³his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;) 7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ⁴ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse ⁵give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds; 8 That all of you have ⁶conspired against me, and there is none that ⁷sheweth me that my son hath made ⁸a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or

¹ i.e. when he had learnt of his hiding place.

* Held a royal court at Gibeah.

* The sign of royalty (p. xxv.).

* The tribe of Benjamin only was present. It may be that the other tribes would no longer serve Saul, or that Saul felt he could not trust any but his own clan.

* Saul appeals to their selfishness. If David succeed he will reward his own tribe, Judah, and the men of Benjamin will receive no state office and no state pay.

* Saul in his jealousy imagines that there was a conspiracy or plot against himself.

* Discloseth.

* The covenant between David and Jonathan is known to Saul.

sheweth unto me that ¹⁰my son hath stirred up my servant against me, ¹¹to lie in wait, as at this day? 9 Then answered ¹²Doeg the Edomite, which ^awas ¹³set over the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. 10 And he ¹⁴enquired of the LORD for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine. 11 Then the king ¹⁵sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king. 12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I am, my lord. 13 And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and ¹⁶hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, ¹⁷to lie in wait, as at this day? 14 Then Ahimelech ¹⁸answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son in law, ^band ¹⁹goeth at thy bidding, and is ²⁰honourable in thine house? 15 ²¹Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? ²²be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father; for thy servant ²³knew nothing of all this, less or more. 16 And the king said, ²⁴Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house. 17 And the king said unto the ²⁵footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not ²⁶shew it

^a see R.V. and comment p. 115.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 115.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 115.

* Discloseth.

¹⁰ Saul has been informed of the part played by Jonathan in the escape of David.

¹¹ Lit. "as a liar in wait," i.e. to plot against his life and seize the throne.

¹² Doeg would free the officers of Saul from complicity in the alleged plot, and states that the conspiracy was hatched at Nob by the priests.

¹³ The superintendent or overseer.

¹⁴ This is not recorded in the account of David's visit. (xxi. 1-9). The priest went to the sanctuary, where the ephod was, to fetch the sword of Goliath. Doeg may have thought he had gone for the purpose of enquiring of the Lord. But from ver. 15 it would appear that Ahimelech did actually inquire.

¹⁵ Saul summons the priests from Nob, already perhaps intending to put them to death.

¹⁶ Evidently the gravest offence of all in Saul's eyes.

¹⁷ See ver. 8, and note.

¹⁸ Ahimelech asserts his innocence. What reason had he to suspect anything wrong in the case of David, loyal and devoted to Saul, and moreover, the king's son-in-law?

¹⁹ Lit. "having access to thy private audience."

²⁰ Held in honour.

²¹ Lit. "Have I to-day begun?"

= Was it the first time I had inquired of God for David?

²² A solemn assertion of his innocence.

²³ Had no knowledge of the covenant between Jonathan and David, or of the alleged conspiracy against the king.

²⁴ The king pronounces sentence of death, not only on Ahimelech, but on all the priests.

²⁵ Runners (see p. 126).

** Disclose.

to me. But the servants of the king²⁷ would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD. 18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and²⁸ fall upon the priests. And Doeg²⁹ the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that³⁰ did wear a linen ephod. 19 And Nob, the city of the priests,³¹ smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

²⁷ They declined to obey the unjust command, and refused to take part in so sacrilegious an act as the execution of the priests of Jehovah.

²⁸ Put them to death.

²⁹ As a foreigner Doeg would not have the religious scruples of an Israelite, so would not hesitate to obey the command.

³⁰ The priests were clad in their official dress. This circumstance renders the massacre more atrocious.

³¹ Contrast Saul's breach of the Divine command in the case of the Amalekites (xv. 3), with this ruthless, indiscriminate massacre on the innocent city of Nob.

The massacre fulfils the doom pronounced on the house of Eli (iii. 31).

The family of Ithamar was nearly exterminated. Only eight heads of priestly families of the line of Ithamar could be found in the time of David, as against sixteen representatives of the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. xxiv. 4).

In thus devoting the city of Nob to destruction, Saul regards the supposed conspiracy against himself as an act of treason against Jehovah, the God-King.

A typical parallel has been drawn between the slaughter of the priests at Nob and the massacre of the children at Bethlehem by Herod (St. Matt. ii. 16).—"All the more striking, that in the latter case also an Edomite was the guilty party, Herod the Great having been by descent an Idumæan." (Eldersheim.)

Abiathar Escapes to David.

20 And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named¹ Abiathar, escaped, and² fled after David. 21 And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the LORD's priests. 22 And David said unto Abiathar, I³ knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: "I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. 23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for⁴ he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be⁵ in safeguard.

¹ Intro. p. lxxxiii. He may have remained at Nob to perform the duties at the tabernacle, and thus have received timely warning of the massacre of the priests.

² He appears to have joined David at Keilah, and to have taken the high priest's ephod with him.

³ Suspected and feared it when I saw Doeg at Nob. It has been suggested that Doeg was a personal enemy to David.

⁴ I am the cause of their deaths.

⁵ Saul is the persecutor of both of us, so we have a common cause.

* David speaks thus in firm faith that Jehovah would protect him and all his followers. The act of Saul in putting the priests to death would confirm his faith, as it would be a proof that Saul had completely cut himself off from Divine protection.

David Delivers Keilah from the Philistines.

23. Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors. 2 Therefore David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. 3 And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines? 4 Then David enquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. 5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. 6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.

¹ This appeal tells us that during this period David defended the South against the Philistines. Thus he won the affection of the inhabitants of the district.

² It was a mere raid or marauding company.

³ See p. 129. The raid was made just on the conclusion of the harvest.

⁴ Through Abiathar (see ver. 6)

⁵ Are not safe from the pursuit of Saul.

⁶ i.e. in the hill country of Judah.

⁷ Intro. p. lxxiv.

⁸ We shall incur an additional danger.

⁹ For further assurance.

¹⁰ From the hill country into the plain.

¹¹ There is some difficulty in this passage as regards Abiathar.

If Abiathar joined David at Keilah, the inquiries referred to in verses 2 and 4 must have been made through Gad.

But we may well conceive that verse 6 is intended to inform the reader that Abiathar joined David at the time when he contemplated the rescue of Keilah, and to explain how he inquired of God.

¹² Rescued from the destruction at Nob. He must have escaped before the massacre at that city.

The Treachery of the Men of Keilah.

7 And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. 8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. 9 And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod. 10 Then said David, O

¹ Lit. "Hath rejected him and delivered him into mine hand."

² Saul's difficulty was to catch David—almost impossible whilst he was in the open country taking refuge in caves and the hill fastnesses. Now that David is in a town, his position is located, and the task of capturing him rendered easy.

³ i.e. the men of war.

⁴ Lit. "was forging or devising."

⁵ see R.V. and comment p. 116.

LORD God of Israel, thy servant⁶ hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake.

11 ⁶Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the LORD said, He will come down.

12 Then said David, Will ⁷the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, ⁸They will deliver thee up. 13 Then David and his men, which were about ⁹six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and ¹⁰went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forebore ¹¹to go forth. 14 And David abode in the wilderness in ¹²strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the ¹³wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him ¹⁴every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. 15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph ¹⁵in a wood.

¹¹ In a dense forest. No trace of this can now be found. It is suggested that thick brushwood or undergrowth is meant, for the district is devoid of trees.

The Last Meeting between David and Jonathan.

16 And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and ¹went to David into the wood, and ²strengthened his hand in God. 17 And he said unto him, ³Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee;

* Note David's position at the time:

1. A homeless outlaw.
2. Relentlessly pursued by Saul.
3. Liable to be betrayed by his countrymen.

So Jonathan reminded him of God's promises and strengthened David's faith.

* Jonathan expresses his confidence that:

1. Saul would not capture David.
2. David would be the future king.

And he himself as ready to surrender the succession, and serve as second in the kingdom under David, when he becomes king.

* David's friends (probably Jonathan) inform him of the king's design.

* David desires to know two things:

1. Will Saul march against Keilah?

2. Will the men of Keilah surrender the city to Saul, and thus deliver David into his hands?

These questions are inverted in *ver.* 11, but are answered in the correct order in the affirmative.

* The chiefs or governors of the city.

* Forgetting the service David had just rendered them in delivering them from the Philistines, they would hand over David to Saul with the selfish idea of saving themselves from the vengeance of the king. They feared to experience the fate of Nob. (xxii. 19.)

* They had increased from the 400 mentioned, xxii. 2.

* Scattering for a time to baffle pursuit, and having no fixed residence when they met again.

¹¹ *ie.* in pursuit of David.

¹² Mountain fastnesses.

¹³ Intro. p. lxxxii.

¹⁴ All the days of his life. A general remark indicating that from this time David was constantly in danger from Saul.

* So Jonathan and David were in communication with each other. This passage renders it probable that Jonathan warned David of Saul's intended descent on Keilah (*ver.* 7).

and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father ⁴knoweth. 18 And they two ⁵made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to ⁶his house.

* *Either* the anointing of David was now well known, or that Saul was convinced that David was the chosen king of the future.

* Renewed.

* At Gibeah (see *ver.* 19).

The Treachery of the Ziphites.

19 Then came up the ¹Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David ²hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the ³hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of ⁴Jeshimon? 20 Now therefore, O king, ⁵come down according to all the ⁶desire of thy soul to come down; and ⁷our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand. 21 And Saul said, ⁸Blessed be ye of the LORD; for ye have compassion on me. 22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place ⁹where his haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very ¹⁰subtily. 23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with ¹¹the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the ¹²thousands of Judah. 24 And they arose, and went to Ziph ¹³before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness of ¹⁴Maon, ¹⁵in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. 25 Saul also and his men went to seek him. And they told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. 26 And Saul went on this side of ¹⁶the moun-

¹ Contrast the treachery of the Ziphites with the conduct of Jonathan.

² From the hill of Hachilah they could watch the movements of David.

³ Intro. p. lxxii.

⁴ Intro. p. lxxiii. = the waste or wilderness.

⁵ *i.e.* from Gibeah, which is on higher ground.

⁶ *viz.* to capture David.

⁷ Lit. "It is in us" = it is in our power.

⁸ Saul, in his mad hatred of David, imagines that the latter would become his murderer, and so thanks God in his delusion that the Ziphites had saved his life in betraying David's hiding place.

⁹ Lit. "where his foot is," *i.e.* track him by his footsteps.

¹⁰ Cunningly, *i.e.* is very clever in concealing himself.

¹¹ *i.e.* when you have positively located him—are absolutely certain of his hiding place.

¹² Families.

¹³ *i.e.* as guides.

¹⁴ Intro. p. lxxiv.

¹⁵ The Arabah, the plain of the Jordan.

¹⁶ The range of these rocky cliffs.

tain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David ¹⁷made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men ¹⁸compassed David and his men round about to take them.

¹⁷ The pursuit is close, and David is anxiously endeavouring to escape. He slips away down one side of the range whilst Saul and his men are climbing up the other side.

¹⁸ Threw out detachments and worked round, gradually enclosing David, as it were, in a net. Saul almost succeeded.

A Philistine Raid Compels Saul to Abandon the Pursuit.

27 But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, ¹Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines ²have invaded the land. 28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place ³Sela-hammahlekoth. 29 And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at ⁴En-gedi.

¹ A Philistine raid saves David. Saul is compelled to abandon the pursuit just at the moment when David was almost in his hands.

² Note the foolishness of Saul
1. By his persecution of David he lost the assistance of his best captain against the Philistines.
2. His design to capture David causes him to divert his army from their real duty of resisting the Philistines, who take advantage of the fact to raid the land.

¹ Intro. p. lxxvi.—the rock of slipping away or escaping. A memorial of David's escape.
² Intro. p. lxxviii., where there are many caves.

David Spares the Life of Saul in the Cave at Engedi.

24. And it came to pass, when Saul was returned ¹from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of ²En-gedi. 2 Then Saul took ³three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon ⁴the rocks of the wild goats. 3 And he came to the ⁵sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul ⁶went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained ⁷in the sides of the cave. 4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD ⁸said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good

¹ Saul at once resumes his pursuit of David (*ver. 2*).

² Intro. p. lxxvi.—the fountain of the goat.

³ A force sufficiently numerous to overcome resistance.

⁴ Descriptive of the wild rocky character of the district.

⁵ Formed by loose walls in front of the caves, thus affording shelter for the sheep and security against thieves and wild animals.

By the way = some well-known highway.

⁶ Saul, retiring for rest fatigued by a long march, unwittingly enters the very cave occupied by David and his men.

⁷ The deeper recesses, the side caves. David and his men would be hidden in darkness

from anyone coming into the main cave, but could clearly see anyone coming in. So David could watch all Saul's movements whilst he himself was unseen.

⁸ The promises of Jehovah with respect to David are evidently known to his followers. They see an opportunity of fulfilling them by murdering Saul.

unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's ⁹robe ¹⁰privily. 5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart ¹¹smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. 6 And he said unto his men, ¹²The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD. 7 So David ¹³stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. 8 David also arose afterward, and ¹⁴went out of the cave, and ¹⁵cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and ¹⁶bowed himself.

¹¹ Did obeisance, in deep reverence and homage to the monarch. The act would prove to Saul that David recognised him as **King of Israel**.

David Asserts His Innocence.

9 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou ¹men's words, saying, Behold, ²David seeketh thy hurt? 10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD ³had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed. 11 Moreover, ⁴my father, see, yea, ⁵see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there *is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest ⁶my soul to take it. 12 The LORD ⁷judge between me and thee, and the LORD

⁷ David had just proved to the king that he had no intention of taking his life, so now he appeals to Jehovah to judge between them. David will not injure Saul, but if Saul persists in the unjust persecution it is certain that Jehovah will punish him for it.

⁶ The royal mantle, probably covering the king as he slept.

Wishful of obtaining some proof that Saul had been in his power.

¹⁰ *i.e.* unknown to Saul.

¹¹ Even this slight indignity to the king causes David to feel that he had taken an undue liberty with the Lord's anointed.

¹² David resists the temptation. His loyalty to Saul and his house is as conspicuous as his faith in Jehovah. He recognises that accession to the throne by the murder of Saul would not be approved by God.

¹³ **Checked.** The word denotes forcible restraint.

¹⁴ Either confident in his own agility to climb the cliffs, or determined to make an appeal to Saul's better nature.

¹⁵ David allowed Saul to go some distance ere he called after him.

¹ Clearly David had enemies at court who were continually inflaming Saul's mind against him by their false accusations. Doeg the Edomite was one, and from the beading of Ps. vii. we learn that Cush the Benjamite was another.

² One of these false statements was that David intended to murder Saul.

³ David refutes the statement by the best of arguments. The life of Saul had been in his power. He had been urged to take advantage of the opportunity, and had refused to do any harm to Saul.

⁴ An epithet significant of David's affection and reverence for Saul.

⁵ In confirmation of the statement that Saul's life had been in his power.

⁶ My life.

avenge me of thee : but mine hand shall not be upon thee. 13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, ⁶Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked : but mine hand shall not be upon thee. 14 ⁹After whom is the king of Israel come out ? after whom dost thou pursue ? after a ¹⁰dead dog, after a ¹¹flea. 15 The LORD therefore be judge, and ¹²judge between me and thee, and see, and ¹³plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

- * *i.e.* an evil deed can proceed only from an evil heart. I (David) will not do a deed of wickedness, therefore my heart is not evilly disposed towards the king.
- * David pleads his insignificance.
- ¹⁰ An expression of contempt — also harmless, a dead dog cannot bite.
- ¹¹ Insignificant. *Lit.* a single flea, therefore difficult to catch. Surely the pursuit of such a harmless insignificant person as himself is beneath the dignity of a king, who should be engaged

in matters more important to his kingdom.

¹² Give sentence.

¹³ See Ps. xxxv. 1, and Ps. xliii. 1.

The Temporary Reconciliation of Saul with David.

16 And ¹⁴it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, *Is* this thy voice, ²my son David ? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. 17 And he said to David, ⁹Thou art more righteous than I : for thou hast ⁴rewarded me good, ⁶whereas I have rewarded thee evil. 18 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me : forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. 19 For if a man ⁶find his enemy, will he let him go ⁷well away ? wherefore the LORD ⁸reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. 20 And now, behold, ⁹I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that ¹⁰the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. 21 ¹¹Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

- ¹ The arguments of David convinced Saul.
- * The old affection for David comes back to Saul.
- * Saul is moved with remorse. He acknowledges the superior morality of David. Had David fallen into Saul's hands he would not have escaped with his life.
- * *Lit.* Rendered.
- * Saul acknowledges :
 1. His own error.
 2. The justice of David's cause.
 3. The future of David, viz., that he would found a royal line of kings.
- * Catch, get him in his power.
- ⁷ Alive.
- * Repay.
- * Saul here discloses the main reason which actuated him in his persecution of David. Yet whilst acknowledging God's will, he fights against it.
- ¹⁰ The monarchy shall be in thy descendants, *i.e.* David would found a dynasty.

