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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
1 SAMUEL

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS

THIS and the three following books were formerly termed the *first*, *second*, *third*, and *fourth books of Kings*, and the two books of *Samuel* made in ancient times but one; the separation which has taken place seems to have been done without reason or necessity. These books are, properly speaking, a continuation of the book of *Judges*, as they give us an account of the remaining judges of Israel, down to the election of Saul; and of all the kings of Israel and Judah to the Babylonish captivity.

Of this book, called the first book of Samuel, the following are the contents: The birth and education of Samuel; the high priesthood of Eli; the Philistines attack the Israelites, overthrow them with a terrible slaughter, take the ark of the Lord, and set it up in the temple of their god Dagon; they are visited with Divine judgments, and are obliged to send back the ark with offerings and presents; Samuel, long acknowledged as a prophet of the Lord, takes the government of the people. Under his wise and pious administration, the affairs of Israel become re-established, and the Philistines are subdued. The sons of Samuel, who principally administered the secular concerns of the kingdom, acting unworthily, the people desire to have a *king*, who should be supreme, both in civil and military affairs. Samuel, after expostulations, yields to their entreaties; and, under the direction of God, Saul the son of Kish, whilst seeking the lost asses of his father, is met by the prophet, and anointed king over Israel. This man, not conducting himself in the government according to the direction of God, is rejected, and David the son of Jesse anointed king in his place, though Saul continues still in the government. This person soon becomes advantageously known to Israel by his single combat with a gigantic Philistine chief, called *Goliath*, whom he slays; on which the Israelites attack the Philistines, and give them a total overthrow. Saul, envious of David's popularity, seeks his destruction; he is in consequence obliged to escape for his life, and take refuge sometimes among the Moabites, sometimes among the Philistines, and sometimes in the caves of the mountains of Judah, everywhere pursued by Saul, and everywhere visibly protected by the Lord. At last Saul, being pressed by the Philistines, and finding that the Lord had forsaken him, had recourse to a witch that dwelt

at En-dor, whom he consulted relative to the issue of the present war with the Philistines; he loses the battle, and being sorely wounded, and his three sons slain, he falls on his own sword, and expires on Mount Gilboa. The Philistines find his body, and the bodies of his three sons, among the slain; they cut off Saul's head, and affix the bodies to the walls of Beth-shan. The men of Jabesh-gilead, hearing this, go by night, and take the bodies from the walls of Beth-shan, bring them to Jabesh, burn them there, bury the bones, and mourn over their fallen king, fasting seven days. Thus concludes the first book of Samuel.

Concerning the *author* of these books there have been various conjectures. Because, in most of the Hebrew copies, they bear the name of *Samuel*, as a running title, it has been generally supposed that *he* was the author. But his name does not appear to have been anciently prefixed to these books, at least in those copies used by the Greek interpreters, commonly called the *Septuagint*, as they simply term each βασιλειων. The *History* or *Book of Kingdoms*. The *Chaldee* has no inscription. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* call each The *Book of Samuel the Prophet*; and the *Vulgate*, The *Book of Samuel*, simply. The Jews, in *general*, believe that *Samuel* is the author of the first twenty-seven chapters of this book, which contain the history of his own life and government, and what respects Saul and David during that time. The remaining four chapters they suppose were added by the prophets Gad and Nathan. This opinion is founded on what is said ~~1~~¹ **Chronicles 29:29**: *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.* Others suppose the books to be more recent than the persons already named, but that they were compiled out of their *memoirs*.

But who was the compiler? Some of the most learned among the Jews suppose it to have been *Jeremiah* the prophet, and that the style bears a near resemblance to his prophecies. That they were the work of a more recent author than Samuel, &c., *Grotius* thinks evident from this circumstance, that the names of the *months* are comparatively *modern*, and were not known among the ancient Jews. Others have attributed them to David; others, to Hezekiah; and others, to Ezra the scribe, on his return from the Babylonish captivity.

Calmet's opinion is as probable as any, viz., "That these books were written by the same hand, though composed out of the memoirs left by

persons of that time; and that the compiler has generally used the same terms he found in those memoirs, adding here and there something of his own by way of illustration.” The equality of the *style*, the frequent eulogiums on the character of Samuel, the connection of the materials, particular quotations, and remarks on certain events, are, he thinks, proofs sufficiently clear of what he assumes. These books contain remarks or expressions which could only proceed from a *contemporary* author, and others which are evidences of a much *later* age.

1. For instance, we read, ^{<0001>}**1 Samuel 3:1**, *The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision*; i.e., in the days of Eli, the high priest: hence it is evident that the author lived in times in which prophecy was *more common*; which, in fact, it was after Samuel, under David, and the succeeding kings of Israel and Judah.

2. Again, in the time of the author of this book, *Beth-el* was called *Beth-aven*, ^{<0036>}**1 Samuel 13:5**, which name was given to it in derision *after* Jeroboam had placed there his golden calves.

3. Again, it is said, ^{<0068>}**1 Samuel 6:18**, that the ark of the Lord was set down in the field of *Joshua the Beth-shemite, where it remained to the time of this author*; and yet, in ^{<0075>}**1 Samuel 7:15**, he speaks of Samuel as being already dead: *And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life*.

4. It is not natural to suppose that Samuel would have spoken of himself as is done ^{<0026>}**1 Samuel 2:26**: *And the child Samuel grew, and was in favour both with the Lord and with men*; but if he were *dead* when this book was written, any author might have added this with the strictest propriety.

5. In ^{<0276>}**1 Samuel 27:6**, it is said that Achish gave Ziklag to David, *Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth to the kings of Judah unto this day*. This is a proof that when this book was written the kingdoms of Judah and Israel were *separated*; and that, although the tribe of Simeon belonged to the kings of *Israel*, yet *Ziklag*, which was in that tribe, remained in the hands of the kings of *Judah*.

Here, therefore, are proofs that this book contains matters which must have been written by a *contemporary* author; and others which could not have been inserted but in times *much posterior*. These seeming contradictions are reconciled by the hypothesis that the books were compiled, by a comparatively recent author, out of materials of a much

earlier date, the author not changing many of the expressions which he found in those ancient documents.

Several other proofs might be here adduced to support this opinion; but as the reader will find them noticed in the places where they occur, it is not necessary to repeat them here. Those who wish to see the subject farther discussed, may consult *Calmet*. We may rest satisfied with these *three* things: 1. That the books of Samuel were constructed out of original and authentic documents. 2. That the compiler was not contemporary with the facts he narrates. And, 3. That both the author and time in which he compiled his history, though comparatively more recent than the facts themselves, are nevertheless both *uncertain*.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

- Year from the Creation, 2833.
- Year before the Incarnation, 1171.
- Year before the first Olympiad, 395.
- Year before the building of Rome, 418.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3543.
- Year of the Dionysian Period, 351.
- Cycle of the Sun, 15.
- Cycle of the Moon, 9.

CHAPTER 1

Some account of Elkanah and his two wives, Peninnah and Hannah, 1, 2. His annual worship at Shiloh and the portions he gave at such times to his wives, 3-5. Hannah, being barren, is reproached by Peninnah, especially in their going up to Shiloh; at which she is sorely grieved, 6, 7. Elkanah comforts her, 8. Her prayer and vow in the temple, that if God would give her a son, she would consecrate him to His service, 9-11. Eli, the high priest, indistinctly hearing her pray, charges her with being drunk, 12-14. Her defence of her conduct, 15, 16. Eli, undeceived, blesses her; on which she takes courage, 17, 18. Hannah and Elkanah return home; she conceives, bears a son, and calls him Samuel, 19, 20. Elkanah and his family go again to Shiloh to worship; but Hannah stays at home to nurse her child, purposing, as soon as he is weaned, to go and offer him to the Lord, according to her vow, 21-23. When weaned, she takes him to Shiloh, presents her child to Eli to be consecrated to the Lord, and offers three bullocks, an ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, for his consecration, 24-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. Ramathaim-zophim] Literally, *the two high places of the watchman*; these were, no doubt, two contiguous hills, on which watchtowers were built, and in which watchmen kept continual guard for the safety of the country and which afterwards gave name to the place.

Verse 2. He had two wives] The custom of those times permitted polygamy; but wherever there was more than *one wife*, we find the peace of the family greatly disturbed by it.

The name of the one was Hannah] **hnj** *Channah*, which signifies *fixed* or *settled*, and *the other hnnp Peninnah*, which signifies a *jewel* or *pearl*.

Verse 3. Went up out of his city yearly to worship] As the ark was at Shiloh, *there* was the temple of God, and thither all the males were bound by the law to go once a year, on each of the great national festivals: viz., *the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles*.

The Lord of hosts] **twabx hwhy** *Yehovah tsebaoth, Jehovah of armies*. As all the heavenly bodies were called the *hosts of heaven*, **μymvh abx tseba hashshamayim**, Jehovah being called Lord of this host showed that he was their Maker and Governor; and consequently *He*, not *they*, was the proper object of religious worship. The *sun, moon, planets, and stars*, were the highest objects of religious worship to the heathens in general. The Jewish religion, teaching the knowledge of a Being who was the Lord of all these, showed at once its superiority to all that heathenism could boast. This is the *first place* where *Lord of hosts* is mentioned in the Bible; and this is so much in the style of the prophets *Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c.*, that it gives some weight to the supposition that this book was written by a person who lived *in* or *after* the times of these prophets. See the *preface*.

Verse 4. He gave-portions] The sacrifices which were made were probably *peace-offerings*, of which the *blood* was poured out at the foot of the altar; the *fat* was burnt on the fire; the *breast* and *right shoulder* were the portion of the priest, and the *rest* belonged to him who made the offering; on it he and his family feasted, each receiving his *portion*; and to these feasts God commands them to invite the *Levite, the poor, the widow, and the orphan*, ^{<[516]>} **Deuteronomy 16:11**.

Verse 5. Unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion] The Hebrew here is very obscure, **μyπα tj a hnm ^ty** *yitten manah achath appayim; he gave her one portion of two faces*; which the Syriac renders, *he gave her one DOUBLE PART*; and the *Chaldee, he gave her one CHOSEN part*; the *Arabic* is nearly the same; the *Vulgate Annæ autem dedit unam partem tristis, but to Anna he being sorrowful gave one part*. As the *shew-bread* that was presented to the Lord was called **μyπρ μj |** *lechem panim, the bread of faces*, because it was placed before the *face* or *appearances* of the Lord; probably this was called **μyπα hnm** *manah appayim*, because it was the portion that belonged to, or was placed *before*, the person who

had offered the sacrifice. On this ground it might be said that Elkanah gave Hannah *his own portion* or a part of that which was placed *before himself*. Whatever it was, it was intended as a proof of his especial love to her; *for*, it is added, *he loved Hannah*.

Verse 6. And her adversary] That is, Peninnah.

Provoked her sore] Was constantly striving to irritate and vex her, *to make her fret*-to make her discontented with her lot, because the Lord had denied her children.

Verse 7. And as he did so year by year] As the whole family went up to Shiloh to the annual festivals, Peninnah had both *sons* and *daughters* to accompany her, ^{<0004>}**1 Samuel 1:4**, but Hannah had none; and Peninnah took this opportunity particularly to twit Hannah with her barrenness, by making an ostentatious exhibition of her children.

Therefore she wept] She was greatly distressed, because it was a great reproach to a woman among the Jews to be barren; because, say some, every one hoped that the *Messiah* should spring from her line.

Verse 8. Amos not I better to thee than ten sons?] TEN, a certain for an uncertain number. Is not my especial affection to thee better than all the comfort thou couldst gain, even from a numerous family?

Verse 9. Eli-sat upon a seat] askh I [al hakkisse, upon the throne, i.e., of judgment; for he was then *judge* of Israel.

By a post of the temple of the Lord.] I think this is the first place where **hwhy I kyh** *heychal Yehovah*, “temple of Jehovah,” is mentioned. This gives room for a strong suspicion that the books of Samuel were not compiled *till the first temple was built*, or *after the days of Solomon*. After this the word *temple* is frequent in the books of Kings, Chronicles, and in the prophets. Perhaps those *Psalms* in which this word occurs were, like many others in the *Psalms*, not of David’s composition; some of them were evidently made long after his time.

Verse 11. I will give him unto the Lord] Samuel, as a descendant of the house of *Levi*, was the Lord’s property from *twenty-five* years of age till *fifty*; but the vow here implies that he should be consecrated to the Lord from his infancy to his death, and that he should not only act as a *Levite*, but as a *Nazarite*, on whose head no razor should pass.

Verse 13. Spake in her heart; only her lips moved] She prayed; her whole heart was engaged: and though she spake not with an audible voice, yet her lips formed themselves according to the pronunciation of the words which her *heart* uttered.

Verse 15. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink] Neither wine nor inebriating drink has been *poured out unto me*; but I have *poured out my soul unto the Lord*. There is a great deal of delicacy and point in this vindication.

Verse 16. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial] *ynp l*
Ētma ta ^tt l a l [yl b tb al titten eth amathecha liphney bath
Beliyael; ‘Put not thy handmaiden before the faces of a daughter of Belial.’
 “If I am a drunkard, and strive by the most execrable hypocrisy (praying in the house of God) to cover my iniquity, then I am the chief of the daughters of Belial.” Or, “Give not thy handmaid (to reproach) before the faces of the daughters of Belial.” Several of *these* probably attended there for the purposes of prostitution and gain; for it is said, ^{<09122>}**1 Samuel 2:22**, that Eli’s sons lay with the women at the door of the tabernacle, though this may refer to the women who kept the door.

Verse 17. Grant thee thy petition] He was satisfied he had formed a wrong judgment, and by it had added to the distress of one already sufficiently distressed.

The fact that Eli supposed her to be *drunken*, and the other of the conduct of Eli’s sons already mentioned, prove that religion was at this time at a very low ebb in Shiloh; for it seems *drunken women* did come to the place, and *lewd women* were to be found there.

Verse 18. Let thine handmaid find grace] Continue to think favourably of me, and to pray for me.

Verse 20. Called his name Samuel] As she gave this name to her son because she had asked him of the Lord, the word *l awmv Shemuel* must be here considerably contracted; if it express this sentiment, the component parts of it are the following: *l am l wav shaul meEl*, “asked of God.’ This name would put both the mother and the son in continual remembrance of the Divine interposition at his birth. See on ^{<09128>}**1 Samuel 1:28**.

Verse 21. The man Elkanah and all his house] He and the whole of his family, Hannah and her child excepted, who purposed not to go up to Shiloh till her son was old enough to be employed in the Divine service.

And his vow] Probably he had also made some vow to the Lord on the occasion of his wife's prayer and vow; in which, from his love to her, he could not be less interested than herself.

Verse 23. Until thou have weaned him] On the nature of this *weaning*, and the time in which it was usually done, the reader will be pleased to refer to **Clarke's note on "^{<01208>}Genesis 21:8"**.

The Lord establish his word.] Or, *may the Lord establish his word*-preserve the child, cause him to grow up, and make him a blessing to Israel.

Verse 24. With three bullocks] The *Septuagint*, the *Syriac*, and the *Arabic*, read, *a bullock of three years old*; and this is probably correct, because we read, ^{<0025>}**1 Samuel 1:25**, that they slew *ta rph eth happar*, THE *bullock*. We hear of no more, and we know that a *bullock* or *heifer* of *three years old* was ordinarily used, see ^{<0159>}**Genesis 15:9**.

One ephah of flour] Seven *gallons and a half*.

A bottle of wine] *yy l bn nebel yayin*, a *skin full of wine*. Their bottles for wine and fluids in general were made out of skins of goats, stripped off without being cut up; the places whence the legs were extracted sewed up, as also the lower part; and the top tied. **See Clarke's notes on "^{<01214>}Genesis 21:14"**, and "^{<01917>}Matthew 9:17". These three things, the *ox*, the *flour*, and the *wine*, probably constituted the *consecration-offering*.

Verse 26. As thy soul liveth] As sure as thou art a living soul, so surely am I the person who stood by thee here praying.

Verse 28. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord] There is here a continual reference to her *vow*, and to the *words* which she used in making that *vow*.

The word *Samuel*, as we have already seen, is a contraction of the words *I am I wav Shaul meEl*, that is, *asked or lent of God*; for his mother said, ^{<0027>}**1 Samuel 1:27**, *The Lord hath given me my petition, which ytl av SHAALTI*, I ASKED of him. In ^{<0028>}**1 Samuel 1:28** she says: *hwlyl I wcv*

awh hu SHAUL *layhouah*, he shall be LENT unto the Lord: here we find the verb is the same; and it is remarked by grammarians that **l av** *shaal*, he asked, making in the participle *pahul l wav* *shaul*, ASKED, in the conjugation *hiphil* signifies to lend; therefore, says his mother, ^{<00128>}**1 Samuel 1:28**,

hwyl whytl avh HISHILTIHU *layhovah*, I have LENT him to the Lord. This twofold meaning of the Hebrew root is not only followed by our translators, but also by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Syriac*.

And he worshipped the Lord there.] Instead of **wj tvyw** *vaiyishtachu*, HE worshipped, **wwj tvyw** *vaiyishtachavu*, and THEY worshipped, is the reading of six of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., of some copies of the *Septuagint*, and of the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*.

This and the following chapter are *connected* in most copies of the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* thus: *And Anna worshipped, and said, My soul is strengthened in the Lord, &c.* It is very likely that the whole passage, from the beginning of ver. 26 to the end of ver. 10 of the ensuing chapter, { ^{<00126>}**1 Samuel 1:26-2:10**, } contains the words of Hannah *alone*; and that even the clause, *He worshipped the Lord there*, should be, *And she worshipped the Lord there*, and prayed, and said, &c. Indeed this latter clause is wanting in the *Polyglot Septuagint*, as I have stated above.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 2

Hannah's prophetic hymn, 1-10. Samuel ministers to the Lord, 11. The abominable conduct of Eli's sons, 12-17. Farther account of Samuel, and of the Divine blessing on Elkanah and Hannah, 18-21. Eli's reprehensible remissness towards his sons in not restraining them in their great profligacy, 22-26. The message of God to Eli, and the prophecy of the downfall of his family, and slaughter of his wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas, 27-36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. And Hannah prayed, and said] The *Chaldee* very properly says, *And Hannah prayed in the spirit of prophecy*; for indeed the whole of this prayer, or as it may be properly called *oracular declaration*, is a piece of regular prophecy, every part of it having respect to the future, and perhaps not a little of it declaratory of the Messiah's kingdom.

Dr. *Hales* has some very good observations on this prophetic song.

“This admirable hymn excels in simplicity of composition, closeness of connection, and uniformity of sentiment; breathing the pious effusions of a devout mind, deeply impressed with a conviction of God's mercies to herself in particular, and of his providential government of the world in general; exalting the poor in spirit or the humble-minded, and abasing the rich and the arrogant; rewarding the righteous, and punishing the wicked. *Hannah* was also a prophetess of the first class, besides predicting her own fruitfulness, ^{<0005>}**1 Samuel 2:5**, (for she bore six children in all, ^{<0021>}**1 Samuel 2:21**.) she foretold not only the more immediate judgments of God upon the *Philistines* during her son's administration, ^{<0010>}**1 Samuel 2:10**, but his remoter judgments ‘upon the ends of the earth,’ ^{<0010>}**1 Samuel 2:10**, in the true spirit of the prophecies of *Jacob*, *Balaam*, and *Moses*. Like them, she describes the promised Saviour of the world as a KING, before there was any king in Israel; and she first applied to him the remarkable epithet MESSIAH in Hebrew, CHRIST in Greek, and ANOINTED in English, which was adopted by *David*, *Nathan*, *Ethan*, *Isaiah*, *Daniel*, and the succeeding prophets of the Old

Testament; and by the apostles and inspired writers of the New. And the allusion thereto by Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, in his hymn, ~~<016>~~**Luke 1:69**, where he calls Christ a ‘*horn of salvation*,’ and the beautiful imitation of it by the blessed *Virgin* throughout in her hymn, ~~<0146>~~**Luke 1:46-55**, furnishing the finest commentary thereon, clearly prove that *Hannah* in her rejoicing had respect to something higher than *Peninnah* her rival, or to the triumphs of *Samuel*, or even of *David* himself; the expressions are too magnificent and sublime to be confined to such objects. Indeed the learned rabbi, *David Kimchi*, was so struck with them that he ingenuously confessed that ‘the *King* of whom *Hannah* speaks is the MESSIAH,’ of whom she spake either by *prophecy* or *tradition*; for, continues he, ‘there was a tradition among the *Israelites*, that a *great King should arise in Israel*; and she seals up her song with celebrating this King *who was to deliver them from all their enemies*.’ The tradition, as we have seen, was founded principally on Balaam’s second and third prophecies, ~~<0207>~~**Numbers 24:7-17**; and we cannot but admire that *gracious* dispensation of spiritual gifts to *Hannah* (whose name signifies *grace*) in ranking her among the prophets who should first unfold a leading title of the *blessed Seed of the woman*.”

In the best MSS. the whole of this hymn is written in hemistich or poetic lines. I shall here produce it in this order, following the plan as exhibited in *Kennicott’s Bible*, with some trifling alterations of our present version:—

Ver. 1. My heart exulteth in Jehovah;
 My horn is exalted in Jehovah.
 My mouth is incited over mine enemies,
 For I have rejoiced in thy salvation.

Ver. 2. There is none holy like Jehovah,
 For there is none besides thee;
 There is no rock like our God.

Ver. 3. Do not magnify yourselves, speak not proudly, proudly.
 Let not prevarication come out of your mouth;
 For the God of knowledge is Jehovah,
 And by him actions are directed.

Ver. 4. The bows of the heroes are broken,
 And the tottering are girded with strength.

Ver. 5. The full have hired out themselves for bread,
 And the famished cease for ever.
 The barren hath borne seven,
 And she who had many children is greatly enfeebled.

Ver. 6. Jehovah killeth, and maketh alive;
 He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

Ver. 7. Jehovah maketh poor, and maketh rich;
 He bringeth down, and he even exalteth.

Ver. 8. He lifteth up the poor from the dust;
 From the dunghill he exalteth the beggar,
 To make him sit with the nobles,
 And inherit the throne of glory.
 For to Jehovah belong the pillars of the earth,
 And upon them he hath placed the globe.

Ver. 9. The foot of his saints he shall keep,
 And the wicked shall be silent in darkness;
 For by strength shall no man prevail.

Ver. 10. Jehovah shall bruise them who contend with him
 Upon them shall be thunder in the heavens.
 Jehovah shall judge the ends of the earth;
 And he shall give strength to his King.
 And shall exalt the horn of his Messiah.

It is not particularly stated here when Hannah composed or delivered this hymn; it appears from the connection to have been at the very time in which she dedicated her son to God at the tabernacle, though some think that she composed it immediately on the birth of Samuel. The former sentiment is probably the most correct.

Mine horn is exalted in the Lord] We have often seen that *horn* signifies power, might, and dominion. It is thus constantly used in the Bible, and was so used among the heathens. The following words of Horace to his jar are well known, and speak a sentiment very similar to that above:—

*Tu spem reducis mentibus anxiiis,
 Viresque et addis CORNUA pauperi.
 Hor. Odar. lib. iii., Od. 21, v. 18.*

Thou bringest back hope to desponding minds; And thou addest strength and *horns* to the poor man.

Paraphrastically expressed by Mr. Francis:—

*“Hope, by thee, fair fugitive,
Bids the wretched strive to live.
To the beggar you dispense
Heart and brow of confidence.”*

In which scarcely any thing of the *meaning* is preserved.

My mouth is enlarged] My faculty of speech is *incited, stirred up*, to express God’s disapprobation against my adversaries.

Verse 2. None holy] HOLINESS is peculiar to the God of Israel; no false god ever pretended to *holiness*; it was no attribute of heathenism, nor of any religion ever professed in the world before or since the true revelation of the true God.

There is **none beside thee]** There can be but one unoriginated, infinite, and eternal Being; that Being is Jehovah.

Any rock like our God.] Rabbi *Maimon* has observed that the word רֹאשׁ תְּסוּר, which we translate *rock*, signifies, when applied to Jehovah, *fountain, source, spring*. There is no *source* whence continual help and salvation can arise but our God.

Verse 3. A God of knowledge] He is the most wise, *teaching* all good, and *knowing* all things.

Actions are weighed] וְנִתְּנָן *nithkenu*, they are *directed*; it is by his counsel alone that we can successfully *begin, continue, or end*, any work.

Verse 4. The bows of the mighty] The *Targum* considers the *first* verse as including a prophecy against the *Philistines*; the *second* verse, against *Sennacherib* and his army; the *third*, against *Nebuchadnezzar* and the *Chaldeans*; the *fourth*, against the *Greeks*; the *fifth*, against *Haman* and his posterity; and the *tenth*, against *Magog*, and the enemies of the Messiah.

Verse 5. They that were full] All the things mentioned in these verses frequently happen in the course of the Divine providence; and indeed it is the particular providence of God that Hannah seems more especially to celebrate through the whole of this simple yet sublime ode.

Verse 6. The Lord killeth] God is the arbiter of life and death; he only can give life, and he only has a right to take it away.

He bringeth down to the grave] The Hebrew word **לַוַּאב** *sheol*, which we translate *grave*, seems to have the same meaning in the Old Testament with **αδης**, *hades* in the New, which is the word generally used by the *Septuagint* for the other. It means the *grave*, the *state* of the *dead*, and the *invisible place*, or place of *separate spirits*. Sometimes we translate it *hell*, which now means the *state of perdition*, or place of *eternal torments*; but as this comes from the Saxon [Anglo-Saxon], *to cover* or *conceal*, it means only the *covered place*. In some parts of England the word *helling* is used for the *covers* of a book, the *slating* of a house, &c. The *Targum* seems to understand it of death and the resurrection. “He kills and commands to give life; he causes to descend into Sheol, that in the time to come he may bring them into the lives of eternity,” i.e., the *life* of shame and everlasting contempt, and the *life* of glory.

Verse 7. The Lord maketh poor] For many cannot bear affluence, and if God should continue to trust them with riches, they would be their ruin.

Maketh rich] Some he can trust, and therefore makes them stewards of his secular bounty.

Verse 8. To set them among princes] There have been many cases where, in the course of God’s providence, a person has been raised from the lowest and most abject estate to the highest; from the *plough* to the *imperial dignity*: from the *dungeon* to the throne; from the *dunghill* to *nobility*. The story of *Cincinnatus* is well known; so is that of the patriarch *Joseph*; but there is one not less in point, that of *Roushen Akhter*, who was brought out of a dungeon, and exalted to the throne of Hindustan. On this circumstance the following elegant couplet was made:—

[—Arabic—]

[—Arabic—]

*“He was a bright star, but now is become a moon,
Joseph is taken from prison, and is become a king.”*

There is a play here on *Roushen Akhter*, which signifies a *bright star*; and there is an allusion to the history of the patriarch *Joseph*, because of the similarity of fortune between him and the Mohammedan prince.

For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's] He is almighty, and upholds all things by the word of his power.

Verse 9. He will keep the feet of his saints] He will order and direct all their goings, and keep them from every evil way.

The wicked shall be silent in darkness] The *Targum* understands this of their being sent to the *darkness of hell*; they shall be slain.

By strength shall no man prevail.] Because God is *omnipotent*, and no power can be successfully exerted against him.

Verse 10. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken] Those who *contend with him*, *wybyrm meribaiu*, by sinning against his laws, opposing the progress of his word, or persecuting his people.

Shall judge the ends on the earth] His empire shall be extended over all mankind by the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, for to this the afterpart of the verse seems to apply: *He shall give strength unto his king, and shall exalt the horn of his Christ*, or, as the *Targum* says, *hyj yvm twkl m ybryw viribbey malcuth Meshicheyh*, “he shall multiply the kingdom of the Messiah.” Here the horn means spiritual as well as secular dominion.

After the clause, *The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces*, the Septuagint add the following words: *Μη καυχασθω ο φρονιμος εν τη φρονησει αυτου, κ. τ. λ.* *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom and let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glorieth rather glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the Lord; and that he executeth judgment and righteousness in the midst of the earth.* This is a very long addition, and appears to be taken from ⁴⁰²³**Jeremiah 9:23**, but on collating the two places the reader will find the words to be materially different. This clause is wanting in the *Complutensian Polyglot*, but it is in the edition of *Aldus*, in that of *Cardinal Caroffa*, and in the *Codex Alexandrinus*.

Verse 11. And Elkanah went to Ramah] Immediately after the 10th verse, the Septuagint add, *Και κατελιπεν αυτον εκει ενωπιον κυριου, και απηλθεν εις αραματαια*, *And she left him there before the Lord, and went unto Arimathea*. Thus the Septuagint suppose that the song of Hannah was composed when she brought Samuel to present him to the Lord; and as soon as she had completed this fine ode, she delivered him

into the hands of Eli the high priest, and the child entered immediately on his ministrations, under the direction and instructions of Eli.

Verse 12. The sons of Eli were sons of Belial] They were perverse, wicked, profligate men; devil's children. *They knew not the Lord.*

*“THEY know! nor would an angel show Him;
They would not know, nor choose to know Him.”*

These men were the principal cause of all the ungodliness of Israel. Their most execrable conduct, described ⁻⁰⁰¹³⁻ **1 Samuel 2:13-17**, caused the people to abhor the Lord's offering. An impious priesthood is the grand cause of the transgressions and ruin of any nation; witness France, Germany, Spain, Ac., from 1792 to 1814.