¹¹ Saul gives a practical proof that he acknowledges David as the future king, by exacting an oath that he would not, on his accession, follow the barbarous Oriental custom — the common practice on a change of dynasty — of destroying the family of the late king.

22 And David¹²swore unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto¹³the hold.

- ¹² David readily gave the oath, and kept it.
¹³ The stronghold of Engedi. He feared that Saul's better feeling would be but temporary.

The Death and Burial of Samuel.

25. And Samuel¹died; and²all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in³his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the⁴wilderness of Paran.

- ¹ The death of Samuel is recorded here because it occurred at this time.
² The Israelites according Samuel a public mourning. So they mourned for Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 8). Samuel is the greatest figure since Moses.

Moses gave the Law, Samuel founded the Monarchy.

The public mourning is a proof of the high honour in which the nation held Samuel.

³ Not in the family tomb, but in the court or garden of his own house.

⁴ Intro. p. lxxvii.

The Churlish Behaviour of Nabal to David.

2 And there was a man in¹Maon, whose²possessions were in³Carmel; and the man was very⁴great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was⁵shearing his sheep in Carmel. 3 Now the name of the man was⁶Nabal; and the name of his wife⁷Abigail: and she was a woman of⁸good understanding, and⁹of a beautiful countenance: but the man was¹⁰churlish and evil in his doings; and he was¹¹of the house of Caleb. 4 And David heard in¹²the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep. 5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and¹³greet him in my name: 6 And¹⁴thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. 7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt

- ¹ Intro. p. lxxiv.
² Work, occupation, business.
³ Intro. p. lxxiv. The Carmel of Judah.
⁴ Rich. The same expression is used of Barzillai (2 Sam. xix. 32).
⁵ A time of feasting and hospitality.
⁶ Intro. p. xcii. = foolish, churlish.
⁷ Intro. p. lxxxiv. = father's joy.
⁸ Highly intelligent.
⁹ Of beautiful figure.
¹⁰ Harsh, stingy.
¹¹ A descendant of Caleb. The district round Hebron fell to the lot of Caleb (Josh. xv. 13).

¹² Where he appears to have been a protection to the borderland of Judah. Possibly in return the farmers and sheep-masters furnished him with considerable supplies.

¹³ Salute him.

¹⁴ David instructs these young men

1. To greet Nabal courteously in his name and wish him prosperity.
2. To remind Nabal that David and his men had not only refrained from

taking any of his sheep, but had protected his flocks so effectually that not a single sheep was missing.

3. To request that at this festive time Nabal would remember these services and send a bountiful present to David.

them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. 8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a ¹⁶good day: ¹⁶give, I pray thee, ¹⁷whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to ¹⁸thy son David. 9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ¹⁹ceased. 10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, ²⁰Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that ²¹break away every man from his master. 11 Shall I then take my ²²bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be? 12 So David's young men turned their way, and ²³went again, and came and told him all those sayings. 13 And David said unto his men, ²⁴Gird ye on every man his sword. And they ²⁵girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the ²⁶stuff.

Abigail Determines to Appease David's Anger.

14 But one of the young men ¹told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to ²salute our master; and he ³railed on them. 15 But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were ⁴conversant with them, when we were in the ⁵fields: 16 They were a ⁶wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we

¹⁶ *i.e.* at a time of feasting and hospitality.

¹⁷ David's request was reasonable and in accordance with Eastern custom.

¹⁸ On such a festive occasion near a town or village even in our own time, an Arab sheik of the neighbouring desert would hardly fail to put in a word either in person or by message; and his message, both in form and substance, would be only a transcript of that of David." (Robinson.)

¹⁹ As much as thou canst spare.

²⁰ Thus claiming Nabal's good will.

²¹ *Lit.* "sat down," *i.e.* rested after their journey.

²² What is David to me? A contemptuous reference to David as an exile and outlaw.

²³ Nabal speaks of David as if he were a runaway slave from his master Saul.

²⁴ Equivalent to "meat" and "drink."

²⁵ Went back again to David. It was natural that such an answer should excite the anger of David.

²⁶ David advances with a large force and with deadly intent against Nabal.

²⁷ Buckled their swords to their sword-belts.

²⁸ Baggage.

¹ Fearing the consequences of the reply given by Nabal, he hastens to tell his mistress of what had happened.

² Bless.

³ Flew upon them (*see margin*), indicating that Nabal burst out into one of his fits of ungovernable anger.

⁴ In company with (*see p. 120*).

⁵ The open country where the sheep were pastured.

⁶ A protection as firm as a wall. We were as safe as if we were in a town.

were with them keeping the sheep. 17 Now therefore ⁷know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a ⁸son of Belial, that a man cannot ⁹speak to him. 18 Then Abigail ¹⁰made haste, and ¹¹took two hundred loaves, and two ¹²bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five ¹³measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of ¹⁴raisins, and two hundred ¹⁵cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. 19 And she said unto her servants, ¹⁶Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal. 20 And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the ¹⁷covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came ¹⁸down against her; and she met them. 21 Now David ¹⁹had said, Surely ²⁰in vain have I ²¹kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath ²²requited me evil for good. 22 ²³So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light so much as one male child.

* The young man warns Abigail that immediate steps must be taken to ward off the consequences of Nabal's rash anger. If not, David will be upon them and will take summary vengeance.

* Worthless, churlish fellow.

* Address him, i.e. because of his ungovernable temper.

* She perceives that no time must be lost.

* The ample supplies for the shearing feast enabled her to select freely.

* Wine-skins (p. 119), holding a considerable quantity.

* Measure—a seah, $\frac{1}{2}$ of an ephah (see p. 127).

* Dried grapes.

* Figs pressed together.

* Sending the present intended for David in advance. So Jacob sent his presents for Esau in advance (Gen. xxxii. 13-16).

* Hidden part of the mountain, probably a hollow or ravine between two hills.

* Down the opposite side of the hill. Abigail came down on one side and was in the hollow as David and his men came down the other slope.

* To his men; probably the leaders of the different companies.

* With a false expectation of receiving some return.

* Defended, protected.

* Repaid.

* A rash oath. The wise conduct of Abigail turns David from his purpose, and keeps him from the sin of blood-guiltiness.

The Meeting of Abigail with David.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and ¹bowed herself to the ground, 24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this ²iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in ³thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. 25 Let not my lord, I pray

* With submission and reverence.

* The guilt.

* Thine ears, i.e. to disclose the real truth; not only the facts about Nabal, but the consequences of David's intended act.

thee, ⁴regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; ⁵Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid ⁶saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send. 26 Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. 27 And now ⁷this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord. 28 I pray thee, forgive the ⁸trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD ⁹will certainly make my lord a ¹⁰sure house; ¹¹because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days. 29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy ¹²soul: but the ¹²soul of my lord shall be bound in the ¹³bundle of life with the LORD thy God; and the ¹⁴souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the ¹⁵middle of a sling. 30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have ¹⁶done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; 31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor ¹⁷offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood

^a see R. V. and comment p. 116.

in a bundle or putting them in a bag. David's life is precious in God's sight and will be preserved as a valuable thing. The lives of his enemies shall be hurled away as a stone from a sling. ¹⁴ Lives.

¹² *Lit. the cup, i.e. the hollow of the sling in which the stone was placed.*

¹³ *The feeling of resentment against Nabal may be natural now, but how will it be when you are king? Do not run the risk of remorse for such an act as the death of Nabal, which you will certainly regret when you become king.*

¹⁷ *Stumbling block = anything in a person's road which causes him to stagger. The murder of Nabal would be for ever a burden on David's conscience.*

• Take no notice of Nabal, for such a fellow is not worth consideration.

• Nabal=fool. Abigail declares that the name exacti describes his character.

• So Abigail was not responsible for the reply given by Nabal.

Abigail uses four arguments:

1. Her meeting with David has been designed by Jehovah for the purpose of keeping David from murder.

2. God is the avenger of the wicked. Ungodliness brings its own punishment. Therefore let David leave it to God to punish Nabal and all his other enemies.

3. The practical argument of the present which she describes as a gift to David's men.

4. David will surely come to the throne. The forgiveness of Nabal now will relieve David of any occasion of remorse when he recalls this incident of his life.

* A usual term for a present given in compliment.

* Once more taking the insult to David upon herself.

* Abigail expresses her conviction that David is destined to succeed Saul.

¹⁰ Permanent dynasty.

¹¹ Abigail bases her belief on two facts:

1. David is the champion of Israel against the Philistines.

2. His life had been altogether blameless.

¹² Life.

¹³ Bag. The metaphor is taken from the custom of binding up valuable things

¹⁸causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

¹⁸ Without cause, needlessly.

The Arguments of Abigail Turn David From His Purpose.

32 And David ¹said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: 33 And blessed be thy ²advice, and blessed be thou, which has kept me this day from ³coming to shed blood, and from ⁴avenging myself with mine own hand. 34 For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light so much as one male child. 35 So David ⁵received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, ⁶Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and ⁷have accepted thy person.

¹ David recognises the great spiritual danger from which he had been delivered, and in reply—

1. Praises God for having sent Abigail to meet him.

2. Thanks Abigail for her good advice.

³ Wisdom, discernment, discretion.

⁴ Falling into the sin of blood-guiltiness.

⁵ Committing the sin of enacting private vengeance, and of not leaving the issue to God.

⁶ Accepted the gifts which she brought. The acceptance of the gifts was a sign that her request was granted.

⁷ Bade her return home with the assurance that her request was granted.

⁷ I have granted thy request.

The Death of Nabal.

36 And Abigail ¹came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the ²feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was ³very drunken: wherefore she told ⁴him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. 37 But it came to pass in the morning, ⁵when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that ⁶his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. 38 And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD ⁷smote Nabal, that he died.

¹ On her return she finds her husband rioting and in drunkenness.

² *i.e.* regal, in his abundance and liberality.

³ We may note the contrast between Abigail and Nabal. Abigail pious and highly intelligent. Nabal, churlish and obstinate—a drunken sot.

⁴ He was too drunk to understand.

⁵ When he had become sober and capable of understanding what had passed.

⁶ Descriptive of an apoplectic stroke following a fit of impotent fury when he learnt what his wife had done, and, it may be, brought on by the terror excited by

the conviction of what his fate would have been but for her action in appeasing David.

⁷ Possibly a second stroke of apoplexy.

David Marries Abigail After the Death of Nabal.

39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, ¹Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD ²hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and ³communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife. 40 And when the servants of David ⁴were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife. 41 And she arose, and ⁵bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant ⁶to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. 42 And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife. 43 David also took Ahinoam of ⁷Jezreel; and they were ⁸also both of them his wives. 44 But Saul ⁹had given ¹⁰Michal his daughter, David's wife, to ¹¹Phalti the son of Laish, which was of ¹²Gallim.

¹ David acknowledges his deliverance from the crime of murder.

² David regards the death of Nabal as a stroke of Divine judgment visited upon him for his sin.

³ Her beauty and intelligence had made a great impression upon David.

⁴ *i.e.* when the time of mourning for Nabal had expired.

⁵ By her action expressing acknowledgment of the honour.

⁶ Ready to perform the humblest service. An Eastern method of signifying how deeply she felt the high honour shown to her by David in his desire to make her his wife.

⁷ Intro. p.lxxv. Not Jezreel in the north, in the tribe of Issachar, but a city in the hill country of Judah.

⁸ *i.e.* in addition to Michal.

⁹ It is not said "when."

¹⁰ Intro. p. xxxiii. David compelled Abner to restore Michal as a condition preliminary to making a league with him (2 Sam. iii. 13-16). The giving of Michal to Phalti shows the fixed determination of Saul to break completely and for ever with David.

¹¹ Intro. p. xciii. Possibly a powerful chieftain, whose assistance would be of service to Saul.

¹² Intro. p. lxix.

WHY IS THE HISTORY OF NABAL AND ABIGAIL RECORDED?

We gather two facts from it:

1. That David in his exile was able to take upon himself the care and defence of those dwelling in the south of Judah. This is shown in his protection of the flocks of Nabal. David thus won the hearts of the people.
2. That David learnt the deep spiritual lesson of self-restraint.

The speech of Abigail is of great importance in enabling us to understand the feelings of Israel towards David and Saul. We obtain an insight into the inner spiritual life of the nation.

Her speech brings out four facts:

1. That the pious Israelites knew that David was destined to be the future king of Israel.
2. That David was the champion of Israel, *i.e.* the chosen defender and protector of the nation (see *ver.* 28).
3. That the admirably discreet conduct of David had made a great impression upon the people (see *ver.* 28).
4. That the people were convinced that David must take no active steps against Saul, but must wait God's own time for the fulfilment of His promises.

Thus the people regarded David's cause as the cause of Jehovah. They did not look upon the matter as a personal conflict between Saul and David. In this we see the force of

Abigail's argument when she pleads with David not to attempt to right himself with Nabal, but to leave the issue with God.

We can thus understand—

1. How deeply the speech of Abigail impressed David, and why, when he saw the great spiritual danger from which he was delivered, he thanked first God, and then the pious, wise Abigail who had given him such good advice.
2. How David became finally the unanimous choice of the whole nation. He came to them as **king** with no stain on his character.

Saul Renews his Pursuit of David. The Ziphites again act treacherously.

26. And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before ¹Jeshimon? 2 Then Saul arose, and went ²down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. 3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, ³by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he ⁴saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. 4 David therefore sent out ⁵spies, and understood that Saul was come ⁶in very deed.

By some this is supposed to be only another account of the transaction related in xxiii. 19—xxiv. 23.

The accounts must, however, refer to two separate incidents. (See note p. 90 at end of chapter.)

In his return to Ziph David may have relied:

1. On the promise made by Saul (xxiv. 16-22).
2. The assistance of the families of Ahinoam and Abigail. Probably these were of power and influence in the district.

¹ Intro. p. lxxiii.

² From Gibeah.

³ Probably near some well-marked high road.

⁴ Learnt, received information.

* To obtain full information of Saul's route.

* Of a very certainty.

David Visits Saul's Camp in the Night.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David ¹beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay *in the* ²trench, and the people pitched round about him. 6 Then answered David and said to ³Ahimēlech the Hittite, and to ⁴Abishai the son of ⁵Zeruiah, brother to ⁶Joab, saying, Who will ⁷go down ⁸with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee. 7 So David and Abishai ⁹came

¹ David was on higher ground and in concealment. He watched the movements of Saul's men and noted how they pitched the camp.

² The waggon trench, or circle of waggons surrounded the camp (see p. 113).

³ Intro. p. lxxxvii.

⁴ Intro. p. xciii.

⁵ Intro. p. lxxxiv.

⁶ Intro. p. xcl. The most famous of the three sons of Zeruiah.

⁷ Descend from the hill.

⁸ Not to attempt the life of Saul, but to furnish a proof of his own innocence of any attempt against the life of the king.

a see R.V. and comment p. 113.

* Creeping stealthily through the brushwood that covered the sides of the hill (see xxiii. 19).

to¹⁰the people by night : and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within *the trench*, and ¹¹his spear stuck in the ground ¹²*at his bolster* : but Abner and the people lay round about him. 8 Then said Abishai to David, ¹³God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day : now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth ¹⁴*at once*, and I will not smite him the second time. 9 And David said to Abishai, ¹⁵Destroy him not : for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be ¹⁶guiltless? 10 David said furthermore, ¹⁷As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him ; or his day shall come to die ; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. 11 The LORD forbid that ¹⁸I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed : but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is ¹⁹*at his bolster*, and the ²⁰cruse of water, and let us go. 12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's *bolster* ; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked : for they were all asleep ; because ²¹a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 113.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 116.

^c see R.V. and comment p. 116.

¹⁰ The men composing the force of Saul.

¹¹ The royal spear, the symbol of authority (see p. xxv.).

¹² At his head (see p. xxv.).

¹³ The same argument as that used by David's men in the cave at Engedi (xxiv. 4). David again repels the suggestion and will have none of it.

¹⁴ At one stroke (it does not mean "immediately"), and a second stroke will be unnecessary.

¹⁵ David refuses to stain himself with the death of Saul.

¹⁶ Remain unpunished.

¹⁷ Saul's death may come in three ways :

1. By direct visitation of God.

2. By natural death.

3. Or he may fall in battle.

¹⁸ The guilt would have been David's had he allowed Abishai to strike the blow.

¹⁹ At his head.

²⁰ Pitcher or small jar.

These are taken as proofs that David had penetrated into the very centre of the camp and had stood over the sleeping king, whose life was then at his mercy.

²¹ Explanatory of the ease with which David and Abishai enter and leave the camp. The sleep was supernatural.

David Taunts Abner and Expostulates with Saul.

13 Then David went over to ¹the other side, and stood on the top of an hill ²afar off ; a great space being between them : 14 And David ³cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who art thou that ⁴criest to the king? 15 And David said to Abner, Art

¹ Of a ravine.

² To secure his safety. He does not again trust himself within Saul's power (see xxiv. 8).

³ Though David was separated from the camp by a deep gorge, his voice could be heard across the ravine. People = Saul's army.