Verse 13. When any man offered sacrifice] That is, when a *peace-offering* was brought, the right shoulder and the breast belonged to the priest, the fat was burnt upon the altar, and the blood was poured at the bottom of the altar; the rest of the flesh belonged to the offerer. Under pretence of taking only their own part, they took the *best* of all they chose, and *as much* as they chose.

Verse 14. Kettle-caldron, or pot] We know not what these were, nor of what capacity; nor is it of any consequence.

Verse 15. Before they burnt the fat] They would serve *themselves* before GOD was served! This was iniquity and arrogance of the first magnitude.

He will not have sodden flesh] He chooses *roast* meat, not *boiled*; and if they had it in the pot before the servant came, he took it out that it might be roasted.

Verse 17. Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great] That is, Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli.

Men abhorred the offering] As the people saw that the priests had no piety, and that they acted as if there was no God; they despised God's service, and became infidels.

A national priesthood, when the foundation is right, may be a great blessing; but if the priesthood becomes corrupt, though the foundation itself stand sure, the corruption of the national manners will be the unavoidable consequence.

Verse 18. Girded with a linen ephod] This the Targum translates $\chi\omega\beta\delta$ $c\omega d r k$ *rysa asir cardut debuts*, “Girded with a cardit of byssus, or *fine linen*.” The word *cardut* they seem to have borrowed from the Greek $\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\iota\delta\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$, a *tunic*, having $\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\iota\delta\alpha\varsigma$, i.e., *sleeves* that came down to, or covered, the *hands*. This was esteemed an effeminate garment among the Romans. See Buxtorf’s *Talmudic Lexicon*.

Verse 19. Made him a little coat] $\hat{c}q l y[m$ *meil katon, a little cloak, or surtout, an upper garment*: probably intended to keep him from the cold, and to save his other clothes from being abused in his meaner services. It is probable that she furnished him with a *new one* each year, when she came up to one of the annual sacrifices.

Verse 20. Eli blessed Elkanah] The natural place of this verse seems to be before the 11th; after which the 21st should come in; after the 21st, perhaps the 26th should come in. { ^{<1021>} **1 Samuel 2:11, 21, 26.** } The subjects in this chapter seem very much entangled and confused by the wrong position of the verses.

Verse 22. They lay with the women that assembled] It is probable that these were persons who had some *employment* about the tabernacle. See Clarke’s note on “^{<1028>} **Exodus 38:8**”, where the Hebrew text is similar to that in this place.

Verse 23. Why do ye such things!] Eli appears to have been a fondly affectionate, easy father, who wished his sons to do well, but did not bring them under proper *discipline*, and did not use his *authority* to restrain them. As *judge*, he had power to cast them immediately out of the vineyard, as wicked and unprofitable servants; this he did not, and his and their ruin was the consequence.

Verse 25. If one man sin against another] All differences between man and man may be settled by the proper judge; but if a man sin against the Supreme Judge, God himself, who shall reconcile him to his Maker? Your sin is immediately against God himself, and is the highest insult that can be offered, because it is in the matter of his own worship, therefore ye may expect his heaviest judgments.

But if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?] This was a question of the most solemn importance under the old covenant, especially after the death of Moses, the mediator. The law had determined

what sins should be punished with *death*; and it was supposed that there was not any appeal from the decision there pronounced. ^{<0010>} **1 John 2:1** is an answer to this question; but it is an answer which the *Gospel* alone can give: *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; but if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Because the Lord would slay them.] The particle *yk ki*, which we translate *because*, and thus make their continuance in sin the *effect* of God's determination to destroy them, should be translated *therefore*, as it means in many parts of the sacred writings. See *Noldius's* Particles, where the very text in question is introduced: *Sed non auscultarunt, &c.*, IDEO *vult Jehova eos interficere*; "But they would not hearken, &c.; THEREFORE God purposed to destroy them." It was their not hearkening that induced the Lord to will their destruction.

Verse 27. There came a man of God] Who this was we know not, but the Chaldee terms him *yyd aybn nebiya daya, a prophet of Jehovah.*

Unto the house of thy father] That is, to *Aaron*; he was the first high priest; the priesthood descended from him to his eldest son *Eleazar*, then to *Phinehas*. It became afterwards established in the younger branch of the family of *Aaron*; for *Eli* was a descendant of *Ithamar*, *Aaron's* youngest son. From *Eli* it was transferred back again to the family of *Eleazar*, because of the profligacy of *Eli's* sons.

Verse 28. And did I choose him] The high priesthood was a place of the greatest *honour* that could be conferred on man, and a place of considerable *emolument*; for from their part of the sacrifices they derived a most comfortable livelihood.

Verse 29. Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice] They disdained to take the *part* allowed by law; and would take for themselves *what* part they pleased, and *as much* as they pleased, ^{<0013>} **1 Samuel 2:13-16**: thus they kicked at the sacrifices.

Honourest thy sons above me] Permitting them to deal, as above, with the offerings and sacrifices, and take their part *before* the fat, &c., was burnt unto the Lord: thus they were *first* served. At this *Eli connived*, and thus honoured his sons *above* God.

Verse 30. Should walk before me for ever] See ^{<0230>}Exodus 29:9; 40:15; ^{<0251>}Numbers 25:10-13, where it is positively promised that the priesthood should be continued in the *family of Aaron* FOR EVER. But although this promise appears to be *absolute*, yet we plainly see that, like all other apparently absolute promises of God, it is conditional, i.e., a *condition* is *implied* though not *expressed*.

But now-be it far from me] You have walked unworthily; I shall annul my promise, and reverse my ordinance. See ^{<0189>}Jeremiah 18:9, 10.

For them that honour me] This is a plan from which God will never depart; this can have no *alteration*; every promise is made in reference to it; “they who honour God shall be honoured; they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed.”

Verse 31. I will cut off thine arm] I will destroy the strength, power, and influence of thy family.

Verse 32. Thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation] Every version and almost every commentator understands this clause differently. The word $\Gamma \times$ *tsar*, which we translate an *enemy*, and the Vulgate *æmulum*, a *rival*, signifies *calamity*; and this is the best sense to understand it in here. The calamity which he saw was the defeat of the Israelites, the capture of the ark, the death of his wicked sons, and the triumph of the Philistines. All this he *saw*, that is, knew to have taken place, before he met with his own tragical death.

In all the wealth which God shall give Israel] This also is dark. The meaning may be this: God has spoken good concerning Israel; he will, in the end, make the triumph of the Philistines their own confusion; and the capture of the ark shall be the desolation of their gods; but the Israelites shall first be sorely pressed with *calamity*. See the *margin*.

There shall not be an old man] This is repeated from the *preceding* verse, all the family shall die in the flower of their years, as is said in the following verse.

Verse 33. And the man of thine] Of this passage Calmet observes: “The posterity of Eli possessed the high priesthood to the time of Solomon; and even when that dynasty was transferred to another family, God preserved that of Eli, not to render it more happy, but to punish it by seeing the prosperity of its enemies, to the end that it might see itself destitute and

despised. This shows the depth of the judgments of God and the grandeur of his justice, which extends even to distant generations, and manifests itself to sinners both in life and death; both in their own disgrace, and in the prosperity of their enemies.”

Verse 34. They shall die both of them.] Hophni and Phinehas were both killed very shortly after in the great battle with the Philistines in which the Israelites were completely routed, and the ark taken. See ^{<0300>}**1 Samuel 4:1-11.**

Verse 35. A faithful priest] This seems to have been spoken of Zadok, who was anointed high priest in the room of Abiathar, the last descendant of the house of Eli; see ^{<1026>}**1 Kings 2:26, 27.** Abiathar was removed because he had joined with Adonijah, who had got himself proclaimed king; see ^{<1007>}**1 Kings 1:7.**

I will build him a sure house] I will continue the priesthood in his family.

He shall walk before mine Anointed] He shall minister before Solomon, and the *kings* which shall reign in the land. The *Targum* says, “He shall walk *yj yvm m̄dq kodam Meshichi, before my MESSIAH,*” and the *Septuagint* expresses it, *ενωπιον ξριστου μου,* “*before my CHRIST;*” “for, in their proper and more extended sense, these things are supposed to belong to our great High Priest and the Christian system: but the word may refer to the *Israelitish people.* See Clarke’s note on “**Heb 9:26**”.

Verse 36. Shall come and crouch to him] Shall *prostrate* himself before him in the most abject manner, begging to be employed even in the meanest offices about the tabernacle, in order to get even the most scanty means of support.

A piece of silver] *āsk trwga agorath keseph,* translated by the *Septuagint,* *οβολου αργυριου,* an *obolus of silver.* The *Targum* translates it *a[m mea,* which is the same as the Hebrew *gerah,* and weighed about sixteen grains of barley.

A morsel of bread] A mouthful; what might be sufficient to keep body and soul together. See the *sin* and its *punishment.* They formerly *pampered* themselves, and *fed to the full* on the Lord’s sacrifices; and now they are reduced to a *morsel of bread.* They fed themselves *without fear;* and now

they have *cleanness of teeth* in all their dwellings. They *wasted* the Lord's heritage, and now they *beg their bread!*

IN religious establishments, vile persons, who have no higher motive, may and do get into the priest's office, that they may clothe themselves with the wool, and feed themselves with the fat, while they starve the flock. But where there is no law to back the claims of the worthless and the wicked, men of piety and solid merit only can find support; for they must live on the *free-will offerings* of the people. Where religion is established by law, the strictest ecclesiastical discipline should be kept up, and all *hireling priests* and ecclesiastical *drones* should be expelled from the Lord's vineyard. An established religion, where the *foundation* is good, as is ours, I consider a great blessing; but it is liable to this continual abuse, which nothing but careful and rigid ecclesiastical discipline can either cure or prevent. If *our* high priests, our archbishops and bishops, do not their duty, the whole body of the clergy may become corrupt or inefficient. If *they* be faithful, the establishment will be an honour to the kingdom, and a praise in the earth.

The words *pillars of the earth*, *xra yqxm metsukey erets*, Mr. Parkhurst translates and defends thus: "The *compressors of the earth*; i.e., the columns of the celestial fluid which compress or keep its parts together." This is all *imaginary*; we do not know this compressing *celestial fluid*; but there is one that answers the same end, which we do know, i.e., the AIR, the *columns* of which *press* upon the earth *in all directions; above, below, around*, with a weight of *fifteen pounds* to every *square inch*; so that a *column of air* of the height of the atmosphere, which on the surface of the globe measures one square inch, is known by the most accurate and indubitable experiments to weigh *fifteen pounds*. Now as a *square foot* contains one hundred and forty-four square inches, each foot must be compressed with a weight of incumbent atmospheric *air* equal to two thousand one hundred and sixty pounds. And as the earth is known to contain a surface of *five thousand five hundred and seventy-five billions* of square feet; hence, allowing *two thousand one hundred and sixty pounds* to each square foot, the whole surface of the globe must sustain a pressure of atmospheric air equal to *twelve trillions and forty-one thousand billions of pounds*; or *six thousand and twenty-one billions of tons*. This pressure, independently of what is called *gravity*, is sufficient to keep all the parts of the earth *together*, and perhaps to counteract all the influence of *centrifugal* force. But adding to this all the influence of *gravity* or

attraction, by which every particle of matter tends to the *centre*, these *compressors of the earth* are sufficient to poise, balance, and preserve the whole terraqueous globe. These *pillars* or *compressors* are an astonishing provision made by the wisdom of God for the necessities of the globe. Without this, water could not rise in fountains, nor the sap in vegetables. Without this, there could be no respiration for man or beast, and no circulation of the blood in any animal. In short, both vegetable and animal life depend, under God, on these *pillars* or *compressors of the earth*; and were it not for this *compressing* power, the air contained in the vessels of all plants and animals would by its elasticity expand and instantly rupture all those vessels, and cause the destruction of all animal and vegetable life: but God in his wisdom has so balanced these two forces, that, while they appear to counteract and balance each other, they serve, by mutual dilations and compressions, to promote the circulation of the sap in vegetables, and the blood in animals.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 3

Samuel ministers to the Lord before Eli, 1. He is thrice called by the Lord; who informs him of the evils which shall be brought on the house of Eli, 2-15. Eli inquires of Samuel what the Lord had said, 16, 17. He gives a faithful reunion of the whole, which Eli receives with great submission, 18. Samuel prospers; is established as a prophet in Israel; and the Lord reveals himself to him to Shiloh, 19-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. Samuel ministered unto the Lord] He performed minor services in the tabernacle, under the direction of Eli, such as *opening the doors*, &c. See ^{<0815>}1 Samuel 3:15.

The word of the Lord was precious] There were but few revelations from God; and because the word was *scarce*, therefore it was *valuable*. The author of this book probably lived at a time when prophecy was frequent, See the *preface*.

There was **no open vision.**] There was no public accredited prophet; one with whom the secret of the Lord was known to dwell, and to whom all might have recourse in cases of doubt or public emergency.

Verse 2. Eli was laid down in his place] It is very likely that as the ark was a long time at Shiloh, they had built near to it certain apartments for the high priest and others more immediately employed about the tabernacle. In one of these, near to that of Eli, perhaps under the same roof, Samuel lay when he was called by the Lord.

Verse 3. Ere the lamp of God went out] Before sunrise; for it is likely that the lamps were extinguished before the rising of the sun. See ^{<0272>}Exodus 27:21; ^{<0348>}Leviticus 24:3.

Verse 4. The Lord called Samuel] The voice probably came from the holy place, near to which Eli and Samuel were both lying.

Verse 7. Samuel did not yet know the Lord] He had not been accustomed to receive any revelation from him. He *knew* and *worshipped*

the God of Israel; but he did not know him as communicating especial revelation of His will.

Verse 9. Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth] This was the usual way in which the prophets spoke, when they had intimations that the Lord was about to make some especial revelation.

Verse 10. The Lord cane, and stood] He heard the voice as if it was approaching nearer and nearer; till at last, from the sameness of the tone, he could imagine that it ceased to approach: and this is what appears to be represented under the notion of God *standing* and calling.

Verse 11. The Lord said to Samuel] He probably saw nothing, and only heard the *voice*; for it was not likely that any extraordinary *representation* could have been made to the *eyes* of a person so young. He heard a *voice*, but saw no *similitude*.

The ears-shall tingle.] It shall be a *piercing* word to all Israel; it shall astound them all; and, after having heard it, it will still continue to *resound* in their ears.

Verse 12. I will perform-all things which I have spoken] That is, what He had declared by the prophet, whose message is related ^{<0027>}**1 Samuel 2:27**, &c.

When I begin, I will also make an end.] I will not delay the execution of my purpose: when I begin, nothing shall deter me from bringing all my judgments to a conclusion.

Verse 13. I will judge his house for ever] I will continue to execute judgments upon it till it is destroyed.

His sons made themselves vile] See ^{<0012>}**1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-25**.

He restrained them not.] He did not use his parental and juridical authority to curb them, and prevent the disorders which they committed. See at the conclusion of the chapter.

Verse 14. Shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering] That is, God was determined that they should be removed by a violent death. They had committed the *sin unto death*; and no *offering* or *sacrifice* could prevent this. What is spoken here relates to their *temporal death* only.

Verse 15. Samuel feared to show Eli] He revered him as a father, and he feared to distress him by showing what the Lord had purposed to do. It does not appear that God had commanded Samuel to deliver this message: he, therefore, did not attempt it till adjured by Eli, ^{<UB17>}**1 Samuel 3:17.**

Verse 17. God do so to thee, and more also] This was a very solemn adjuration: he suspected that God had threatened severe judgments, for he knew that his house was very criminal; and he wished to know what God had spoken. The words imply thus much: If thou do not tell me fully what God has threatened, may the same and greater curses fall on thyself.

Verse 18. Samuel told him every whit] Our word *whit*, or *wid*, comes from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], which signifies *person, thing, &c.*; *every whit* is *every thing*. The Hebrew **מִיְרַבְדֵּה לְכָל תְּבָרָה** et col haddebarim, “all these words.”

It is the Lord] He is *Sovereign*, and will do what he *pleases*; he is *righteous*, and will do nothing but what is *just*.

Let him do what seemeth him good.] There is much of a godly submission, as well as a deep sense of his own unworthiness, found in these words. He also had sinned, so as to be punished with *temporal death*; but surely there is no evidence that the displeasure of the Lord against him was extended to a future state.

Verse 19. Samuel grew] Increased to manhood.

The Lord was with him] Teaching him, and filling him with grace and holiness.

None of his words fall] Whatever prediction he uttered, God fulfilled it; and his counsels were received as coming from the Lord.

Verse 20. All Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba] Through the whole extent of Palestine; Dan being at the *northern*, Beer-sheba at the *southern* extremity.

Was established to be a prophet] The word **נֶאֱמָן** *neeman*, which we translate *established*, signifies *faithful*: *The faithful Samuel was a prophet of the Lord.*

Verse 21. The Lord appeared again] *harhl hwhy ācyw vaiyoseph Yehovah leheraoh*, “And Jehovah *added* to appear; “ that is, he continued to reveal himself to Samuel at Shiloh.

By the word of the Lord.] By the *spirit* and *word of prophecy*.

In this chapter we read again of the fearful consequences of a neglected religious education. Eli’s sons were wicked: their father knew the Lord; but he neither taught his children, nor restrained them by his parental authority. I have already had occasion to remark, that were a proper line of conduct pursued in the education of children, how few *profligate* sons and *daughters*, and how few *broken-hearted* parents should we find! The neglect of early *religious education*, connected with a *wholesome* and *affectionate* restraint, is the ruin of millions. Many parents, to excuse their indolence and most criminal neglect, say, “We cannot give our children grace.” What do they *mean* by this? That God, not *themselves*, is the author of the irregularities and viciousness of their children. They may shudder at this imputation: but when they reflect that they have not given them right precepts, have not brought them under firm and affectionate restraint; have not showed them, by their own spirit, temper, and conduct, how they should be regulated in theirs; when either the worship of God has not been established in their houses, or they have permitted their children, on the most trifling pretenses, to absent themselves from it; when all these things are considered, they will find that, speaking after the manner of men, it would have been a very extraordinary miracle indeed if the children had been found preferring a path in which they did not see their parents conscientiously tread. Let those parents who continue to excuse themselves by saying, “*We cannot give grace to our children*,” lay their hand on their conscience, and say whether they ever knew an instance where God withheld *his* grace, while they were, in humble subserviency to him, performing *their* duty. The real state of the case is this: parents cannot do God’s work, and God will not do *theirs*; but if they use the means, and *train up the child in the way he should go*, God will not withhold his blessing.

It is not parental *fondness*, nor parental *authority*, taken *separately*, that can produce this beneficial effect. A father may be as *fond* of his offspring as *Eli*, and his children be sons of Belial; he may be as *authoritative* as the *grand Turk*, and his children despise and plot rebellion against him. But let parental *authority* be tempered with *fatherly affection*; and let the rein of

discipline be steadily held by this powerful but affectionate hand; and there shall the pleasure of God prosper; there will he give his blessing, even life for evermore. Many fine families have been *spoiled*, and many *ruined*, by the separate exercise of these two principles. Parental *affection*, when *alone*, infallibly degenerates into *foolish fondness*; and parental authority frequently degenerates into *brutal tyranny* when standing by *itself*. The first sort of parents will be *loved* without being respected; the second sort will be *dreaded*, without either *respect* or *esteem*. In the first case obedience is not *exacted*, and is therefore felt to be unnecessary, as offenses of great magnitude pass without punishment or reprehension: in the second case, rigid exaction renders obedience almost impossible; and the smallest delinquency is often punished with the extreme of torture, which, hardening the mind, renders duty a matter of perfect indifference.

Parents, lay these things to heart: remember Eli and his sons; remember the dismal end of both! Teach your children to fear God-use wholesome discipline-be determined-begin in time-mingle *severity* and *mercy* together in all your conduct-and earnestly pray to God to second your godly discipline with the power and grace of his Spirit.

Education is generally defined that series of means by which the human understanding is gradually enlightened, and the dispositions of the heart are corrected, formed, and brought forth, between early infancy and the period when a young person is considered as qualified to take a part in active life. Whole *nations* have been corrupted, enfeebled, and destroyed, through the want of proper education: through this multitudes of *families* have degenerated; and a countless number of *individuals* have come to an untimely end. Parents who neglect this, neglect the present and eternal interests of their offspring.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 4

A battle between Israel and the Philistines, in which the former are defeated, with the loss of four thousand men, 1, 2. They resolve to give the Philistines battle once more, and bring the ark of the Lord, with Hophni and Phinehas the priests, into the camp, 3, 4. They do so, and become vainly confident, 5. At this the Philistines are dismayed, 6-9. The battle commences; the Israelites are again defeated, with the loss of thirty thousand men; Hophni and Phinehas are among the slain; and the ark of the Lord is taken, 10, 11. A Benjamite runs with the news to Eli; who, hearing of the capture of the ark, falls from his seat, and breaks his neck, 12-18. The wife of Phinehas, hearing of the death of her husband, and father-in-law, and of the capture of the ark, is taken in untimely travail, begets a son, calls him I-chabod, and expires, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. The word of Samuel came to all Israel] This clause certainly belongs to the preceding chapter, and is so placed by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*.

Pitched beside Eben-ezer] This name was not given to this place till more than *twenty* years *after* this battle, see ^{<00712>}**1 Samuel 7:12**; for the monument called *rz[h `bah haeben haezer*, the “Stone of Help,” was erected by Samuel in the place which was afterwards from this circumstance, called *Eben-ezer*, when the Lord had given the Israelites a signal victory over the Philistines. It was situated in the tribe of Judah, between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*, and not far from the *Aphek* here mentioned. This is another proof that this book was compiled *after* the times and transactions which it records, and probably from *memoranda* which had been made by a contemporary writer.

Verse 2. Put themselves in array] There is no doubt that both the Philistines and Israelites had what might be called *the art of war*, according to which they marshalled their troops in the field, constructed their camps, and conducted their retreats, sieges, &c.; but we know not the principles on which they acted.

They slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.] This must have been a severe conflict, as *four thousand* were left dead on the

field of battle. The contest also must have lasted some considerable time, as these were all slain hand to hand; swords and spears being in all probability the only weapons then used.

Verse 3. Let us fetch the ark] They vainly supposed that the ark could save them, when the God of it had departed from them because of their wickedness. They knew that in former times their fathers had been *beaten* by their enemies, when they took not the ark with them to battle; as in the case of their wars with the Canaanites, ^{<01444>}**Numbers 14:44, 45**; and that they had *conquered* when they took this with them, as in the case of the destruction of Jericho, ^{<01003>}**Joshua 6:4**. From the latter clause they took confidence; but the *cause* of their miscarriage in the former they laid not to heart. It was customary with all the nations of the earth to take their *gods* and *sacred ensigns* with them to war. The *Persians, Indians, Greeks, Romans, Germans, Philistines, &c.*, did so. *Consecrated crosses, blessing and hallowing of colours and standards*, are the *modern* remains of those ancient *superstitions*.

Verse 4. The Lord of hosts] See on ^{<00103>}**1 Samuel 1:3**.

Dwelleth between the cherubims] Of what shape the cherubim were, we know not; but there was one of these representative figures placed at each end of the ark of the covenant; and between them, on the *lid* or *cover* of that ark, which was called the *propitiatory* or *mercy-seat*, the *shechinah*, or symbol of the Divine presence, was said to dwell. They thought, therefore, if they had the ark, they must necessarily have the *presence* and *influence* of *Jehovah*.

Verse 5. All Israel shouted] Had they *humbled* themselves, and *prayed* devoutly and fervently for success, they would have been heard and saved. Their shouting proved both their vanity and irreligion.

Verse 7. God is come into the camp.] They took for granted, as did the Israelites, that his presence was inseparable from his ark or shrine.

Verse 8. These mighty Gods] *pyrydah pyhl ah dym miyad haelohim haaddirim, from the hand of these illustrious Gods*. Probably this should be translated in the *singular*, and not in the *plural*: *Who shall deliver us from the hand of this illustrious God?*

Verse 9. Be strong, &c.] This was the address to the whole army, and very forcible it was. “If ye do not fight, and acquit yourselves like men, ye

will be servants to the Hebrews, as they have been to you; and you may expect that they will avenge themselves of you for all the cruelty you have exercised towards *them*.”

Verse 11. Hophni and Phinehas were slain.] They probably attempted to defend the ark, and lost their lives in the attempt.

Verse 12. Came to Shiloh the same day] The field of battle could not have been at any great distance, for this young man reached Shiloh the same evening after the defeat.

With his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.] These were signs of *sorrow* and *distress* among all nations. The *clothes rent*, signified the *rending, dividing, and scattering*, of the *people*; the *earth, or ashes on the head*, signified their *humiliation*: “We are brought down to the *dust* of the earth; we are near to our *graves*.” When the Trojan fleet was burnt, Æneas is represented as *tearing his robe from his shoulder*, and invoking the aid of his gods:—

*Tum pius Æneas humeris abscindere vestem,
Auxilioque vocare Deos, et tendere palmas.
VIRG. Æn. lib. v., ver. 685.*

*“The prince then tore his robes in deep despair,
Raised high his hands, and thus address’d his prayer.”
PITT.*

We have a remarkable example in the same poet, where he represents the queen of King Latinus resolving on her own death, when she found that the Trojans had taken the city by storm:—

*Purpueros moritura manu discindit amictus.
Æn. lib. xii., ver. 603.*

She *tears* with both her hands her *purple vest*.

But the image is complete in King Latinus himself, when he heard of the death of his queen, and saw his city in flames:—

———*It scissa veste Latinus,
Conjugis attonitus fatis, urbisque ruina,
Canitiem immundo perfusam pulvere turpans.
Ib., ver. 609.*

*Latinus tears his garments as he goes.
Both for his public and his private woes:
With filth his venerable beard besmears,
And sordid dust deforms his silver hairs.*

DRYDEN.

We find the same custom expressed in one line by Catullus:—

Canitiem terra, atque infuso pulvere fœdans.

EPITH. Pelei et Thetidos, ver. 224.

Dishonouring her hoary locks with earth and sprinkled dust.

The ancient Greeks in their mourning often *shaved off their hair*:—

Τουτο νυ και γερας οιον οιζυροισι βροτοισι,
Κειρασθαι τε κομην, βαλειν τ̄ απο δακρυ παρειων.

HOM. *Odyss.* lib. iv., ver. 197.

*“Let each deplore his dead: the rites of wo
Are all, alas! the living can bestow
O’er the congenial dust, enjoin’d to shear
The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.”*

POPE.

And again:—

Καθμεν εν λεχεεσσι καθηραντες χροα καλον
Υδατι τε λιαρω και αλειφατι, πολλα δε ὄ αμφισ
Δακρυα θερμα χεον δαναοι, κειροντο τε χαιτας.

Ib., lib. xxiv., ver. 44.

*“Then unguents sweet, and tepid streams, we shed;
Tears flow’d from every eye; and o’er the dead
Each clipp’d the curling honours of his head.”*

POPE.

The whole is strongly expressed in the case of Achilles, when he heard of the death of his friend Patroclus:—

᾿Ως φατο, τον δ αχεεος νεφeos νεφελη εκαλυψε μελαινα
Αμφοτερησι δε χερσιν ελων κονιν αοθαλοεσσαν,
Χευατο κακ κεφαλης, χαριεν δ ησχυνε προσωπον,
Νεκταρεω δε χιτωνι μελαιν̄ αμφιζανε τεφρη.

Iliad, lib. xviii., ver. 22.

*“A sudden horror shot through all the chief,
 And wrapp’d his senses in the cloud of grief.
 Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread
 The scorching ashes o’er his graceful head:
 His purple garments, and his golden hairs.
 Those he deforms with dust, and these with tears.”*
 POPE.

It is not unusual, even in *Europe*, and in the most *civilized* parts of it, to see grief expressed by *tearing the hair*, *beating the breasts*, and *rending the garments*; all these are *natural* signs, or expression of deep and excessive grief, and are common to all the nations of the world.

Verse 13. His heart trembled for the ark of God] He was a most mild and affectionate father, and yet the safety of the *ark* lay nearer to his heart than the safety of his *two sons*. Who can help feeling for this aged, venerable man?

Verse 17. And the messenger answered] Never was a more afflictive message, containing such a variety of woes, each rising above the preceding, delivered in so few words.

1. *Israel is fled before the Philistines.*

This was a sore evil: that *Israel* should *turn their backs upon their enemies*, was *bad*; and that they should turn their backs on such enemies as the *Philistines*, was yet worse; for now they might expect the chains of their slavery to be strengthened and riveted more closely.

2. *There hath also been a great slaughter among the people.*

A *rout* might have taken place without any *great previous slaughter*; but in this case the field was warmly contested, *thirty thousand* were laid dead on the spot. This was a deeper cause of distress than the preceding; as if he had said, “The flower of our armies is destroyed; scarcely a veteran now to take the field.”

3. *Thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead.*

This was still more afflictive to him as a father, to lose *both* his sons, the only hope of the family; and to have them taken away by a *violent death* when there was so little prospect of their having died *in the peace of God*, was more grievous than all.

4. *The ark of God is taken.*

This was the most dreadful of the whole; now Israel is dishonoured in the sight of the heathen, and the name of the Lord will be blasphemed by them. Besides, the capture of the ark shows that God is departed from Israel; and now there is no farther hope of restoration for the people, but every prospect of the destruction of the nation, and the final ruin of all religion! How high does each wo rise on the back of the preceding! And with what apparent *art* is this very laconic message constructed! And yet, probably, no art at all was used, and the messenger delivered the tidings just as the facts rose up in his own mind.

How vapid, diffused, and alliterated, is the report of the messenger in the Persæ of Æschylus, who comes to the queen with the tremendous account of the destruction of the whole naval power of the Persians, at the battle of Salamis? I shall give his first speech, and leave the reader to compare the two accounts.

Ω γης απασης ασιδος πολισματα,
 Ω περσις αια, και πολυς πλουτου λιμην,
 Ως εν μια πληγη κατεφθαρται πολυς
 Ολβος, το περσων δ ανθος οιχται πεσον.
 Ωμοι, κακον μεν πρωτον αγγελλειν κακα,
 Περσαις, στρατος γαρ πας αλωλε βαρβαρων.

Of which I subjoin the following translation by Mr. Potter:—

*Wo to the towns through Asia's peopled realms!
 Wo to the land of Persia, once the port
 Of boundless wealth! how is thy glorious state
 Vanish'd at once, and all thy spreading honours
 Fallen, lost! Ah me! unhappy is his task
 That bears unhappy tidings; but constraint
 Compels me to relate this tale of wo:
 Persians! the whole barbaric host is fallen.*

This is the sum of his account, which he afterwards details in about a dozen of speeches.

Heroes and conquerors, ancient and modern, have been celebrated for comprising a vast deal of information in a few words. I will give *three* examples, and have no doubt that the Benjamite in the text will be found to have greatly the advantage.

1. Julius Cæsar having totally defeated *Pharnaces*, king of Pontus, wrote a letter to the Roman senate, which contained only these three words:—

**VENI, VIDI, VICI;
I came, I saw, I conquered.**

This war was begun and ended in *one day*.

2. *Admiral HAWKE* having totally defeated the French fleet, in 1759, off the coast of Brittany, wrote as follows to King George II.:—

“SIRE, *I have taken, burnt, and destroyed all the French fleet, as per margin.*—HAWKE.”

3. NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, then general-in-chief of the French armies in Italy, wrote to *Josephine*, his wife, the evening before he attacked Field Marshal *Alvinzi*, the imperial general:—

“*Demain j’attaquerai l’emie; je le battrai; et j’en finirai.*” “*To-morrow I shall attack the enemy; I shall defeat them, and terminate the business.*” He did so: the imperialists were totally defeated, *Mantua* surrendered, and the campaign for that year (1796) was concluded.

In the above examples, excellent as they are in their kind, we find little more than *one idea*, whereas the report of the Benjamite includes *several*; for, in the most forcible manner, he points out the *general* and *particular disasters* of the *day*, the *rout of the army*, the *great slaughter*, the *death of the priests*, who were in effect the whole generals of the army, and the *capture of the ark*; all that, on such an occasion, could affect and distress the heart of an Israelite. And all this he does in *four simple assertions*.

Verse 18. When he made mention of the ark of God] Eli bore all the relation till the messenger came to this solemn word; he had *trembled* before *for the ark*, and now, hearing that it was *captured*, he was transfixed with grief, fell down from his seat, and dislocated his neck! Behold the judgments of God! But shall we say that this man, however remiss in the education of his children, and criminal in his indulgence towards his profligate sons, which arose more from the *easiness* of his disposition than from a desire to encourage vice, is gone to perdition? God forbid! No man ever died with such benevolent and religious feelings, and yet perished.

He had judged Israel forty years] Instead of *forty* years, the Septuagint has here **εἰκοσι ἔτη**, *twenty years*. All the other versions, as well as the Hebrew text, have *forty* years.

Verse 19. And his daughter-in-law] This is another very affecting story; the defeat of Israel, the capture of the ark, the death of her father-in-law, and the slaughter of her husband, were more than a woman in her circumstances, near the time of her delivery could bear. She bowed, travailed, was delivered of a son, gave the child a name indicative of the ruined state of Israel, and expired!

Verse 20. But she answered not] She paid no attention to what the women had said concerning her having borne a son; that information she *regarded not*.

Verse 21. She named the child I-chabod] The versions are various on the original words **dwbk** *I-chabod*; the *Septuagint*, **ουαιβαραχαβωθ** *ouaibrachaboth*; the *Syriac*, [Syriac] *yochobor*; the *Arabic*, [Arabic] *yochabad*. But none of these give us much light on the subject. It is pretty evident they did not know well what signification to give the name; and we are left to collect its meaning from what she says afterwards, *The glory is departed from Israel*; the words literally mean, *Where is the glory?* And indeed where was it, when the armies of Israel were defeated by the Philistines, the priests slain, the supreme magistrate dead, and the ark of the Lord taken?

THIS is a very eventful, interesting, and affecting chapter, and prepares the reader for those signal manifestations of God's power and providence by which the ark was restored, the priesthood re-established, an immaculate judge given to Israel, the Philistine yoke broken, and the people of the Most High caused once more to triumph. God humbled them that he might exalt them; he suffered his glory for a time to become eclipsed, that he might afterwards cause it to break out with the greater effulgence.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 5

The Philistines set up the ark in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod; whose image is found next morning prostrate before it, broken in pieces, 1-5. The Philistines are also smitten with a sore disease, 6. The people of Ashdod refuse to let the ark stay with them; and the lords of the Philistines, with whom they consulted, order it to be carried to Gath, 7, 8. They do so; and God smites the inhabitants of that city, young and old, with the same disease, 9. They send the ark to Ekron, and a heavy destruction falls upon that city, and they resolve to send it back to Shiloh, 10-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. Brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod.] Ashdod or Azotus was one of the five *satrapies* or *lordships* of the Philistines.

Verse 2. The house of Dagon] On this idol, which was supposed to be partly in a *human* form, and partly in that of a *fish*, see the note on ~~<071623>~~ **Judges 16:23**. Some think that this idol was the same with *Dirceto*, *Attergatis*, the *Venus* of Askelon, and the *Moon*.—See Calmet's *Dissertation on the gods of the Philistines*.

The *motive* which induced the Philistines to set up the ark in the temple of Dagon, may be easily ascertained. It was customary, in all nations, to dedicate the spoils taken from an enemy to their gods: 1. As a *gratitude-offering* for the help which they supposed them to have furnished; and, 2. As a *proof* that their gods, i.e., the gods of the conquerors, were *more powerful* than those of the conquered. It was, no doubt, to insult the God of Israel, and to insult and terrify his people, that they placed his ark in the temple of Dagon. When the Philistines had conquered Saul, they hung up his armour in the temple of Ashtaroth, ~~<08110>~~ **1 Samuel 31:10**. And when David slew Goliath, he laid up his sword in the tabernacle of the Lord, ~~<02108>~~ **1 Samuel 21:8, 9**. We have the remains of this custom in the depositing of colours, standards, &c., taken from an enemy, in our *churches*; but whether this may be called superstition or a religious act, is hard to say. If the battle were the *Lord's*, which few battles are, the dedication might be right.

Verse 3. They of Ashdod arose early on the morrow] Probably to perform some act of their superstition in the temple of their idol.

Dagon was fallen upon his face] This was one proof, which they little expected, of the *superiority* of the God of Israel.

Set him in his place again.] Supposing his fall might have been merely *accidental*.

Verse 4. Only the stump of Dagon was left] Literally, Only *gd dagon* (i.e., the *little fish*) was left. It has already been remarked that Dagon had the head, arms and hands of a man or woman, and that the rest of the idol was in the form of a *fish*, to which Horace is supposed to make allusion in the following words:—

Desinat in piscem mulisr formosa superne

“The upper part resembling a beautiful woman; the lower, a fish.”

All that was *human* in his form was broken off from what resembled a *fish*. Here was a proof that the affair was not accidental; and these proofs of God’s *power* and *authority* prepared the way for his *judgments*.

Verse 5. Tread on the threshold] Because the arms, &c., of Dagon were broken off by his fall on the threshold, the threshold became sacred, and neither his priests nor worshippers ever tread on the threshold. Thus it was ordered, in the Divine providence, that, by a religious custom of their own, they should perpetuate their disgrace, the insufficiency of their worship, and the superiority of the God of Israel.

It is supposed that the idolatrous Israelites, in the time of *Zephaniah*, had adopted the worship of Dagon: and that in this sense ~~<000>~~ **1 Samuel 1:9** is to be understood: *In the same day will I punish all those who leap upon the threshold*. In order to go into such temples, and not tread on the threshold, the people must *step* or *leap over* them; and in this way the above passage may be understood. Indeed, the *thresholds* of the temples in various places were deemed so sacred that the people were accustomed to fall down and *kiss* them. When Christianity became corrupted, this *adoration* of the thresholds of the churches took place.

Verse 6. Smote them with emerods] The word $\mu\upsilon\lambda\ \rho[\$ *apholim*, from $l\ \rho[\$ *aphal*, to be *elevated*, probably means the disease called the *bleeding*

piles, which appears to have been accompanied with dysentery, bloody flux, and ulcerated anus.

The Vulgate says, *Et percussit in secretiori parte natium*; “And he smote them in the more secret parts of their posteriors.” To this the psalmist is supposed to refer, ^{<19786>} **Psalm 78:66**, *He smote all his enemies in the HINDER PARTS; he put them to a perpetual reproach*. Some copies of the *Septuagint* have *εξεξεσεν αυτοις εις τας ναυς*, “he inflamed them in their ships;” other copies have *εις τας εδρας*, “in their posteriors.” The *Syriac* is the same. The *Arabic* enlarges: “He smote them in their posteriors, so that they were affected with a dysentery.” I suppose them to have been affected with enlargements of the *hæmorrhoidal veins*, from which there came frequent discharges of blood.

The *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* make a very material *addition* to this verse: *και μεσον της χωρας αυτης ανεφνεσιν μυες, και εγενετο συγχυσις θανατου μεγαλη εν τη πολει*; *Et ebullierunt villæ et agri in medio regionis illius; et nati sunt mures, et facta est confusio mortis magnæ in civitate*: “And the cities and fields of all that region burst up, and mice were produced, and there was the confusion of a great death in the city.” This addition Houbigant contends was originally in the Hebrew text; and this gives us the reason why golden mice were sent, as well as the images of the emerods, (^{<9004>} **1 Samuel 6:4**.) when the ark was restored.

Verse 7. **His hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.**] Here the *end* was completely answered: they now saw that they had not prevailed against Israel, on account of their god being more *powerful* than *Jehovah*; and they now feel how easily this God can confound and destroy their whole nation.

Verse 8. **The lords of the Philistines**] The word *ynrs* *sarney*, which we translate *lords*, is rendered by the *Chaldee* *ynrwc* *tureney*, *tyrants*. The *Syriac* is the same. By the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*, *satrapæ*, satraps. Palestine was divided into five *satrapies*: Ashdod, Ekron, Askelon, Gath, and Gaza. See ^{<6138>} **Joshua 13:8**. But these were all federates and acted under one general government, for which they assembled in council.

Let the ark-be carried about] They probably thought that their affliction rose from some natural cause; and therefore they wished the ark to be carried about from place to place, to see what the effects might be. If they

found the same evil produced wherever it came, then they must conclude that it was a judgment from the God of Israel.

Verse 9. The hand of the Lord was against the city] As it was at *Ashdod*, so it was at *Gath*. The *Vulgate* says, *Et computrescebant prominenter extales eorum*; which conveys the idea of a bloody flux, dysentery, and ulcerated anus; and it adds, what is not to be found in the Hebrew text, nor many of the versions, except some traces in the Septuagint, *Et fecerunt sibi sedes pelliceas*, “And they made unto themselves *seats of skins*;” for the purpose of sitting more easy, on account of the malady already mentioned.

Verse 11. Send away the ark] It appears that it had been received at Ekron, for *there was a deadly destruction through the whole city*. They therefore concluded that the ark should be sent back to Shiloh.

Verse 12. The men that died not] Some it seems were smitten with *instant death*; others with the *hæmorrhoids*, and there was a universal consternation; and *the cry of the city went up to heaven*-it was an exceeding great cry.

It does not appear that the Philistines had any correct knowledge of the nature of Jehovah, though they seemed to acknowledge his *supremacy*. They imagined that every country, district, mountain, and valley, had its peculiar deity; who, in its place, was supreme over all others. They thought therefore to appease Jehovah by sending him back his ark or shrine: and, in order to be redeemed from their plagues, they send golden mice and emerods as *telesms*, probably made under some particular configurations of the planets. See Clarke at the end of “~~1~~ 1 Samuel 6:21”.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 6

After the ark had been seven months in the land of the Philistines, they consult their priests and diviners about sending it to Shiloh, 1, 2. They advise that it be sent back with a trespass-offering of five golden emerods, and five golden mice, 3-6. They advise also that it be sent back on a new cart, drawn by two milch kine from whom their calves shall be tied up; and then conclude that if these cows shall take the way of Beth-hemesh, as going to the Israelitish border, then the LORD had afflicted them, if not, then their evils were accidental, 7-9. They do as directed; and the kine take the way of Beth-shemesh, 10-13. They stop in the field of Joshua; and the men of Beth-shemesh take them, and offer them to the Lord for a burnt-offering, and cleave the wood of the cart to burn them, and make sundry other offerings, 14, 15. The offerings of the five lords of the Philistines, 16-18. For too curiously looking into the ark, the men of Beth-shemesh are smitten of the Lord, 19, 20. They send to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, that they may take away the ark, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 2. The diviners] μymsq *kosemim*, from μsq *kasam*, to *presage* or *prognosticate*. See ^{<61810>} **Deuteronomy 18:10**. In what their pretended art consisted, we know not.

Verse 3. Send it not empty] As it appears ye have *trespassed* against him, send him an offering for this trespass.

Why his hand is not removed] The sense is, If you send him a trespass-offering, and ye be cured, then ye shall know why his judgments have not been taken away from you previously to this offering.

It is a common opinion, says *Calmet*, among all people, that although the Supreme Being needs nothing of his creatures, yet he requires that they should consecrate to him all that they have; for the same argument that proves his independence, infinitude, and self-sufficiency, proves our dependence, and the obligation we are under to acknowledge him by offering him due marks of our gratitude and submission. Such sentiments were common among all people; and God himself commands his people not to appear before him without an offering, ^{<12315>} **Exodus 23:15**: *None shall appear before me empty.*

Verse 4. Five golden emerods, and five golden mice] *One* for each satrapy. The *emerods* had afflicted their bodies; the *mice* had marred their land. Both, they considered, as sent by God; and, making an image of each, and sending them as a trespass-offering, they acknowledged this. See at the end.

Verse 5. He will lighten his hand from off you] The whole land was afflicted; the ground was marred by the *mice*; the common people and the lords afflicted by the *hæmorrhoids*, and their gods broken in pieces.

Verse 6. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts] They had heard how God punished the Egyptians, and they are afraid of similar plagues. It appears that they had kept the ark long enough.

Did they not let the people go] And has he not *wrought wonderfully among us*? And should we not send back his ark?

Verse 7. Make a new cart] It was indecent and improper to employ in any part of the worship of God any thing that had before served for a *common* purpose. Every thing in the worship of God is said to be *sanctified*: now the general meaning of that word is, *to separate a thing from all earthly and common uses, and devote it solely to the service of God.*

When David removed the ark from the house of Abinadab, he put it on a new cart, ^{<00B>}2 Samuel 6:3.

Bring their calves home from them] So it appears that their calves had been with them in the fields. This was a complete trial: unless they were supernaturally *influenced*, they would not leave their calves; unless supernaturally *directed*, they would not leave their home, and take a way unguided, which they had never gone before.

Verse 8. The jewels of gold] The word *yl q keley*, which our translators so often render *jewels*, signifies *vessels, implements, ornaments, &c.* A *jewel of gold* has an odd sound to those who always attach the idea of a *precious stone* to the term.

Verse 9. A chance that happened to us] The word *hrqm mikreh*, from *hrq karah*, to *meet* or *coalesce*, signifies an event that naturally arises from such concurring causes as, in the order and nature of things, must produce it.

Thus a bad state of the atmosphere, putrid exhalations, bad diet, occasioned by any general scarcity, might have produced the disease in question; and to something of this kind they would attribute it, if the other evidences did not concur. This gives us the proper notion of *chance*; and shows us that it is a matter as dependent upon the *Divine providence*, as any thing can be: in short, that these *occurrences* are parts of the *Divine government*.

The word *chance*, though often improperly used to signify such an occurrence as is not under the Divine government, is of itself, not only *simple*, but expressive; and has nearly the meaning of the Hebrew word: it comes from the French *cheoir*, or *escheoir*, *to fall out, to occur, to fall to*. Hence our law-term *escheat*, any lands that fall to the lord of the manor by forfeiture, or for want of heirs: i.e., these are the *occurrences* which *naturally* throw the lands into the hands of the lord.

Verse 12. Lowing as they went] Calling for their calves.

To **the right hand or to the left]** Some think they were placed where two roads met; one going to *Ekron*, the other to *Beth-shemesh*. It is possible that they were put in such circumstances as these for the greater certainty of the affair: to have turned from their own homes, from their calves and known pasture, and to have taken the road to a strange country, must argue supernatural influence.

The lords of the Philistines went after] They were so jealous in this business that they would trust no eyes but their own. All this was wisely ordered, that there might be the fullest conviction of the *being* and *interposition* of God.

Verse 14. They clave the wood of the cart] Both the *cart* and the *cattle* having been thus employed, could no longer be devoted to any secular services; therefore the *cattle* were *sacrificed*, and the *cart* was *broken up* for fuel to consume the sacrifice.

Verse 15. The Levites took down] It appears there were some of the tribe of Levi among the people of Beth-shemesh: to them appertained the service of the tabernacle.

Verse 17. These are the golden emerods] Each of these cities, in what may be called its *corporate capacity*, sent a golden emerod.

Verse 18. And the golden mice] The desolation that had been made through the land by these animals had excited a general concern; and it appears from the text, that all the cities of the Philistines, as well *fended* as without *walls*, sent a golden mouse as a trespass-offering.

Remaineth **unto this day]** Some think the *ark* is intended, which continued on the stone of Abel for some considerable time after it was placed there; and that the memoranda from which this book was afterwards compiled, were made before it was removed: but it is not likely that it remained any time exposed in the open field. Therefore it is most natural to suppose that it is the *stone of Abel* which is here intended; and so our translators have understood the place, and have used supplementary words to express this sentiment: “*Which stone remaineth unto this day.*”

Verse 19. He smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men] The present Hebrew text of this most extraordinary reading stands thus: µ[b Ęw-vmv-tyb yvnab Ęw vya āl a µvymj µy[bv *vaiyach beanshey Beith-shemesh-vaiyach baam shibim ish, chamishshim eleph ish*; “And he smote among the men of Beth-shemesh, (because they looked into the ark of Jehovah,) and he smote among the people SEVENTY men, FIFTY THOUSAND *men.*”

From the manner in which the text stands, and from the great improbability of the thing, it is most likely that there is a corruption in this text, or that some explanatory word is lost, or that the number *fifty thousand* has been added by ignorance or design; it being very improbable that such a small village as Beth-shemesh should *contain* or be *capable of employing fifty thousand* and *seventy* men in the fields at wheat harvest, much less that they could all peep into the ark on the stone of Abel, in the corn-field of Joshua.

That the words are not naturally connected in the Hebrew text, is evident; and they do not stand better in the *versions*.

1. The VULGATE renders it thus:—*Et percussit de populo SEPTUAGINTA viros; et QUINQUAGINTA MILLA plebis*; “And he smote of the (chief) people SEVENTY men, and FIFTY THOUSAND of the (common) people.” This distinction, I suppose, St. Jerome intended between *plebis* and *populus*; which he might think was warranted by the µvyna *anashim*, and vya *ish*, of the Hebrew text.

2. The TARGUM of *Jonathan* is something similar to the *Vulgate*:—"And he smote **am[ybsb besabey amma**, of the *elders* of the people SEVENTY men; **al hqbw ubekahala**, and of the *congregation* FIFTY THOUSAND men."

3. The SEPTUAGINT follow the Hebrew text: **και επαταξεν εν αυτοις εβδομηκοντα ανδρας, και πεντηκοντα χιλιαδας ανδρων**; "And he smote of them SEVENTY men; and FIFTY THOUSAND men." **εκ του λαου**, of the *people*, is added by some copies.

4. The SYRIAC has *forty-five thousand* less! It is as follows: [—Syriac—] *wamacho Morio beamo chamesho alapin weshabein gabrin*; "And the Lord smote among the people FIVE *thousand* and SEVENTY men."

5. The ARABIC is nearly similar: "*And the LORD smote among the people; and there died of them* [—Arabic—] FIVE *thousand* and SEVENTY men."

We have no other *versions* from which we can receive any farther light.

6. JOSEPHUS is different from all the rest, and has *fifty thousand* less, for he renders the place thus, *Antiq. Jud. libe. vi., cap. i., sect. 4*: **θρηγη δε και χολος του Θεου μετεισιν, ωστε εβδομηκοντα των εκ της βηθσαμης κωμης**"βαλων απεκτεινεν "But the displeasure and wrath of God pursued them so, that SEVENTY *men* of the village of Beth-shemesh, approaching the ark, which they were not worthy to touch, (not being priests,) were struck with lightning." Here we find the whole *fifty thousand* is omitted.

7. *Rabbi Solomon Jarchi*, giving the opinion of other rabbins as well as his own, says, "Our rabbins say SEVENTY *men*, and each of them was worth *fifty thousand* men; or *fifty thousand*, every one of whom was worth the seventy of the Sanhedrin." This only shows embarrassment, but gives very little light.

All these discordances, together with the utter improbability of the thing, lead us to suppose there must be a corruption in this place, either by *adding* or *omitting*.

Dr. *Kennicott* has found *three* very reputable MSS. in which the words **vya āl a myvmj chamishshim eleph ish**, *fifty thousand men*, are wanting. The 1st, No. 84, a MS. from *Holland*; the 2d, No. 210, one of the

Parisian MSS.; the 3d, No. 418, a MS. belonging to *Milan*; all three written about the beginning of the *twelfth* century, and numbered as above in Dr. K's Bible.

Perhaps the omission in these MSS. was occasioned by a mistake of the transcriber, which might have easily happened, because of the word *vya ish*, which occurs both after *μy[bv shibim* and after *āl a eleph*; for, having written the *first*, and taking his eye off, when he recommenced he might have supposed he had written the latter, and so proceed, leaving the words in question out of his copy. *Two, three, or more* persons might have been thus deceived, and so produce the above MSS.; or the mistake once made, all the MSS. copied from that would show the same omission. The common reading may be defended, if we only suppose the *omission* of a single letter, the particle of *comparison* *k ke*, like, as, or equal to, before the word *μyvmj chamishshim*: thus *μyvmj k kechamishshim*; the passage would then read: "And he smote of the people SEVENTY men, *equal to* FIFTY THOUSAND men;" that is, they were the *elders* or *governors* of the people.

Some solve the difficulty by translating, "He slew SEVENTY men OUT OF *fifty thousand* men." There are various *other* methods invented by learned men to remove this difficulty, which I shall not stop to examine; all, however, issue in this point, that only SEVENTY MEN were slain; and this is, without doubt the most probable. The FIFTY THOUSAND, therefore, must be an *interpolation*, or be understood in some such way as that mentioned above. But the omission of the particle of *similitude* solves every difficulty; and this would account for the reading in *Josephus*, who in his recital would naturally leave out such an explanation of the *worth* of the *seventy* men, as his Roman readers could not easily comprehend such *comparisons*.

With a great slaughter.] Seventy men slain, out of an inconsiderable village in a harvest day, was certainly a *great slaughter*.

Verse 20. Who is able to stand] Why this exclamation? They knew that God had forbidden any to touch his ark but the priests and Levites; but they endeavoured to throw that blame on God, as a Being *hard to be pleased*, which belonged solely to themselves.

Verse 21. To the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim] They wished the ark away out of their village, but why they sent to this city instead of sending

to *Shiloh*, does not appear: probably Shiloh had been destroyed by the Philistines, after the late defeat of Israel. This is most likely, as the ark was never more taken back to that place.

It was a very ancient usage, when a plague or other calamity infested a country, city, &c. for the magicians to form an *image* of the *destroyer*, or of the things on which the plague particularly rested, in gold, silver, ivory, wax, clay, &c., under certain configurations of the heavens; and to set this up in some proper place, that the evils thus represented might be driven away. These consecrated images were the same that are called *talismans*, or rather *telesms*, among the Asiatics. Mr. Locke calls the diviners *talismans*, but this is a mistake; the *image*, not the *fabricator*, was called by this name.

I have seen several of these *talismans*, of different countries; and such images were probably the origin of all the forms of gods which, in after times, were the objects of religious worship. It is well known that Ireland is not infested with any venomous creature; no serpent of any kind is found in it:—

*“No poison there infects, no scaly snake
Lurks in the grass, nor toads annoy the lake.”*

This has been attributed to a *telesm*, formed with certain rites under the sign *Scorpio*. Such opinions have been drawn from very ancient pagan sources: e.g.: A stone engraved with the figure of a *scorpion*, while the *moon* is in the sign *Scorpio*, is said to cure those who are stung by this animal. *Apollonius Tyaneus* is said to have prevented *flies* from infesting Antioch, and *storks* from appearing in Byzantium, by figures of those animals formed under certain constellations. A *brazen scorpion*, placed on a pillar in the city of *Antioch*, is said to have expelled all such animals from that country. And a *crocodile* of lead is also said to have preserved *Cairo* from the depredations of those monsters. See *Calmet*.

Virgil refers to this custom, Eclogue viii., ver. 80, where he represents a person making two images or *telesms*, one of *wax*, another of *clay*, which were to represent an absent person, who was to be alternately *softened* or *hardened*, as the *wax* or *clay* image was exposed to the fire:—

*Limus ut hic durescit, et haec ut cera liquescit
Uno et eodem igni: sic nostro Daphnis amore.*

“As this clay hardens, and this wax softens, by one and the same fire, so may Daphnis by my love.”

This thought is borrowed from *Theocritus*, Idyl. ii., ver. 28.

A beautiful marble figure of *Osiris*, about four inches and a quarter high, now stands before me, entirely covered with *hieroglyphics*; he is *standing*, and holds in each hand a *scorpion* and a *snake* by the tails, and with each foot he stands on the neck of a *crocodile*. This I have no doubt was a *telesm*, formed under some peculiar *configuration* of the heavens, intended to drive away both scorpions and crocodiles. This image is of the highest antiquity, and was formed probably long before the Christian era.

Tavernier observes that something like what is mentioned in the text is practiced among the Indians; for when a pilgrim goes to one of the idol temples for a cure, he brings the *figure* of the *member* affected, made either of *gold*, *silver*, or *copper*, according to his circumstances, which he offers to his god. This custom was common among the heathens, and they consecrated to their gods the *monuments* of their deliverance. From heathenism it was adopted by *corrupt Christianity*; and *Theodoret* informs us that in his time there might be seen about the tombs of the martyrs figures of *eyes*, *hands*, *feet*, and other parts of the body, which represented those of the offerers which they supposed had been healed by the intercession of those holy persons! This degrading superstition is continued among the papists to the present day: I have seen at *St. Winifred's well*, in *Holywell*, Flintshire several *staves*, *crutches*, and *handbarrows*, hung up in different places, which were reported to be the votive offerings of the maimed, the halt, the withered, &c., who had received their cure by the virtue of the saint! It is true the crutches are such as no man or woman could ever walk with; and the *barrows* are such as most evidently never carried any human being. But they serve the purpose of superstition, and keep up an idolatrous reverence for the well and the legendary virgin.

After all, I need not say that the system of judicial astrology is vain, unfounded, absurd, and wicked. It in effect presumes to take the government of the world out of the hand of an all-wise God, and to abandon it to the most fortuitous and unconnected occurrences of life; for the stars have their influences according to this pretended science, conformably to the occurrences here below: e.g., if a child be born but one hour sooner or later than a particular configuration of the heavens, his destiny will be widely different from what it otherwise would have been;

and as an almost infinite number of casualties may accelerate or retard a birth, consequently the whole destiny of man is influenced and ruled by these casualties: to say nothing of the absurdity, that those omnipotent stars ever can affect the infant while invested with a thin covering of flesh in the womb of its parent. But the whole science is a tissue of absurdities.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 7

The men of Kirjah-jearim bring the ark from Beth-shemesh, and consecrate Eleazar, the son of Abinadab, to keep it; and there it continued twenty years, 1, 2. Samuel reproves and exhorts the people, and gathers them together at Mizpeh, where they fast and pray, and confess their sins, 3-6. The Philistines go up against them; the Israelites cry unto the Lord for help; Samuel offers sacrifices; and the Lord confounds the Philistines with thunder; Israel discomfits and pursues them to Beth-car, 7-11. Samuel erects a stone for a memorial, and calls it Eben-ezer, 12. The Philistines are totally subdued, and Israel recovers all its lost cities, 13, 14. Samuel acts as an itinerant judge in Israel, 15-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. Fetched up the ark] When these people received the message of the Beth-shemites, they probably consulted Samuel, with whom was the counsel of the Lord, and he had encouraged them to go and bring it up, else they might have expected such destruction as happened to the Beth-shemites.

Sanctified Eleazar] Perhaps this sanctifying signifies no more than *setting* this man *apart*, simply to take care of the ark.

Verse 2. It was twenty years] This chapter contains the transactions of at least *twenty* years, but we know not the date of each event.