⁴ Offendest the king by this noise, and disturbing his rest.

not thou a valiant man? and who is ⁵like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not ⁶kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. 16 This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye are ⁷worthy to die, because ye have not ⁸kept your master, the LORD's anointed. And now ⁹see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was ¹⁰at his bolster. 17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. 18 And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? 19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. ¹¹If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the LORD; for they ¹²have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, ¹³Go, serve other gods. 20 Now therefore, ¹⁴let not my blood fall to the earth ¹⁵before the face of the LORD: for the king of Israel is come out to seek ¹⁶a flea, as when one doth hunt ¹⁷a partridge in the mountains.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 116.

enemies (see xxiv. 9), may God punish them, for they have driven me into exile.

¹² David intimates that if the persecution continues he will be compelled to take refuge in another land.

¹³ Foreign exile is equivalent to serving other gods, for the worship of Jehovah could only take place in His own land. Far from the sanctuary, David and his men might well be tempted to abandon the true worship. ¹⁴ David pleads for his life.

¹⁵ If Saul puts him to death Jehovah will avenge the crime.

¹⁶ A single flea, a most insignificant creature (see xxiv. 14 and note).

¹⁷ See p. 136. This persecution of a solitary individual is entirely beneath the dignity of the

¹⁸ 19. **Offering.**—Who was to make this offering? Though it may mean that David is referring to some sin of his own, and therefore that it is his duty to offer sacrifice, it is much more probable that David alludes to Saul.

The persecution of David by Saul dates from the time of the "evil spirit" taking possession of Saul.

Therefore the passage is an entreaty on David's part that Saul should seek the pardon of God, and by sacrifice endeavour to obtain the removal of the evil spirit.

⁵ Evidently Abner held the first place at Court and in the army. His great influence is shown by the prominent part he takes in upholding the cause of Ishbosheth on Saul's death.

⁶ Safely guarded.

⁷ Deserving of death. *Lit.* "sons of death."

⁸ Safely guarded.

⁹ Go and look, and you will find they are gone.

¹⁰ At his head.

This sarcastic taunting of Abner by David seems to imply that Abner was one of David's enemies at court. Possibly he envied David's prowess, and desired to keep the leadership of the army for himself. That Abner was not well disposed to David is further established by the fact that on the death of Saul, Abner espoused the cause of Ishbosheth.

¹¹ David supposes two causes for Saul's relentless persecution:

1. **Jehovah**, either for David's sin or Saul's sin.

(a) If for David's sin, then let him (David) offer a propitiatory sacrifice.

(b) If for Saul's sin, then let Saul appease His wrath by a sacrifice.

2. **Men**, his enemies, who have incited Saul by false reports of David's intentions.

But, if you (Saul) are incensed against me (David) by the false reports of mine

[king.

Saul and David once more Reconciled.

21 Then said Saul, I have sinned :
 I return, my son David : for I will no more
 do thee harm, because my soul was
 precious in thine eyes this day : behold, I
 have played the fool, and have erred
 exceedingly. 22 And David answered
 and said, Behold the king's spear ! and
 let one of the young men come over and
 fetch it. 23 The LORD render to every
 man his righteousness and his faithfulness :
 for the LORD delivered thee into my hand
 to day, but I would not stretch forth mine
 hand against the LORD's anointed. 24
 And, behold, as thy life was much set by
 this day in mine eyes, so let my life be
 much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and
 let him deliver me out of all tribulation.
 25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed be
 thou, my son David : thou shalt both do
 great things, and also shalt still prevail.
 So David went on his way, and Saul
 returned to his place.

- * He begs David to come back to the court.
- * A promise upon which David could not rely.
- * Saul once more recognises David's magnanimity.
- * Life.
- * Acted foolishly.

- * David will not trust his life into Saul's hands, but calls for one of Saul's followers to cross the ravine to take back the royal spear.
- * David puts his own conduct in plain words before the king, not in boastfulness, nor as holding himself up to the king in contrast with Saul's spirit of persecution, but as indicating his innocence of any design against Saul's life. Saul may be his enemy, but as he is the Lord's anointed his life is sacred in David's eyes.
- * An utterance of the pious wish that Jehovah may keep and guard him.
- * Saul is in a prophetic vein and foretells a great future for David.
- * Back to his home at Gibeah.

DID THE ZIPHITES BETRAY DAVID TO SAUL MORE THAN ONCE? IN FACT, DO THE NARRATIVES IN xxiii. 19—xxiv. 11 AND xxvi. REFER TO THE SAME OR DIFFERENT EVENTS IN THE WANDERINGS OF DAVID?

Similarities :

1. The traitors are the same, viz., the Ziphites.
 2. The position is the same "the hill of Hachilah" (xxiii. 19, xxvi. 1).
 3. The special mention of Saul's locality "by the way" (xxiv. 3, xxvi. 3).
 4. In each case Saul is accompanied by 3000 men.
 5. David is urged to take the life of Saul and refuses.
 6. David takes with him a proof that the life of Saul had been in his power.
 7. Saul is in a sound sleep.
 8. David defends his conduct.
 9. Saul confesses his error, and expresses his conviction of David's future greatness.
- But, as Keil remarks, all these are outward and unessential things, and the details, as well as the results, differ entirely from one another.

Dissimilarities :

- | First occurrence. | Second occurrence. |
|---|---|
| 1. Saul is in a cave alone. | 1. Saul is in the camp in the midst of his troops. |
| 2. The time is in the day. | 2. The time is night. |
| 3. David and all his men are in the recesses of the cave. | 3. David and Abishai steal into the camp alone by night. |
| 4. David cuts off the skirt of Saul's robe. | 4. David and Abishai carry off Saul's spear and a cruse of water. |

Dissimilarities—continued:

5. David has a personal interview with Saul, and evidently trusts himself in his hands.
6. David remains in the mountains.
5. David does not make himself known until he has placed himself on the opposite hill, with the ravine between. He does not trust himself to Saul, but calls for a young man to cross over to fetch the spear and cruse.
6. Immediately on the retirement of Saul David betakes himself to the land of the Philistines.

The dissimilarities outweigh the similarities, and it is more probable that the life of Saul was in the power of David on two separate occasions.

David Takes Refuge With Achish, King of Gath.

27 And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily³ escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any^a coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand. 2 And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto³ Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath. 3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his⁴ household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife. 4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and⁵ he sought no more again for him.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹ David is despondent. His narrow escapes from the hand of Saul convince David that he is not safe in the land of Israel.

² He takes refuge in the land of the Philistines with Achish, king of Gath.

We may note that he does not take counsel of God.

On his former visit (xxi. 10) he was alone, known as the conqueror of Goliath, and saved his life by feigning madness. Now he comes with a band of 600 tried warriors, and is the open enemy of Saul. Achish welcomes him as a valuable ally, and takes him into his service, as a powerful leader of a band of "free companions."

³ Intro. p. lxxxvi.

⁴ Family.

⁵ In Philistia David was safe from pursuit, so Saul desists from further efforts to capture his rival.

Achish Assigns Ziklag to David.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a¹ place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee? 6 Then Achish gave him² Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth³ unto the kings of Judah unto this day. 7 And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

¹ David's idea was to get away from the personal supervision of Achish. He had no intention of warring against Israel. If out of Achish's sight he would be free to make war against the nomad tribes of the south who were continually making raids into the land of Judah (xxx. 1).

The Philistines were already preparing for the great invasion of Israel.

² Intro. p. lxxxii.

³ A note of the time of the compilation of the Books of Samuel, *i.e.*:

1. After the great schism in the reign of Behoboam.
2. Before the Babylonish captivity.

David's Raids Upon the Tribes of the South.

8 And David and his men went up, and invaded the ¹Geshurites, and the ²Gezrites, and the ³Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to ⁴Shur, even unto the land of Egypt. 9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away ⁵the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish. 10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a ^{ab}road to day? And David ⁷said, Against the south of ⁸Judah, and against the south of the ⁹Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the ¹⁰Kenites. 11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, ^bto bring ¹¹tidings to Gath, saying, ¹²Lest they should ¹³tell on us, saying, ¹⁴So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines. 12 And ¹⁵Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be ¹⁶my servant for ever.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 116.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 116.

¹ Intro. p. li.

² Intro. p. li.

³ Intro. p. xvii., the remnants of those attacked by Saul.

⁴ Intro. p. lxxxii.

⁵ The enumeration of these animals, especially camels, indicates that these invaders were all nomad tribes.

⁶ **Raid.**

⁷ Already David is involved in difficulties, for

1. He is compelled to massacre all his captives.

2. He tells a false story to Achish.

⁸ His own tribe.

⁹ Intro. p. li.

¹⁰ Intro. p. li. Friendly to Israel.

¹¹ Them, *i.e.* as captives and slaves.

¹² He dared not spare any person lest the Philistines should discover his deceit

¹³ Report against us.

¹⁴ A speech supposed to be uttered by imaginary captives.

¹⁵ Achish believed that David by these acts of cruelty and rapine was losing the affection of his countrymen.

¹⁶ Subject to me.

David Compelled to Join the Philistines in the Campaign Against Israel.

28. And it came to pass ¹in those days, that the Philistines ²gathered their armies together for warfare to fight with Israel. And Achish ³said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men. 2 And David said to Achish, ⁴Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee ⁵keeper of mine head for ever.

¹ During the time that David was at Ziklag.

² The whole force of the nation for a great invasion — no mere border raid.

³ Achish calls upon David to join the expedition. A fit punishment for David's mistake in taking refuge in Philistia.

⁴ David is compelled to give an ambiguous answer. Achish takes the reply as an assurance of fidelity.

⁵ Captain of his bodyguard.

THE PHILISTINE INVASION.

The route of this Philistine invasion follows the plain on the sea coast as far as the Carmel ridge, then turns eastward through the pass of Megiddo, into the plain of Esdraelon.

The army seized a strong position at Shunem, and prepared to strike a blow at the centre of the land. The object was to gain the central plateau, and then march southward. The Philistines faced south.

Saul hurried northward and took up his position on the ridge of Gilboa, facing the Philistines, intending to bar their access to the central plateau (see map, p. lxviii).

Saul Visits the Witch of Endor.

3 Now ¹Samuel ²was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had ³familiar spirits, and the ⁴wizards, out of the land. 4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in ⁵Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched ⁶in Gilboa. 5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, ⁷he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. 6 And when Saul ⁸enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by ⁹dreams, nor by ¹⁰Urim, nor ¹¹by prophets. 7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman ¹²that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at ¹³En-dor. 8 And Saul ¹⁴disguised himself, and put on ¹⁵other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman ¹⁶by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me ¹⁷by the familiar spirit, and bring me him ¹⁸up, whom I shall name unto thee. 9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest ¹⁹what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a

¹ See xxv. 1.

² This statement is an introduction to what follows, and explains why Saul appealed to the witch of Endor.

³ See p. 123.

⁴ *Lit.* "knowing or wise men" (S.C.).

⁵ *Intro.* p. lxxx. The Philistines are in the plain of Esdraelon threatening to storm the heights giving them access to the centre of the land.

⁶ *Intro.* p. lxx. Saul posts his small force in their way. The two forces are separated by the plain.

⁷ Partly at the number of the Philistines, partly because he was conscious that God had forsaken him.

⁸ Probably Zadok was the priest.

⁹ A revelation to himself.

¹⁰ An answer through a priest wearing the ephod.

¹¹ An answer through some prophet speaking in the name of the Lord (see xxii. 5).

¹² The possessor of a conjuring spirit.

¹³ *Intro.* p. lxvi. = the spring of Dor.

¹⁴ For the purpose of deceiving the witch, and for slipping past the Philistine posts.

¹⁵ Of an ordinary peasant, laying aside his royal robes.

¹⁶ A perilous journey of seven or eight miles, during which he would skirt the eastern shoulder of the Hill of Morah past the camp of the Philistines.

¹⁷ Through necromancy *i.e.* by communication with the dead.

¹⁸ From *Sheol* or *Hades*, the abode of departed spirits, supposed to be under the earth.

¹⁹ The woman is afraid that the visit is a trap to cause her to commit herself and then to have her put to death as a conjuror.

²⁰snare for my life, to cause me to die? 10 And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, ²¹As the LORD liveth, there shall be no punishment happen to thee for this thing. 11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up ²²Samuel. 12 And when ²³the woman saw Samuel, she ²⁴cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? ²⁵for thou art Saul. 13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what ²⁶sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw ²⁷*gods* ascending out of the earth. 14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man ²⁸cometh up; and he is covered with a ²⁹mantle. And Saul ³⁰perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and ³¹bowed himself.

a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

³¹ **Did obeisance**, i.e. the usual form of reverence and homage.

²⁰ Trap to bring her within the law, and thus subject to death.

²¹ The strongest form of oath. Saul gives her a pledge of safety.

Note how hardened Saul must have become when he swears by the name of the Lord to the witch of Endor at a time when he was breaking God's law.

²² Saul would consult the guide and counsellor of his early days.

²³ At first Samuel appeared only to the woman.

²⁴ Startled at the unexpected appearance.

²⁵ Hitherto the woman had not suspected that her visitor was Saul.

²⁶ The figure is invisible to Saul.

²⁷ A supernatural, celestial being.

²⁸ Is ascending.

²⁹ **Robe**, the prophet's dress, such as Samuel was accustomed to wear when alive (xv. 27).

³⁰ Saul now sees the figure and recognises Samuel from the description given by the woman.

The Doom of Saul Pronounced by Samuel.

15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou ¹disquieted me, to bring me ²up? And Saul answered, I am ³sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by ⁴prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. 16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of ⁵me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? 17 And the LORD hath ⁶done to him, as he spake by me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: 18 Because

¹ Disturbed me from my rest in Sheol.

² From Sheol.

³ Hard pressed by the Philistines, abandoned by God, truly Saul was in a desperate condition. He is filled with a gloomy foreboding that he will lose crown and life in the impending battle.

⁴ "Why does not Saul name the *Urim*? He shrank from naming to Samuel that which must bring to his mind the slaughter of the priests at Nob" (Kitto).

⁵ The servant of the Lord, and can therefore only do the bidding of Jehovah. God has refused to answer by the *Urim*, etc. So no answer can come from me.

⁶ **Lit. hath performed for Himself** (see R. V.) = wrought out his own purposes.

thou ⁷obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor ⁸executedst his fierce wrath upon Amelek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day. 19 Moreover the LORD will also deliver ⁹Israel with me into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be ¹⁰with me: the LORD also shall deliver the ¹¹host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

* The sin of Saul involves Israel also 'n his fall.

¹⁰ In *Sheol* or *Hades*, the abode of departed spirits.

¹¹ **Camp, army**, *i.e.* the army will be defeated in the battle.

* *i.e.* your present condition is but the working out of the design of Jehovah as already declared by me in my lifetime.

* His disobedience on that occasion sealed his fate. It did not want the ghost of Samuel to tell him that; he had been told it already (xv. 20-26).

On the gradual decline of Saul's spiritual character (see p. xxix).

The Witch of Endor Entertains Saul.

20 Then Saul fell straightway ^{a1}*all along* on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and ²there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. 21 And the woman came unto Saul, and ³saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have ⁴put my life in my hand, and ⁵have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. 22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and ⁶let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on ⁷thy way. 23 But he ⁸refused, and said, I will not eat. But ⁹his servants, together with the woman, ¹⁰compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon ¹¹the bed. 24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she ¹²hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake ¹³unleavened bread thereof: 25 And she

a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

¹³ There was no time to leaven the bread.

Straightway=*immediately*.

* **His full length**. Hitherto he had been kneeling (see *ver.* 14).

* Saul fainted at the awful declaration.

* The woman feels genuine sympathy for Saul in his great trouble.

* Risked my life by practising necromancy in disobedience to the decree of the King.

* The awful fate pronounced on Saul may have caused her to think that Saul might forget his promise to *my s. life* (see *ver.* 10).

* The woman tries to coax Saul to eat.

* *i.e.* to make the return journey to Gilboa.

* Saul refuses the invitation to eat.

* Who had been outside, but entered on hearing the fall of Saul (see *ver.* 20).

¹⁰ **Constrained**, forced him to take food.

¹¹ A bench, or divan, furnished with cushions, running round the wall, serving the double purpose of a seat for meals and a couch at night.

¹² Meals are quickly prepared in the East. "With the Bedawin it is nearly universal to cook the meat immediately after it is butchered, and to bake fresh bread for every meal." (*Thomson, The Land and the Book*.) So Abraham entertained the three angels (Gen. xviii. 6-8).

brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away ¹⁴that night.

¹⁴ The same night, returning to Gilboa.

The Philistine Leaders Regard David with Suspicion.

29. ¹Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to ²Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in ⁸Jezreel. ² And the ⁴lords of the Philistines passed on by ⁶hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the ⁹rereward with Achish. ³ Then said the ⁷princes of the Philistines, What do these ⁶Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me ⁹these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since ¹⁰he fell unto me unto this day? ⁴ And the princes of the Philistines were ¹¹wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to ¹²his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not ¹³go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be ¹⁴an adversary to us: for wherewith should he ¹⁵reconcile himself unto his ¹⁶master? should it not be with the heads of ¹⁷these men? ⁵ Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in ¹⁸dances, saying, ¹⁹Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

¹ Resuming the story of the Philistine expedition.

² Intro. p. lix.

³ Intro. p. lxxiii. A more exact description of the position of the contending armies.

⁴ The five lords.

⁵ Their military divisions — arranged in hundreds and in thousands.

The Philistine organisation was much superior to that of Israel. David may have learned much in this respect during his stay in Philistia.

⁶ **Rearguard** (p. 126). This would be his position, for his men formed the body-guard of Achish.

⁷ Inferior chieftains, not the five lords.

⁸ The name applied to the Israelites by foreigners (see iv. 6).

⁹ A considerable time, during which I have had no reason to doubt his fidelity.

¹⁰ *Lit. since his coming over*, i.e. from the time he deserted Saul and took service with me.

¹¹ They feared that David would desert to Saul.

¹² i.e. Ziklag.

¹³ Descend from the hills into the plain of Esdraelon. "**Go down to battle**" is the usual phrase for giving battle, for the battles were generally fought in the plains.

¹⁴ Desert to Saul and fight against us.

¹⁵ *Lit. Show himself acceptable*, and thus regain favour with Saul.

¹⁶ Saul. ¹⁷ The Philistine soldiers, to whom the princes would point.

¹⁸ The dances at their festivals. ¹⁹ A popular song of Israel, well known to the Philistines.

Achish Dismisses David, who Returns to Ziklag.

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, ²as the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and ³thy going out and

¹ Achish expresses his confidence in David, but suggests that it would be well to satisfy the scruples of the Philistine princes.

² A solemn oath for a heathen to take. Achish swears by David's God to convince David of his sincerity. ³ All thy conduct.

thy coming in with me 'in the host is ⁶good in my sight : for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day : nevertheless the lords ⁶favour thee not. 7 Wherefore now ⁷return, and go in peace, that thou ⁶displease not the lords of the Philistines. 8 And David said unto Achish, ⁹But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king? 9 And Achish answered and said to David, ¹⁰I know that thou art good in my sight, as an ¹¹angel of God : notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. 10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy ¹²master's servants that are come with thee : and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have ¹³light, depart. 11 So David and his men ¹⁴rose up early to depart in the morning, to return ¹⁵into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

¹¹ The occurrence takes place after the army had left the land of the Philistines, but as David reached Ziklag on the third day (xxx. 1) after leaving Achish, he cannot have gone far beyond the frontier. His return was not a moment too soon to rescue the women and children left at Ziklag.

⁶ *i.e.* in the army on this expedition.
⁶ Is quite satisfactory to me.

⁶ Object to your having any part in the battle. The princes did not trust David.
⁷ Go back to Ziklag.

⁶ The objection taken by the Philistine lords to the presence of David in the battle relieved David from an embarrassing position.

⁶ Not a truthful reply. David cannot have had any real intention of fighting against Saul, and in his regard was pleased at being relieved from the embarrassing position in which his own duplicity had placed him. The reply was intended to convince Achish of his fidelity.

¹⁰ The generous confidence of Achish contrasts painfully with the obvious duplicity of David.

¹¹ *i.e.* faithful, true and pure as one.

¹³ Saul, whose subjects all David's men were.

¹³ Sufficient to enable David to array his men and to see the way.

¹⁶ David would be delighted to go. Matters had turned out so that he had neither violated the fidelity he owed to Achish, nor had to fight against Israel.

The Amalekites Sack Ziklag in David's Absence.

30. And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on ¹the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the ²south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire ; 2 And had taken the women captives, that were therein : they ³slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their

¹ *i.e.* after leaving the army of the Philistines.

² The Negeb (p. xlii.), the technical name for the south of Judah.

Made a raid, no doubt in revenge for the raids of David (xxvii. 8, 9). They may have learnt of David's absence.

³ In the absence of the fighting men there would be no resistance. Ziklag fell an easy prey to the raiders. They carried off the women as slaves, possibly to sell them in Egypt.

way. 3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was ⁴burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. 4 Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and ⁵wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5 And David's ⁶two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. 6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people ⁷spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was ⁸grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David ⁹encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

* **Strengthened.** By taking refuge in Philistia, David had shown want of confidence in Jehovah. Now he turns to the Lord in prayer and receives consolation and strength. He exhibits this strength in the resolution to pursue the raiders and rescue the captives.

The Pursuit.

7 And David said to ¹Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither ²the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. 8 And David ³enquired at the LORD, saying, 'Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them?' And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all. 9 So David ⁴went, he and ⁵the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the ⁶brook Besor, where ⁷those that were left behind stayed. 10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred ⁸abode behind, which were ⁹so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor. 11 And they ¹⁰found an Egyptian ¹¹in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him ¹²bread, and he did

* And was probably still burning.

* In desperation of grief.

* David's wives shared the same fate as the other women.

* So Israel threatened to stone Moses at Rephidim when there was no water (Ex. xvii. 4).

And again on the return of the twelve spies (Numb. xiv. 10).

* Embittered, exasperated.

David's men may have had grounds of discontent in being compelled to take service with Achish. Now that their march northwards in that service had left Ziklag unprotected, they turned in fury on David.

¹ Abiathar cannot have remained at Ziklag, but must have gone north with David.

² To consult God.

* Note the contrast between Saul and David at this time.

1. Saul, distrustful of God, abandoned by the Almighty, fought and fell at Gilboa.

2. David, strong in faith, by the aid of Jehovah pursued the Amalekites and recovered the captives and the spoil.

At=*of*.

* The question is simply, "Shall I pursue, shall I overtake?" The reply is in the affirmative, and adds that all shall be recovered.

* Immediately on receiving the reply.

* A picked force; probably his veteran band, David had now a much larger force under his command. The newly-joined men would not be equal to the fatigue of the rapid pursuit.

⁷ Intro. p. lxi.

* The 200 of ver. 10.

* Stayed behind.

¹⁰ Tired out, dead beat, they could go no further.

¹¹ Came accidentally upon. This fortunate find was ultimately the cause of their success.

* In the open country, lying exhausted.

¹² Food.

eat; and they made him drink water; 12 And they gave him ¹⁴a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, ¹⁵his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten ¹⁶no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. 13 And David said unto him, To whom belondest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master ¹⁷left me, because ¹⁸three days ago I fell sick. 14 We made an ¹⁹invasion upon the ²⁰south of the ²¹Cherethites, and ²²upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the ²³south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire. 15 And David said to him; Canst thou ²⁴bring me down to this ²⁵company? And he said, ²⁶Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this ²⁷company. 16 And when he had ²⁷brought him down, behold, they were ²⁸spread abroad upon all the earth, ²⁹eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the ³⁰Philistines, and out of the land of Judah. 17 And David smote them from the ³¹twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred ³²young men, which rode upon ³³camels, and fled. 18 And David recovered ³⁴all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two

^a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

rested his men and attacked early in the morning, and the pursuit was stayed by darkness.

¹⁴ The servants in charge of the camels. They may have ridden off early when they saw the fight going against their masters.

²⁵ The mention of the animals shows that the Amalekites were a nomad tribe (see Judg. vii. 12, 1 Sam. xv. 3).

³⁴ In fulfilment of the word of Jehovah (see 8).

¹⁴ A slice of fig cake, i.e. made of figs compressed together.

¹⁵ He came to himself again.

¹⁶ Evidently he was exhausted through want of food.

¹⁷ Abandon me. Note the contrast between the inhumanity of the Amalekites and the kindness of David's men. The abandonment of this slave cost the Amalekites dear; the kindness of David was repaid by the information given by the slave.

¹⁸ Three days ago, so David learns what start the Amalekites had. Encumbered with cattle they would travel more slowly than David and his men.

¹⁹ **Raid**, a plundering expedition. David learns that the slave is actually one of the band that had plundered Ziklag.

²⁰ That part of the Negeb belonging to the Cherethites.

²¹ Intro. p. xlix.

²² That part of the Negeb belonging to Judah.

²³ That part of the Negeb assigned to Caleb (see p. lxi.).

²⁴ Guide me from the higher land of the Negeb to the desert of the south, i.e. can you remember the route by which you came?

²⁵ **Troop**.

²⁶ He makes David give an oath to secure his safety.

²⁷ Guided them on the return track.

²⁸ Encamped without order or guard.

²⁹ In revelry and debauch, rejoicing over the great spoil they had taken.

³⁰ Confirmative that **Cherethites** (see 14) means Philistines.

³¹ **Twilight**, either the evening—in that case the fight and pursuit lasted from sunset to sunset—or morning, in which case David

wives. 19 And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any thing that they had taken to them: David ²⁰recovered all. 20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they ²¹drave before those other cattle, and said, ²²This is David's spoil.

The Spoil Divided.

21 And David came to the two hundred men, which were so ¹faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook ²Besor: and they ³went forth to meet David, and to meet ⁴the people that were with him: and when David came near to ⁵the people, he ⁶saluted them. 22 Then answered ⁷all the wicked men and ⁸men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, ⁹Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away, and depart. 23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which ¹⁰the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the ¹¹company that came against us into our hand. 24 For ¹²who will hearken unto you in this matter? but ¹³as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that ¹⁴tarrieth by the ¹⁵stuff: they shall ¹⁶part alike. 25 And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a ¹⁷statute and an ¹⁸ordinance for Israel unto this day.

David Distributes His Share of the Spoil Amongst the Elders of Judah.

26 And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of ¹the spoil unto the elders of Judah,

²² Brought back.

²⁰ Drove = had in their possession and drove along with them before they captured the cattle at Ziklag.

²¹ Set aside as David's share as captain. His men took the rest of the spoil. David distributed the cattle amongst his friends in Judah (*ver.* 26-31).

¹ Tired out, dead beat.

² Intro. p. lxi.

³ Having rested and recovered.

⁴ Men of David's band.

⁵ The band of the 200.

⁶ Greeted them, inquired after their welfare.

⁷ The objection was not made by all of David's men.

⁸ **Worthless fellows** (see p. 119). In their selfishness they grudge these 200 any share of the spoil.

⁹ A plausible argument. They had taken no part in the fight, why should they participate in the spoil? Let each man take his wife and children and be content.

¹⁰ A fitting rebuke. The victory was the Lord's doing.

¹¹ Troop.

¹² You will get no one to accept your view.

¹³ Joshua bade those of the Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh, who had taken part in the invasion of Canaan, to share the spoil with their brethren who had remained on the East of Jordan (*Josh.* xxii. 8).

¹⁴ Guarding the baggage.

¹⁵ Baggage.

¹⁶ Share.

¹⁷ A recognized rule in war, for a baggage guard is as essential as the fighting force.

¹⁸ Decree.

¹ His own share (*ver.* 20). He puts this spoil to good use.

even² to his friends, saying, Behold a³ present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD; 27 To them which were in⁴ Beth-el, and to them which were in south⁵ Ramoth, and to them which were in⁶ Jattir, 28 And to them which were in⁷ Aroer, and to them which were in⁸ Siphmoth, and to them which were in⁹ Eshtemoa, 29 And to them which were in¹⁰ Rachal, and to them which were in the¹¹ cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to them which were in the cities of the¹² Kenites, 30 And to them which were in¹³ Hormah, and to them which were in¹⁴ Chor-ashan, and to them which were in Athach, 31 And to them which were in¹⁵ Hebron, and to¹⁶ all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

¹² Intro. p. lxxiii.¹⁴ Intro. p. lxxv.¹⁶ Intro. p. lxxii.¹⁸ So David overlooked none who had in any way befriended him.

* An act of wise policy.

It showed :

1. That David's prestige, shaken by the Amalekite raid, was restored.

2. That he was grateful for the assistance given him in his exile.

It was also designed to secure their favour when, at Saul's death, he should come forward openly as the claimant of the throne.

* *Lit. blessing* = complimentary present (xxv. 27).

* Intro. p. lxxii. Not the Bethel of Benjamin, but a town in the south of Judah.

* Intro. p. lxxviii. = Ramoth-Negeb, i.e. Ramoth in the south country.

* Intro. p. lxxiii.

* Intro. p. lix.

* Site unknown.

* Intro. p. lxxx.

¹⁰ Intro. p. lxxvii.

¹¹ Intro. p. li. These cities must have been situated in the Negeb.

¹² Intro. p. li.

The Battle on Gilboa. Death of Saul.

31. ¹Now the Philistines ²fought against Israel: and the men of Israel ³fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. 2 And the Philistines ⁴followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines ⁵slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons. 3 And the battle ⁶went sore against Saul, and the ⁷archers hit him; and he was ⁸sore wounded of the archers. 4 Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, ⁹Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these ¹⁰uncircumcised come and thrust

* Resuming the narrative from xxix. 11.

* The principal battle took place in the plain of Esdraelon.

* The defeated Israelites fled up the slope of Gilboa and were pursued and slain there.

* Followed in close pursuit.

* On Saul's family see p. xxxi.

* The Philistines were making a special attack on Saul. His death or capture would mean complete victory for them.

* *Shooters, men with the bow.* May it not have been that skilled shots were told off to make a special aim at Saul? The giant king may have struck down all who came

a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

to close quarters. The archers shooting at a safe distance inflicted a fatal wound. So Harold fell at Hastings.

* Saul dreads falling alive into the hands of the Philistines, and calls upon his armourbearer to slay him.

* The usual epithet applied to the Philistines. It would be a great indignity for the Lord's anointed to fall into their hands.

me through, and ¹⁰abuse me. But his armourbearer ¹¹would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took ¹²a sword, and fell upon it. 5 And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he ¹³fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. 6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and ¹⁴all his men, that same day together. 7 And when the men of Israel that were ¹⁵on the other side of the valley, and ¹⁶they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

¹⁰ Maltreat and make sport of me, as they had made sport of Samson (Judg. xvi. 21-25).

¹¹ The armourbearer refused, he was afraid, since he was supposed to be answerable for the king's life.

¹³ His own sword. He puts the hilt firmly on the ground and throws his weight upon the point.

¹³ Either fearing for his own life, or in noble fidelity to Saul.

¹⁴ Probably his body guard, not all the host, for Abner at least escaped (1 Chron. x. 6 has "*all his house*"). So Harold, his brothers, and his house-carls perished at Hastings. Compare also the stand of the Scottish nobles round James IV. at Flodden.

¹⁵ On the side of the valley of Jezreel opposite the battle, *i.e.* the Israelites of the north.

¹⁶ Omitted in 1 Chron. x. 7. Ordinarily means the east of Jordan. May mean the district opposite to the battlefield in the direction of Jordan. If so, the passage is intelligible. All Israel fled, some to the north, some to the east over Jordan, abandoning their cities and leaving the whole plain of Esdraelon in possession of the Philistines.

In 2 Sam. i. 6-10 there is another account of the death of Saul. It is told by an Amalekite, who had fled to Ziklag direct from the battlefield to tell of the defeat of Israel and of the death of Saul and Jonathan.

According to his account he happened to come by accident upon Saul leaning upon his spear, while the Philistine chariots and horsemen were closing in around him. Saul perceived him, and learning that he was an Amalekite, called to him and said, "Slay me, for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me."

The Amalekite adds that he saw that Saul was incapable of resistance to the Philistines, so he complied with the king's request, and now brought Saul's crown and bracelet as a proof that the king was dead.

Clearly the story was false. The man had been plundering the slain, and had come across the dead body of Saul, robbed it of the royal crown and bracelet, and hastened to Ziklag to acquaint David of the fate of his persistent foe.

Desiring to curry favour with David, he represented himself as the actual slayer of Saul.

He met the reward of death, for David, instead of being grateful to him for having removed Saul out of his way, was indignant that he should have laid hands on the Lord's anointed, and ordered his instant death.

He well deserved his fate, for, if he had not murdered Saul, he had stripped him when dead.

The Burial of Saul and His Sons.

8 And it came to pass on ¹the morrow, when the Philistines came ²to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and ³sent into the land of the

¹ After the battle.

² The usual custom of stripping the dead of their armour. The armour was kept as trophies of the victory.

³ To announce the great victory to the nation.

Philistines round about, ⁴to publish it in the ⁵house of their idols, and among the people. ¹⁰ And they put his armour in the house of ⁶Ashtaroth : and they ⁷fastened his body to the wall of ⁸Beth-shan. ¹¹ And when the inhabitants of ⁹Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul ; ¹² All the valiant men ¹⁰arose, and went ¹¹all night, and ¹²took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and ¹³burnt them there. ¹³ And they took their bones, and buried them under ¹⁴a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

⁴ To declare the great news of the famous victory.

⁵ Their idol temples. They ascribed their triumph to their idols.

⁶ *The Ashtaroth* (p. xi.). Placed as a trophy of the victory. "This was doubtless the famous temple of Venus in Askelon, mentioned by Herodotus (I. 105) as the most ancient of all her temples." (S.C.)

⁷ That all might see the disgrace that had befallen Israel.

⁸ Intro. p. lxiii. Captured by the Philistines.

⁹ Intro. p. lxxiii.

¹⁰ Remembering how Saul had come to their aid against Nahash.

¹¹ They could easily go and return in one night.

¹² To save them from further dishonour.