Verse 3. And Samuel spake] We have heard nothing of this judge since he served in the tabernacle. He was now grown up, and established for a prophet in the land of Israel.

If ye do return] From your backsliding and idolatry.

With all your hearts] For outward services and professions will avail nothing.

Put away the strange gods] Destroy their *images*, *altars*, and *groves*: they are *strange*; you do not know them as *helpers*, *saviours*, or *defenders*.

Prepare your hearts] Let your hearts be *straight* and *steady*.

And serve him only] Have no other religious service but his, and *obey* his laws.

He will deliver you] Vain are your own exertions; he will deliver you in such a way as to show that the excellence of the power is of himself alone.

Verse 4. Put away Baalim and Ashtaroth] These were not two *particular deities*, but two *genera* of idols; the one *masculine*, BAALIM; the other *feminine*, ASHTAROTH; both the words are in the *plural* number, and signify all their *gods* and *goddesses*.

Verse 5. Gather all Israel to Mizpeh] This appears to have been an *armed* assembly, though probably collected principally for religious and political purposes; but Samuel knew that an *unarmed* multitude could not safely be convened in the vicinity of the Philistines.

Verse 6. Drew water, and poured it out] It is not easy to know what is meant by this; it is true that *pouring out water*, in the way of *libation*, was a religious ordinance among the *Hebrews*, (^{<23118>}**Isaiah 12:3**.) and among most other nations, particularly the *Greeks* and *Romans*, who used, not only *water*, but *wine*, *milk*, *honey*, and *blood*, as we find by Homer, Virgil, Euripides, Sophocles, Porphyry, and Lucian. Our Lord seems to allude to this ceremony, (^{<8373>}**John 7:37, 38**), where see the note.

The *Chaldee Paraphrast* understands the place differently, for he translates: “And they *poured out* their *hearts* in *penitence*, as WATERS, before the Lord.” That deep penitential sorrow was represented under the notion of *pouring out water*, we have a direct proof in the case of David, who says, (^{<19214>}**Psalm 22:14**), *I am Poured out like water, my heart is like wax; it is MELTED in the midst of my bowels*. And to repentance, under this very similitude, the prophet exhorts fallen Jerusalem: *Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches POUR OUT thine HEART LIKE WATER before the face of the Lord*; (^{<25119>}**Lamentations 2:19**). David uses the same image, (^{<19318>}**Psalm 62:8**): *Trust in him at all times, ye people; POUR OUT your hearts before him*. The same figure is used by *Hannah* in (^{<8015>}**1 Samuel 1:15**) of this book; *I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have Poured out my soul before the Lord*. Perhaps the *drawing* and *pouring out* of *water* mentioned in the text was done *emblematically*, to represent the *contrition* of their *hearts*.

And Samuel judged] He gave them ordinances, heard and redressed grievances, and taught them how to get reconciled to God. The assembly, therefore, was held for religio-politico-military purposes.

Verse 7. The Philistines went up against Israel] They went to give them battle before that, by continual accessions of numbers, they should become too powerful.

Verse 8. Cease not to cry unto the Lord] They had strong confidence in the intercession of Samuel, because they knew he was a holy man of God.

Verse 9. Samuel took a sucking lamb] This sucking lamb must have been *eight days under its mother* before it could be offered, as the law says, ~~Leviticus 22:27~~.

Though Samuel was not a *priest*, yet he offered this sacrifice; or he might have ordered *Eleazar* to offer it, and still be said to have done it himself: *Qui facit per alterum, facit per se*; “He who *procures* a thing to be done, may be said to *do it himself*.”

His not sacrificing at the *tabernacle* was justified by the necessity of the case; neither tabernacle nor ark was at hand.

Verse 10. The Lord thundered with a great thunder] Literally, *The Lord thundered with a great voice*-he confounded them with a mighty tempest of thunder and lightning, and no doubt slew many by the lightning.

Verse 11. Under Beth-car.] We know not where this place was; the *Septuagint* have *Beth-chor*; the *Targum*, *Beth-saron*; and the *Syriac* and *Arabic*, *Beth-jasan*.

Verse 12. Called the name of it Eben-ezer] *rz[h ^ba Eben haezer*, “The Stone of Help; “ perhaps a *pillar* is meant by the word *stone*.

Verse 13. They came no more into the coast of Israel] Perhaps a more signal victory was never gained by Israel; the Lord had brought them low, almost to extermination; and now, by his miraculous interference, he lifts them completely up, and humbles to the dust their proud oppressors. God often suffers nations and individuals to be brought to the lowest extremity, that he may show his mercy and goodness by suddenly rescuing them from destruction, when all human help has most evidently failed.

Verse 14. The cities which the Philistines had taken] We are not informed of the particulars of these reprisals, but we may rest assured all this was not done in one day: perhaps the *retaking* of the cities was by slow degrees, through the space of several years.

There was peace between Israel and the Amorites.] That is, all the remaining Canaanites kept quiet, and did not attempt to molest the Israelites, when they found the Philistines, the most powerful of the ancient inhabitants of the land, broken and subdued before them.

Verse 15. Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.] Samuel is supposed to have lived *one hundred* years; he did not begin to judge Israel till he was about *forty* years of age; and if he was *one hundred* years of age when he died, he must have been a judge *sixty* years, and consequently filled that office during the whole of Saul's reign. But that he had been dead before Saul's last battle, is evident from the transactions of that king with the witch of En-dor, and probably not long before. Samuel was the *prophet* of that time; declared the will of the Lord, and frequently directed both the *civil* and *military* transactions of the kingdom. Samuel seems, in many respects, to have been considered the *governor of the people*, while Saul was only looked on as the *general of the armies*.

Verse 16. He went from year to year in circuit] When he was at BETH-EL, the tribe of Ephraim, and all the northern parts of the country, could attend him; when at GILGAL, the tribe of Benjamin, and those beyond Jordan, might have easy access to him; and when at MIZPEH, he was within reach of Judah, Simeon, and Gad; but *Ramah* was the place of his ordinary abode; and there he held his court, for there he *judged Israel*; and, as it is probable that *Shiloh* was destroyed, it is said, ^{<00717>} **1 Samuel 7:17**, that *there* (viz., at Ramah) *he built an altar unto the Lord*. This altar, being duly consecrated, the worship performed at it was strictly legal.

Ramah, which is said to be about six miles from Jerusalem, was the *seat of prophecy* during the life of Samuel; and there it is probable all Israel came to consult him on matters of a spiritual nature, as *there* was the only *altar* of God in the land of Israel.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 8

Samuel, grown old, makes his sons judges in Beer-sheba, 1, 2. They pervert judgment; and the people complain, and desire a king, 3-5. Samuel is displeased, and inquires of the Lord, 6. The Lord is also displeased; but directs Samuel to appoint them a king, and to show them solemnly the consequences of their choice, 7-9. Samuel does so; and shows them what they may expect from an absolute monarch, and how afflicted they should be under his administration, 10-18. The people refuse to recede from their demand; and Samuel lays the matter before the Lord, and dismisses them, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. When Samuel was old] Supposed to be about *sixty*.

He made his sons judges] He appointed them as his lieutenants to superintend certain affairs in Beer-sheba, which he could not conveniently attend to himself. But they were never *judges* in the proper sense of the word; Samuel was the last judge in Israel, and he judged it to the day of his death. See ~~1 Samuel 7:16~~ **1 Samuel 7:16**.

Verse 3. His sons walked not in his ways] Their iniquity is pointed out in *three* words: 1. *They turned aside after lucre*; the original ([**xb** *batsa*) signifies to *cut, clip, break off*; and therefore Mr. Parkhurst thinks that it means nearly the same with our *clipping of coin*. It however expresses here the idea of *avarice, of getting money by hook or by crook*. The Targum says, “They looked after **rqvd** **^wmm** *mamon dishkar, the mammon of unrighteousness;*” of which they did not make unto themselves *friends but enemies*; see **Clarke’s note on** “~~Matthew 6:24~~ **Matthew 6:24**”. 2. *They took bribes*; **dj v** *shochad, gifts or presents, to blind their eyes*. 3. *They perverted judgment—they turned judgment aside*; they put it out of its *regular path*; they *sold* it to the highest bidder: thus the wicked rich man had his cause, and the poor man was oppressed and deprived of his right. This was the custom in our own country before MAGNA CHARTA was obtained; he that would speed in the *king’s court* must *bribe* all the *officers*, and fee both the *king* and *queen*! I have found in our ancient records the most barefaced and shameful examples of this kind; but it was totally abolished, *invito rege*, by that provision in the above charter which states, *Nulli vendemus,*

nulli negabimvs ant differemus rectum aut iudicium; “To no man will we sell, to no man will we deny or defer, justice and right.” It was customary in those inauspicious times, for judgment to be *delayed in banco regis*, in the king’s court, as long as there was any hope that *more money* would be paid in order to bring it to *issue*. And there were cases, where the king did not like the party, in which he *denied justice and judgment* entirely! *Magna Charta* brought them to book, and brought the subject to his right.

Of those times it might well be said, as Homer did, Iliad xvi., ver. 387.

Οι βιη αγορη σκολιας κρινωσι θεμιστας,
Εκ δε δικην ελασωσι, θεων οπιν ουκ αλεγοντες.

“When guilty mortals break the eternal laws,
Or judges, bribed, betray the righteous cause.”

“When the laws are perverted by force; when justice is expelled from her seat; when judges are swayed from the right, regardless of the vengeance of Heaven.” Or, in other words, these were times in which the streams of justice were poisoned in their source, and judges neither feared God nor regarded man.

Verse 5. Make us a king] Hitherto, from the time in which they were a people, the Israelites were under a *theocracy*, they had no other king but GOD. NOW they desire to have a king like the other nations around them, who may be their general in battle; for this is the point at which they principally aim.

Verse 6. The thing displeased Samuel] Because he saw that this amounted to a formal renunciation of the Divine government.

Samuel prayed unto the Lord] He begged to know his mind in this important business.

Verse 7. They have rejected me] They wish to put that government in the hands of a *mortal*, which was always in the hands of their GOD. But *hearken unto their voice*—grant them what they request. So we find God grants that in his *displeasure* which he withholds in his *mercy*.

Verse 9. Show them the manner of the king] The word *cpvm mishpat*, which we here render *manner*, signifies simply what the king would and might require, according to the *manner* in which kings in general ruled; all of whom, in those times, were *absolute* and *despotic*.

The whole of this *manner of the king* is well illustrated by Puffendorf. “Hitherto,” says he, “the people of Israel had lived under governors raised up of God, who had exacted no tribute of them, nor put them to any charge; but, little content with this form of government. they desire to have *a king like other nations*, who should live in magnificence and pomp, keep *armies*, and be able to resist any invasion. Samuel informs them what it was they desired; that when they understood it, they might consider whether they would persist in their choice If they would have a king splendidly attended, he tells them that he *would take their sons for his chariots, &c.*; if they would have him keep up constant *forces*, then he would appoint them for *colonels* and *captains*, and employ those in his *wars* who were accustomed to follow their family business; and since, after the *manner* of other kings, he must keep a *stately court*, they must be content that their *daughters* should serve in several offices, which the king would think below the dignity of his wives and daughters, ^{<0081>} **1 Samuel 8:13**. Many ministers also, in several departments, both of war and peace, must have *salaries* to support them, which must be paid out of their *fields* and *vineyards*, ^{<0084>} **1 Samuel 8:14**. In one word, that to sustain his dignity their king would exact the *tenth* of all they possessed, and be maintained in a royal manner out of their estates,”

It is perfectly vain in *Grotius*, or any one else, to state that this shows what a king, as king, *may* any where in virtue of his *office, claim* and *exact*; and that he can take the *property* and *persons* of his subjects, and dispose of them as *he may judge necessary* for the exigence of the state. This was the *manner* of *Saul*, but *Saul* was not a king of God’s *choosing*: “He gave him in his wrath, and took him away in his displeasure;” and the *manner* of such a king should not be arrogated by any potentate who affects to rule *jure divino*, by Divine right. The *manner* of the king of God’s choice is distinctly detailed, ^{<5175>} **Deuteronomy 17:15-20**, to which the reader will do well to refer, that he may have an impartial statement of the subject.

Verse 19. The people refused to obey] They *would* have the *king*, his *manner* and all, notwithstanding the solemn warning which they here receive.

Verse 20. May judge us] This appears to be a rejection of Samuel.

Go out before us] Be in every respect our head and governor.

And fight our battles.] Be the general of our armies.

Verse 21. Rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord.] He went to the altar, and in his secret devotion laid the whole business before God.

Verse 22. Hearken unto their voice] Let them have what they desire, and let them abide the consequences.

Go ye every man unto his city.] It seems the elders of the people had tarried all this time with Samuel, and when he had received his ultimate answer from God, he told them of it and dismissed them.

ON this account we may observe: 1. That GOD did not change the government of Israel; it was the people themselves who changed it. 2. That though God permitted them to have a king, yet he did not *approve* of him. 3. That, notwithstanding he did not suffer them to choose the *man*, he ordered his servant Samuel to choose him by lot, he disposing of that lot. 4. That God never gave up the supreme government; he was still KING *in Israel*, and the king, so called, was only the *vicegerent* or *deputy* of the Lord. 5. That no king of Judah attempted to be supreme, therefore they never *made new laws*, nor *altered the old*; which was a positive confession that God was the supreme Legislator. 6. That an *absolute monarchy* is always an evil, and is contrary to all the rights, civil and religious, of mankind; a mode of government that all people should avoid, as pregnant with evils to mankind. 7. That although it was a sin in the Israelites to *desire a king*, that is, *to change a constitution* of which God was the author, yet *kingly government*, properly understood, is a good of the first magnitude to the civil happiness of mankind. 8. That by *kingly government*, *properly understood*, I mean such a monarchical government as that of *Great Britain*, where the *king*, the *nobles*, and the *people*, are duly *mixed*, each having his proper part in the government, and each preventing the other from running to excess, and all limited by law. 9. That the *three* grand forms of government which have obtained among mankind, viz., *monarchy*, *aristocracy*, and *democracy*, have each certain *advantages* without which no state can be well preserved; but they have *evils* by which any state may be injured. 10. That, from a proper *mixture* of these, the advantages of the whole may be reaped without any of their attendant evils, and that this is the *British constitution*; which, not merely the *wisdom of our ancestors*, but the *providence of God* has given unto us, and of which no other state has had common sense enough to avail themselves, though they see that *because of this* the British empire is the most *powerful* and the most *happy* in the universe, and likely at last *to give laws to the*

whole world. The *manner of our king* is *constitutional*, widely different from that of Saul, and from that of any other potentate in the four quarters of the globe. He is the *father* of his people, and the people *feel* and *love* him as *such*. He has all the *power* necessary to do good; they have all the *liberty* necessary to their political happiness, had they only a diminution of taxes, which at present are too heavy for any nation to bear.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 9

Saul's lineage and description; he is sent by his father to seek some lost asses, 1-5. Not finding them, he purposes to go and consult Samuel concerning the proper method of proceeding, 6-14. The Lord informs Samuel that he should anoint Saul king, 15, 16. Samuel invites Saul to dine with him, and informs him that the asses are found; and gives him an intimation that he is to be king, 17-21. Saul dines with Samuel, and afterwards he is taken to the house-top, where both commune together, 22-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. A mighty man of power.] Literally, a *strong man*; this appears to be the only *power* he possessed; and the physical strength of the father may account for the extraordinary size of the son. See ~~1~~ **1 Samuel 9:2.**

Verse 2. From his shoulders and upwards] It was probably from this very circumstance that he was chosen for king; for, where kings were *elective*, in all ancient times great respect was paid to *personal appearance*.

Verse 3. The asses of Kish-were lost] What a wonderful train of occurrences were connected in order to bring Saul to the throne of Israel! Every thing seems to go on according to the *common course of events*, and yet all conspired to favour the election of a man to the kingdom who certainly did not come there by the *approbation* of God.

Asses grow to great perfection in the East; and at this time, as there were no *horses* in Judea, they were very useful; and on them kings and princes rode.

Verse 5. Were come to the land of Zuph] Calmet supposes that Saul and his servant went from Gibeah to Shalisha, in the tribe of Dan; from thence to Shalim, near to Jerusalem; and thence, traversing the tribe of Benjamin, they purposed to return to Gibeah; but passing through the land of Zuph, in which Ramatha, the country of Samuel, was situated, they determined to call on this prophet to gain some directions from him; the whole of this circuit he supposes to have amounted to no more than about *twenty-five* leagues, or three days' journey. We do not know where the places were

situated which are here mentioned: the Targum translates thus: “And he passed through the mount of the house of *Ephraim*, and went into the *southern* land, but did not meet with them. And he passed through the land of *Mathbera*, but they were not there; and he passed through the land of the tribe of *Benjamin*, but did not find them; then they came into the land where the *prophet of the Lord* dwelt. And Saul said to his servant,” &c.

Verse 7. There is not a present to bring to the man of God] We are not to suppose from this that the prophets took money to predict future events: Saul only refers to an invariable custom, that no man approached a *superior* without a present of some kind or other. We have often seen this before; even God, who needs nothing, would not that his people should approach him with *empty hands*. “It is very common in Bengal for a person, who is desirous of asking a favour from a superior, to take a present of *fruits* or *sweetmeats* in his hand. If not accepted, the feelings of the offerer are greatly wounded. The making of presents to appease a superior is also very common in Bengal.”-WARD’S *Customs*.

Verse 8. The fourth part of a shekel of silver] We find from the preceding verse, that the *bread* or *provisions* which they had brought with them for their journey was expended, else a *part of that* would have been thought a suitable present; and here the *fourth part of a shekel of silver*, about *ninence* of our money, was deemed sufficient: therefore the present was intended more as a *token of respect* than as an *emolument*.

Verse 9. Beforetime in Israel] This passage could not have been a part of this book originally: but we have already conjectured that Samuel, or some contemporary author, wrote the memoranda, out of which a later author *compiled* this book. This hypothesis, sufficiently reasonable in itself, solves all difficulties of this kind.

Was beforetime called a seer.] The word *seer*, *har roeh*, occurs for the first time in this place; it literally signifies a *person who SEES*; particularly *preternatural* sights. A *seer* and a *prophet* were the same in most cases; only with this difference, the seer was always a *prophet*, but the prophet was not always a *seer*. A seer seems to imply one who *frequently* met with, and *saw*, some symbolical representation of God. The term *prophet* was used a long time before this; Abraham is called a *prophet*, ^{<01210>}**Genesis 20:7**, and the term frequently occurs in the law. Besides, the word *seer* does not occur before this time; but often occurs *afterwards* down through

the prophets, for more than *three hundred* years. See ^{<30712>}**Amos 7:12**;
^{<33107>}**Micah 3:7**.

All prophets, false and true, profess to see God; see the case of *Balaam*,
^{<02404>}**Numbers 24:4, 16**, and ^{<24414>}**Jeremiah 14:14**. All *diviners*, in their
enthusiastic flights, boasted that they had those things *exhibited* to their
sight which should come to pass. There is a remarkable account in *Virgil*
which may serve as a specimen of the whole; the *Sibyl* professes to be a
seer:—

—————*Bella, horrida bella,*
Et Tyberim molto spumantem sanguine CERNO.
ÆN. lib. vi., ver. 86.

Wars, horrid wars, I VIEW; a field of blood;
And Tyber rolling with a purple flood.

I think the 9th verse comes more naturally in after the 11th. {^{<0000>}**1 Samuel 9:9, 11**}

Verse 11. Young maidens going out to draw water] So far is it from
being true, that young women were always kept closely shut up at home,
that we find them often in the field, drawing and carrying water, as here.

Verse 12. He came to-day to the city] Though Samuel lived chiefly in
Ramah, yet he had a dwelling in the country, at a place called Naioth,
where it is probable there was a school of the prophets. See ^{<09198>}**1 Samuel 19:18-24**.

A sacrifice of the people] A great *feast*. The animals used were first
sacrificed to the Lord; that is, their blood was poured out before him; and
then all the people fed on the flesh. By *high place* probably Samuel's *altar*
is alone meant; which no doubt was raised on an eminence.

Verse 13. He doth bless the sacrifice] He alone can perform the religious
rites which are used on this occasion.

Afterwards they eat that be bidden.] Among the Arabs, often a large
feast is made of sacrificed *camels*, &c., and then the people of the vicinity
are invited to come and partake of the sacrifice. This is the custom to
which allusion is made here.

Verse 14. Come out against them] Met them.

Verse 15. Now the Lord had told Samuel] How this communication was made, we cannot tell.

Verse 16. Thou shalt anoint him to be captain] Not to be *king*, but to be *dlygn nagid* or captain of the Lord's host. But in ancient times no king was esteemed who was not an able warrior. *Plutarch* informs us that Alexander the Great esteemed the following verse the most correct, as to its sentiment, of any in the whole Iliad of Homer:—

Ουτος ἔ ατρειδης ευρυκρειων αγαμεμνων,
Αμφοτερον βασιλευς ἑ αγαθος, κρατερος ἑ αιχημητης.

“*The king of kings, Atrides, you survey;
Great in the war, and great in acts of sway.*”
POPE.

Verse 17. Behold the man whom I spake to thee of] What an intimate communion must Samuel have held with his God! A constant familiarity seems to have existed between them.

Verse 19. I am the seer] This declaration would prepare Saul for the communications afterwards made.

Verse 20. As for thine asses] Thus he shows him that he knew what was in his heart, God having previously revealed these things to Samuel.

And on whom is all the desire of Israel?] Saul understood this as implying that he was chosen to be king.

Verse 21. Amos not I a Benjamite] This speech of Saul is exceedingly *modest*; he was now becomingly humble; but who can bear *elevation* and *prosperity*? The tribe of Benjamin had not yet recovered its strength, after the ruinous war it had with the other tribes, ~~<ORIS>~~ **Judges 20:29-46.**

Verse 22. Brought them into the parlour] It might as well be called *kitchen*; it was the place where they sat down to feast.

Verse 23. Said unto the cook] *j bc tabbach*, here rendered *cook*; the singular of *twj bc tabbachoth*, *female cooks*, ~~<ORIS>~~ **1 Samuel 8:13**, from the root *tabach*, to *slay* or *butcher*. Probably the *butcher* is here meant.

Verse 24. The shoulder, and that which was upon it] Probably the shoulder was covered with a part of the caul, that it might be the better

roasted. The Targum has it *the shoulder and its thigh*; not only the *shoulder* merely, but the *fore-leg bone* to the knee; perhaps the whole *fore-quarter*. Why was the *shoulder* set before Saul? Not because it was the *best part*, but because it was an emblem of the *government* to which he was now called. See ^{<2306>}**Isaiah 9:6**: *And the government shall be upon his SHOULDER.*

Verse 25. Upon the top of the house.] All the houses in the East were flat-roofed; on these people walked, talked, and frequently *slept*, for the sake of fresh and cooling air.

Verse 26. Called Saul to the top of the house] Saul had no doubt slept there all night; and now, it being the *break of day*, “Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away.” There was no calling him *to* the house-top a *second* time he was sleeping there, and Samuel called him up.

Verse 27. As they were going down] So it appears that Saul arose immediately, and Samuel accompanied him out of the town, and sent the servant on that he might show Saul the *word*-the *counsel* or *design*, of the Lord. What this was we shall see in the following chapter.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 10

Samuel anoints Saul captain of the Lord's inheritance, 1. Instructs him concerning his return home, whom he should meet, and what he should do, 2-8. Saul meets a company of prophets, the Spirit of the Lord comes on him, and he prophesies among them, 9-13. He meets his uncle, and converses with him, 14-16. Samuel calls the people together to Mizpeh, and upbraids them for having rejected the Lord as their king, 17-19. Lots are cast to find out the person proper to be appointed king; Saul is chosen, 20-24. Samuel shows the manner of the king, and writes it in a book, 25. Saul goes to Gibeah; and certain persons refuse to acknowledge him as king, 26, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. Took a vial of oil] The reasons of this rite the reader will find largely stated in **Clarke's note on** "^{<02307>}**Exodus 29:7**". The anointing mentioned here took place in the *open field*. See the preceding chapter, ^{<0026>}**1 Samuel 9:26, 27**. How simple was the ancient ceremony of consecrating a king! A *prophet or priest poured oil upon his head, and kissed him*; and said, *Thus the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance*. This was the whole of the ceremony. Even in this anointing, Saul is not acknowledged as *king*, but simply *dygn nagpid, a captain-one who goes before and leads the people*.

Verse 2. Rachel's sepulchre] This was nigh to Bethlehem. See ^{<03519>}**Genesis 35:19**.

At Zelzah] If this be the name of a *place*, nothing is known of it.

The Hebrew **j xl xb** *betseltsach* is translated by the *Septuagint* **αλλομενους μεγαλα**, *dancing greatly*: now this may refer to the *joy* they felt and expressed on finding the asses, or it may refer to those *religious exultations*, or *playing on instruments of music*, mentioned in the succeeding verses.

Verse 3. Three men going up to God to Bethel] Jacob's altar was probably there still, ^{<02819>}**Genesis 28:19**. However this might be, it was still considered, as its name implies, *the house of God*; and to it they were now going, to offer *sacrifice*.

The *three kids* were for *sacrifice*; the *three loaves of bread* to be offered probably as a *thank-offering*; and the *bottle* or skin full of *wine*, for a *libation*. When the blood was poured out before the Lord, then they feasted on the *flesh* and on the *bread*; and probably had a sufficiency of the *wine* left for their own drinking.

Verse 4. And they will salute thee] מַלְאֵי וְלֵי עֵלְמָלְאָא וְשַׁאֲלוּ לְעַלְמָלְאָא *veshaalu lecha lesalom*, “And they will inquire of thee concerning peace,” i.e., *welfare*. In the East, if this salutation be given, then the person or persons giving it may be reckoned friends; if the others return it, then there is friendship on both sides. *Salaam alicum*, Peace to you! is the mode of compellation: *Alicum essalaam*, To you be peace! is the return. If you give the former and receive not the latter, you may expect hostility. The meaning of the prophet is, When you come to the plain of Tabor, ye shall meet three men; you need not be afraid of them, for they are *friends*; and they will show this friendship, not only by bidding you good speed, but by giving you two loaves of bread, a provision which you will need for the remaining part of your journey.

Verse 5. The hill of God] The Targum says, “The hill on which *the ark of the Lord* was. Calmet supposes it to be a height near Gibeah.

The garrison of the Philistines] Probably they kept a watch on the top of this hill, with a company of soldiers to keep the country in check.

A company of prophets] A company of scribes, says the Targum. Probably the scholars of the prophets; for the prophets seem to have been the only accredited teachers, at particular times, in Israel; and at this time there does not appear to have been any other prophet besides Samuel in this quarter. Probably the teacher of this school was not an inspired man, but one acting under the direction of Samuel. Mr. Harmer thinks that the following custom among the Mohammedans greatly illustrates this obscure place: “When the children have gone through the Koran, their relations borrow a fine horse and furniture, and *carry them about the town in procession*, with the book in their hand, the rest of their *companions* following, and all sorts of music of the country going before. Dr. Shaw, in p. 195, mentions the same custom; adding the *acclamations* of their *school-fellows*, but taking no notice of the music. We have no reason, however, to doubt the fact on account of the doctor’s silence; especially as it relates to another part of Barbary, and is given us by those who resided

some years in that country. The doctor makes no use of this circumstance relating to the education of youth in Barbary; but the account of the procession above given seems to be a lively comment on that ancient Jewish custom mentioned in these verses. That the word *prophet* often signifies *sons* or *scholars* of the prophets, and that *prophesying* often implies *singing*, has been already remarked; but no author that I know of has given any account of the nature of this procession, or its design. We are sometimes told that *high places* were used for sacrifices; and in one case *music*, it is certain, played before them when they went up to worship, ^{<23319>}**Isaiah 30:29**. But did they not also return from sacrifice with it? We are told that music was used by the prophets to calm and compose them, and to invite the Divine influences; which is indeed very true. But is it to the purpose? Did they go forth in this manner *from their college* into the *noise* and *interruptions* of the world, to call down the prophetic impulse? But if we consider them as a company of the *sons of the prophets*, going in procession with *songs of praise* and *music* playing before them, and recollect that it is usual in this day for young scholars to go in procession with acclamations and music, the whole mystery seems to be unravelled. To which may be added, that Saul was to *meet them*, and find himself *turned into another man*; into a man, perhaps, who is instantaneously made as knowing in the law of God as the youth to whom they were doing the above honours, or any of his convoy; which acquaintance with the law of God was very necessary for one who was to judge among his brethren as their king. For this reason the Jewish kings were to write out a copy of the law of God, and read it continually, that they might be perfect masters of it, ^{<61718>}**Deuteronomy 17:18, 20**, which accomplishment some youth had gained whom Saul met with, and who was honoured with the solemnity the sacred historian speaks of, if the customs of South Barbary may be supposed to be explanatory of those of Judea.”

On the word *prophet*, and the general account given here, I shall introduce the following illustrations from another work:—

“The word *prophet* generally conveys the idea of a person so far acquainted with *futurity* as to discern some purpose of the Divine Being relative to his government of the natural and moral world, but which is not sufficiently matured by the economy of Providence to make, as yet, its public appearance among men, and to *prophesy* is usually understood to imply the *foretelling* such an event, the *time* of its appearance, and the *place* of its operation, with some preceding and subsequent circumstances.