¹² To prevent the Philistines again obtaining possession of them.

¹⁴ *The tree*, a well-known tree.

David removed the bones to Zelah, and buried them in the grave of Kish, *ie.* the family tomb (2 Sam. xxi. 12-14).

The time of full mourning: They paid due honour to Saul.

The Elegy of David Over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 19-27).

- 19 *The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places :
How are the mighty fallen !*
- 20 *Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon ;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.*
- 21 *Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings ;
For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.*
- 22 *From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.*
- 23 *Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided :
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.*
- 24 *Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.*
- 25 *How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !
O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.*
- 26 *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan :
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me :
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.*
- 27 *How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !*



PALESTINE ACCORDING TO TRIBES.

COMMENTS

ON THE

REVISED VERSION.

"The son of Zuph, an Ephrathite." (i. 1.)

An Ephrathite.

R.V. An Ephraimite.

Ephrathite may mean—

(1) An Ephraimite; or (2) an inhabitant of Ephratah, the ancient name of Bethlehem.

The R.V. removes the ambiguity. Elkanah was of the tribe of Levi, residing in the territory of Ephraim.

Mount Ephraim. (i. 1 and passim.)

R.V. The hill country of Ephraim.

The A.V. would make it appear that the district described is a single mountain or range. What is meant is the hilly district in the territory of Ephraim.

"And when the time was that Elkanah offered." (i. 4.)

The time was.

R.V. The day came.

Not at the time of the sacrifice, but at the stated day appointed for the feast.

'But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion.' (i. 5.)

A worthy portion.

R.V. A double portion.

The original signifies "one portion for two persons," *i.e.* a double portion, which Elkanah gave her because he loved her, to indicate that she was as dear to him as if she had borne him a child. The R.V. makes this clear. The eldest son received a double portion.

"Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord." (i. 9.)

A seat by a post.

R.V. His seat by the door-post.

The R.V. makes it clear—

(1) That Eli had a particular seat near the entrance to the tabernacle, where he probably administered justice, and transacted business.

(2) That some permanent building had been erected.

"For out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto." (i. 16.)

Grief.

R.V. Provocation.

The original signifies "provocation, or vexation arising from provocation," and evidently refers to the manner in which Peninnah had provoked Hannah.

"Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." (i. 28.)

Lent.

R.V. Granted.

Samuel was not "lent," but dedicated to a lifelong service at the tabernacle. The original states this clearly.

"He will keep the feet of his saints." (ii. 9.)

Saints.

R.V. Holy ones.

The original signifies those who are the objects of God's mercy, *i.e.* Israel, the covenant people of Jehovah. It is better to translate "chosen" "elect."

"And the wicked shall be silent in darkness." (ii. 9.)

Silent.

R.V. Put to silence.

The wicked, who oppress and persecute the righteous, will not merely be silent, but be put to silence, *i.e.* perish, in darkness, *i.e.* in adversity, when God withdraws the light of His grace, so that they fall into distress and calamity. (K.)

"The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces." (ii. 10.)

The adversaries of the Lord.

R.V. They that strive with the Lord.

The meaning is that all those who contend or fight against the Lord shall be destroyed.

"Also before they burnt the fat." (ii. 15.)

Also.

R.V. Yea.

A better translation is "*even*." The original marks strongly the enormity of the offence. To take of the sacrificial meal, that which did not fall to the priests' share, was a great scandal, but these wicked sons of Eli went further; they "*even*" took of the flesh before the fat had been burnt upon the altar, thus bringing the whole sacrifice into contempt (see note on the passage, p. 7).

"*The women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*" (ii. 22.)

R.V. That did service at the door of the tent of meeting.

The original, translated "*assembled*," (A.V.) should be rendered "*served*" in the sense of military duties. Hence these women performed some regular course of duties, but what these were it is impossible to say.

Tabernacle of the congregation, (A.V.), is always translated tent of meeting, (R.V.). "Congregation" is inadequate to describe what is meant. It was not merely the gathering of the worshippers, but the meeting of God with His people, to commune with them and make His word known to them.

Thus "meeting" conveys the two senses, viz.:

- (1) The people met together to worship God.
- (2) God met His people and held communication with them.

"*If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?*" (ii. 25.)

The Judge.

R.V. God.

The Hebrew is *Elohim*, God. Hence the change in the R.V. Whilst judges may be regarded as God's representatives on earth in deciding causes between man and man, still there are moral offences between man and man which do not come under human laws; these are arbitrated upon by God himself. Hence the change made by the R.V. includes all classes of offences between man and man.

Intreat=intercede. If a man offend against God, no third party can intervene as arbitrator or mediator.

This was true under the Old Covenant, but under the New Covenant Jesus Christ becomes the Mediator between God and man. "*If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.*" (1 John ii. 1-2.)

"*Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father?*" (ii. 27.)

Plainly appear.

R.V. Reveal myself.

The R.V. gives a more accurate description of God's revelation of himself to Moses and Aaron (see Ex. iv. 14 and 27, xii. 1 and 43).

"**To offer upon mine altar.**" (ii. 28.)

R.V. To go up unto mine altar.

The original signifies "*to ascend upon mine altar,*" i.e. to mount the steps leading up to the altar of burnt offering, and thus perform the sacrifices.

"And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation." (ii. 32.)

R.V. **And thou shalt behold the affliction of my habitation.**

The Vulgate gives "*rival*."

If we follow the A.V., the meaning is that a rival priest, not of the house of Eli, should take the place of his descendants in the priesthood at a time of the nation's prosperity.

This refers to the deposition of Abiathar (house of Eli) by Solomon in the early prosperous days of his reign (1 Kings ii. 27).

If we follow the R.V., the meaning is that, while the nation was prosperous, the house of God should be in distress or tribulation.

This actually took place, for whilst the nation was reviving under Samuel and Saul, the ark was not restored to Shiloh, and the tabernacle was removed from Shiloh to Nob, and later to Gibeon. Shiloh lost its position as the national sanctuary with the defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines and the capture of the ark.

"When I begin, I will also make an end." (iii. 12.)

R.V. **From the beginning even unto the end.**

Lit. "beginning and finishing it," *i.e.* will do the work thoroughly.

"Because his sons made themselves vile." (iii. 13.)

Made themselves vile.

R.V. **Did bring a curse upon themselves.**

Lit. "cursing themselves" = have made themselves accursed, or devoted to destruction.

"Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching." (iv. 13.)

A seat.

(also iv. 18.)

R.V. **His seat.**

Lit. upon his throne, = his chair of priestly state. He probably sat at the gate leading into the inner court of the tabernacle.

"And his eyes were dim, that he could not see." (iv. 15.)

Dim.

R.V. **Set.**

Eli was now totally blind. The phrase seems to express the fixed state of the blind eye, which is not affected by the light (S.C.).

"And smote them with emerods." (v. 6 and passim.)

Emerods.

R.V. **Tumours, margin** Plague boils.

The original clearly points out some form of swelling. Emerods is a corruption of hemorrhoids, or bleeding piles.

"Emerods in their secret parts" (v. 9) is best rendered "internal tumours." The R.V. has simply "tumours brake out upon them," which is perhaps the true reading.

"*Even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.*" (v. 6 and passim.)

Coasts.

R.V. Borders.

The original meaning of "coast" was a border generally, but the word is now applied to the sea coast only, so the R.V. substitutes a word conveying the modern signification.

"*And will set them to ear his ground.*" (viii. 12.)

R.V. "And he will set some to plow his ground."

"To ear" is an old English word, now obsolete, signifying to *plough* (see p. 122).

"*Peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.*" (ix. 6.)

R.V. Peradventure he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go.

Lit. "have gone and still go," *i.e.* the seer will be able to tell us which way we must take to attain the object of our journey.

"*Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear.*" (ix. 15.)

R.V. Now the Lord had revealed unto Samuel.

Lit. "had opened or uncovered his ear." The original expresses Jehovah as making a confidential communication to Samuel by whispering in his ear. To do this it would be necessary to push aside the head-dress or turban in order to whisper the secret. The R.V. translates by an equivalent expression, for Samuel knew of the approach of Saul by revelation from Jehovah.

"*This same shall reign over my people.*" (ix. 17.)

Reign.

R.V. Have authority.

The original conveys the idea of "restraint" or "control." The lax system prevalent in the times of the Judges, when each man was a law to himself and did what was right in his own eyes, was to come to an end. The people were now to settle down under the orderly government of a king, by whose authority the laws would be fixed. The R.V. makes this clear.

"*And on whom is all the desire of Israel?*" (ix. 20.)

R.V. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel?

The original does not signify that all eyes in Israel were set on Saul to make him king as the A.V. seems to imply, but that all the most desirable things in Israel would become Saul's when he was king. "The antithesis is between the asses and every desirable thing" (Schmidt). As Saul and his family would be enriched through the appointment of Saul as king, there was little cause for anxiety with respect to the loss of a few asses.

Parlour.

(ix. 22.)

Guest-Chamber.

The A.V. is an unfortunate rendering.

The word in the original is the same as that used to describe the chambers or cells of the priests attached to the temple (1 Chron. ix. 26).

In the present passage it signifies the cell or apartment prepared for the sacrificial meal.

"Therefore they enquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither." (x. 22.)

If the man should yet come thither.

R.V. Is there yet a man to come hither?

The Speaker's Commentary translates "*Is the man yet come hither,*" and explains "They wished to know whether Saul, on whom the lot had fallen, had come to Mizpeh on Samuel's summons or not."

The R.V. seems to imply that the whole of Kish's family had not come to Mizpeh.

The A.V. reads as if it was known that Saul had not come, and that the people inquired of God to see if it was his intention to come.

They inquired of God in order to learn where Saul was. There was no doubt as to his selection, but where was the man? The rendering in the Speaker's Commentary conveys this idea very clearly.

"Stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord." (xii. 7.)

Reason.

R.V. Plead.

The verbs rendered "stand still" and "reason" are used in a legal sense. The sentence is equivalent to "Stand up in the court, that I may appear as the advocate of Jehovah, plead his cause and state the case against you."

In his final address (chap. xii.) Samuel pictures a court of justice.

In the first part (xii. 3-5) he represents himself as the accused, calls upon the people as before Jehovah and the king, to mention any act of fraud or oppression on his part, if they can find any. They declare him innocent.

Samuel then reverses the position. He places the people at the bar, and comes forward himself as the advocate of Jehovah, rehearses the acts of Jehovah as protector and deliverer of his people, and condemns the people of ingratitude in rejecting Jehovah, and in choosing an earthly king in the place of God.

"Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel." (xiii. 1.)

R.V. Saul was (thirty) years old when he began to reign; and he reigned two years over Israel.

This verse is in reality the usual formula for announcing the commencement of a king's reign, stating the age of the king when he began to reign and the number of years that his reign lasted (see 2 Sam. ii. 10).

The numbers have fallen out.

We may read therefore "Saul was () years old when he began to reign, and he reigned () and two years over Israel."

The events related in this chapter and onwards cannot refer to the early days of Saul's reign, for we find Jonathan in the vigour of his manhood as a warrior. His son Mephibosheth, grandson of Saul, was only five years old at Saul's death (2 Sam. iv. 4).

Hence the events recorded in chapter xiii. and onwards must be incidents in the latter part of Saul's reign.

The intention of the sacred writer gives a clue to an explanation.

The historian is writing a history of the establishment of the monarchy. Though Saul was the first king, the monarchy was not permanently established till David's reign, when the kingdom was extended to the limits promised to Joshua, and the monarchy became hereditary.

So the historian has David chiefly in his mind, and relates only those portions of Saul's reign leading up to the history of David. This chapter contains the first notable instance of disobedience on the part of Saul.

Hence we have the rejection of Saul preparatory to the election of David.

Thus we see a reason why the historian passes over the earlier, and probably successful, portion of Saul's reign, and *now* proceeds to point out for us the causes of his fall.

"Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings." (xiii. 9.)

A burnt offering. Peace offerings. (also xiii. 12.)

R.V. The burnt offering. The peace offerings.

Saul called for *the* burnt offering and *the* peace offerings, which had been prepared and were awaiting the arrival of Samuel.

"Within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow." (xiv. 14.)

R.V. Within as it were half a furrow's length in an acre of land.

The ridge or ledge was evidently very narrow, for two could not fight abreast. Jonathan led, and as he struck a man down his armour-bearer despatched him.

Thus we may take it that the breadth of the ridge or ledge was about half the width of a furrow, and that the length of the ledge is determined by the length of one side of an acre.

The R.V. brings out the idea of the narrowness of the ledge. The A.V. would represent the struggle as taking place on a surface of half an acre. This is manifestly inconsistent with the narrative.

"And he said, Ye have transgressed."

(xiv. 33.)

Ye have transgressed.

R.V. Ye have dealt treacherously.

Better "*Ye have acted faithlessly,*" i.e. have not been faithful to the covenant. The Law forbade the eating of blood. "*Ye shall not eat anything with the blood*" (Lev. xix. 26), though the command dated from the days of Noah. "*But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat*" (Gen. ix. 4).

"Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect lot."

Give a perfect lot.

(xiv. 41.)

R.V. Shew the right.

The original is obscure. It may be translated "*Give the innocent,*" i.e. show who is innocent, or "*give innocence,*" i.e. show the truth.

"I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt."

(xv. 2.)

I remember.

R.V. I have marked, margin "*I will visit.*"

Lit. "I have looked upon," and when God looks upon a sin, he must punish it. The sense is that God had marked out Amalek for signal vengeance in remembrance of the attack on Israel in the Wilderness.

He laid wait for.

R.V. He set himself against.

Lit. "placed himself in his way." The A.V. conveys the idea that the Amalekites had laid an ambush for the Israelites. The R.V. brings out the correct idea, viz., that the Amalekites had fiercely opposed the passage of Israel through the Wilderness.

"And it grieved Samuel."

(xv. 11.)

R.V. And Samuel was wroth.

Much the same kind of anger as that which Jonah displayed when Nineveh was spared. Jonah had been sent to pronounce the doom on Nineveh, but the city repented and was spared. The prophet was angry that his prediction did not receive fulfilment.

So Samuel had anointed Saul to be king; he had indulged in bright visions of what the king would effect for the people. The rejection of Saul cast all his hopes to the ground.

"Behold, he set him up a place."

(xv. 12.)

A place.

R.V. A monument.

Saul had erected a monument or memorial of his victory at Carmel. Carmel in Judah would lie in the line of Saul's journey from the defeat of the Amalekites.

"*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.*" (xv. 23.)

Iniquity.

R.V. Idolatry.

Original—"Vanity" or "Emptiness," a word always applied to the heathen idols.

Idolatry.

R.V. Teraphim, *i.e.* the small household gods—the worship of images.

"*And a target of brass between his shoulders.*" (xvii. 6.)

Target.

R.V. Javelin.

The original signifies "javelin." The javelin must have been suspended by a strap slung over the shoulders. The giant would not require a shield to cover his back, for that was sufficiently protected by his coat of mail.

"*But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.*" (xvii. 15.)

Went and returned.

R.V. Went to and fro.

The tense of the verbs indicates that David went backwards and forwards from Saul to feed his father's sheep in Bethlehem, *i.e.* that he was at the court only when his services were required during Saul's fits of melancholy. Clearly he had not yet been appointed Saul's armourbearer as stated in xvi. 21.

"*And he came to the trench.*" (xvii. 20, see also xxvi. 5-7.)

Trench.

R.V. Place of the waggons.

Lit. The waggon rampart, a circle of waggons forming a rude fortification for the camp, equivalent to the system of forming a laager in South Africa.

"*And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage.*" (xvii. 22.)

Carriage.

R.V. Baggage.

In the A.V., "carriage" is used in the now obsolete sense of what is carried. The R.V. replaces by the modern word (see also p. 119).

"Until thou come to the valley."

(xvii. 52.)

The Valley.

R.V. Gal.

The Hebrew is "*gai*," the same word as rendered "valley" or "ravine" (xvii. 3). It is clear that the previously mentioned ravine cannot be the one referred to, for that lay between the two armies, and could not be in the line of pursuit.

If we follow A.V. and translate "valley," the reference must be to some valley in the land of the Philistines, which the army of the latter crossed and thus placed it between themselves and the pursuing Israelites.

The Septuagint reads "*Gath*" (compare the conclusion of the verse) and this is probably the correct reading.

The R.V. simply gives the Hebrew word, and thus shirks the difficulty.

"Thou shalt this day be my son in law in the one of the twain."

(xviii. 21.)

In the one of the twain.

R.V. A second time.

The Hebrew signifies "a second time" or "in a second way."

Saul had broken his first promise as regards Merab, and now offers David a second opportunity of becoming his son-in-law.

"And Samuel standing as appointed over them."

(xix. 20.)

As appointed over them.

R.V. As head over them.

Lit. "Overseer" or "Leader," *i.e.* Samuel was acting as conductor or leader of the inspired songs and dances.

"And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side."

(xx. 25.)

Arose.

R.V. Stood up.

A difficult passage. According to the A.V., Jonathan rose from his seat by the side of Saul and gave up the place to Abner. The R.V. may mean that Jonathan stood up, and signed to Abner to take the place next to Saul left vacant by the absence of David.