But that this was the *original* and *only meaning* of the word prophet or prophesy, is very far from being clear. The first place the word occurs in is ^{<012107>}**Genesis 20:7**, where the Lord says of Abraham to Abimelech, He is a *prophet*, (*awh aybn nabi hu.*) and will pray (*l l ptyw veyith-pallel*, will make earnest intercession) *for thee*. In the common acceptation of the word it is certain Abraham was *no prophet*; but here it seems to signify a man well acquainted with the Supreme Being, capable of teaching others in Divine things, and especially a *man of prayer*-one who had great influence with the God he worshipped, and whose intercessions were available in the behalf of others. And in this sense the original word *aybn nabi* is used in several places in the Old Testament.

“It was through inattention to this meaning of the word, which appears to me to be the true, original, and ideal one, that all the commentators and critics that I have met with have been so sadly puzzled with that part of the history of Saul which is related ^{<010109>}**1 Samuel 10:9-13; 19:20-24**. In these passages the sacred historian represents Saul, who was neither a prophet nor the son of one, associating with the prophets, and *prophesying among them*, to which he was led by *the Spirit of the Lord which came upon him*.

“That this can mean no more here than prayer and *supplication* to God, accompanied probably with edifying *hymns of praise* and *thanksgiving*, (for they had instruments of music, ^{<010105>}**1 Samuel 10:5**,) needs, in my opinion, little proof. If Saul had prophesied in the common acceptation of the word, it is not likely that we should have been kept absolutely in the dark concerning the subject and design of his predictions, of which, by the way, not one syllable is spoken in the oracles of God. The simple fact seems to have been this: God, who had chosen this man to govern Israel, designed to teach *him* that the Most High alone is the fountain of power, and that by him only kings could reign so as to execute justice properly, and be his ministers for good to the people. To accomplish this gracious purpose, *he gave him another heart* (^{<010109>}**1 Samuel 10:9**)-a disposition totally different from what he had ever before possessed, and taught him *to pray*.

“Coming among the sons of the prophets, on whom the Spirit of the Lord rested, and who were under the instruction of Samuel, (^{<010120>}**1 Samuel 19:20**,) while they worshipped God with music and supplication, Saul also was made a partaker of the same Divine influence, and *prophesied*, i.e., made prayer and supplication among them. To see one who did not belong

to the prophetic school *thus incorporated* with the prophets, pouring out his soul in prayer and supplication, was an unusual sight, which could not pass unnoticed, especially by those of Saul's acquaintance who probably knew him in times past to have been as careless and ungodly as themselves, (for it was only *now* he got that other good Spirit from God, a sufficient proof that he had it not *before*.) These companions of his, being unacquainted with that grace which can in a moment influence and change the heart, would, according to an invariable custom, express their astonishment with a sneer: *Is SAUL also among the prophets?* That is, in modern language, 'Can this man *pray* or *preach*? He whose education has been the same as our own, employed in the same secular offices, and formerly companion with us in what he now affects to call folly and sin? Can such a person be among the prophets?' Yes, for God may have *given him a new heart*; and the *Spirit of God*, whose inspiration *alone* can give sound understanding in sacred things, may have *come upon him* for this very purpose, that he might announce unto *you* the righteousness of the Lord, and speak unto your ruined souls *to edification, and to exhortation, and to comfort*.

"The history of Elijah and the priests of Baal, mentioned in ^{<11817>}**1 Kings 18:17-40**, throws farther light on this subject. In ^{<11826>}**1 Kings 18:26** it is said, 'They (the priests of Baal) took a bullock and dressed it, and called on the name of Baal, from morning to noon, saying, O Baal, hear us! And they leaped upon the altar, and cried aloud, and cut themselves with knives, till the blood gushed out; and they *prophesied* (^{wabntyw} *vaiyithnabbeu, and they made supplication*) until the time of the evening sacrifice.' From the whole context it is plain that *earnest, importunate prayer*, is alone what is meant by *prophesying* in this text. See also ^{<6143>}**1 Corinthians 14:3**.

"And as all the prophets of God, whose principal business it was to instruct the people in the way of righteousness, were *men of prayer*, who were continually interceding with God in behalf of those to whom they ministered, the term ^{aybn} *nabi* became their proper appellative; and thus a part of their office, *intercessors for the people*, might have given rise to that name by which the Spirit of God thought proper in after times to distinguish those whom he sent, not only to *pray for* and *instruct the people*, but also to *predict* those future events which concerned the punishment of the incorrigible and the comfort and exaltation of his own servants." See a sermon which I have printed on ^{<6143>}**1 Corinthians 14:3**,

entitled, “The Christian Prophet and his Work;” and see **Clarke’s note on** “^{<01210>}**Genesis 20:7**”.

A psaltery] **l bn** *nebel*. As the word signifies in other places a *bottle* or *flagon*, it was probably something like the *utricularia tibia* or BAG-PIPE. It often occurs both with the Greeks and Romans, and was evidently borrowed from the *Hebrews*.

A tabret] **ãt** *toph*; a sort of *drum* or *cymbal*.

A pipe] **l y l j** *chalil*, from **l j** *chal*, *to make a hole* or *opening*; a sort of *pipe*, *flute*, *hautboy*, *clarionet*, or the like.

A harp] **rwnk** *kinnor*; a stringed instrument similar to our harp, or that on the model of which a harp was formed. On these different instruments I shall have occasion to speak more at large when I come to the *Psalms*.

Verse 7. Thou do as occasion serve thee] After God has shown thee all these signs that thou art under his especial guidance, fear not to undertake any thing that belongs to thy office, for God is with thee.

What a number of circumstances thus precisely foretold! Does not this prove that Samuel was under the continual inspiration of the Almighty?

Verse 8. Seven days shalt thou tarry] I will come to thee within seven days, offer sacrifices, receive directions from the Lord, and deliver them to thee. It is likely that these seven *days referred* to the time in which Samuel came to Saul to Gilgal, offered sacrifices, and confirmed the kingdom to him, after he had defeated the Ammonites. See ^{<01114>}**1 Samuel 11:14, 15**.

Verse 10. Behold, a company of prophets] See on ^{<01005>}**1 Samuel 10:5**, &c.

Verse 12. But who is their father?] The Septuagint, in its principal editions, adds **ov Keic**; *is it not Kish?* This makes the sense more complete.

Verse 13. He came to the high place.] I suppose this to mean the place where Saul’s father lived; as it is evident the next verse shows him to be at *home*.

Verse 14. Saul's uncle] The word **dwd** *dod* signifies a *beloved one, love, a lover, friend, &c.*; and is the same as *David*. It is supposed to mean *uncle* here; but I think it means some *familiar friend*.

Verse 18. I brought up Israel out of Egypt] These are similar to the upbraidings in ^{<0087>}**1 Samuel 8:7**, &c.

Verse 19. Present yourselves-by your tribes] It appears that, in order to find out the proper person who should be made their king, they must determine by lot: 1. The *tribe*. 2. The *thousands* or *grand divisions* by families. 3. The *smaller divisions* by families. And, 4. The *individual*. When the lot was cast for the tribe, *Benjamin* was taken; when for the *thousand*, the division of *Matri* was taken; when for the *family*, the family of *Kish* was taken; when for the *individual*, *Saul*, the son of *Kish*, was taken.

Verse 21. When they sought him, he could not be found.] Through modesty or fear he had secreted himself.

Verse 22. The Lord answered] What a continual access to God! and what condescension in his attention to all their requests!

The *stuff* among which he had secreted himself may mean the *carts, baggage, &c.*, brought by the people to *Mizpeh*.

Verse 24. God save the king.] There is no such word here; no, nor in the whole Bible; nor is it countenanced by any of the *versions*. The words which we thus translate here and elsewhere are simply **Ël mh yj y yechi hammelech**, "May the king live; " and so all the *versions*, the *Targum* excepted, which says, *May the king prosper!* The French *Vive le roi!* is a proper version of the Hebrew.

Verse 25. The manner of the kingdom] It is the same word as in ^{<0088>}**1 Samuel 8:9**; and doubtless the same thing is implied as is there related. But possibly there was some kind of *compact* or *covenant* between *them* and *Saul*; and this was the thing that was *written in a book, and laid up before the Lord*, probably near the *ark*.

Verse 26. A band of men] Not a *military band*, as I imagine, but some *secret friends*, or *companions*, who were personally attached to him. Others think that all the men fit to bear arms are intended; but this seems inconsistent with the life that *Saul* led for some time afterwards; for he

appears to have gone into his agricultural concerns, and waited for a call from the Divine providence. See ~~<09105>~~ **1 Samuel 11:5**.

Verse 27. Brought him no presents] They gave him no proofs that they acknowledged either the Divine appointment or his authority. The Arab chiefs are, to this day, when on a march or excursion of any kind, supplied with every necessary by the *free-will offerings* or *presents* of the people in the villages or places where they encamp. Saul was now a public character, and had a right to support from the public. These sons of Belial refused to bear their part; they *brought him no presents*. He marked it, but at present held his peace; *he was as if he were deaf*: so says the text. He was prudent, and did not immediately assume all the consequence to which his office entitled him. It is probable, however, that *tribute* is meant by the word *present*. The people in general finding they had now a king, took it for granted that they must pay tribute or taxes to him. This was a part of the *manner of the king* which Samuel had shown them; the great majority had done so, but certain refractory people refused to pay any thing, on the pretence that such a person as Saul could not be a deliverer of Israel. *How, say they, shall this man save us?*

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 11

Nahash, king of the Ammonites, besieges Jabesh-gilead; and proposes to its inhabitants the most degrading conditions of peace, 1, 2. They apply to their brethren for help, 3, 4. Saul hears of their distress; takes a yoke of oxen, hews them in pieces, and sends them throughout the coasts of Israel, with the threat that all who did not come to his standard should have his cattle served in like manner; in consequence of which he is soon at the head of an army of three hundred and thirty thousand men, 5-8. He sends to Jabesh-gilead, and promises help, 9, 10. Saul attacks the Ammonites next morning, and gives them a total overthrow, 11. The people are greatly encouraged, and propose to put to death those who are opposed to Saul's government: but this he prevents, 12, 13. Samuel leads the people to Gilgal: they offer sacrifices, and renew the kingdom to Saul, 14, 15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. Nahash the Ammonite] In the *Vulgate* this chapter begins thus: *Et factum est quasi post mensem*, “And it came to pass about a month after.” This addition appears also in the principal copies of the *Septuagint*; though it is wanting in the Complutensian edition, both in the *Greek* and *Latin*, and is not acknowledged by any of the *Oriental versions*. But it is in *Josephus*, and probably was inserted from him into some copies of the *Septuagint*, and thence into the *Vulgate*. It appears to be of very little authority.

We know little about *Nahash*; there was a king of this name among the Ammonites in the time of David, ^{<JOKID>} **2 Samuel 10:2**, but probably not the same person. *Nahash* might have been a common name of the Ammonitish kings.

Make a covenant with us] They found they were in no condition to risk a war; and they wish to have peace, and desire to know his conditions.

Verse 2. I may thrust out all your right eyes] This cruel condition would serve at once as a badge of their *slavery*, and a means of incapacitating them from being effective warriors. *Theodoret* observes, “He who opposes his shield to the enemy with his left hand, thereby hides his left eye, and

looks at his enemy with his right eye; he therefore who plucks out that right eye makes men useless in war.” *Josephus* gives the same reason.

Verse 3. Give us seven days respite] Such promises are frequently made by besieged places: “We will surrender if not relieved in so many days;” and such conditions are generally received by the besiegers.

Verse 4. Then came the messengers to Gibeah] It does not appear that the people of Jabesh-gilead knew any thing of Saul’s appointment to the kingdom, for the message is not directed to him but to the *people*.

The people lifted up their voices and wept.] They saw no hope of deliverance, and they expected that their reproach would be laid on all Israel.

Verse 5. Saul came after the herd] He had been bred up to an *agricultural* life, and after his consecration he returned to it, waiting for a call of Divine providence, which he considered he had now received in the message from Jabesh-gilead.

It has often been remarked, that mighty kings and accomplished generals have been chosen from among those who were engaged in agricultural concerns. In these observations one fact is lost sight of, viz., that in ancient times *agriculture* was the *only* employment. *Trade* and *commerce* were scarcely known; therefore all descriptions of official dignities must be chosen out of this class, there being no other to choose them from. We need not wonder at these words of the poet:—

*Jura dabat populis posito modo consul aratro;
Pascebatque suas ipse senator oves.*

*“The consul, having now laid aside his plough,
gives laws to the people;
And the senator himself feeds his own sheep.”*
OVID, *Fast. lib. i., v. 204-207.*

Verse 6. The Spirit of God came upon Saul] He felt himself *strongly excited* to attempt the relief of his brethren.

And his anger was kindled greatly.] I believe this means no more than that *his courage was greatly excited*-he felt himself strong for fight, and confident of success.

Verse 7. He took a yoke of open] The sending the *pieces* of the oxen was an act similar to that of the Levite, ^{<071929>}**Judges 19:29**, where see the note. And both customs are similar to the sending about of the *bloody cross*, to call the clans to battle, practised by the ancient Highlanders of Scotland. See at the end of this chapter. See Clarke “^{<09115>}**1 Samuel 11:15**”

Verse 8. The children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.] This was a vast army, but the *Septuagint* make it even more: “All the men of Israel were **εξακοσιας χιλιαδας**, SIX HUNDRED *thousand*; and the men of Judah **εβδομηκοντα χιλιαδας**, SEVENTY *thousand*.” *Josephus* goes yet higher with the number of the Israelites: “He found the number of those whom he had gathered together to be **εβδομηκοντα μυριαδας** SEVEN HUNDRED *thousand*.” Those of the tribe of Judah he makes *seventy thousand*, with the *Septuagint*. These numbers are not all right; and I suspect even the Hebrew text to be exaggerated, by the mistake or design of some ancient scribe.

Verse 10. To-morrow we will come out unto you] They concealed the information they had received of Saul’s promised assistance. They did *come* out unto them; but it was in a different manner to what the Ammonites expected.

Verse 11. Put the people in three companies] Intending to attack the Ammonites in three different points, and to give his own men more *room* to act.

In the morning watch] He probably began his march in the evening, passed Jordan in the night, and reached the camp of the Ammonites by daybreak.

That two of them were not left together.] This proves that the rout was complete.

Verse 12. Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign] Now, flushed with victory and proud of their leader, they wished to give him a proof of their attachment by slaying, even in cool blood, the persons who were at first averse from his being intrusted with the supreme power! The common soldier is scarcely ever inspired by his victory to acts of *magnanimity*; he has shed blood—he wishes to shed more!

Verse 13. There shall not a man be put to death] This was as much to Saul's credit as the lately proposed measure was to the discredit of his soldiers.

Verse 14. Renew the kingdom] The unction of Saul, in the first instance, was a very private act; and his being appointed to be king was not known to the people in general. He had now shown himself worthy to command the people; and Samuel takes advantage of this circumstance to gain the general consent in his favour. Josephus says that Saul was anointed a *second time* at this convocation.

Verse 15. There they made Saul king] It is likely, from these words, that Saul was anointed a second time; he was now publicly acknowledged, and there was no gainsayer. Thus far Saul acted well, and the kingdom seemed to be confirmed in his hand; but soon through *imprudence* he lost it.

ON the custom referred to in ^{<09107>} **1 Samuel 11:7** I am favoured with the following observations by a learned correspondent:—

“It is considered that the authenticity of records respecting a peculiar people cannot be better illustrated, or the fidelity of the historian more clearly ascertained, than by proving that the manners and customs recorded are in unison with, or bear a resemblance to, the manners and customs of other nations of the same antiquity; or, what may be more correct, in a similar state of improvement; and the records of such rites and customs may possibly acquire an additional mark of authenticity, when the similarity is not so exact as to admit a presumption that the customs of one nation were merely copied from the other.

“Sir Walter Scott, in the third canto of the *Lady of the Lake*, describes the rites, incantations, and imprecations, used prior to the fiery cross being circulated, to summon the rough warriors of ancient times to the service of their chief; and in the first note of this canto he alludes to this ancient custom which, in comparatively modern times, has been used in Scotland, and proves that a similar punishment of death or destruction of the houses for disobeying the summons was inflicted by the ancient Scandinavians, as recorded by Olaus Magnus, in his history of the Goths. A custom still more in point than the one cited may be found to have existed in a more ancient nation, whose history is supposed the most, if not the only

authentic narrative of deeds of ancient times, and which also records the sanguinary manners of uncultivated nations; see the preceding chapter, first eight verses. { ⁹¹⁰⁰**1 Samuel 10:1-8**} The similarity of the custom is to be found in the seventh verse; with the Highlanders a goat was slain; with the Israelites, an ox. The exhibition of a cross stained with the blood of the sacrificed animal was the summons of the former, while part of the animal was the mandate of the latter. Disobedience in the one nation was punished with the death of the parties, and burning of their dwellings; in the other, the punishment was more simple, and more allusive to the sacrificed emblem, the forfeiture or destruction of their oxen. It is not difficult to judge whether the comparison be correct.

“The first verses record the sanguinary practices of ancient times, which to many appear merely as the gratification of revenge, or as proofs of victory; yet when it is considered that the right eye must chiefly aid the warrior in aiming at his adversary, whether the weapon be of ancient or modern warfare, here arises a military reason, corroborative of the truth of history, for the deprivation, and in some degree lessening the cruelty of the mutilation, which would be increased if it were caused by revenge or wantonness; though Nahash declares it to be a reproach upon all Israel.”

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 12

Samuel, grown old, testifies his integrity before the people, which they confirm, 1-5. He reproves them for their ingratitude and disobedience; and gives a summary of the history of their fathers, 6-12. He exhorts them to future obedience, and calls for a sign from heaven to confirm his authority, and to show them their disobedience: God sends an extraordinary thunder and rain, 13-19. He warns them against idolatry, and exhorts to obedience, and promises to intercede for them, 20-23. Sums up their duty, and concludes with a solemn warning, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. And Samuel said] It is very likely that it was at this public meeting Samuel delivered the following address; no other time seems to be given for it, and this is the most proper that could be chosen.

Verse 2. My sons are with you] It is generally agreed that these words intimate that Samuel had deprived them of their public employ, and reduced them to a level with the common people.

Have walked before you from my childhood] He had been a long, steady, and immaculate servant of the public.

Verse 3. Witness against me] Did ever a minister of state, in any part of the world, resign his office with so much self-consciousness of integrity, backed with the universal approbation of the public? No man was oppressed under his government, no man defrauded! He had accumulated no riches for himself; he had procured none for his friends; nor had one needy dependant been provided for out of the *public purse*. He might have pardoned his own sons, who had acted improperly, before he quitted the government; but though he was the most tender of parents, he would not, but abandoned them to national justice, with only a tacit solicitation of mercy: *Behold, my sons are with you!* They have acted improperly; I deprived them of their authority; they are amenable to *you* for their past conduct; I have walked uprightly and disinterestedly among you; they have not followed my steps: but can you forgive them for their father's sake? As a *minister of justice*, he abandons them to their fate; as a *tender father*, he indirectly and modestly pleads for them on the ground of his own services.

Had he not acted thus in both these relations, he would have been unworthy of that character which he so deservedly bears.

Verse 4. They said, Thou hast not defrauded] Of what minister or governor can any nation under heaven say such things?

Verse 7. Now therefore stand still] I have arraigned *myself* before God and you; I now arraign *you* before God.

Verse 8. The Lord sent Moses and Aaron] He shows them that through all their history God had ever raised them up deliverers, when their necessities required such interference.

Verse 9. The hand of Sisera] See these transactions in the book of Judges, as marked in the margin; and see the notes on those passages.

Verse 11. Jerubbaal] That is, Gideon. *And Bedan*: instead of *Bedan*, whose name occurs nowhere else as a judge or deliverer of Israel, the *Septuagint* have *Barak*; the same reading is found in the *Syriac* and *Arabic*. The Targum has *Samson*. Many commentators are of this opinion; but *Calmet* thinks that *Jair* is intended, who judged Israel *twenty-two* years, ^{<0710B>}**Judges 10:3.**

Instead of *Samuel* the *Syriac* and *Arabic* have *Samson*; and it is most natural to suppose that Samuel does not mention *himself* in this place. St. Paul's authority confirms these alterations: *The time would fail me*, says he, *to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephthah, of David, &c.*

Verse 12. When ye saw that Nahash] This was not the first time they had demanded a *king*; see before, ^{<008B>}**1 Samuel 8:5**. But at the crisis mentioned here they became more importunate; and it was in consequence of this that the kingdom was a second time confirmed to Saul. Saul was *elected* at *Mizpeh*, he was *confirmed* at *Gilgal*.

Verse 14. If ye will fear the Lord, &c.] On condition that ye rebel no more, God will take you and your king under his merciful protection, and he and his kingdom shall be confirmed and *continued*.

Verse 16. This great thing] This unusual occurrence.

Verse 17. Is it not wheat harvest to-day?] That is, This is the *time of wheat harvest*. According to St. Jerome, who spent several years in the promised land, this harvest commenced about the end of *June* or beginning

of *July*, in which he says he never saw rain in Judea: *Nunquam enim in fine mensis Junii, sive in mense Julio, in his provinciis, maximeque in Judea, pluvias vidimus.*-HIER. in ^{<0047>}**Amos 4:7**; where he refers to this very history. What occurred now hardly ever occurs there but in the winter months.

Verse 18. The Lord sent thunder and rain that day] This was totally unusual; and, as it came at the *call of Samuel*, was a most evident *miracle*.

Greatly feared the Lord] They dreaded His terrible majesty; and *they feared Samuel*, perceiving that he had so much power with God.

Verse 19. Pray for thy servants-that we die not] As they knew they had rebelled against God, they saw that they had every thing to fear from his justice and power.

We have added unto all our sins this evil] It is no sin to have a king; a good king is one of the greatest blessings of God's providence; but it is a sin to put a *man* in the place of *God*. Is it not strange that they did not now attempt to repair their fault? They might have done it, but they did not; they acknowledged their sin, but did not put it away. This is the general way of mankind. "God help us, we are all sinners!" is the general language of all people: but though to be a *sinner* is to be in the most *solemn* and *awful* circumstances, yet they are contented to bear the character, heedless of the consequences!

Verse 20. Ye have done all this wickedness] That is, *although* ye have done all this wickedness: what was past God would pass by, provided they would be obedient in future.

Verse 21. After vain things] That is, *idols*; which he calls here **wth hattohu**, the same expression found ^{<0102>}**Genesis 1:2**. *The earth was wth tohu*; it was *waste, empty, and formless*: so *idols*; they are *confusion*, and things of *naught*, for *an idol is nothing in the world*-it is not the representative of any intelligent being.

Verse 22. The Lord will not forsake his people] He will not as yet cast you off, though you have deserved it. His purpose in preserving them in their land and religion was not yet accomplished. It was not however *for their sake* that he would not cast them off, but *for his own great name's sake*. He drew his reasons from himself.

Verse 23. God forbid that I should sin] They had earnestly begged him, ^{<01219>}**1 Samuel 12:19**, to pray to God for them, that they might not die; and he tells them that he should consider himself a sinner, should he cease to be their intercessor.

But I will teach you the good and the right way] I will show you, as long as I am with you, what *true religion* is; it is the *way to happiness and heaven*. It is *right*-there is no *crookedness* in it; it is *good*-there is no *evil* in it.

Verse 24. Only fear the Lord] *Know, respect, and reverence* him.

Serve him] Consider him your *Lord and Master*; consider yourselves his *servants*.

In truth] Be ever *honest, ever sincere; with all your heart*-have every *affection* engaged in the work of obedience; act not merely from a principle of *duty*, but also from a *pious, affectionate sense* of obligation. Act towards your God as an affectionate *child* should act towards a tender and loving *parent*.

Consider how great things] Review the history of your *fathers*, review your own life; see what interpositions of power, mercy, goodness, and truth, God has displayed in your behalf! Has he not daily loaded you with his benefits?

Verse 25. Ye shall be consumed] If ye do wickedly *you* shall be destroyed, your *kingdom* destroyed, and your *king* destroyed. Here they had set before them life and good, death and evil. Never was a people more fully warned, and never did a people profit less by the warning; and they continue to this day monuments of God's justice and forbearance. Reader, What art thou? Perhaps a similar monument. Consider therefore what great things God has done for *thee*.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 13

Saul chooses a body of troops, 1, 2. Jonathan smites a garrison of the Philistines, 3, 4. The Philistines gather together an immense host against Israel, 5. The Israelites are afraid; and some hide themselves in caves, and others flee over Jordan, 6, 7. Samuel delaying his coming, Saul offers sacrifice, 8, 9. Samuel comes and reproves him, and Saul excuses himself, 10-12. Samuel shows him that God has rejected him from being captain over his people, 13, 14. Samuel departs; and Saul and Jonathan, with six hundred men abide in Gibeah, 15, 16. The Philistines send out foraging companies, and waste the land, 17, 18. Desolate state of the Israelitish army, having no weapons of defence against their enemies, 19-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. Saul reigned one year] A great deal of learned labour has been employed and lost on this verse, to reconcile it with propriety and common sense. I shall not recount the meanings put on it. I think this clause belongs to the preceding chapter, either as a part of the whole, or a chronological note added afterwards; as if the writer had said, *These things* (related in ^{<11>}1 Samuel 12:1-25) *took place in the first year of Saul's reign:* and then he proceeds in the next place to tell us what took place in the *second year*, the *two* most remarkable years of Saul's reign. In the first he is appointed, anointed, and twice confirmed, viz., at *Mizpeh* and at *Gilgal*; in the *second*, Israel is brought into the lowest state of degradation by the Philistines, Saul acts unconstitutionally, and is rejected from being king. These things were worthy of an especial *chronological* note.

And when he had reigned] This should begin the chapter, and be read thus: "And when Saul had reigned two years over Israel, he chose him three thousand," *tic*. The *Septuagint* has left the clause out of the text entirely, and begins the chapter thus: "And Saul chose to himself three thousand men out of the men of Israel."

Verse 2. Two thousand were with Saul] Saul, no doubt, meditated the redemption of his country from the Philistines; and having chosen three thousand men, he thought best to divide them into companies, and send one against the Philistine garrison at *Michmash*, another against that at *Beth-el*, and the third against that at *Gibeah*: he perhaps hoped, by

surprising these garrisons, to get *swords* and *spears* for his men, of which we find, (^{<09132>}1 Samuel 13:22,) they were entirely destitute.

Verse 3. Jonathan smote] He appears to have taken this garrison by surprise, for his men had no arms for a regular battle, or taking the place by storm. This is the first place in which this brave and excellent man appears; a man who bears one of the most amiable characters in the Bible.

Let the Hebrews hear.] Probably this means the people who *dwelt beyond Jordan*, who might very naturally be termed here **יַרְבֵּחַ** *haibrim*, from **רַב** *abar, he passed over*; those who are beyond the river Jordan: as Abraham was called **יַרְבֵּעַ** *Ibri* because he dwelt beyond the river Euphrates.

Verse 4. The people were called together] The smiting of this garrison was the commencement of a war, and in effect the shaking off of the Philistine yoke; and now the people found that they must stand together, and fight for their lives.

Verse 5. Thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen] There is no proportion here between the *chariots* and the *cavalry*. The largest armies ever brought into the field, even by mighty emperors, never were furnished with *thirty thousand* chariots.

I think **לְשָׁלֹשׁ** *sheloshim*, THIRTY, is a false reading for **לְשָׁלוֹשׁ** *shalosh*, THREE. The *Syriac* has [Syriac] *telotho alpin*, and the *Arabic* [Arabic] *thalathato alf*, both signifying *THREE thousand*; and this was a fair proportion to the *horsemen*. This is most likely to be the true reading.

Verse 6. The people did hide themselves] They, being few in number, and totally unarmed as to *swords* and *spears*, were terrified at the very numerous and well-appointed army of the Philistines. Judea was full of *rocks, caves, thickets, &c.*, where people might shelter themselves from their enemies. While some hid themselves, others fled beyond Jordan: and those who did cleave to Saul *followed him trembling*.

Verse 8. He tarried seven days according to the set time] Samuel in the beginning had told Saul to wait *seven days*, and he would come to him, and *show him what to do*, (^{<09108>}1 Samuel 10:8. What is here said cannot be understood of that appointment, but of a different one. Samuel had at this time promised to come to him within seven days, and he kept his word, for

we find him there before the day was ended; but as Saul found he did not come at the beginning of the *seventh day*, he became impatient, took the whole business into his own hand, and acted the parts of prophet, priest, and king; and thus he attempted a most essential change in the Israelitish constitution. In it the king, the prophet, and the priest, are in their nature perfectly distinct. What such a rash person might have done, if he had not been deprived of his authority, who can tell? But his conduct on this occasion sufficiently justifies that deprivation. That he was a rash and headstrong man is also proved by his senseless *adjuration* of the people about *food*, ^{<0143>}**1 Samuel 14:24**, and his unfeeling resolution to put the brave Jonathan, his own son, to death, because he had unwittingly acted contrary to this adjuration, ^{<0144>}**1 Samuel 14:44**. Saul appears to have been a brave and honest man, but he had few of those qualities which are proper for a king, or the governor of a people.

Verse 9. And he offered the burnt-offering.] This was most perfectly unconstitutional; he had no authority to offer, or cause to be offered, any of the Lord's sacrifices.

Verse 10. Behold, Samuel came] Samuel was punctual to his appointment; one hour longer of delay would have prevented every evil, and by it no good would have been lost. How often are the effects of *precipitation* fatal!