"And Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David." (xxi. 1.)

R.V. And Ahimelech came to meet David trembling.

The R.V. gives the literal translation, and correctly describes the agitation of Ahimelech. The sudden appearance of David the son-in-law of the king, without attendants, might well alarm the high priest, who must have been well aware of the strained relations between Saul and David, though ignorant that David was fleeing for his life.

"And the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel." (xxi. 5.)

R.V. Though it was but a common journey; how much more then to-day shall their vessels be holy.

In the *Speaker's Commentary* this passage is explained thus: "*And though this is the manner of common bread (i.e. though it is treating it like common bread to give it to me and my young men), yet surely to-day the bread in the vessel is holy (i.e. there is fresh shew-bread baked and put on the table in place of what you give us).*"

But Keil explains the passage as follows: "*And if it is an unholy way, i.e. the journey or enterprise undertaken by David and his young men, moreover, there is also the fact, that it becomes holy through the instrument, i.e. through me, the confidential servant of Saul, sent upon this important mission.*"

"Common," or unsanctified, must refer to the journey, and if we read "vessels," as in R.V., the passage may mean: "And when we came out the vessels (bags or wallets) of the young men were holy (undefiled); how much more then to-day, though it is a common journey (i.e. with no religious purpose) will these vessels be holy (i.e. if undefiled three days ago, surely they are more likely to be undefiled to-day, and so cannot pollute the bread)."

If we substitute "instrument" for "vessel," the passage may read: "And if our journey be common (i.e. with no religious purpose), yet it will become sanctified by the instrument." Instrument meaning either David, the person chosen by Saul, or Ahimelech, who had power to sanction the proceedings.

"Doeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants of Saul." (xxii. 9.)

Set over.

R.V. Stood by.

Doeg was the head of the herdmen of Saul (p. lxxxviii.), but it is improbable that Saul would place an Edomite, a foreigner, over the princes of his own tribe, Benjamin. The R.V. adopts another reading, which describes Doeg as being present at the time, and standing amongst the other servants of the king.

"And goeth at thy bidding." (xxii. 14.)

R.V. Is taken into thy council.

The R.V. correctly renders the original. David was one of Saul's Privy Councillors.

"And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him." (xxii. 17.)

Footmen.

R.V. Guard.

Lit. "runners." Described as running before the chariot of the king (viii. 11). (See note p. 126.) They were present at the time as a guard to the king.

"And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him." (xxiii. 9.)

Secretly practised.

R.V. Devised.

The R.V. correctly omits "*secretly*." The original signifies "was forging," "was preparing."

"Them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling." (xxv. 29.)

Out of the middle.

R.V. From the hollow.

Lit. "cup," = the hollow or cavity in which the stone was placed for the purpose of slinging.

"And his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster." (xxvi. 7.)

At his bolster.

(also xxvi. 11.)
(also xxvi. 16.)

R.V. At his head.

Lit. "at the place where his head was." The R.V. translates correctly.

The incident is in accord both with ancient and modern custom (see p. xxv.).

"Let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time." (xxvi. 8.)

At once.

R.V. At one stroke.

Abishai is not asking for immediate permission, but to be allowed to strike *only one blow*, and pledges himself to do that so effectually that there will be no need for a second stroke.

"Whither have ye made a road to day?" (xxvii. 10.)

Road.

R.V. Raid.

By the use of a modern word the R.V. makes it clear that David had gone upon a marauding expedition, a plundering foray for booty.

"To bring tidings to Gath." (xxvii. 11.)

Tidings.

R.V. Them.

"The sense rather is 'to bring them to Gath' as captives and slaves" (S.C.).

"I saw gods ascending out of the earth." (xxviii. 13.)

Gods.

R.V. A god.

Heb. Elohim, the plural form. If we take the literal rendering we must believe that more than one form appeared, but the question of Saul, "What form is he of?" and the reply of the woman, "an old man cometh up," clearly shew that only *one* apparition was seen. "The word Elohim here refers not to a Devil but simply a supernatural appearance, because its *character* was not earthly"—a celestial, heavenly, or spiritual being.

"Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth." (xxviii. 20.)

All along.

R.V. His full length.

Lit. "The fulness of his stature." Hitherto he had been kneeling. Smitten with terror, and weak through want of food, (v. 20) he falls full length upon the ground.

The R.V. makes this clear.

"Canst thou bring me down to this company?" (xxx. 15.)

Company.

Troop.

The original describes a marauding band, *i.e.* a troop of plundering Arabs.

"And he was sore wounded of the archers." (xxx. 3.)

Sore wounded of.

R.V. Greatly distressed by reason of.

Lit. "he was greatly alarmed at them." His fear was that he would be wounded by them, and so, unable to escape, fall alive into the hands of the Philistines. In 2 Sam. i. 9, Saul is represented as saying "anguish is come upon me." The Hebrew translated "anguish" is best rendered "cramp" or "giddiness." If this be the true rendering, we can see that Saul, either through physical distress or anguish of mind, was incapable of resistance.

"And buried them under a tree at Jabesh." (xxxi. 13.)

A tree.

R.V. The tamarisk tree.

Lit. "the tamarisk," evidently a well-known tree at Jabesh, and still standing when the narrative was written. Chronicles has "oak," (R.V.) "terebinth" in margin (1 Chron. x. 12).

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED.

(The Editor would acknowledge his obligation to the "Bible Word-Book.")

Abroad = away from home, out of the house; not necessarily out of the country. "*They went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad*" (ix. 26) = out of the house.

Abuse = misuse, deceive, mock. "*Lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me*" (xxx. 4) = illtreat me for their amusement.

Against = over against, opposite to. "*Samuel came out against them*" (ix. 14) = met Saul and his servant.

Agone. The old form of the past participle of the verb "to go," now usually written "ago." "*Because three days agoe I fell sick*" (xxx. 13) = ago.

Along = at full length. "*Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth*" (xxviii. 20).

Ark. *Lit.* chest. (Lat. *arca*, a chest.) It is generally applied exclusively to Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant.

Anointing. The rites of inauguration into the three typical offices of prophet, priest and king:

1. *Prophet*. Elijah is bidden to anoint Elisha as his successor (1 Kings xix. 16). Prophets are called "anointed" (1 Chron. xvi. 22; Ps. cv. 15).
2. *Priests*. At the institution of the Levitical priesthood, all the priests were anointed to their offices, the sons of Aaron as well as Aaron himself (Ex. xl. 15; Num. iii. 3), but afterwards the rite appears to have been reserved for the high priest alone.
3. *Kings*. Anointing was the principal ceremony in the inauguration of the Jewish king, who, from the ceremony, is constantly described as "*the Lord's anointed.*"

Instances of anointing kings are:

1. *Saul*, at his first meeting with Samuel (x. 1).
2. *David*, three times:
 - (1) Privately at Bethlehem by Samuel before the death of Saul (xvi. 1-13).
 - (2) At Hebron, as king over Judah (2 Sam. ii. 4).
 - (3) At Hebron, as king over the whole nation (2 Sam. v. 3).
3. *Absalom*, when he claimed to have deposed David and to have become king (2 Sam. xix. 10).
4. *Solomon*, as successor to David, and as establishing his right to the kingdom in preference to Adonijah (1 Kings i. 39).
5. *Joash*, when the usurpation of Athaliah was terminated (2 Kings xi. 12).

6. *Jehoahaz*, anointed in succession to Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 30). He was not the eldest son of Josiah.
7. *Jehu*, at Ramoth-gilead, by the prophet sent by Elisha for that purpose (2 Kings ix. 3). Jehu was anointed in fulfilment of the command given to Elijah at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 16), and for the purpose of putting an end to the dynasty of Ahab and the worship of Baal.

[Besides Jewish kings, we read that Hazael was to be anointed king over Syria (1 Kings xix. 15). Cyrus is also called the Lord's anointed, as having been raised by God to the throne for the special purpose of delivering the Jews out of captivity (Is. xiv. 1).]

It will be noted that all the instances recorded above are connected either with a new dynasty, or when there was a dispute as to the succession.

The title, "the Lord's anointed," describes the king as the visible representative of Jehovah. It is this that causes David to refuse to do violence to Saul. "*Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?*" (xxvi. 9).

The title is found only in the Books of Samuel and the Psalms. It is not found in the Books of Kings. The division of the kingdom had destroyed the theocratic character of the monarchy,

Our Lord is designated the Messiah or the Christ—the anointed one, as uniting in himself the three offices of *Prophet, Priest and King*.

Artillery. (Lat. *Ars*, used in later Latin to signify an implement.) *Artillaria* = a workshop, then implements, particularly implements of war. The word was used of missile weapons long before the invention of gunpowder. "*Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad*" (xx. 40) = his bow and quiver.

Assay. (Low Lat. *exagium*, a test; Lat. *exigere*, to weigh; Old Fr. *asaier*, to try, to put to the proof.) "*He assayed to go*" (xvii. 39) = made trial, endeavoured.

Avoid. (Fr. *vider*, to make empty, clear out.) Intransitively = to depart, escape. "*David avoided out of his presence twice*" (xviii. 11) = slipped away, escaped.

Belial. This word is given in the A.V. as if it were a proper name, "*daughter of Belial*" (i. 16), "*men of Belial*" (xxx. 22). The word, however, signifies *worthlessness*. Hence, *daughter*, or *son*, or *man* of Belial signifies a worthless, good-for-nothing person.

Bottle = a skin-bottle (see i. 24; xxv. 18).

"Leathern bottles made of the skins of goats, oxen and buffaloes, turned inside out, clipped with the scissors, washed and rubbed over with warm mineral tar or naphtha. The openings were closed with a sort of wooden bung, except at the feet, where they are only tied with a cord. The wine is drawn out at one of the feet merely by opening and closing the noose."—(Kitto.)

Carriage. "*And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage*" (xvii. 22). Baggage, luggage, requiring to be carried; not "the act of carrying," or "the vehicle whereon anything is carried."

Causeless. "*Thou hast shed blood causeless*" (xxv. 31) = needlessly.

Champion. "*And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines*" (xvii. 4.). The Hebrew signifies "*the man between the two camps*," i.e. "one who did not fight in the ranks like an ordinary soldier, but who came forth into the space between the hostile camps to challenge the mightiest man of his enemies to come and fight him."—(S.C.)

The word "champion" is derived from the Lat. *campus*, a field; and as Goliath came down one slope of the valley separating the Israelites and Philistines, the A.V. rightly terms him "champion."

Chiefest. (xxi. 7.) An instance of the double use of the superlative very common in writers of the Elizabethan age, e.g.,

"This was the *most unkindest* cut of all."

—Shakespeare, *Julius Cæsar*, III. ii. 187.

Churlish. "*The man was churlish and evil in his doings*" (xxv. 3) = hard, harsh, austere. Churl (A.S. *ceorl*, man) originally meant nothing more than "rustic," "countryman," "serf." As rustics are usually more unintelligent and unmannerly than townfolk, the word very early received the signification of "rude," "boorish," and was also applied to express the rough, repulsive habits of the miser.

Coast = border region. From Lat. *costa* = rib or side. through Fr. *coste*. Formerly a "border" generally, though now applied to the seaside only.

Common. "*There is no common bread under mine hand*" (xxi. 4). Here used in the technical sense of "profane," "polluted," "unconsecrated," as defined by the ceremonial laws of the Jews. Ahimelech intimates to David that he has no other bread than the consecrated loaves of the shewbread.

Confectionaries. "*And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries*" (viii. 13). (Lat. *confectionarius*.) The original form of *confectioner*. In the passage referred to the word signifies one who makes compounds of spices and perfumes, i.e. a perfumer, and not in the modern sense of a compounder of sweetstuffs.

Congregation. The technical term for the national assembly of Israel. The Greek word used means an assembly called out from others by the summons of a herald. The Israelites were a nation *called out* by God from the rest of the world.

This national assembly was summoned by Samuel to Mizpeh for the election of a king (x. 17).

Joshua (Num. xxvii. 18-23), David (2 Sam. v. 1), Solomon (1 Chron. xxix. 20-22), were thus elected to their respective offices.

Conversant. (Lat. *conversari*, to dwell or abide with) = to associate with. "*As long as we were conversant with them*" (xxv. 15), i.e. as long as we associated or lived along with them.

Covert. (Fr. *couvrir*, to cover) = shelter, hiding-place. Now spelt *cover*, and applied only to a hiding place for game. "*She came down by the covert of the hill*" (xxv. 20).

Abigail was apparently riding down a defile or glen between two hills, which is called "the secret place," as being hidden from sight.

Cruse. (Dan. *kruus*, a cup or drinking vessel) = a small cup or jar. "*The cruse of water from Saul's bolster*" (xxvi. 12).

Cubit. (Jewish *ammah*), a measure of length, the distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger. It is very difficult to arrive at its exact dimensions, as there is mention of several kinds of cubits. The greatest estimate is between nineteen and twenty inches; and the least rather less than a foot.

For the purpose of general calculation, eighteen inches is the length agreed upon.

Cunning. (A. S. *cunnan*, to know.) As substantive = skill; as adjective = skilful. David is described as "*a cunning player on an harp*" (xvi. 16), i.e. a skilful player.

Discomfit. Discomfiture. (Lat. *dis*, apart; *configere*, to fasten together.) Primarily signifies to unfasten, hence to break up into the parts of which it was originally composed; to break up, disperse an army so that it ceases to be an organized body, and becomes a mob of individuals seeking their personal safety.

The word is nearly always applied to panics arising from supernatural causes.

Diviner. One who predicts future events by means of omens. "*The Philistines called for the priests and the diviners*" (vi. 2).

Dogs. The wild street dogs of the East are regarded as unclean animals, and are only useful as scavengers in clearing away refuse and offal. So the dogs ate Jezebel in the streets of Jezreel (2 Kings ix. 33-36). This fate was threatened to the descendants of Jeroboam (1 Kings xiv. 11), of Baasha (1 Kings xvi. 4), to Ahab and to Jezebel and to their descendants (1 Kings xxi. 19-24).

The terms dog, dead dog, dog's head, were used as terms of reproach.

1. Goliath addressed David, "*Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?*" (1 Sam xvii. 43).
2. David describes himself in terms of humility to Saul when hunted by that monarch, "*After whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog?*" (1 Sam. xxiv. 14).
3. Abner to Ishbosheth. "*Am I a dog's head?*" (2 Sam. iii. 8).
4. Mephibosheth describes himself to David in humility. "*What is thy servant that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?*" (2 Sam. ix. 8).
5. Abishai when Shimei cursed David. "*Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?*" (2 Sam. xvi. 9).

6. **Hazael** to Elisha, when Elisha prophesied that he would put Benhadad to death and ascend the throne of Syria. "*Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?*" (2 Kings viii. 13).

So in the **Revelation**. "*For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers,*" etc. (Rev. xxii. 15).

Dowry. The presents made by the bridegroom to the bride and her parents, not as in modern times the property brought by the bride to her husband.

Ear = (Lat. *arare*, to plough) to plough. "*And will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest*" (viii. 12).
 "He that *ears* my land spares my team" (Shakespeare, *All's Well*, I. iii. 37).

Elders, or old men, were the representatives of the nation.

They are first mentioned as acting in concert as a political body at the time of the Exodus. "*Moses came and called for the elders of the people*" (Ex. xix. 7). They retained their position under all the political changes which the Jews underwent, viz.—

- (a) **Under Joshua**. "*Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel*" (Josh. xxiv. 1).
- (b) **Under the Judges**. "*When the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said*" (1 Sam. iv. 3).
- (c) **Under the Kings**. "*And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel*" (2 Sam. xvii. 4).
- (d) **During the Captivity**. "*The letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives*" (Jer. xxix. 1).
- (e) **After the return**. "*But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease*" (Ezra v. 5).

Notices in I. Samuel:

1. On the return of the defeated army of Israel unto the camp, "*the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to day before the Philistines?*" (iv. 3).
2. "*All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together,*" and came to Ramah to Samuel to demand a king (viii. 4).

Ephah. A measure of capacity (dry measure) equivalent, according to Josephus, to nearly nine gallons, but according to Rabbinical calculations, not quite four and a-half gallons.

Ephod. A sacred vestment, originally reserved for the high priest, but afterwards worn by the other priests.

The Ephod consisted of two parts, one of which covered the back, and the other the breast and upper parts of the body. The two parts were joined at the shoulder with two large onyx stones, on each of which was engraved the names of six of the tribes of Israel.

With the Ephod the priest wore a girdle of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twisted linen round the waist.

Familiar spirit. (Lat. *famulus*, a servant.) A spirit or devil who was supposed to be in attendance upon the old necromancers, obey their commands, and discharge the commissions like servants. "A woman that hath a familiar spirit" (xxviii. 7). *Lit.* a woman mistress or owner of *Ob*. The word *Ob* means a *skin-bottle*, and is always rendered *ventriloquist* in the Septuagint, and hence appears to mean the distended belly of the ventriloquist. (S.C.)

Girding up the loins. The Easterns wear a long tunic fastened at the waist by a girdle. The tunic is tucked into the girdle when men desire to move quickly or to work hard. So the expression, "*gird up the loins*," describes the action of thus tucking in the long skirt of the tunic. So Elijah "*girded up his loins*," that his limbs might be free, and thus he ran before the chariot of Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel (1 Kings xviii. 46).

The figure is employed in the song of Hannah, "*and they that stumbled are girded with strength*" (ii. 4).

Gorget. (Fr. *gorge*, the throat.) A piece of defensive armour for the throat. "*Gorget*" is the marginal rendering of "*target*" (xvii. 6).

Greaves. (Fr. *grève*, the shin of the leg.) Plates of brass, or other defensive covering, for the front of the leg. Goliath had "*greaves of brass upon his legs*" (xvii. 6).

Harp. (Heb. *hinnôr*.) A stringed instrument, the national musical instrument of the Hebrews, the exact form of which is unknown, being variously described as resembling the modern harp, or a guitar, or in the form of the Greek letter delta.

Hebrew. A name derived from :

- (1) *Either Eber* (Gen. x. 21, 24, 25), signifying the descendants of Eber.
- (2) *Or*, the Hebrew word "*eber*" = beyond, and originally applied to Abraham, because he came unto Canaan "from beyond the flood," *i.e.* from the further side of the river Euphrates.

Hebrews is a name of the Israelites specially distinguished from foreigners, *e.g.* :

- (1) Used by the Israelites when alluding to themselves to foreigners. Miriam asks the daughter of Pharaoh if she shall fetch "*a nurse of the Hebrew women*" (Ex. ii. 7).
Moses speaks to Pharaoh in the name of the "*Lord God of the Hebrews*" (Ex. iii. 18).
- (2) Used by foreigners in speaking of the Israelites.
The Philistines demand, "*What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?*" (iv. 6).
The Philistine princes object to the presence of David and his men in the expedition against Saul. "*What do these Hebrews here?*" (xxix. 3).
- (3) Generally, in distinguishing Israelites from foreigners. Saul summoned the people with a trumpet, "*Let the Hebrews hear*" (xiii. 3).
Again, "*And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan*" (xiii. 7).

Hold = a fortress or stronghold.

Horn. Used metaphorically to denote *strength* and *honour*. "*Mine horn is exalted in the Lord*" (ii. 1). "*Exalt the horn of his anointed*" (ii. 10).

"*To exalt the horn,*" means "to raise to a position of power or honour."

House. Eastern houses are built with flat roofs, used for various purposes, e.g.:

Prayer. Peter at Joppa "*went up upon the housetop to pray*" (Acts x. 9).

Proclamations. "*What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops*" (St. Matt. x. 27).

Promenades. After supper David "*walked upon the roof of the king's house*" (2 Sam. xi. 2).

For domestic purposes, e.g. spreading flax, drying corn, etc.

Sleeping Places, as being cool during the summer season.

It is not uncommon for a house to be built on the wall of a city.

Notices in I. Samuel:

1. Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house (ix. 25). Here they could indulge in private conversation, whilst the people of the city would see the honour shown by Samuel to Saul.

Saul appears to have slept upon the housetop, and to have been called down by Samuel early in the morning (ix. 26).

2. Michal let David down through a window so that he escaped from the messengers sent by Saul to secure his person (xix. 12). Probably the house was on the wall of the city, and thus David could easily gain the open country.

Lucre. (Lat. *lucrum*.) Gain; only used in Scripture in the sense of "ill-gotten gain." The sons of Samuel are said to have "*turned aside after lucre*" (viii. 3).

Man of God. A name that appears to have been the ordinary designation of a prophet. It is a title frequently assigned to Elijah and Elisha.

The appellation first appears with reference to the angel who appeared to Manoah and his wife, announcing the birth of Samson (Judges xiii. 6).

The doom on Eli's house was first pronounced by a Man of God (ii. 27).

Meat. This word is never used in the A.V. in the exclusive meaning of "flesh," to which it is restricted in modern usage. It is always used in the general sense of "food," denoting all kinds of victuals except bread and drink.

Mourning and Woe, Signs of.

1. *Rending Garments.*

Instances in I. Samuel:

The messenger who brought to Eli the tidings of the defeat of the Israelites, the capture of the ark, and the death of his two sons Hophni and Phinehas (iv. 12).

Other Instances :

1. Reuben, when he found that Joseph was not in the pit (Gen. xxxvii. 29).
2. Jacob, when his sons showed him the blood-stained coat of Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 34).
3. The brethren of Joseph, when the cup was found in Benjamin's sack (Gen. xlv. 13).
4. Joshua, after the rout of the Israelites before Ai (Josh. vii. 6).
5. Jephthah, when his daughter met him (Judges xi. 35).
6. The messenger who brought to David at Ziklag the tidings of the death of Saul on Mount Gilboa (2 Sam. i. 2).
7. Job, on hearing the death of his children (Job i. 20).
8. Job's friends, when they visited him (Job ii. 12).
9. Ezra, when he learnt of the mixed marriages and idolatry of the people (Ezra ix. 3).

The action also often signified "horror" at some intelligence which shocked by its enormity. Instances are :

1. Hezekiah, on hearing the speech of Rab-shakeh (2 Kings xviii. 37).
2. Mordecai, when he learnt the plot of Haman for the destruction of the Jews (Esther iv. 1).
3. The men of Samaria, at the murder of Gedaliah by Ishmael (Jer. xli. 5).
4. The High Priest, at the alleged blasphemy of our Lord when He claimed to be the Son of God (St. Matt. xxvi. 65).

2. Dust on the head.**Instances in I. Samuel :**

The young man of Benjamin who brought to Eli the tidings of the defeat of the Israelites and the loss of the Ark (iv. 12).

Other instances :

1. Joshua and the elders lay before the Ark till the evening, with their clothes rent and dust on their heads, after the disaster before Ai (Josh. vii. 6).
2. The Amalekite who came to David with the news of the defeat on Mount Gilboa and the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 2).
3. Tamar put ashes upon her head as a sign of mourning (2 Sam. xiii. 19).
4. Hushai, in grief at the departure of David from Jerusalem in the revolt of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 32).
5. The prophet, when he rebuked Ahab for letting Benhadad escape so lightly (1 Kings xx. 38).

New Moon. The first day of the lunar month, and always observed as a holy day. Special sacrifices were offered on that day, and trumpets were blown at the offering of these special sacrifices. It was an occasion for state banquets. Saul held a feast at Gibeah on the new moon, at which feast he had intended to seize David (xx. 24-34). It was a day of rest, there being a cessation of all trade and handicraft.

Part = share. "*As his part (share) is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part (share) be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part (share) alike*" (xxx. 24).

Passage. (Fr. *passage*.) A pass over a mountain. "*The passage of Michmash*" (xiii. 23) "*The passages of Jordan*" (Judg. xii. 6) signifies the fords of the river.

Peradventure. (Lat. *per*, through, by; *adventura*, that which is about to happen.) *Lit.* by chance, or adventure = perchance, perhaps. "*Peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go*" (ix. 6).

Pipe. (Heb. *châlél*), a kind of flute. The pipe is generally associated with the tabret.

Psaltery. (Heb. *nebel*), a stringed instrument resembling the guitar.

Quit. (Fr. *quitter*.) "To quit oneself" = "to acquit oneself," is to behave, to discharge a duty, and so to free or acquit oneself from the obligation of it. "*Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines*" (iv. 9) = behave.

Rehearse. (Fr. *rehercer*, to harrow over again) = to tell, narrate, recte; not necessarily with the notion of repetition, which originally belonged to the word. "*And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul*" (xvii. 31) = repeated, *i.e.* told his exact words.

Rereward. A corruption of the Fr. *arriere-garde* = rearguard. Guard and ward are doublets.

Road. (A. S. *rād*, a riding.) A riding, especially a plundering excursion, a raid. "*Whither have ye made a road to day?*" (xxvii. 10).

Runners. We find mention of several runners well known for their speed and ability to run long distances. Asahel was specially celebrated for his fleetness of foot (2 Sam. ii. 18). They were employed:

1. *To carry tidings, e.g.—*

- (a) A man of Benjamin ran to Shiloh, and brought to Eli the news of the defeat of Israel and the capture of the Ark (iv. 12).
- (b) Cush and Ahimaaz ran from the field of battle, and brought to David the tidings of the defeat and death of Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 19-31).

2. *As running footmen before the chariots of great men, e.g.—*

- (a) Samuel tells the Israelites that the king will take some of them to "*run before his chariots*" (viii. 11).
- (b) Absalom, in aiming at royal state, had "*fifty men to run before him*" (2 Sam. xv. 1).
- (c) Adonijah assumed quasi-royal state like Absalom, and had "*fifty men to run before him*" (1 Kings i. 5).
- (d) When Elijah ran before Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel, it was no doubt as a royal runner in front of the chariot to do honour to the king (1 Kings xviii. 46).

3. *As guards and executioners—*

- (a) Saul commanded "*the footmen that stood about him*" to slay Ahimelech and the priests (1 Sam. xxii. 17). The word "footmen" in the original means "*runners*," and signifies those runners before the chariot, who also acted as guard to the king.

- (b) The "guard" mentioned as protecting Joash in the Temple (2 Kings xi. 6). Properly = *runners*. They put Athaliah to death at the command of Jehoiada (2 Kings xi. 15, 16).

Scrabble. To scratch or make marks, to scrawl. David "*scrabbled on the doors of the gate*" at Gath (xxi. 13).

Scrip. David "*chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip*" (xvii. 40) = a wallet or small bag.

"Though not with bag and baggage, yet with *scrip* and scrippage."

—Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, III. ii. 171.

There are two words "*scrip*" in the English language :

- (1) *Scrip* (Icl. *skreppa*, a purse : Low Lat. *scrippum*. The root is found in to *crab*, that which chinks together) = something drawn up or puckered ; a small bag or wallet.
- (2) *Scrip* (Lat. *scriptum*, something written) = a small writing, a certificate or schedule. The former word is obsolete.

Seah. A Jewish measure of capacity = one-third of an ephah, and estimated at about three gallons.

Set by = to value, esteem. David's "*name was much set by*" (xviii. 30). David declares to Saul, when he had spared his life in the camp, "*Thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes*" (xxvi. 24).

Shekel. A Jewish standard of value by weight. A shekel of silver was equivalent to about 2s. 6d. of our money : 3,000 shekels made a talent.

Sheol. Rendered "*grave*" in ii. 6. "*He bringeth down to the grave,*" and in other places "*hell,*" or "*pit,*" denotes the abode of departed spirits.

Shewbread. "*The loaves of setting forth.*" Twelve cakes (one for each tribe) of fine flour were placed every Sabbath on the table of shewbread in the Holy Place. They were replaced by fresh loaves on the succeeding Sabbath. The priests alone ate the shewbread.

Sling. The favourite weapon of the shepherds of Syria. It is not necessary to describe the weapon. It was used by the Israelites as a most effective weapon for light-armed troops. The various tribesmen were well skilled in the use of the sling, and so readily furnished a body of light-armed troops. Sling stones were selected for their smoothness, and were either carried in a bag, or were heaped up at the feet of the slinger.

The Benjamites are described as being particularly skilful in the use of the sling. There were seven hundred of them, left-handed, who could sling at a hair and not miss (Judges xx. 16), whilst a contingent of Benjamites joined David at Ziklag armed with bows, and able to shoot arrows or sling stones equally well with either hand (1 Chron. xii. 2).

The sling was used to advantage in attacking towns (see 2 Kings iii. 25).

We need not wonder, then, at David's skill in the use of the sling. His choice of this weapon against Goliath was a judicious one. He

could pelt Goliath at a distance, and rely upon his activity to keep out of reach of the weapons of the giant. The heavy-armed, bulky Philistine had no chance to get to close quarters with the agile, light-armed David.

Span. A Jewish measure of length, the distance between the extremities of the thumb and the little finger in the extended hand, and generally reckoned as half a cubit.

Stuff=goods or furniture. Achan is said to have hidden the stolen goods in his "*own stuff*" (Josh. vii. 11).

When Saul was chosen to be king he was found hidden "*among the stuff*" (x. 22). After the pursuit of the Amalekites who had plundered Ziklag, David made it a rule that he "*that tarrieth by the stuff*," i.e. who is one of the baggage guard, should share equally in the spoil with them who went "*down to the battle*" (xxx. 24).

Tabret. (Heb. *tôph*) or timbrel = a tambourine.

Tale. (A. S. *taln*, a number) = that which is told or counted. "*They gave them in full tale to the king*" (xviii. 27) = number.

Teraphim. (Used only in the plural.) These were images connected with magic and divination rather than worship, and were most probably of the nature of a fetish. By some they have been considered as similar to the Penates of the Romans, i.e. household gods, securing domestic happiness. They were images in human form, either the whole figure, or the head and shoulders only.

Michal put an image (teraphim) in David's bed to deceive the messengers of Saul (xix. 13).

The Lord of Hosts. *Jehovah Sabaoth.* A title of Jehovah which occurs for the first time in the account of Elkanah's yearly visits to Shiloh (i. 3.)

It is not found once in the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Job, the books of Solomon, Ezekiel or Daniel.

It is found eleven times in the two Books of Samuel; it is used upwards of sixty times by Isaiah, about eighty times by Jeremiah, and by the minor prophets, especially Zechariah and Malachi, also in Kings and 1 Chronicles.

Hosts = armies, and is translated:

(1) Earthly hosts.

(2) Heavenly hosts, sometimes meaning the celestial bodies, sun, moon and stars, or celestial beings, i.e. angels.

It is significant that the title first appears in the book which is concerned mainly with the foundation of the monarchy.

It may imply therefore:

1. *To Israel.*

(a). An assertion of the invisible universal sovereignty of Jehovah, a bulwark against the danger that the visible earthly monarchy should cause the Israelites to forget the invisible Jehovah, still their king, though they had in a sense rejected Him, nay, more than *their* king, the supreme ruler of the universe.

(b). The monarchy could be firmly established only by victory over the enemies of Israel. The title was therefore a pledge to the covenant people that the Lord of Hosts would be with their armies. David went to meet Goliath in the name of "the Lord of Hosts" (xvii. 45).

2. *To heathen nations.* A refutation of the idea that the God of Israel was simply the national deity of that particular nation.

Threshing. The threshing floor was a level spot in the open, with the earth beaten down hard and flat.

The threshing was done in three ways :

1. By oxen, by simply treading out the grain.
2. By dragging a rude apparatus of logs over the threshing floor, by which the grain was crushed out and the straw broken.
3. By the flail, used only for small seeds, or by poor persons.

Urim and Thummim. What these were we have no means of deciding. The words mean "Light and Perfection." They were put in the breastplate of judgment worn by the High Priest. "*Thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart*" (Ex. xxviii 30). The breastplate was worn over the ephod.

All that we know for certain is that they were worn by the priest when inquiring of the Lord.

The favourite theory is that the Urim and Thummim were identical with the twelve stones on which were engraved the names of the tribes of Israel, and that the answer was given by the illuminations of the letters which were to make up the reply.

The simplest solution is that an answer was given by the word of the Lord to the high priest, when, clothed with the ephod and breastplate, he had inquired of the Lord.

Instances of inquiring of the Lord in I. Samuel :

1. Saul consults Ahiah when about to engage the Philistines (xiv. 3-18).
2. David inquires of the Lord before going to the rescue of the men of Keilah (xxiii. 2).
3. David inquires to learn if the men of Keilah would act treacherously, and deliver him up to Saul (xxiii. 12).
4. David inquires whether he will be successful in the pursuit of the Amalekites who had sacked Ziklag (xxx. 8).

In Ezra we find the Tirshatha declaring that the priests who had lost their genealogy must not take part in any priestly duties till "*there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim*" (Ezra ii. 63), so that inquiry of the Lord might be made. It would seem that Zerubbabel deemed that the loss would be only temporary.

Wax. (A.S. *weawan*) = to grow, to increase. The eyes of Eli "*began to wax dim*" (iii. 2).

Whit. (A.S. *wiht*, a thing.) "*And Samuel told him every whit*" (iii. 18) = everything.

PASSAGES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

The Song of Hannah compared with the Magnificat and Psalm cxlii.

THE SONG OF HANNAH (1 Sam. ii. 1-10).

- 1 My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
Mine horn is exalted in the Lord :
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies ;
Because I rejoice in thy salvation.
- 2 There is none holy as the Lord :
For there is none beside thee ;
Neither is there any rock like our God.
- 3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly ;
Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth :
For the Lord is a man of knowledge,
And by him actions are weighed.
- 4 The bows of the mighty men are broken,
And they that stumbled are girded with
strength.
- 5 They that were full have hired out them-
selves for bread ;
And they that were hungry ceased :
So that the barren hath born seven ;
And she that hath many children is waxed
feeble.
- 6 The Lord killeth and maketh alive :
He bringeth down to the grave, and
bringeth up.
- 7 The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich :
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.
- 8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth up the beggar from the dung-
hill,
To set them among princes,
And to make them inherit the throne of
glory :
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
And he hath set the world upon them.
- 9 He will keep the feet of his saints,
And the wicked shall be silent in dark-
ness ;
For by strength shall no man prevail.
- 10 The adversaries of the Lord shall be
broken to pieces ;
Out of heaven shall he thunder upon
them :
The Lord shall judge the ends of the
earth ;
And he shall give strength unto his king,
And exalt the horn of his anointed.