Verse 11. And Saul said] Here he offers *three* excuses for his conduct: 1. The people were fast leaving his standard. 2. Samuel did not come *at the time*, **d[wm]** *lemoed*; at the very *commencement* of the time he did not come, but *within* that time he did come. 3. The Philistines were coming fast upon him. Saul should have waited *out* the time; and at all events he should not have gone contrary to the counsel of the Lord.

Verse 12. I forced myself] It was with great reluctance that I did what I did. In all this Saul was sincere, but he was rash, and regardless of the *precept of the Lord*, which precept or command he most evidently had received, ^{<0133>}**1 Samuel 13:13**. And one part of this precept was, that the *Lord should tell him what he should do*. Without this information, in an affair under the immediate cognizance of God, he should have taken no step.

Verse 14. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart] That this man was *David* is sufficiently clear from the sequel. But in what sense

was he *a man after God's own heart*? Answer: 1. In his strict attention to the law and worship of God. 2. In his admitting, in the whole of his conduct, that God was King in Israel, and that he himself was but his vicegerent. 3. In never attempting to alter any of those laws, or in the least change the Israelitish constitution. 4. In all his *public official conduct* he acted according to the Divine mind, and fulfilled the will of his Maker: thus was he *a man after God's own heart*. In reference to his *private or personal moral* conduct, the word is never used. This is the sense alone in which the word is used here and elsewhere; and it is unfair and wicked to put another meaning on it in order to ridicule the revelation of God, as certain infidels have done.

Verse 15. And Samuel arose] Though David, in the Divine purpose, is appointed to be *captain over the people*, yet Saul is not to be removed from the government during his life; Samuel therefore accompanies him to Gibeah, to give him the requisite help in this conjuncture.

About six hundred men.] The whole of the Israelitish army at this time, and not one sword or spear among them!

Verse 17. The spoilers came out] The Philistines, finding that the Israelites durst not hazard a battle, divided their army into three bands, and sent them in three different directions to pillage and destroy the country. Jonathan profited by this circumstance, and attacked the remains of the army at Michmash, as we shall see in the succeeding chapter.

Verse 19. Now there was no smith found] It is very likely that in the former wars the Philistines carried away all the smiths from Israel, as Porsenna did in the peace which he granted to the Romans, not permitting any iron to be forged except for the purposes of agriculture: “Ne ferro, nisi in agricultura, uterentur.” The Chaldeans did the same to the Jews in the time of Nebuchadnezzar; they carried away all the artificers, ^{<12314>}**2 Kings 24:14;** ^{<2410>}**Jeremiah 24:1; 29:2.** And in the same manner did Cyrus treat the Lydians, *Herod.* lib. i., c. 145. See several examples in *Calmet*.

Verse 20. But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines] We find from this that they did not grant them as much as Porsenna did to the Romans; he permitted the people to manufacture the implements of *husbandry*.

Verse 21. Yet they had a file] The Hebrew *hryxp petsirah*, from *rxp patsar*, to *rub hard*, is translated very differently by the versions and by critics. Our translation may be as likely as any: they permitted them the use of *files*, (I believe the word means *grindstone*.) to restore the blunted edges of their *tridents axes*, and *goads*.

Verse 22. In the day of battle-these was neither sword nor spear] But if the Israelites enjoyed such profound peace and undisturbed dominion under Samuel, how is it that they were totally destitute of *arms*, a state which argues the lowest circumstances of oppression and vassalage? In answer to this we may observe, that the *bow* and the *sling* were the principal arms of the Israelites; for these they needed no *smith*: the most barbarous nations, who have never seen *iron*, have nevertheless *bows* and *arrows*; the arrow *heads* generally made of *flint*. Arrows of this kind are found among the inhabitants of the South Sea islands; and even axes, and different implements of war, all made of stone, cut and polished by stone, are frequent among them. The arms of the aboriginal Irish have been of this kind. I have frequently seen heads of *axes* and *arrows* of *stone*, which have been dug up out of the ground, formed with considerable taste and elegance. The former the common people term *thunderbolts*; the latter, *elf-stones*. Several of these from *Ireland*, from *Zetland*, and from the *South Sea islands*, are now before me.

Now it is possible that the Israelites had still *bows* and *arrows*: these they could have without the *smith*; and it is as likely that they had *slings*, and for these they needed none. But then these were *missiles*; if they came into *close* fight, they would avail them nothing: for attacks of this kind they would require *swords* and *spears*; of these none were found but with Saul and Jonathan. WE see, in this chapter, Israel brought to as low a state as they were under Eli; when they were totally discomfited, their priests slain, their ark taken, and the judge dead. After that, they rose by the strong hand of God; and in this way they are now to rise, principally by means of David, whose history will soon commence.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 14

Jonathan and his armour-bearer purpose to attack a garrison of the Philistines, 1. Saul and his army, with Ahiah the priest, tarry in Gibeah, 2, 3. Jonathan plans his attack of the Philistine garrison, 4-10. He and his armour-bearer climb over a rock: attack and rout the garrison, 11-15. Saul and his company, seeing confusion on the Philistine host, come out against them; as did the men who had hidden themselves; and the Philistines are defeated, 16-23. Saul lays every man under a curse who shall eat food until the evening; in consequence of which the people are sorely distressed, 24-26. Jonathan, not hearing the adjuration, eats a little honey, which he found on the ground, 27-30. The Philistines being defeated, the people seize on the spoil, and begin to eat flesh without previously bleeding the animals, which Saul endeavours to prevent, 31-34. He builds an altar there, 35. Inquires of the Lord if he may pursue the Philistines by night, but receives no answer, 36, 37. Attributes this to some sin committed by some unknown person: makes inquiry by lot; and finds that Jonathan had tasted the honey, on which he purposes to put him to death, 38-44. The people interpose, and rescue Jonathan, 45. Saul fights against the Moabites, Ammonites, and Amalekites, 46-48. An account of the family of Saul, 49-52.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. Come, and let us go over] This action of Jonathan was totally contrary to the laws of war; no military operation should be undertaken without the knowledge and command of the general. But it is likely that he was led to this by a Divine influence.

The *armour-bearer* is the origin of what we call *esquire*, from *escu*, old French, a *shield*; *armiger* is the Latin, from *arma*, *weapons*, and *gero*, *I bear*. In the times of chivalry, the *armiger*, or *esquire*, was the *servant* of the knight who went after him, and carried his lance, shield, &c. It is now (strange to tell!) a title of *honour*.

Verse 2. Under a pomegranate tree] Under *Rimmon*, which not only signifies a *pomegranate tree*, but also a strong rock, in which *six hundred* Benjamites took shelter, ^{<07206>}**Judges 20:45**. Probably it was in this very rock that Saul and his six hundred men now lay hidden.

Verse 3. Ahiah, the son of Ahitub] Phinehas, son of Eli the high priests had two sons, Ahitub and I-chabod; the latter was born when the ark was taken, and his mother died immediately after. Ahiah is also called Ahimelech, ^{<0220>}**1 Samuel 22:9**.

Wearing an ephod.] That is, performing the functions of the high priest. This man does not appear to have been with Saul when he offered the sacrifices, ^{<0930>}**1 Samuel 13:9**, &c.

Verse 4. The name of the one was Bozez] *Slippery*; and the name of the other Seneh, *treading down*.-Targum.

Verse 6. Let us go over] Moved, doubtless, by a Divine impulse.

There is no restraint to the Lord] This is a fine sentiment; and where there is a promise of defense and support, the weakest, in the face of the strongest enemy, may rely on it with the utmost confidence.

Verse 7. Behold, I am with thee] I shall accompany thee whithersoever thou goest, and share all thy dangers.

Verse 9. If they say thus unto us] Jonathan had no doubt asked this as a sign from God; exactly as Eliezer the servant of Abraham did, ^{<012412>}**Genesis 24:12**.

Verse 12. Come up to us, and we will show you a thing.] This was the favourable sign which Jonathan had requested. The Philistines seem to have meant, Come, and we will show you how well fortified we are, and how able to quell all the attacks of your countrymen.

Verse 13. Jonathan climbed up] It seems he had a part of the rock still to get over. When he got over he began to slay the guards, which were about twenty in number, these were of a sort of outpost or advanced guard to the garrison.

Slew after him] Jonathan knocked them down, and the armour-bearer despatched them. This seems to be the meaning.

Verse 14. A half acre of land] The ancients measured land by the quantum which a yoke of oxen could plough in a day. The original is obscure, and is variously understood. It is probably a proverbial expression for a *very small space*.

Verse 15. There was trembling in the host] They were terrified and panic-struck; the people in general round about, those in the garrison, the spoilers, and the whole country, were struck with terror; the commotion was universal and most extraordinary. The trembling of the earth is probably not to be taken literally, but as a metaphor for a great commotion in the country, though God might have interposed in an extraordinary manner, and produced a real earthquake; but their being panic-struck was sufficient to produce all the requisite confusion and dismay.

Verse 16. The watchmen of Saul] Those who were sent out as scouts to observe the motions of the army.

Melted away] There was no order in the Philistine camp, and the people were dispersing in all directions. The Vulgate has, *Et ecce multitudo prostrata*, “And behold the multitude were prostrate;” many lay dead upon the field, partly by the sword of Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and partly by the swords of each other, ^{<01>}**1 Samuel 14:20.**

Verse 17. Number now] Saul perceived that the Philistines were routed, but could not tell by what means; supposing that it must be by some of his own troops, he called a muster to see who and how many were absent.

Verse 18. Bring hither the ark of God] He wished to inquire what use he should make of the present favourable circumstances, and to proceed in the business as God should direct.

Verse 19. While Saul talked unto the priest] Before he had made an end of consulting him, the increasing noise of the panic-struck Philistines called his attention; and finding there was no time to lose, he immediately collected his men and fell on them.

Verse 21. The Hebrews that were with the Philistines] We may understand such as they held in bondage, or who were their servants. Instead of *Hebrews* the *Septuagint* read, *οι δουλοι*, *the slaves*; from which it is evident that, instead of *μυρβ* [*Ibrim, Hebrews*, they found in their text *μυδβ* [*abadim*, servants. But this reading is not countenanced by any other version, nor by any MS. yet discovered.

Verse 22. The men-which had hid themselves] See ^{<01>}**1 Samuel 13:6.**

The *Vulgate* and the *Septuagint* add here, *And there were with Saul about ten thousand men*; but this is supported by no other authority.

Verse 24. Saul had adjured the people] He was afraid, if they waited to refresh themselves, the Philistines would escape out of their hands, and therefore he made the taking any food till sunset a capital crime. This was the very means of defeating his own intention; for as the people were exhausted for want of food, they could not continue the pursuit of their enemies: had it not been for this foolish adjuration, there had been a greater slaughter of the Philistines, ^{<D143>}**1 Samuel 14:30.**

Verse 25. There was honey upon the ground] There were many wild bees in that country, and Judea is expressly said to be a land flowing with milk and *honey*.

Verse 26. The honey dropped] It seems to have dropped from the *trees* on the ground. *Honey dews*, as they are called, are not uncommon in most countries; and this appears to have been something of this kind. I have seen *honey* in considerable quantity on the *trees* and long *grass* in the fields, and have often eaten of it.

Verse 27. His eyes were enlightened.] Hunger and fatigue affect and dim the sight; on taking food, this affection is immediately removed. This most people know to be a fact.

Verse 31. They smote the Philistines-from Mishmash to Aijalon] The distance Calmet states to be three or four leagues.

Verse 32. The people did eat them with the blood.] They were faint through hunger, and did not take time to bleed the cattle on which they fed. This was another bad effect of Saul's rash adjuration.

Verse 33. Roll a great stone unto me] Probably this means that they should set up an altar to the Lord, on which the animals might be properly slain, and the blood poured out upon the earth; and a *large stone* was erected for an *altar*.

Verse 35. Saul built an altar] And this we are informed was *the first* he had built; Samuel, as prophet had hitherto erected the altars, and Saul thought he had sufficient authority to erect one himself without the prophet, as he once offered sacrifice without him.

Verse 36. Then said the priest] It is evident that Ahiah doubted the propriety of pursuing the Philistines that night; and as a reverse of fortune

might be ruinous after such a victory, he wished to have specific directions from the Lord.

Verse 37. He answered him not that day.] Why was this answer delayed? Surely Jonathan's eating the honey was no *sin*. This could not have excited God's displeasure. And yet the *lot* found out Jonathan! But did this argue that he had incurred guilt in the sight of God? I answer: It did not; for Jonathan was delivered, by the authority of the people, from his father's rash curse; no propitiation is offered for his supposed transgression to induce God to pardon it; nor do we find any displeasure of God manifested on the occasion. See below.

Verse 41. Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect lot.] Both the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* add much to this verse: *And Saul said to the Lord God of Israel, Lord God of Israel, give judgment. Why is it that thou hast not answered thy servant to-day? If the iniquity be in me, or Jonathan my son, make it manifest. Or if this iniquity be in thy people, give sanctification.*

Verse 42. And Jonathan was taken.] The object of the inquiry most evidently was, "Who has gone contrary to the king's *adjuration* today?" The answer to that *must* be JONATHAN. But was this a proof of the Divine displeasure against the man? By no means: the holy oracle told the truth, but neither that oracle nor the God who gave it fixed any blame upon Jonathan, and his own conscience acquits him. He seeks not pardon from God, because he is conscious he had not transgressed. But why did not God answer the priest that day? Because he did not think it proper to send the people by night in pursuit of the vanquished Philistines. Saul's motive was perfectly vindictive: *Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them unto the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them;* that is, Let us burn, waste, destroy, and slay all before us! Was it right to indulge a disposition of this kind, which would have led to the destruction of many innocent country people, and of many Israelites who resided among the Philistines? Besides, was there not a most manifest reason in the people why God could not be among them? Multitudes of them were defiled in a very solemn manner; they had eaten the *flesh with the blood*; and however sacrifices might be offered to atone for this transgression of the law, they must continue unclean till the evening. Here were reasons enough why God would not go on with the people for that night.

Verse 44. And Saul answered-thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.] To save thy rash oath! So must John Baptist's head be taken off at the desire of an

impure woman, because a Herod had sworn to give her whatever she might request! Unfeeling brute! However, the king was JUDGE. But what said the *people*, who were the JURY?

Verse 45. And the people said] “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.” Here was a righteous and impartial *jury*, who brought in a *verdict* according to the *evidence*: No man should *die* but for a *breach of the law of God*; but Jonathan hath *not broken any law of God*; therefore Jonathan *should not die*. And because he *should* not, therefore he *shall* not.

He hath wrought with God this day.] God has been commander-in-chief; Jonathan has acted under his directions.

So the people rescued Jonathan] And God testified no displeasure; and perhaps he permitted all this that he might correct Saul’s propensity to rashness and precipitancy.

Verse 47. So Saul took the kingdom] The Targum appears to give the meaning of this expression: “Saul prospered in his government over Israel.” And the proofs of his prosperity are immediately subjoined.

Fought against all his enemies] Of the wars which are mentioned here we have no particulars; they must have endured a long time, and have been, at least in general, successful.

Verse 48. Smote the Amalekites.] This war is mentioned in the following chapter.

Verse 49. Now the sons of Saul] We do not find Ishbosheth here. *Calmet* says it was “because he was too young, and did not go with him to the war, for he mentions only those who were with him.” Why then mention his *daughters* and his *wife*? Did *they* go with him to the war?

Verse 52. When Saul saw any strong man] This was very politic. He thus continued to recruit his army with strong and effective men.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 15

Samuel sends Saul to destroy the Amalekites, and all their substance, 1-3. Saul collects an immense army and comes against their city, 4, 5. He desires the Kenites to remove from among the Amalekites, 6. He smites the Amalekites, and takes their king, Agag, prisoner, and saves the best of the spoil, 7-9. The Lord is displeased, and sends Samuel to reprove him, 10, 11. The conversation between Samuel and Saul, in which the latter endeavours to justify his conduct, 12-23. He is convinced that he has done wrong, and asks pardon, 24-31. Samuel causes Agag to be slain; for which he assigns the reasons, 32-35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. The Lord sent me to anoint thee] This gave him a right to say what immediately follows.

Verse 2. I remember that which Amalek did] The Amalekites were a people of Arabia Petræa, who had occupied a tract of country on the frontiers of Egypt and Palestine. They had acted with great cruelty towards the Israelites on their coming out of Egypt. (See ^{<12178>}**Exodus 17:8**, and the notes there.) They came upon them *when they were faint and weary, and smote the hindermost of the people*-those who were too weak to keep up with the rest. (See ^{<162518>}**Deuteronomy 25:18**.) And God then purposed that Amalek, as a nation, should be blotted out from under heaven; which purpose was now fulfilled by Saul upwards of *four hundred years* afterwards!

Verse 3. Slay both man and woman] Nothing could justify such an exterminating decree but the absolute authority of God. This was given: all the reasons of it we do not know; but this we know well, *The Judge of all the earth doth right*. This war was not for *plunder*, for God commanded that all the *property* as well as all the *people* should be destroyed.

Verse 4. Two hundred thousand-and ten thousand] The *Septuagint*, in the *London Polyglot*, have FOUR HUNDRED *thousand companies of Israel*, and THIRTY *thousand companies of Judah*. The *Codex Alexandrinus* has TEN *thousand* of each. The *Complutensian Polyglot* has TWO HUNDRED *thousand companies of Israel*, and TEN *thousand of Judah*. And *Josephus* has FOUR HUNDRED *thousand of Israel*, and THIRTY *thousand of Judah*. All

the other *versions* are the same with the *Hebrew* text; and there is no difference in the MSS.

Verse 5. Saul came to a city of Amalek] I believe the original should be translated, *and Saul came to the city Amalek*; their capital being called by the *name* of their *tribe*.

Verse 6. Said unto the Kenites] The Kenites were an ancient people. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a Kenite. Hobab his son (if the same person be not meant) was guide to the Hebrews through the wilderness. They had a portion of the promised land, near to the city Arad. See ^{<070116>}**Judges 1:16**; and for more particulars concerning them and the Amalekites, see the notes on ^{<04631>}**Numbers 26:20, 21**.

Verse 7. From Havilah-to Shur] From Pelusium in Egypt, unto the Red Sea.-*Josephus*. But Havilah lay eastward from the Red Sea; the Amalekites lay between this and the way to Egypt towards Shur.

Verse 11. It repenteth me that I have set up Saul] That is, I placed him on the throne; I intended, if he had been obedient, to have established his kingdom. He has been disobedient; I change my purpose, and the kingdom shall not be *established in his family*. This is what is meant by God's *repenting-changing a purpose* according to conditions already laid down or mentally determined.

Verse 12. He set him up a place] Literally, a *hand*, *dy yad*. Some say it was a *monument*; others, a *triumphal arch*: probably it was no more than a *hand*, pointing out the place where Saul had gained the victory. *Absalom's pillar* is called *the hand of Absalom*, ^{<101818>}**2 Samuel 18:18**.

Verse 15. The people spared the best of the sheep] It is very likely that the people did spare the best of the prey; and it is as likely that Saul might have *restrained* them if he would. That they might not *love war*, God had interdicted *spoil* and *plunder*, so the war was undertaken merely from a sense of *duty*, without any hope of enriching themselves by it.

Verse 17. Little in thine own sight] Who can bear *prosperity*? Is it not of the Lord's great goodness that the majority of the inhabitants of the earth are in comparative *poverty*?

Verse 21. To sacrifice unto the Lord] Thus he endeavours to excuse the people. They did not take the spoil in order to *enrich themselves* by it, but to *sacrifice unto the Lord*; and did not this motive justify their conduct?

Verse 22. Hath the Lord as great delight, &c.] This was a very proper answer to, and refutation of Saul's excuse. Is not obedience to the will of God the end of all religion, of its rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices?

Verse 23. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.] This is no translation of those difficult words, **uyprtw ^waw yrm usq tacj yk rxph** *ki chattath kesem meri veaven utheraphim haphtsar*. It appears to me that the three nouns which occur first in the text refer each to the three last in order. Thus, **tacj** *chattath*, TRANSGRESSION, refers to **^wa** *aven*, INIQUITY, which is the principle whence *transgression* springs. **usq** *kesem*, DIVINATION, refers to **uyprt** *teraphim*, consecrated images or *telesms*, vulgarly *talismans*, used in incantations. And **yrm** *meri*, REBELLION, refers evidently to **rxph** *haphtsar*, STUBBORNNESS, whence rebellion springs. The meaning therefore of this difficult place may be the following: As transgression comes from iniquity, divination from teraphim, and rebellion from stubbornness, so, because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king. All the *versions* are different.

Verse 24. I have sinned-because I feared the people] This was the best excuse he could make for himself; but had he *feared* GOD *more*, he need have *feared* the PEOPLE *less*.

Verse 25. Pardon my sin] Literally, *bear my sin*; take it away; forgive what I have done against thee, and be my intercessor with God, that he may forgive my offense against him; *turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord*.

Verse 26. I will not return with thee] I cannot acknowledge thee as king, seeing the Lord hath rejected thee.

Verse 29. The Strength of Israel will not lie] What God has purposed he will bring to pass, for he has all power in the heavens and in the earth; and he will not *repent*-change his purpose-concerning thee.

We may say it was some extenuation of Saul's fault that the people *insisted* on preserving the best of the prey; for who could resist the demands of a

victorious mob? But his crime was in *consenting*; had he not, the crime would have been *theirs alone*.

Verse 32. Agag came unto him delicately.] The Septuagint have *τρεμων*, *trembling*; the original, *tnd[m maadannoth, delicacies*; probably *vya ish*, man, understood; *a man of delights, a pleasure-taker*: the Vulgate, *pinguissimus et tremens*, “very fat and trembling.”

Surely the bitterness of death is past.] Almost all the versions render this differently from ours. *Surely death is bitter*, is their general sense; and this seems to be the true meaning.

Verse 33. As thy sword hath made women childless] It appears that Agag had forfeited his life by his own personal transgressions, and that his death now was the retribution of his cruelties.

And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces] 1. What Samuel did here he did in his magisterial capacity; and, 2. It is not likely he did it by his *own sword*, but by that of an executioner. What kings, magistrates, and generals do, in an official way, by their subjects, servants, or soldiers, they are said to do themselves; *qui facit per alterum, facit per se*.

Verse 35. And Samuel came no more to see Saul] But we read, ^{<0182>}**1 Samuel 19:22-24**, that *Saul* went to *see Samuel* at Naioth, but this does not affect what is said here. From this time Samuel had no *connection* with Saul; he never more acknowledged him as king; he mourned and prayed for him, and continued to perform his prophetic functions at Ramah, and at Naioth, superintending the school of the prophets in that place.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 16

Samuel is sent from Ramah to Bethlehem, to anoint David, 1-13. The Spirit of the Lord departs from Saul, and an evil spirit comes upon him, 14. His servants exhort him to get a skilful harper to play before him, 15, 16. He is pleased with the counsel, and desires them to find such a person, 17. They recommend David, 18. He is sent for, comes, plays before Saul, and finds favour in his sight, 19-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. Fill thine horn with oil] *Horns* appear to have been the *ancient* drinking vessels of all nations; and we may suppose that most persons who had to travel much, always carried one with them, for the purpose of taking up water from the fountains to quench their thirst. Such a *horn* had Samuel; and on this occasion he was commanded to fill it with oil, for the purpose of consecrating a king over Israel from among the sons of Jesse.

Verse 2. Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice] This was strictly *true*; Samuel *did offer a sacrifice*; and it does not appear that he could have done the work which God designed, unless he had offered this sacrifice, and called the elders of the people together, and thus collected Jesse's sons. But he did not tell the principal design of his coming; had he done so, it would have produced *evil and no good*: and though no man, in any circumstances, should ever *tell a lie*, yet in all circumstances he is not obliged to tell the *whole* truth, though in every circumstance he must tell *nothing but the truth*, and in every case so tell the truth that the hearer shall not believe a lie by it.

Verse 3. Call Jesse to the sacrifice] The common custom was, after the blood of the victim had been poured out to God, and the fat burnt, to feast on the flesh of the sacrifice. This appears to have been the case in all, except in the *whole burnt-offering*; this was entirely consumed.

Verse 4. The elders of the town trembled at his coming] They knew he was a prophet of the Lord, and they were afraid that he was now come to denounce some judgments of the Most High against their city.

Verse 5. Sanctify yourselves] Change your clothes, and wash your bodies in pure water, and prepare your minds by meditation, reflection, and prayer; that, being in the spirit of sacrifice, ye may offer acceptably to the Lord.

Verse 7. Man looketh on the outward appearance] And it is well he *should*, and confine his looks to *that*; for when he pretends to sound the *heart*, he usurps the prerogative of God.

In what way were these communications made from God to Samuel? It must have been by direct inspirations into his heart. But what a state of holy familiarity does this argue between God and the prophet! I believe Moses himself was not more highly favoured than Samuel.

Verse 10. Seven of his sons] This certainly was not done *publicly*; Samuel, Jesse, and his children, must have been in a *private* apartment, previously to the public feast on the sacrifice; for Samuel says, ^{<0161>}**1 Samuel 16:11**, *We will not sit down till he (David) come.*

Verse 12. He was ruddy] I believe the word here means *red-haired*, he had *golden locks*. Hair of this kind is ever associated with a delicate skin and florid complexion.

Verse 13. The Spirit of the Lord came upon David] God qualified him to be governor of his people, by infusing such graces as wisdom, prudence, counsel, courage, liberality, and magnanimity.

Verse 14. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul] He was thrown into such a state of mind by the judgments of God, as to be deprived of any regal qualities which he before possessed. God seems to have taken what gifts he had, and given them to David; and then the evil spirit came upon Saul; for what God fills not, the devil will.

An evil spirit from the Lord] The evil spirit was either immediately sent from the Lord, or permitted to come. Whether this was a diabolic possession, or a mere mental malady, the learned are not agreed; it seems to have partaken of both. That Saul had fallen into a deep melancholy, there is little doubt; that the devil might work more effectually on such a state of mind, there can be but little question. There is an old proverb, Satan delights to fish in troubled waters; and Saul's situation of mind gave him many advantages.

The theory of Dr. Scheuchzer, in his *Physica Sacra*, on the malady of Saul, is allowed to be very ingenious. It is in substance as follows: Health consists in a moderate tension of the *fibres*, which permits all the *fluids* to have an entire freedom of circulation, and to the *spirits*, that of diffusing themselves through all the limbs; on the contrary, *disease* consists in tensions of the fibres morbidly weak or morbidly strong. This latter seems to have been the case of Saul; and as the undulations of the air which convey *sound* communicate themselves to and through the most solid bodies, it is easy to suppose that by the modulations of music all the fibres of his body, which were under the influence of the morbidly increased tension, might be so relaxed as to be brought back into their natural state, and thus permit the re-establishment of a free and gentle circulation of the fluids, and consequently of the animal spirits, and thus induce calmness and tranquillity of mind. I believe this theory to be correct, and I should find no difficulty to amplify and to illustrate the subject. Even a skilful playing upon the harp was one means to bring a disordered state of the nervous and fibrous system into a capacity of affording such uninterrupted tranquillity to the mind as to render it capable of receiving the prophetic influence; see the case of Elisha, ^{<OR>} **2 Kings 3:14, 15**. It has been said:—

“Music hath charms to sooth the savage breast.”

This has been literally proved: a musician was brought to play on his instrument while they were feeding a *savage lion* in the tower of London; the beast immediately left his food, came towards the grating of his den, and began to move in such a way as to show himself affected by the music. The musician ceased, and the lion returned to his food; he recommenced, and the lion left off his prey, and was so affected as to seem by his motions to dance with delight. This was repeatedly tried, and the effects were still the same.

Verse 18. I have seen a son of Jesse] Dr. Warburton supposes the story is anticipated from ^{<OR>} **1 Samuel 16:14-23**, and that the true chronology of this part of David’s life is the following:— 1. David is anointed by Samuel; 2. Carries provisions to his brethren in the army; 3. Fights with and kills Goliath; 4. Is received into the king’s court, 5. Contracts a friendship with Jonathan; 6. Incurs Saul’s jealousy; 7. Retires to his father’s house; 8. Is after some time sent for by Saul to sooth his melancholy with his harp; 9. Again excites Saul’s jealousy, who endeavours to smite him with his javelin. This anticipation between the 14th and 23d verse comes in, in the

order of time, between verses 9 and 10, ~~18:9~~ **1 Samuel 18:9, 10**, where the breach is apparent.

Verse 20. Took an ass laden with bread] He must send a present to Saul to introduce his son, and this was probably the best he had. Dr. Warburton pleads still farther on the propriety of his rectification of the chronology in this place. David had at this time vanquished the Philistine, was become a favourite with the people, had excited Saul's jealousy, and retired to shun its effects. In the interim Saul was seized with the disorder in question, and is recommended by his servants to try the effects of music. They were acquainted with David's skill on the harp, and likewise with Saul's bad disposition towards him; the point was delicate, it required to be managed with address, and therefore they recommend David in this artful manner: "As you must have one constantly in attendance, both in court and on your military expeditions; to be always at hand on occasion, the son of Jesse will become both stations well; he will strengthen your camp and adorn your court, for he is a tried soldier and of a graceful presence. You have nothing to fear from his ambition, for you saw with what prudence he went into voluntary banishment when his popularity had incurred your displeasure." Accordingly Saul is prevailed on, David is sent for, and succeeds with his music; this dissipates all former umbrage, and, as one who is ever to be in attendance, he is *made Saul's armour-bearer*. This sunshine still continued till his great successes awakened Saul's jealousy afresh, and then the lifted *javelin* was to strike off all obligations. Thus we see what light is thrown upon the whole history by the supposition of an *anticipation* in the latter part of this chapter; an anticipation the most natural, proper, and necessary, for the purpose of the historian. Thus reasons Bishop *Warburton*, and with very considerable plausibility, though the intelligent reader may still have his doubts.

Verse 23. The evil spirit from God] The word *evil* is not in the common Hebrew text, but it is in the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Targum*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*, and in *eight* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., which present the text thus: **h[r μyhl a j wr** *ruach Elohim raah*, spiritus Domini malus, *the evil spirit of God*. The *Septuagint* leave out **θεου**, *of God*, and have **πνευμα πονηρον**, *the evil spirit*. The *Targum* says, *The evil spirit from before the Lord*; and the *Arabic* has it. *The evil spirit by the permission of God*; this is at least the sense.

And the evil spirit departed from him.] The *Targum* says, *And the evil spirit descended up from off him*. This considers the malady of Saul to be more than a *natural* disease.

THERE are several difficulties in this chapter; those of the *chronology* are pretty well cleared, in the opinion of some, by the observations of Bishop Warburton; but there is still something more to be done to make this point entirely satisfactory. Saul's *evil spirit*, and the influence of *music* upon it, are not easily accounted for. I have considered his malady to be of a *mixed* kind, *natural* and *diabolical*; there is too much of apparent *nature* in it to permit us to believe it was all *spiritual*, and there is too much of apparent *supernatural* influence to suffer us to believe that it was all *natural*.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 17

The Philistines gather together against Israel at Ephes-dammim, and Saul and his men pitch their camp near the valley of Elah, 1-3. Goliath of Gath, a gigantic man, whose height was six cubits and a span, defies the armies of Israel, and proposes to end all contests by single combat; his armour is described, 4-11. Saul and his host are greatly dismayed, 12. David, having been sent by his father with provisions to his brethren in the army, hears the challenge, inquires into the circumstances, thinks it a reproach to Israel that no man can be found to accept the challenge, is brought before Saul, and proposes to undertake the combat, 13-32. Saul objects to his youth and inexperience, 33. David shows the grounds on which he undertakes it, 34-37. Saul arms him with his own armour: but David, finding them an encumbrance, puts them off, and takes his staff, his sling, and five stones out of the brook, and goes to meet Goliath, 38-40. The Philistine draws near, despises, defies, and curses him, 41-44. David retorts his defiance, 45-47. They draw near to each other, and David slings a stone, hits Goliath in the forehead, slays him, and cuts off his head with his own sword, 48-51. The Philistines flee, and are pursued by the Israelites, 52, 53. David brings the head of the Philistine to Jerusalem, 54. Conversation between Saul and Abner concerning David, who is in consequence brought before Saul, 55-58.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. Now the Philistines gathered together] Calmet thinks that this war happened *eight* years after the anointing of David, and *ten* or *twelve* years after the war with the Amalekites. We have already seen that there was war between Saul and the Philistines all his days. See ~~14:52~~ **1 Samuel 14:52**.

Shochoh and Azekah] Places which lay to the south of Jerusalem and to the west of Bethlehem; about five leagues from the former. Ephes-dammim was somewhere in the vicinity, but it is not known *where*. See *Calmet*.

Verse 2. The valley of Elah] Some translate this the *turpentine valley*, or the *valley of the terebinth trees*; and others, *the valley of oaks*. The situation of this valley is well known.

Verse 3. The Philistines stood on a mountain] These were two eminences or hills, from which they could see and talk with each other.

Verse 4. There went out a champion] Our word *champion* comes from *campus*, the field; *Campio est enim ille qui pugnat in campo, hoc est, in castris*, “*Champion* is he, properly, who fights in the *field*; i.e., in *camp*s.” A man well skilled in arms, strong, brave, and patriotic.

But is this the meaning of the original **μυνηβ vya** *ish habbenayim*, a *middle man*, the *man between two*; that is, as here, the *man* who undertakes to settle the disputes *between two armies* or *nations*. So our ancient *champions* settled disputes between *contending parties* by what was termed *camp fight*, hence the *campio* or *champion*. The *versions* know not well what to make of this man. The *Vulgate* calls him *sir spurius*, “a bastard;” the *Septuagint*, **ανηρ δυνατος**, “a strong or powerful man;” the *Targum*, **whynybm arbg** *gabra mibbeyneyhon*, “a man from between them;” the Arabic, [Arabic] *rujil jibar*, “a great or gigantic man;” the Syriac is the same; and Josephus terms him **ανηρ παμμεγεθιστατος**, “an immensely great man.” The *Vulgate* has given him the notation of *spurius* or *bastard*, because it considered the original as expressing *a son of two*, i.e., a man whose parents are unknown. Among all these I consider our word *champion*, as explained above, the best and most appropriate to the original terms.

Whose height was six cubits and a span.] The word cubit signifies the length from *cubitus*, the elbow, to the top of the middle finger, which is generally rated at *one foot six inches*. The *span* is the distance from the top of the middle finger to the end of the thumb, when extended as far as they can stretch on a *plain*; this is ordinarily *nine inches*. Were we sure that these were the measures, and their extent, which are intended in the original words, we could easily ascertain the height of this Philistine; it would then be *nine feet nine inches*, which is a tremendous height for a man.

But the *versions* are not all agreed in his height. The *Septuagint* read **τεσσαρων πηχεων και σπιθαμης**, *four cubits and a span*; and *Josephus* reads the same. It is necessary however to observe that the *Septuagint*, in the *Codex Alexandrinus*, read with the Hebrew text. But what was the *length* of the ancient cubit? This has been variously computed; *eighteen inches*, *twenty inches and a half*, and *twenty-one inches*. If we take the first measurement, he was *nine feet nine*; if the second, and read *palm* instead of *span*, with the *Vulgate* and others, he was *ten feet seven inches and a half*; if we take the last, which is the estimate of Grævius, with the *span*, he

was *eleven feet three inches*; or if we go to the exactest measurement, as laid down in Bishop Cumberland's tables, where he computes the cubit at 21.888 inches, the span at 10.944 inches, and the palm at 3.684 inches, then the six cubits and the span will make exactly 11 feet 10.272 inches. If we take the *palm* instead of the span, then the height will be 11 feet 3.012 inches. But I still think that the *nine feet nine inches* is the most reasonable.

Verse 5. He was armed with a coat of mail] The words in the original, *μϋcqcq ~wrv shiryon kaskassim*, mean a *coat of mail* formed of *plates of brass overlapping each other, like the scales of a fish, or tiles of a house*. This is the true notion of the original terms.

With thin *plates of brass or iron, overlapping each other*, were the ancient coats of mail formed in different countries; many formed in this way may be now seen in the tower of London.

The weight-five thousand shekels] Following Bishop Cumberland's tables, and rating the *shekel* at *two hundred and nineteen grains*, and the *Roman ounce* at *four hundred and thirty-eight grains*, we find that Goliath's coat of mail, weighing *five thousand shekels*, was exactly *one hundred and fifty-six pounds four ounces avoirdupois*. A vast weight for a coat of mail, but not all out of proportion to the man.

Verse 6. Greaves of brass upon his legs] This species of armour may be seen on many ancient monuments. It was a *plate of brass* (though perhaps sometimes formed of *laminæ* or *plates*, like the *mail*) which covered the *shin* or fore part of the leg, from the knee down to the instep, and was buckled with straps behind the leg. From ancient monuments we find that it was commonly worn only on one leg. VEGETIUS, *de Revelation Militari*, says, *Pedites Scutati etiam ferreas ocreas in dextris cruribus copebantur accipere*. "The foot soldiers, called Scutati, from their particular species of shield, were obliged to use iron *greaves* on their *right legs*." One of these may be seen in the monument of the gladiator *Buto*, in *Montfaucon*; and another in the Mosaic pavement at *Bognor*, in Surrey.

A target of brass between his shoulders.] When not actually engaged, soldiers threw their shields behind their back, so that they appeared to rest or hang between the shoulders.

There are different opinions concerning this piece of armour, called here *ˆwdyk kidon*. Some think it was a *covering* for the *shoulders*; others, that it was a *javelin* or *dart*; others, that it was a *lance*; some, a *club*; and others, a *sword*. It is certainly distinguished from the shield, ^{<0174>} **1 Samuel 17:41**, and is translated a *spear*, ^{<0181>} **Joshua 8:18**.

Verse 7. The staff on his spear was like a weaver's beam] Either like that on which the *warp* is *rolled*, or that on which the *cloth* is *rolled*. We know not how *thick* this was, because there were several sorts of *looms*, and the sizes of the beams very dissimilar. Our *woollen*, *linen*, *cotton*, and *silk* looms are all different in the *size* of their *beams*; and I have seen several that I should not suppose *too thick*, though they might be *too short*, for Goliath's spear.

His spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron] That is, his spear's head was of *iron*, and it weighed *six hundred shekels*; this, according to the former computation, would amount to *eighteen pounds twelve ounces*.

And one bearing a shield] *hnxh hatstsinnah*, from *ˆxmb[rc tsan*, *pointed* or *penetrating*, if it do not mean some kind of a *lance*, must mean a *shield*, with what is called the *umbo*, a sharp protuberance, in the middle, with which they could as effectually annoy their enemies as defend themselves. Many of the old Highland targets were made with a projecting *dagger* in the centre. Taking the proportions of things *unknown* to those *known*, the armour of Goliath is supposed to have weighed not less than *two hundred and seventy-two pounds thirteen ounces*! Plutarch informs us that the ordinary weight of a soldier's *panoply*, or complete armour, was one *talent*, or *sixty pounds*; and that one Alcimus, in the army of Demetrius, was considered as a prodigy, because his panoply weighed *two talents*, or *one hundred and twenty pounds*.

Verse 8. I a Philistine] The *Targum* adds much to this speech. This is the substance: "I am Goliath the Philistine of Gath, who killed the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas the priests; and led into captivity the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and placed it in the temple of Dagon my god; and it remained in the cities of the Philistines seven months. Also, in all our battles I have gone at the head of the army, and we conquered and cut down men, and laid them as low as the dust of the earth; and to this day the Philistines have not granted me the honour of being chief of a thousand

men. And ye, men of Israel, what noble exploit has Saul, the son of Kish, of Gibeah, done, that ye should have made him king over you? If he be a hero, let him come down himself and fight with me; but if he be a weak or cowardly man, then choose you out a man that he may come down to me.”

Verse 9. Then will we be your servants] Of this stipulation we hear nothing farther.

Verse 10. I defy] *ytprej yna ani cheraphti*, “I strip and make bare,” the armies of Israel; for none dared to fight him. From the *Dhunoor Veda Shastra* it appears that, among the Hindoos, it was common, before the commencement of an engagement, to challenge the enemy by throwing out some terms of abuse, similar to those used by Goliath. We find this also in Homer: his heroes scold each other heartily before they begin to fight. See on ^{<Q1743>} **1 Samuel 17:43**.

Verse 11. Saul and all Israel-were dismayed] They saw no man able to accept the challenge.

Verse 12. The 12th verse, to the 31st inclusive, are wanting in the *Septuagint*; as also the 41st verse; and from the 54th to the end; with the first *five* verses of 1 Samuel xviii., and the 9th, 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, and 19th of the same.

All these parts are found in the *Codex Alexandrinus*; but it appears that the MS. from which the *Codex Alexandrinus* was copied, had them not. See observations at the end of this chapter. Dr. Kennicott has rendered it very probable that these portions are not a genuine part of the text.

Notwithstanding what Bishop Warburton and others have done to clear the chronology of the present printed Hebrew, it is impossible to make a clear consistent sense of the history, unless these verses are omitted. Let any one read the *eleventh* verse in connection with the *thirty-second*, leave out the *forty-first*, and connect the *fifty-fourth* with the *sixth* of 1 Samuel 18, and he will be perfectly convinced that there is nothing wanting to make the sense complete; to say nothing of the other omissions noted above. If the above be taken in as genuine, the ingenuity of man has hitherto failed to free the whole from apparent contradiction and absurdity. I must confess that where every one else has failed, I have no hope of succeeding: I must, therefore, leave all farther attempts to justify the chronology; and refer to those who have written *for* and *against* the genuineness of this part of the

common Hebrew text. At the end of the chapter I shall introduce some extracts from *Kennicott* and *Pilkington*: and leave the whole with the unprejudiced and discerning reader.

Verse 18. Carry these ten cheeses] *Cheeses of milk*, says the *margin*. In the East they do not make what we call *cheese*: they press the milk but slightly, and carry it in rush baskets. It is highly salted, and little different from *curds*.

Verse 19. Fighting with the Philistines.] See at the end of the chapter. See Clarke “^{<0178>}1 Samuel 17:58”.

Verse 29. Is there not a cause?] *awh rbd awl h halo dabar hu*. I believe the meaning is what several of the versions express: *I have spoken but a word*. And should a man be made an offender for a word?

Verse 32. And David said] This properly connects with the eleventh verse. { ^{<0171>}1 Samuel 17:11 }

Verse 33. Thou art but a youth] Supposed to be about *twenty-two* or *twenty-three* years of age.

Verse 34. Thy servant kept his father's sheep] He found it necessary to give Saul the *reasons* why he undertook this combat; and why he expected to be victorious. 1. I have *courage* to undertake it, and *strength* to perform it. 2. Both have been tried in a very signal manner: (1.) A *lion* came upon my flock, and seized a lamb; I ran after him, he attacked me, I seized hold of him by his shaggy locks, smote and slew him, and delivered the lamb. (2.) A *bear* came in the same way, and I attacked and slew him. 3. This, with whom I am to fight, is a *Philistine*, an *uncircumcised* man; one who is an enemy to God: God therefore will not be on his side. On that ground I have nothing to fear. 4. He has defied the armies of the Lord; and has in effect defied Jehovah himself: therefore the battle is the Lord's, and he will stand by *me*. 5. I have perfect confidence in his protection and defense; for they that trust in him shall never be confounded. 6. I conclude, therefore, that the Lord, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine.

Verse 35. The slaying of the lion and the bear mentioned here, must have taken place at two different times; perhaps the verse should be read thus: *I went out after him*, (the lion.) *and smote him*, &c. *And when he* (the bear) *rose up against me*, *I caught him by the beard and slew him*.

Verse 37. Go, and the Lord be with thee.] Saul saw that these were reasonable grounds of confidence, and therefore wished him success.

Verse 38. Saul armed David] He knew that although the battle was the Lord's, yet prudent means should be used to secure success.

Verse 39. I cannot go with these] In ancient times it required considerable *exercise* and *training* to make a man expert in the use of such heavy armour; armour which in the present day scarcely a man is to be found who is able to carry; and so it must have been *then*, until that *practice* which arises from frequent use had made the proprietor perfect. *I have not proved* them says David: I am wholly unaccustomed to such armour and it would be an encumbrance to me.

Verse 40. He took his staff] What we would call his *crook*.

Five smooth stones] 1. Had they been *rough* or *angular*, they would not have passed easily through the air, and their asperities would, in the course of their passage, have given them a *false direction*. 2. Had they not been *smooth*, they could not have been readily despatched from the *sling*.

A shepherd's bag] That in which he generally carried his provisions while keeping the sheep in the open country.

And his sling] The sling, both among the Greeks and Hebrews, has been a powerful offensive weapon. See what has been said on ¹⁷²⁰¹⁶**Judges 20:16**. It is composed of *two strings* and a *leathern strap*; the strap is in the *middle*, and is the place where the *stone* or *bullet* lies. The string on the right end of the strap is firmly fastened to the hand; that on the *left* is held between the thumb and middle joint of the fore finger. It is then whirled two or three times round the head; and when discharged, the finger and thumb let go their hold of the left end string. The velocity and force of the sling are in proportion to the distance of the strap, where the bullet lies, from the shoulder joint. Hence the ancient *Baleares*, or inhabitants of *Majorca* and *Minorca*, are said to have had *three* slings of different lengths, the *longest* they used when the enemy was at the greatest distance; the *middle* one, on their nearer approach; and the *shortest*, when they came into the ordinary fighting distance in the field. The shortest is the most *certain*, though not the most *powerful*. The *Balearians* are said to have had *one* of their slings constantly bound about their *head*, to have used the

second as a *girdle*, and to have carried the *third* always in their *hand*. See DIOD. Sic. lib. v., c. 18, p. 286, edit. *Bipont*.

In the use of the sling it requires much *practice* to hit the mark; but when once this dexterity is acquired, the sling is nearly as fatal as the musket or bow; see on ^{<0174>}**1 Samuel 17:49**. David was evidently an expert marksman; and his sling gave him greatly the *advantage* over Goliath; an advantage of which the giant does not seem to have been aware. He could hit him within any speaking distance, if he missed once, he had as many *chances* as he had *stones*; and after all, being unencumbered with armour, young, and athletic, he could have saved his life by flight. Against him the Philistine could do but little, except in close fight; it is true he appears to have had a *javelin* or *missile spear*, (see on ^{<0176>}**1 Samuel 17:6**,) but David took care to prevent the use of all such weapons, by giving him the first blow.

Verse 41. The man that bare the shield] See on ^{<0177>}**1 Samuel 17:7**.

Verse 42. He disdained him] He held him in contempt; he saw that he was young, and from his *ruddy complexion* supposed him to be *effeminate*.

Verse 43. Amos I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?] It is very likely that Goliath did not perceive the *sling*, which David might have kept coiled up within his hand.

Cursed David by his gods.] Prayed his gods to curse him. This long parley between David and Goliath is quite in the style of those times. A Hindoo sometimes in a fit of anger says to his enemy, *The goddess Kalee shall devour thee! May Doorga destroy thee!* Homer's heroes have generally an altercation before they engage; and sometimes enter into geographical and genealogical discussions, and vaunt and scold most contemptibly.

Verse 44. Come to me, and I will give thy flesh] He intended, as soon as he could lay hold on him, to pull him to pieces.

Verse 45. Thou comest to me with a sword] *I come to thee with the name* (μνβ *beshem*) *of Jehovah of hosts; the God of the armies of Israel*. What Goliath expected from his *arms*, David expected from the ineffable *name*.

Verse 46. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand] This was a direct and circumstantial prophecy of what did take place.

Verse 47. For the battle is the Lord's] It is the Lord's war: you are fighting *against* him and his religion, as the champion of your party; I am fighting *for* God, as the champion of his cause.

Verse 48. The Philistine arose] This was an end of the parley; the Philistine came forward to meet David, and David on his part ran forward to meet the Philistine.

Verse 49. Smote the Philistine in his forehead] Except his *face*, Goliath was everywhere covered over with strong armour. Either he had no *beaver* to his helmet, or it was lifted up so as to expose his forehead; but it does not appear that the ancient helmets had any covering for the face. The *Septuagint* however supposes that the stone passed through the helmet, and sank into his forehead: **Και διεδυ ο λιθος δια της περικεφαλαιας εις το μετωπον αυτου**, “and the stone passed through his helmet, and sank into his skull.” To some this has appeared perfectly improbable; but we are assured by ancient writers that scarcely any thing could resist the force of the *sling*.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. v., c. 18, p. 287, edit. *Bipont*, says “The Baleares, in time of war, sling greater stones than any other people, and with *such force*, that they seem as if projected from a *catapult*. **Διο και κατα τας τειχομαχιας εν ταις προσβολαις τυπτοντες τους προ των επαλξεω εφεστωτας κατατραυματιζουσιν, εν δε ταις παραταξεσι τους τε θυρεους, και τα κρανη, και παν σκεπαστηριον οπλον συντριβουσι. κατα δε την ευστοχιαν ουτως ακριβεις εισιν, ωστε κατα το πλειστον μη αμαρτανειν του προκειμενου σκοπου.** Therefore, in assaults made on fortified towns, they grievously wound the besieged; and in battle they *break in pieces the shields, helmets*, and every *species* of *armour* by which the body is defended. And they are such exact marksmen that they scarcely *ever miss* that at which they *aim*.”

The historian accounts for their great *accuracy* and *power* in the use of the sling, from this circumstance: **αιτιαι δε τουτων, κ. τ. λ.** “They attain to this perfection by frequent exercise from their childhood; for while they are young and under their mother's care, they are obliged to learn to sling; for they fasten bread for a mark at the top of the pole; and till the child hit the

bread he must remain fasting; and when he has hit it, the mother gives it to him to eat.”-*Ibid.*

I have given these passages at large, because they contain several curious facts, and sufficiently account for the *force* and *accuracy* with which David slung his stone at Goliath. We find also in the μη αμαρτανειν, *not miss the mark*, of the historian, the true notion of αμαρτανειν, *to sin*, which I have contended for elsewhere. He who *sins*, though he *aims* thereby at his gratification and profit, misses the mark of present and eternal felicity.

Verse 51. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.] They were panic-struck; and not being willing to fulfil the condition which was stipulated by Goliath, they precipitately left the field. The Israelites took a proper advantage of these circumstances, and totally routed their enemies.

Verse 54. David took the head of the Philistine] It has been already remarked that this, with the following verses, and the five first verses of the eighteenth chapter, are omitted by the Septuagint. See the observations at the end. See Clarke “^{<0173>}1 Samuel 17:58”.

Verse 58. Whose son art thou, thou young man?] That Saul should not know David with whom he had treated a little before, and even armed him for the combat, and that he should not know who his father was, though he had sent to his father for permission to David to reside constantly with him, (^{<0162>}1 Samuel 16:22,) is exceedingly strange! I fear all Bishop Warburton’s attempts to rectify the chronology by assumed *anticipations*, will not account for this. I must honestly confess they do not satisfy me; and I must refer the reader to what immediately follows on the authenticity of the verses which concern this subject.

ON the subject of that large omission in the Septuagint of which I have spoken on ^{<0172>}1 Samuel 17:12, I here subjoin the reasons of Mr. Pilkington and Dr. Kennicott for supposing it to be an interpolation of some rabbinical writer, added at a very early period to the Hebrew text.

“Had every version of the Hebrew text,” says Mr. Pilkington, “agreed to give a translation of this passage, as we now find, the attempts of clearing it from its embarrassments would have been attended with very great difficulties; but, as in several other cases before mentioned, so here, the providence of God seems to have so far secured the credit of those who

were appointed to be the penmen of the oracles of truth, that the defence of their original records may be undertaken upon good grounds, and supported by sufficient evidence. For we are now happily in possession of an ancient version of these two chapters, which appears to have been made from a Hebrew copy, which had none of the thirty-nine verses which are here supposed to have been interpolated, nor was similar to what we have at present in those places which are here supposed to have been altered. This version is found in the *Vatican* copy of the *Seventy*, which whoever reads and considers, will find the accounts there given regular, consistent, and probable. It will be proper, therefore, to examine the several parts where such alterations are supposed to have been made in the *Hebrew* text, in order to produce such other external or internal evidence, as shall be necessary to support the charge of interpolation, which ought not to be laid merely upon the authority of any single version.

“The first passage, which is not translated in the *Vatican* copy of the *Greek* version, is from the 11th to the 32d verse of the 17th chapter wherein we have an account: 1. Of *David's* being sent to the camp to visit his brethren. 2. Of his conversation with the men of *Israel*, relating to *Goliath's* challenge; and their informing him of the premium *Saul* had offered to any one that should accept it, and come off victorious. 3. Of *Eliab's* remarkable behaviour to his brother *David*, upon his making this inquiry. And, 4. Of *Saul's* being made acquainted with what *David* had said upon this occasion.

“It is obvious to remark upon this passage:—

“1. That, after *David* had been of so much service to the king, in causing the evil spirit to depart from him; after its being recorded how greatly *Saul* loved him, and that he had made him his armour-bearer; after the king had sent to *Jesse* to signify his intention of keeping his son with him; all of which are particularly mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter; the account of his keeping his father's sheep afterwards, and being sent to his brethren upon this occasion, must appear to be somewhat improbable. 2. That what is here said of the premium that *Saul* had offered to him who should conquer the *Philistine*, is not well consistent with the accounts afterwards given, of which we shall have occasion to take particular notice. 3. That *Eliab's* behaviour, as here represented, is not only remarkable but unaccountable and absurd. And, 4. That the inquiries of a young man, who is not said to have declared any intentions of accepting the challenge of the

Philistine, would scarcely have been related to the king. But now, if this passage be supposed to have been interpolated, we must see how the connection stands upon its being omitted.

“Verse 11. ‘When *Saul* and all *Israel* heard these words of the *Philistine*, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.’

“Verse 32. ‘Then *David* said unto *Saul*, Let no man’s heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this *Philistine*.’

“No connection can be more proper, and in this view *David* is represented as being at that time an attendant upon the king; and when we had been told just before, (^{<09162>} **1 Samuel 16:21**,) that *Saul* had made him his armour-bearer, we might justly expect to find him with him when the battle was set in array; ^{<09170>} **1 Samuel 17:2**. In this connection *David* is also represented as fully answering the character before given of him: ‘A mighty valiant man, and a man of war,’ ^{<09168>} **1 Samuel 16:18**, and ready to fight with the *giant* upon the first proposal, (for the account of the *Philistine* presenting himself forty days is in this passage here supposed to have been interpolated, ^{<09176>} **1 Samuel 17:16**.) I shall leave it to the critical *Hebrew* reader to make what particular remarks he may think proper in respect to the style and manner of expression in these twenty verses, and let *Jesse go for an old man amongst men in the days of Saul, &c.*”-PILKINGTON’S Remarks upon several Passages of Scripture, p. 62.

“The authorities,” says Dr. *Kennicott*, “here brought to prove this great interpolation are the internal evidence arising from the *context*, and the external arising from the *Vatican* copy of the Greek version. But how then reads the *Alexandrian* MS.? The remarks acknowledge that this MS. agrees here with the corrupted *Hebrew*; and therefore was probably translated, in this part, from some late Hebrew copy which had thus been interpolated; see pages 72, 75. Now that these two MSS. do contain different readings in some places, I observed in pages 398-404, and 414. And in this 17th chapter of *Samuel*, ^{<09174>} **1 Samuel 17:4**, the *Alexandrian* MS. says, agreeably to the present *Hebrew*, that the height of Goliath was *six cubits and a span*, i.e., above *eleven feet*; but the *Vatican* MS., agreeably to *Josephus*, that it was *four cubits and a span*, i.e., near *eight feet*. And in ^{<09173>} **1 Samuel 17:43**, what the *Vatican* renders *he cursed David by his gods*, the *Alexandrian* renders *by his idols*. But though the *Hebrew* text might be consulted and a few words differently rendered by the transcriber of one of these MSS., or by the transcribers of the MSS.

from which these MSS. were taken; yet, as these MSS. do contain, in this chapter, such Greek as is almost universally the same, (in verb, noun, and particle,) I presume that they contain here the same translation with the designed alteration of a few words, and with the difference of the interpolated verses found in the *Alexandrian MS.*

“But, after all, what if the *Alexandrian MS.*, which now has these verses should *itself* prove them interpolated? What if the *very words of this very MS.* demonstrate that these verses were not in some former *Greek MS.*? Certainly if the *Alexandrian MS.* should be thus found, at last, not to contradict, but to confirm the *Vatican* in its omission of these twenty verses, the concurrence of these authorities will render the argument much more forcible and convincing.

“Let us then state the present question; which is, Whether the twenty verses between ver. 11 and 32, which are now in the *Hebrew* text, are interpolated? The *Vatican MS.* goes on immediately from the end of the 11th verse (**και εφοβηθησαν σφοδρα**) to ver. 32, which begins **και ειπε Δαυιδ**: whereas the 12th verse in the *Hebrew* begins, *not with a speech*, but with David’s birth and parentage. If then the *Alexandrian MS.* begins its present 12th verse as the 32d verse begins, and as the 12th verse could not begin properly, I appeal to any man of judgment *whether the transcriber was not certainly copying from a MS. in which the 32d verse succeeded the 11th verse*; and if so, then *from a MS. which had not these intermediate verses*? Now that this is the fact, the case will at once appear upon examining the *Alexandrian* copy, where the 12th verse begins with **ΚΑΙ ΕΙΠΕ ΔΑΥΙΔ**; as the 32d verse begins, and as the 12th verse could not begin properly.

“The case seems clearly to be, that the transcriber, having wrote what is now in the 11th verse, was beginning what is now the 32d verse; when, after writing **και ειπε δαυιδ**, he perceived that either the *Hebrew*, or some other *Greek* copy, or the margin of his own copy, had several intermediate verses: upon which, without blotting out the significant word **ειπε**, he goes on to write the addition: thus fortunately leaving a decisive proof of his own great interpolation. if this addition was in the margin of that *MS.* from which the *Alexandrian* was transcribed, it might be inserted by that transcriber; but if it was inserted either from the *Hebrew*, or from any other *Greek* copy, the transcriber of this *MS.* seems to have had too little learning for such a proceeding. If it was done by the writer of that

former MS., then the interpolation may be *a hundred or a hundred and fifty years* older than the *Alexandrian MS.* Perhaps the earliest Christian writer who enlarges upon the strong circumstance of David's coming from the sheep to the army, is Chrysostom, in his homily upon David and Saul; so that it had then been long in some copies of the *Greek* version. The truth seems to be, that the addition of these twenty verses took its first rise from what *Josephus* had inserted in his variation and embellishment of this history; but that many circumstances were afterwards added to his additions.