THE MAGNIFICAT (St. Luke i. 46-55).

- 46 My soul doth magnify the Lord,
- 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my
Saviour.
- 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of
his handmaiden
For, behold, from henceforth all genera-
tions shall call me blessed.
- 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me
great things ;
And holy is his name.
- 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him
From generation to generation,
- 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm ;
He hath scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts.
- 52 He hath put down the mighty from their
seats,
And exalted them of low degree.
- 53 He hath filled the hungry with good
things ;
And the rich he hath sent empty away.
- 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel,
In remembrance of his mercy ;
- 55 As he spake to our fathers,
To Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

PSALM CXLII. 7-9.

- 7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth the needy out of the dung-
hill ;
- 8 That he may set him with princes,
Even with the princes of his people.
- 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep
house,
And to be a joyful mother of children.

The Fall of Shiloh. PSALM LXXVIII. 56-61.

- 56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God,
And kept not his testimonies ;
57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers :
They were turned aside like a deceitful bow.
58 For they provoked him to anger with their high places,
And moved him to jealousy with their graven images.
59 When God heard this, he was wroth,
And greatly abhorred Israel :
- 60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,
The tent which he placed among men ;
61 And delivered his strength into captivity,
And his glory into the enemy's hand.
62 He gave his people over also unto the sword ;
And was wroth with his inheritance.
63 The fire consumed their young men ;
And their maidens were not given to marriage.
64 Their priests fell by the sword ;
And their widows made no lamentation.

From this we can gather the magnitude of the disaster and the completeness of the sack of Shiloh. From *ver.* 63 it would appear that the Philistines actually burnt the Israelite captives alive.

The custom of the priests of Dagon not to tread on the threshold of Dagon (v. 5).

"In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their master's houses with violence" (Zeph i. 9).

The Ark at Kirjath-jearim (vi. 21).

"Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah :
We found it in the fields of the wood" (Pa. cxxxii. 6).

Kirjath-jearim = *the city of the woods*. The word translated "wood" in Ps. cxxxii. is *jaar*, the singular of "jearim."

David's call whilst keeping his father's flocks (xvi. 11).

"He chose David also his servant,
And took him from the sheep-folds :
From following the ewes great with young he brought him
To feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.
So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart ;
And guided them by the skilfulness of his hands" (Ps. lxxviii. 70-72).

David's escape from his house by Michal's assistance (xix. 11, 12).

The title of Ps. lix. is ". . . when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him."
Verses 6, 14, 15 seem to infer that David was in danger of being assassinated had he ventured into the streets.

David's escape from Gath on his first visit to Achish (xxi. 13-15).

The title of Ps. xxxiv. is "*A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Achish ; who drove him away, and he departed.*"
There is, however, no reference to the event in the Psalm.

Doeg the Edomite (xxii. 9, etc.).

The title of Ps. lii. is "*A Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.*"

Verses 1-4 are clearly descriptive of Doeg :
"Why boasteth thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man ?
The goodness of God endureth continually.
Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs ;
Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.
Thou lovest evil more than good ;
And lying rather than to speak righteousness.
Thou lovest all devouring words,
O thou deceitful tongue" (Ps. lii. 1-4).

The treachery of the Ziphites.

The title of Psalm liv. is "*A Psalm of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us ?*"

David's enemies, who calumniated him to Saul (xxiv. 9).

The title of Ps. vii. is "*Shigaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.*"

Compare Ps. vii. 3, 4.

"O Lord my God, if I have done this;
If there be iniquity in my hands;
If I have rewarded evil unto him that
was at peace with me;
(Yea, I have delivered him that without
cause is mine adversary)."

With I. Sam. xxiv. 11.

"There is neither evil nor transgression in
mine hand, and I have not sinned against
thee; yet thou huest my soul to take
it."

Also Ps. vii. 8.

"The Lord shall judge the people:
Judge me, O Lord, according to my
righteousness, and according to mine
integrity that is in me."

With I. Sam. xxiv. 15.

"The Lord therefore be judge, and judge
between me and thee, and see, and plead
my cause, and deliver me out of thine
hand."

Ps. xxxv. commences with "*Plead my cause, O Lord,*" and may refer to the same occasion.

Wanderings generally, and his escape from Saul.

The title of Ps. xviii. is ". . . *the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.*"

The title of Ps. lvii. is "*When he fled from Saul in the cave.*"

The title of Ps. lxi. is "*A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.*"

The title of Ps. cxlii. is "*A Prayer when he was in the cave.*" See also title to Ps. lvii.

The Death of Saul on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. xxxi. 1-13).

The account of the battle of Gilboa is found almost verbatim in 1 Chron. x. 1-12.

The principal differences are—

I. SAM. XXXI.

- e. 6. "So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together."

To reconcile the difference we must assume that "*all his men*" and "*all his house*" are intended to describe Saul's bodyguard, the men of Benjamin. Certainly all Saul's family did not perish at Gilboa, for Abner and Ishbosheth survived, the former probably in command of another portion of the army, and the latter probably never on the field at all.

- e. 7. "And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled."

"*The other side Jordan*" usually means "*the east of Jordan.*" But it is also used of the west of Jordan, and must be so understood here, for the men of Jabesh-gilead did not hesitate to rescue the bones of Saul and his sons. Abner established Ishbosheth as king on the east of Jordan.

The clause is omitted in 1 Chron. x. 7 (see above).

We may assume that this victory gave the Philistines command of the north of Palestine, but that the country east of Jordan retained its independence.

- e. 9. "To publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people."

I. CHRON. X.

- e. 6. "So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together."

- e. 7. "And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled."

- e. 12, 13. "And came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh."

- e. 9. "To carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people."

- e. 12. "And brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh."

Chronicles omits to mention the act of cremation, and specifies the tree, "the oak" (R.V. terebinth), some well-known tree at Jabesh.

Chronicles adds:

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;

"And enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse" (1 Chron. x. 13, 14).

ILLUSTRATIVE PASSAGES.

ALLUSIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. David's visit to Nob (xxi. 1-9).

This incident of David's receiving the shewbread from Ahimelech is quoted by our Lord in defence of the action of his disciples in plucking the ears of corn as they passed through the corn-fields (St. Matt. xii. 1-8, St. Mark ii. 23-28, St. Luke vi. 1-5).

The lesson taught is that mere ceremonial enactments may be infringed to meet the necessities of man.

In St. Mark ii. 26, it is stated that the occurrence took place "*in the days of Abiathar the high priest.*"

The priest who gave the bread was Ahimelech, father of Abiathar.

Explanations offered for the mention of Abiathar by our Lord are :

- (1) That the more famous name is recorded.
- (2) That Abiathar may have been coadjutor with his father.
- (3) That as one of David's supporters, Abiathar may have been the principal agent in allowing him to take the shewbread.

2. The growth of Samuel described in words used of our Lord.

Samuel.

"And the child Samuel grew before the Lord" (ii. 21).

"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men" (ii. 26).

Our Lord.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (St. Luke ii. 52).

3. David a "man after God's own heart" (xiii. 14).

"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will" (Acts xiii. 22). St. Paul's speech at Antioch in Pisidia.

Samuel's rebuke of Saul.

"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (xv. 22).

Compare with :

1. Our Lord's reply to the Pharisees when they found fault with His disciples for plucking the ears of corn. "*If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless*" (St. Matt. xii. 7).
2. Our Lord's reply to the Pharisees when they found fault with His disciples for eating with publicans and sinners. "*Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*" (St. Matt. ix. 13).
3. The reply of the scribe to Jesus. He admits that the law of love is more "*than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices*" (St. Mark xii. 33).

See also Hosea vi. 6, quoted above by our Lord, "*For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*"

Allusions to Samuel as a Prophet.

"All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after" (Acts iii. 24). St. Peter addressing the people in Solomon's porch after the miracle of curing the cripple, lame from his birth.

"And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet" (Acts xiii. 20). St. Paul in his speech at Antioch in Pisidia.

The reign of Saul,

"God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years" (Acts xiii. 21).

Prophecy.

Prophecy in the sense of *forth-telling*, and of the expression of religious feeling under inspiration is illustrated by the case of the daughters of Philip, the evangelist, who "*had four daughters, virgins, which did prophecy*" (Acts xxi. 9).

APPENDIX.

I.

Error in the number of those slain at Beth-shemesh for looking into the Ark (vi. 19).

The number 50,070 is obviously a corruption. There could not possibly have been 50,000 inhabitants in the district round Beth-shemesh, nor was there time for so large a number to have assembled from other parts.

It is probable that the words "50,000 men" are no part of the sacred text, but have crept in from the margin. In support of this theory we may remark:

1. In the original, 70 stands before 50,000. This is very unusual.
2. The omission of the copula "and" before the second number, which is altogether unparalleled.
3. The words are wanting in certain MSS.
4. Josephus speaks of *seventy* only as being killed.
5. The *people* are still there to lament over the death of 50,070.

"A like instance of the intrusion of a number into the text is found in Nehemiah vii. 70, where the number 500 is erroneously added to the 30 (or 33) priests' garments given by Nehemiah, to make up one hundred with the sixty-seven given by the congregation" (S.C.).

Letters were originally used to express numbers, and marginal notes were often added to explain the number. Following Kennicott we may suggest that the letter *ain*, which represents 70, was rightly interpreted in the margin by some commentators, whilst others confused it with the letter *nun*, which with a dot over it represents 50,000.

Later, both numbers were inserted from the margin into the text. (See S.O.)

The suggestion that 70 were slain out of 50,000 is negatived for the reason assigned above, that it was not possible for 50,000 to be assembled at Beth-shemesh. Granted that over 50,000 were present, the bringing down the number of the slain to 70 merely softens the severity of the visitation, and does not remove the difficulty.

II.

On the difficulty of reconciling, xvi. 14-23 (David's introduction to the Court of Saul) with xvii. 55-58 (Saul's inquiry after David's parentage) and other sections of xvii. and xviii.

In the Vatican copy of the Septuagint we find the following passages omitted:

- (1) xvii. 12-31. David's meeting and conversation with his brothers in the camp of Israel.
- (2) xvii. 55-xviii. 5. Saul's inquiry after David through Abner, and Jonathan's friendship for David.

If we can accept the Vatican copy as the true version of the original narrative, every difficulty vanishes. We get a consistent account of David's life with Saul.

The stages are:

1. Minstrel soothing Saul in his malady.
2. Winning the esteem of Saul, and becoming his armourbearer.
3. Accompanying Saul with the army as his armourbearer.
4. Challenging and slaying Goliath.
5. His success celebrated in song by the women.
6. His subsequent exploits win the heart of the people, and excite the love of Michal.

This is the view taken by the Cambridge Editors, but it appears to shirk the difficulty by assuming that the passages omitted in the Septuagint are interpolations that have crept into the text.

"Such an assumption," says Keil, "cannot be sustained on the mere authority of the Septuagint version; since the arbitrary manner in which the translators of this version made omissions or additions at pleasure is obvious to anyone."

It is far more probable that the translators omitted the sections in order to present a consistent narrative, than that the sections crept into the Hebrew text as interpolations.

Probable Explanation.

If we omit xvi. 21, 22, "*And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer; And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight,*" from the account of

David's first visit to Saul, there is no difficulty in accounting for Saul's failure to recognize David in his encounter with Goliath, for :

- (1) Saul, in his melancholy, and in a darkened tent, might well be affected by the music whilst taking little notice of the player.
- (2) David went to and fro from Bethlehem (see xvii. 15. Revised Version), *i.e.* was not permanently at Saul's court whilst playing to the afflicted king. He appears to have been sent for on the outbreaks of the malady.
He could not, then, at this time have been appointed Saul's armour-bearer.
- (3) The visits of David would be known only to Saul's personal servants. These, as attendants on the king in his illness, may have been persons not needed in camp, and consequently were not present at the battle.
- (4) At such visits to Saul's house David would be very unlikely to meet Abner.
- (5) May not Saul have recovered from his temporary insanity, and may not some time have elapsed since David's services as musician were called for?
If this be so, an interval of one or two years would be sufficient to work such a change in David's appearance that may account for his not being recognised in the camp.

The omission of xvi. 21, 22, as observed above, gives an intelligible solution to the difficulty.

But there is no need to omit these verses. We have only to suppose that the narrator, well aware of the ultimate sequence of David's first visit to Saul, and of his skill in music, anticipates his actual appointment as armourbearer, which did not really take place till after his victory over Goliath, and so records it in connection with the first visit.

"It is quite consistent with the genius of Hebrew narrative for the narrator to pursue his theme to its ultimate consequences in respect to the leading idea of his narrative, and then to return to fill up the details which had been omitted" (S.O.).

III.

To what period of Saul's reign must we assign the War with the Philistines recorded in Chapters xiii. and xiv. ?

On the text of xiii. 1, see comment on Revised Version, p. 110.

Facts that bear upon the question are

1. Saul at his meeting with Samuel is described as "*a choice young man*" (ix. 2).
2. In this war with the Philistines, Jonathan appears as a famous soldier, and entrusted by Saul with the command of a division (xiii. 2).
3. Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was only five years old at the death of Jonathan (2 Sam. iv. 4).

Inferences from the narrative are :

1. That Saul was not likely to exhibit a spirit of disobedience to Samuel at the very commencement of his reign.
2. The friendship of Jonathan with David gives the impression that there was no very great difference between their ages.
3. David was thirty years old when he began to reign. Allow him to be twenty years of age at his combat with Goliath, and we get a definite period of ten years from that incident to the close of Saul's reign.

Conclusion.

That, as Saul was a young man at the time of his election, whilst Jonathan at the time of the Philistine War was a trusted general, some fifteen or twenty years of Saul's reign are passed over in silence.

This period gives time :

- (1) For his wars summarized in xiv. 47.
- (2) For his self-will to develop. Regal authority and royal state turned his head, and he came to regard himself as superior to both prophet and priest, thus setting his kingship as predominate to the word of Jehovah (through his prophet Samuel), and to the worship of Jehovah (in the persons of His priests).

If we place this war at the commencement of Saul's reign, we must accept that he was at least forty years old when he began to reign. The age of Jonathan absolutely compels this. And we must also assign a very short period, not more than twenty years, to his reign, for if Saul reigned forty years Jonathan would be at least fifty years of age

when he formed his friendship for David. Such an attachment as that described in Scripture between Jonathan and David would be ridiculously sentimental if their ages were fifty years and twenty years respectively.

CUSTOMS EXPLAINED.

I.

The Cliffs about Engedi are called "the rocks of the wild goats" (xxiv. 2).

Thomson, "Land and the Book," p. 603, writes: "From them, doubtless, the place received its name, En-gedi ('Ain Jidy)—the Fountain of the Goats. Now, it is a remarkable, pleasing circumstance that these bold and hardy dwellers upon the rocks are still found in the ravines about 'Ain Jidy. I have seen the skin and powerful horns of one that was shot there by an Arab hunter."

II.

The Sheep-cotes at the Cave of Engedi (xxiv. 3).

Thomson, "Land and the Book," p. 603, says of Engedi: "There were sheep-cotes there in connection with the cave into which Saul retired. I have seen hundreds of them around the mouths of caverns, and, indeed, there is scarcely a cave in the land whose location will admit of being thus occupied but has such a 'cote' in front of it generally made by piling loose stones into a circular wall, which is covered with thorn, as a further protection against robbers and wild beasts."

III.

Partridge Hunting. "*For the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge on the mountains*" (xxvi. 20).

"The emeers and feudal chiefs of the country hunt them with the hawk . . . I have been out on the mountains to see them hunt, and it is a most exciting scene. The emeers sit on their horses holding the birds on their wrists, and the woods are filled with their retainers, heating about and shouting, to start up and drive toward them the poor partridges. When near enough, the falcon is launched from the hand, and swoops down upon his victim like an eagle hasting to the prey. After he has struck his quarry, the falcon flies a short distance and lights on the ground, amid the redoubled shouts of the sportsmen. The keeper darts forward, secures both, cuts the throat of the partridge, and allows his captor to suck its blood. This is his reward . . . I do not know whether or not the Jews in ancient days were acquainted with falconry, but David complains that Saul hunted for his blood as one doth hunt for a partridge in the mountains; and this hunting of the same bird on these mountains, and giving their *blood* to the hawk, reminds one of the sad complaint of the persecuted son of Jesse" (Thomson, "The Land and the Book," p. 209).

According to Tristram, "Natural History of the Bible," p. 225: "David alludes to the mode of chase practised now as of old, where the partridge continuously chased was at length, when fatigued, knocked down by sticks thrown along the ground. It must be remembered that both the species of partridge common in the Holy Land, unlike our bird, endeavour to save themselves by running in preference to flight, unless when suddenly started; that they are not inhabitants of plains or cornfields, but of rocky hill-sides."

Student's Notes.