“For (and it is extremely remarkable) though *Josephus* has some, he has not half the improbabilities which are found *at present* in the sacred history: as for instance: Nothing of *the armies being fighting in the valley, or fighting at all*, when David was sent by his father, as in ^{<091719>}**1 Samuel 17:19**. Nothing of *the host going forth, and shouting for the battle*, at the time of David's arrival, as in ^{<091721>}**1 Samuel 17:20**. Nothing of *all the men of Israel fleeing from Goliath*, as in ^{<091724>}**1 Samuel 17:24**; on the contrary, *the two armies*, (it should seem,) continued upon their two mountains. Nothing of *David's long conversation with the soldiers*, ^{<091725>}**1 Samuel 17:25-27**, in seasons so very improper, as, whilst they were *shouting for the battle*, or whilst they were *fleeing from Goliath*; and *fleeing* from a man after they had seen him and heard him *twice* in every day *for forty days together*, ^{<091716>}**1 Samuel 17:16**, the two armies, all this long while, leaning upon their arms, and looking very peaceably at one another. Nothing of Goliath's repeating his challenge *every morning and every evening*, as in ^{<091716>}**1 Samuel 17:16**. David, (it is said, ^{<091723>}**1 Samuel 17:23**,) happened to hear one of these challenges; but if he heard the *evening* challenge, it would have been then too late for the several transactions before, and the long pursuit after, Goliath's death; and David could not well hear the *morning* challenge, because he could scarce have arrived so early, after travelling from *Beth-lehem* to the army, (about *fifteen miles*,) and bringing with him *an ephah of parched corn, and ten loaves, and ten cheeses*, as in ^{<091717>}**1 Samuel 17:17, 18**. Nothing of encouraging any man to fight Goliath, by *an offer of the king's daughter*, ^{<091725>}**1 Samuel 17:25**; which, as it seems from the subsequent history, had never been thought of; and which, had it been offered, would probably have been accepted by some man or other out of the whole army. Nothing of Eliab's reprimanding David for *coming to see the battle*, as in ^{<091728>}**1 Samuel 17:28**; but for a very different reason; and, indeed, it is highly improbable that Eliab should

treat him at all with contempt and scurrility, after having seen Samuel anoint him for the future king of Israel, see ^{<09160>}**1 Samuel 16:1-13**. Nothing of a *second conversation* between David and the soldiers, as in ^{<09173>}**1 Samuel 17:30, 31**. Nothing of *Saul and Abner's not knowing who was David's father*, at the time of his going forth against the Philistine, as in ^{<09175>}**1 Samuel 17:55**. Nothing of *David's being introduced to the king by Abner*, in form, after killing the Philistine, ^{<09175>}**1 Samuel 17:57**, at a time when the king and the captain of the host had no leisure for complemental ceremony; but were set out, ^{<09175>}**1 Samuel 17:57**, in *immediate and full pursuit of the Philistines*. Nor, lastly, is any notice taken *here* by *Josephus* of what now begins the 18th chapter, *Jonathan's friendship for David*, which is related elsewhere, and in a different manner; on the contrary, as soon as *Josephus* has mentioned Goliath's death, and told us that Saul and all Israel shouted, and fell at once upon the Philistines, and that, when the pursuit was ended, the head of Goliath was *carried by David into his own tent*, (and he could have then *no tent of his own* if he had not been then an officer in the army:) I say, as soon as *Josephus* has recorded these circumstances, he goes on to *Saul's envy and hatred of David, arising from the women's songs of congratulation*; exactly as these capital parts of the history are connected in the VATICAN MS. And with this circumstance I shall conclude these remarks; earnestly recommending the whole to the learned reader's attentive examination.

“It must not however be forgot, that the learned F. Houbigant has, in his Bible, placed these twenty verses (from the 11th to the 32d) between *hooks*, as containing a passage which comes in very improperly.

“If it be inquired as to this interpolation in *Samuel*, when it could possibly be introduced into the text? It may be observed that, *about the time of Josephus*, the Jews seem to have been fond of enlarging and, as they vainly thought, embellishing the sacred history, by inventing speeches, and prayers, and hymns, and also new articles of history, and these of considerable length; witness the several additions to the book of Esther; witness the long story concerning *wine, women, and truth*, inserted amidst parts of the genuine history of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, and worked up into what is now called the *First Book of Esdras*; witness the hymn of the three children in the fiery furnace, added to *Daniel*; and witness also the many additions in *Josephus*. Certainly, then, some few remarks might be noted by the Jews, and some few of their historical additions might be inserted in

the margin of their Hebrew copies; which might afterwards be taken into the text itself by injudicious transcribers.

“The history of David’s conquest of the mighty and insulting Philistine is certainly very engaging; and it gives a most amiable description of a brave young man, relying with firm confidence upon the aid of the *GOD of battle* against the blaspheming enemy. It is not therefore very strange that some fanciful rabbin should be particularly struck with the strange circumstances of the Philistines daring to challenge all Israel; and David’s cutting off the giant’s head with the giant’s own sword. And then, finding that Josephus had said that *David came from the sheep to the camp, and happened to hear the challenge*, the rabbin might think it very natural that David should be indignant against the giant, and talk valorously to the soldiers, and that the soldiers should mightily encourage David; and then, to be sure, this was the most lucky season to introduce the celebrated friendship of Jonathan for David; particularly when, according to these additions, Jonathan had seen *Abner leading David in triumph to the king’s presence*; every one admiring the young hero, as he proudly advanced with the grim *head of the Philistine in his hand*. So that this multiform addition and fanciful embellishment of the rabbin reminds one of the motley absurdity described by the poet in the famous lines:—

*Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plasmas, &c.*

“The passage supposed to be interpolated here, was in the Hebrew text before the time of Aquila; because there are preserved a few of the differences in those translations of it which were made by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. These verses, being thus acknowledged at that time, would doubtless be found in such copies as the Jews then declared to be *genuine*, and which they delivered afterwards to Origen as such. And that Origen did refer to the Jews for such copies as *they held genuine*, he allows in his epistle to Africanus; for there he speaks of *soothing* the Jews, in order to get *pure* copies from them.”—KENNICOTT’S *Second Dissertation on the Hebrew Text*, p. 419.

In the *general dissertation* which Dr. Kennicott has prefixed to his edition of the Hebrew Bible, he gives additional evidence that the verses in question were not found originally in the *Septuagint*, and consequently not in the *Hebrew copy* used for that version. Several MSS. in the royal library at Paris either omit these verses or have them with *asterisks* or notes of

dubiousness. And the collation by Dr. *Holmes* and his continuators has brought farther proof of the fact. From the whole, there is considerable evidence that these verses were not in the Septuagint in the time of *Origen*; and if they were not in the MSS. used by *Origen*, it is very probable they were not in that version *at first*; and if they were not in the Septuagint at first, it is very probable that they were not in the *Hebrew text* one hundred and fifty years before Christ; and if not *then* in the Hebrew text, it is very probable they were not in that text *originally*. See *Dissertation on Gen.*, p. 9; and *Remarks on Select Passages*, p. 104.

I have only to remark here, that the *historical books* of the Old Testament have suffered more by the carelessness or infidelity of transcribers than any other parts of the sacred volume; and of this the two books of *Samuel*, the two books of *Kings*, and the two books of *Chronicles*, give the most decided and unequivocal proofs. Of this also the reader has already had considerable evidence; and he will find this greatly increased as he proceeds.

It seems to me that the Jewish copyists had not the same opinion of the *Divine inspiration* of those books as they had of those of the *law* and the *prophets*; and have therefore made no scruple to insert some of their own *traditions*, or the glosses of their doctors, in different parts; for as the whole must evidently appear to them as a *compilation* from their *public records*, they thought it no harm to make *different alterations* and *additions* from *popular statements* of the same facts, which they found in *general circulation*. This is notoriously the case in *Josephus*; this will account, and it does to me very satisfactorily, for many of the *various readings* now found in the Hebrew text of the *historical books*. They were held in less *reverence*, and they were copied with less *care*, and emended with less *critical skill*, than the *pentateuch* and the *prophets*; and on them the hands of careless, ignorant, and temerarious scribes, have too frequently been laid. To deny this, only betrays a portion of the same ignorance which was the parent of those disorders; and attempts to blink the question, though they may with some be an argument of *zeal*, yet with all the sincere and truly enlightened friends of Divine revelation, will be considered to be as dangerous as they are absurd.

Where the rash or ignorant hand of man has fixed a *blot* on the Divine records, let them who in the providence of God are qualified for the task

wipe it off; and while they have the thanks of all honest men, God will have the glory.

There have been many who have affected to deny the existence of *giants*. There is no doubt that the accounts given of several are either fabulous or greatly exaggerated. But men of an extraordinary size are not uncommon even in our own day: I knew two brothers of the name of *Knight*, who were born in the same township with myself, who were *seven feet six inches high*; and another, in the same place, *Charles Burns* who was *eight feet six*! These men were well and proportionately made. I have known others of this height, whose limbs were out of all proportion; their knees bent in, and joints rickety.

Ireland, properly speaking, is the only nation on the earth that produces GIANTS; and let me tell the *poor*, that this is the only nation in the world that may be said to live on *potatoes*; with little *bread*, and less *flesh-meat*.

I have seen and entertained in my house the famous Polish dwarf, the *Count Boruwlaski*, who was about *thirty-six inches* high, every part of whose person was formed with the most perfect and delicate symmetry. The prodigious height and bulk of *Charles Burns*, and the astonishing diminutiveness of *Count Boruwlaski*, could not be properly estimated but by comparing both together. Each was a perfect man; and yet, in quantum, how disproportionate! Man is the only creature in whom the extremes of minuteness and magnitude are so apparent, and yet the proportion of the parts in each strictly correlative.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 18

Jonathan and David commence a lasting friendship; and David acts prudently with respect to Saul, 1-5 Saul becomes jealous of David, on account of the esteem in which he is held in Israel; and, in his fury endeavours to destroy him, 6-12. David is made captain over a thousand; and the people love and respect him, 13-16. Saul, in order to ensnare him, offers him his daughter in marriage, 17-24; and requires a hundred foreskins of the Philistines for dowry; hoping that, in endeavouring to procure them, David might fall by the hands of the Philistines, 25. David agrees to the conditions, fulfils them, and has Michal to wife, 26-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. When he had made an end of speaking] These *first five verses* are omitted by the *Septuagint*. See the notes on the preceding chapter.

Jonathan loved him as his own soul] The most intimate friendship subsisted between them; and they loved each other with pure hearts fervently. No love was lost between them; each was worthy of the other. They had a friendship which could not be affected with changes or chances, and which exemplified all that the ancients have said on the subject; *την φιλιαν ισοτητα ειναι, και μιαν ψυχην, τον φιλον ετερον αυτον*; “Friendship produces an entire sameness; it is one soul in two bodies: a friend is another self.”

Verse 4. Jonathan stripped himself] Presents of *clothes* or *rich robes*, in token of respect and friendship, are frequent in the East. And how frequently *arms* and *clothing* were presented by warriors to each other in token of friendship, may be seen in Homer and other ancient writers.

Verse 5. Set him over the men of war] Made him *generalissimo*; or what we would call *field marshal*.

Verse 6. When David was returned] This verse connects well with the 54th verse of the preceding chapter; { ^{<091754>} **1 Samuel 17:54** } and carries on the narration without any break or interruption. See the notes there.

The women came out] It was the principal business of certain women to celebrate *victories*, sing at *funerals*, &c.

In ancient times, says *Justin*, kings used a *spear* instead of a diadem: *Per ea tempora reges hastas pro diademate habebant*, *Hist. lib. xliii*. And as *spears* were the emblems of supreme power, hence they were reputed as attributes of the Divinity, and were worshipped as representatives of the gods. *Ab origine verum, pro DIIS immortalibus veteres HASTAS coluerent, ob cuius religionis memoriam, adhuc deorum simulachris HASTÆ adduntur.*-Ibid.

Verse 13. Made him his captain] This was under pretence of doing him honour, when it was in effect only to rid himself of the object of his envy.

Verse 15. He was afraid of him.] He saw that, by his prudent conduct, he was every day gaining increasing influence.

Verse 17. Fight the Lord's battles.] Mr. Calmet properly remarks that the wars of the Hebrews, while conducted by the express orders of God, were truly *the wars of the Lord*; but when the spirit of worldly ambition and domination became mingled with them, they were no longer the wars of the Lord, but wars of lust and profanity.

Verse 21. That she may be a snare to him] Saul had already determined the condition on which he would give his daughter to David; viz., that he *should slay one hundred Philistines*: this he supposed he would undertake for the love of Michal, and that he must necessarily perish in the attempt; and *thus* Michal would become a *snare to him*.

Verse 25. But a hundred foreskins] That is, Thou shalt slay one hundred Philistines, and thou shalt produce their *foreskins*, as a proof, not only that thou hast killed one hundred men, but that these are of the *uncircumcised*. A custom similar to this still prevails among the Abyssinians, according to Bruce. See his Travels.

Verse 27. Slew-two hundred men.] The Septuagint has only *one hundred men*. Saul covenanted with David for a *hundred*; and David himself says, ^{<10B14>}**2 Samuel 3:14**, that he espoused Michal for a *hundred*: hence it is likely that *one hundred* is the true reading.

Verse 30. Then the princes of the Philistines went forth] Probably to avenge themselves on David and the Israelites: but of this war we know no more than that David was more skilful and successful in it than any of the other officers of Saul. His military skill was greater, and his success was

proportionate to his skill and courage; hence it is said, he behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 19

Jonathan pleads for David before Saul, who is for the present reconciled, 1-7. David defeats the Philistines; and Saul becomes again envious, and endeavours to slay him, but he escapes, 8-10. Saul sends men to David's house, to lie in wait for him; but Michal saves him by a stratagem, 11-17. David flees to Samuel, at Ramah, 18. Saul, hearing of it, sends messengers three several times to take him; but the Spirit of coming upon them, they prophesy, 19-21. Saul, hearing of this, goes after David himself, and falls under the same influence, 22-24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. That they should kill David.] Nothing less than the especial interposition of God could have saved David's life, when every officer about the king's person, and every soldier, had got positive orders to despatch him.

Verse 2. Take heed to thyself until the morning] Perhaps the order was given to slay him the *next day*; and therefore Jonathan charges him to be particularly on his guard at that time, and to hide himself.

Verse 4. Jonathan spake good of David] It is evident that Jonathan was satisfied that David was an innocent man; and that his father was most *unjustly* incensed against him.

Verse 5. For he did put his life in his hand] The pleadings in this verse, though short, are exceedingly cogent; and the argument is such as could not be resisted.

Verse 6. He shall not be slain.] In consequence of this *oath*, we may suppose he issued orders contrary to those which he had given the preceding day.

Verse 7. He was in his presence, as in times past.] By Jonathan's advice he had secreted himself on that day on which he was to have been assassinated: the king having sworn that he should not be slain, David resumes his place in the palace of Saul.

Verse 9. And the evil spirit from the Lord] His envy and jealousy again returned, producing distraction of mind, which was exacerbated by diabolic influence. See on ^{<0164>} **1 Samuel 16:14.**

Verse 10. But he slipped away] He found he could not trust Saul; and therefore was continually on his watch. His agility of body was the means of his preservation at this time.

Verse 11. To slay him in the morning] When they might be able to *distinguish* between him and Michal his wife; for, had they attempted his life in the night season, there would have been some danger to Michal's life. Besides, Saul wished to represent him as a *traitor*; and consequently an attack upon him was justifiable at any time, even in the fullest daylight.

Verse 12. Let David down through a window] As Saul's messengers were sent to David's house to *watch him*, they would naturally guard the gate, or lie in wait in that place by which David would come out. Michal, seeing this let him down to the ground through a window probably at the *back part* of the house; and there being neither entrance nor issue that way, the liars in wait were easily eluded.

Verse 13. Michal took an image] *μυρθη τα eth hatteraphim, the teraphim.* The Hebrew word appears to mean any kind of *image*, in any kind of *form*, as a representative of some *reality*. Here it must have been something in the *human form*; because it was intended to represent a man lying in bed indisposed.

A pillow of goats' hair] Perhaps she formed the appearance of a sick man's *head* muffled up by this pillow or bag of goats' hair. So I think the original might be understood. The *goats' hair* was merely accidental; unless we could suppose that it was designed to represent the *hair of David's head*, which is not improbable.

Verse 17. Let me go; why should I kill thee?] That is, If thou do not let me go, I will kill thee. This she said to excuse herself to her father: as a *wife* she could do not less than favour the escape of her husband, being perfectly satisfied that there was no guilt in him. It is supposed that it was on this occasion that David wrote the fifty-ninth Psalm, *Deliver me from mine enemies, &c.*

Verse 18. David fled, and escaped-to Samuel] He, no doubt, came to this holy man to ask advice; and Samuel thought it best to retain him for

the present, with himself at Naioth, where it is supposed he had a school of prophets.

Verse 20. The company of the prophets prophesying] Employed in religious exercises.

Samuel-appointed over them] Being *head* or *president* of the school at this place.

The Spirit of God was upon the messengers] They partook of the same influence, and joined in the same exercise; and thus were prevented from seizing David.

Verse 23. He went on, and prophesied] The Divine Spirit seemed to have seized him at the well of Sechu; and he went on from that *prophesying*-praying, singing praises, &c.; till he came to Naioth.

Verse 24. He stripped off his clothes] Threw off his royal robes or military dress, retaining only his *tunic*; and continued so all that day and all that night, uniting with the sons of the prophets in *prayers*, *singing praises*, and other *religious exercises*, which were unusual to kings and warriors; and this gave rise to the saying, *Is Saul also among the prophets?* By bringing both him and his men thus under a Divine influence, God prevented them from injuring the person of David. **See Clarke's notes on** ⁶⁻⁹¹⁰⁶**1 Samuel 10:6**, &c.; and see my sermon on *The Christian Prophet and his Work*.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 20

David complains to Jonathan of Saul's enmity against him; Jonathan comforts him, 1-10. They walk out into the field, and renew their covenant, 11-17. David asks Jonathan's leave to absent himself from Saul's court; and Jonathan informs him how he shall ascertain the disposition of his father towards him, 18-23. David hides himself; is missed by Saul; Jonathan is questioned concerning his absence; makes an excuse for David; Saul is enraged, and endeavours to kill Jonathan, 24-33. Jonathan goes out to the field; gives David the sign which they had agreed on, and by which he was to know that the king had determined to take away his life, 34-39. He sends his servant back into the city; and then he and David meet, renew their covenant, and have a very affectionate parting, 40-42.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. David fled from Naioth] On hearing that Saul had come to that place, knowing that he was no longer in safety, he fled for his life.

Verse 2. My father will do nothing] Jonathan thought that his father could have no evil design against David, because of the oath which he had sworn to himself ^{<0906>}**1 Samuel 19:6**; and at any rate, that he would do nothing against David without informing him.

Verse 3. There is but a step between me and death.] My life is in the most imminent danger. Your father has, most assuredly, determined to destroy me.

The same figure used here, *there is but a step between me and death*, may be found in *Juvenal*, who, satirizing those who risk their lives for the sake of gain in perilous voyages, speaks thus:—

*I nune et ventis animam committe, dolato
Confisus ligno, digitis a morte remotus
Quatuor aut septem, si sit latissima teda.
SAT. xii., ver. 57.*

“Go now, and commit thy life to the winds, trusting to a hewn plank, *four* or *seven* fingers thick, if the beam out of which it has been cut have been large enough.”

Verse 5. To-morrow is the new moon] The months of the Hebrews were *lunar* months, and they reckoned from new moon to new moon. And as their other feasts, particularly the passover, were reckoned according to this, they were very scrupulous in observing the first appearance of each new moon. On these new moons they offered sacrifices, and had a feast; as we learn from ^{<01010>}**Numbers 10:10; 28:11**. And we may suppose that the families, on such occasions, sacrificed and feasted together. To this David seems to refer; but the gathering together all the families of a whole tribe seems to have taken place only once in the year. *There is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family,* ^{<02016>}**1 Samuel 20:6**.

Verse 8. If there be in me iniquity] If thou seest that I am plotting either against the state, or the life of thy father, then slay me thyself.

Verse 10. Who shall tell me?] Who shall give me the necessary information? What means wilt thou use to convey this intelligence to me?

Verse 11. Come, and let us go out into the field] In answer to David's question, he now shows him how he shall convey this intelligence to him.

Verse 12. Jonathan said-O Lord God of Israel] There is, most evidently, something wanting in this verse. The *Septuagint* has, *The Lord God of Israel doth KNOW*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic*, *The Lord God of Israel is WITNESS*. Either of these makes a good sense. But two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. supply the word *yj chai*, "liveth;" and the text reads thus, *As the Lord God of Israel LIVETH, when I have sounded my father-if there be good, and I then send not unto thee, and show it thee, the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan*. This makes a still better sense.

Verse 13. The Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father.] From this, and other passages here it is evident that Jonathan knew that the Lord had appointed David to the kingdom.

Verse 14. Show me the kindness of the Lord] When thou comest to the kingdom, if I am alive, thou shalt show kindness to me, and thou shalt continue that kindness to my family after me.

Verse 20. I well shoot three arrows] Jonathan intended that David should stay at the stone Ezel, where probably there was some kind of *cave*, or *hiding place*; that, to prevent all suspicion, he would not go to him himself, but take his servant into the fields, and pretend to be exercising himself in archery; that he would shoot three arrows, the better to cover his design;

and that, if he should say to his servant, who went to bring back the arrows, “The arrows are on this side of thee,” this should be a sign to David that he might safely return to court, no evil being designed; but if he should say, “The arrows are beyond thee,” then David should escape for his life, Saul having determined his destruction.

Verse 25. The king sat upon his seat] It seems that there was one table for Saul, Jonathan, David, and Abner; Saul having the chief seat, that *next to the wall*. As only *four* sat at this table, the absence of any one would soon be noticed.

Verse 29. Our family hath a sacrifice] Such sacrifices were undoubtedly *festal* ones; the beasts slain for the occasion were first *offered to God*, and *their blood poured out before him*; afterwards all that were bidden to the feast ate of the flesh. This was a family entertainment, at the commencement of which God was peculiarly honoured.

Verse 30. Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman] This clause is variously translated and understood. The *Hebrew* might be translated, *Son of an unjust rebellion*; that is, “Thou art a rebel against thy own father.” The Vulgate, *Fili mulieris virum ultro rapientis*; “Son of the woman who, of her own accord, forces the man.” The Septuagint is equally curious, **υιε κορασιων αυτομολουντων**; “Son of the damsels who came of their own accord.” Were these the meaning of the *Hebrew*, then the bitter reflection must refer to some *secret* transaction between Saul and Jonathan’s mother; which certainly reflects more dishonour on himself than on his brave son. Most sarcasms bear as hard upon the speaker, as they do on him against whom they are spoken. Abusive language always argues a mean, weak, and malevolent heart.

Verse 34. Jonathan arose-in fierce anger] We should probably understand this rather of Jonathan’s *grief* than of his *anger*, the latter clause explaining the former: for *he was grieved for David*. He was grieved for his *father*-he was grieved for his *friend*.

Verse 38. Make speed, haste, stay not.] Though these words appear to be addressed to the lad, yet they were spoken to David, indicating that his life was at stake, and only a prompt flight could save him.

Verse 40. Jonathan gave his artillery] I believe this to be the only place in our language where the word *artillery* is not applied to *cannon* or

ordnance. The original (*yl k keley*) signifies simply *instruments*, and here means the bow, quiver, and arrows.

Verse 41. Until David exceeded.] David's distress must, in the nature of things, be the *greatest*. Besides his friend Jonathan, whom he was now about to lose for ever, he lost his wife, relatives, country; and, what was most afflictive, the altars of his God, and the ordinances of religion.

Saul saw David's growing popularity, and was convinced of his own maladministration. He did not humble himself before God, and therefore became a prey to envy, pride, jealousy, cruelty, and every other malevolent temper. From him David had every thing to fear, and therefore he thought it was safer to yield to the storm, than attempt to brave it; though he could have even raised a very powerful party in Israel, had he used the means which were so much in his power. But as he neither sought not affected the kingdom, he left it to the providence of God to bring him in by such means, at such a way, and in such a time, as was most suited to his godly wisdom. He that believeth shall not make haste: God's *way* and *time* are ever the best; and he who, even in God's way, runs before he is sent, runs at random; runs without light, and without Divine strength. Feeble, therefore, must be his own might, his own counsel, and his own wisdom: though he encompass himself with his own sparks yet this hath he at the Lord's hand-he shalt lie down in sorrow.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 21

David comes to Ahimelech at Nob, receives provisions from him, and the sword of Goliath; and is noticed by Doeg, one of the servants of Saul, 1-9. He leaves Nob, and goes to Achish, king of Gath, 10. But on being recognised as the vanquisher of Goliath by the servants of Achish, he feigns himself deranged, and Achish sends him away, 11-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. Then came David to Nob] There were two places of this name, one on this side, the second on the other side of Jordan; but it is generally supposed that Nob, near Gibeah of Benjamin, is the place here intended; it was about twelve miles from Jerusalem.

Why art thou alone] Ahimelech probably knew nothing of the difference between Saul and David; and as he knew him to be the king's son-in-law, he wondered to see him come without any attendants.

Verse 2. The king hath commanded me a business] All said here is an untruth, and could not be dictated by the Spirit of the Lord; but there is no reason to believe that David was under the influence of Divine inspiration at this time. It is well known that from all antiquity it was held no crime to tell a lie, in order to save life. Thus Diphilus:—

Ἐπολαμβάνω το ψευδος ἐπι σωτηρια
Λεγομενον, ουδεν περιποιεισθαι δυσχερες.

“I hold it right to tell a lie, in order to procure my personal safety; nothing should be avoided in order to save life.”

A heathen may say or sing thus; but no Christian can act thus, and save his soul, though he by doing so may save his life.

Verse 6. So the priest gave him hallowed bread] To this history our Lord alludes, ⁴¹⁰²⁵Mark 2:25, in order to show that in cases of *absolute necessity* a breach of the *ritual law* was no sin. It was lawful for the priests only to eat the shew-bread; but David and his companions were starving, no other bread could be had at the time, and therefore he and his companions ate of it without sin.

Verse 7. Detained before the Lord] Probably fulfilling some vow to the Lord, and therefore for a time resident at the tabernacle.

And his name was Doeg] From ^{<0920>}1 Samuel 22:9 we learn that this man betrayed David's secret to Saul, which caused him to destroy the city, and slay eighty-five priests. We learn from its title that the fifty-second Psalm was made on this occasion; but titles are not to be implicitly trusted.

Verse 9. The sword of Goliath] It has already been conjectured (see ^{<0970>}1 Samuel 17:1-58) that the sword of Goliath was laid up as a trophy in the tabernacle.

Verse 10. Went to Achish the king of Gath.] This was the worst place to which he could have gone: it was the very city of Goliath, whom he had slain, and whose sword he now wore; and he soon found, from the conversation of the servants of Achish, that his life was in the most imminent danger in this place.

Verse 13. And he changed his behaviour] Some imagine David was so *terrified* at the danger to which he was now exposed, that he was thrown into a kind of *frenzy*, accompanied with *epileptic fits*. This opinion is countenanced by the *Septuagint*, who render the passage thus: **Ἴδου ἰδετε ἀνδρα ἐπιλητον;** "Behold, ye see an epileptic man. Why have ye introduced him to me?" **Μη ἐλαττουμαι ἐπιληπτων ἐγω;** "Have I any need of epileptics, that ye have brought him to have his fits before me, (**ἐπιληπτευσθαι προς με?**)" It is worthy of remark, that the *spittle falling upon the beard*, i.e., *slavering or frothing at the mouth*, is a genuine concomitant of an epileptic fit.

If this translation be allowed, it will set the conduct of David in a clearer point of view than the present translation does. But others think the whole was a feigned conduct, and that he acted the part of a lunatic or madman in order to get out of the hands of Achish and his courtiers. Many vindicate this conduct of David; but if *mocking be catching*, according to the proverb, he who *feigns* himself to be *mad* may, through the just judgment of God, *become* so. I dare not be the apologist of *insincerity* or *lying*. Those who wish to look farther into this subject may consult Dr. *Chandler*, Mr. *Saurin*, and *Ortlob*, in the first volume of *Dissertations*, at the end of the Dutch edition of the *Critici Sacri*.

Verse 15. Shall this fellow come into my house?] I will not take into my service a man who is liable to so grievous a disease. *Chandler*, who vindicates David's *feigning himself, mad*, concludes thus: "To deceive the deceiver is in many instances meritorious, in none criminal. And what so likely to deceive as the very reverse of that character which they had so misconstrued? He was undone as a *wise man*, he had a chance to escape as a *madman*; he tried, and the experiment succeeded." I confess I can neither feel the *force* nor the *morality* of this. Deceit and hypocrisy can never be pleasing in the sight of God.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 22

David flees to the cave of Adullam, where he is joined by four hundred men of various descriptions, 1, 2. He goes afterwards to Moab; and by the advice of the prophet Gad, to the forest of Hareth, 3-5. Saul, suspecting his servants of infidelity, upbraids them, 6-8. Doeg informs him of David's coming to Nob; of his being entertained by Ahimelech; on which Saul slays Ahimelech and all the priests, to the number of eighty-five, and destroys the city of Nob, 9-19. Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, only escapes; he joins with David, by whom he is assured of protection, 20-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. The cave Adullam] This was in the tribe of Judah, and, according to Eusebius and Jerome, ten miles eastward of what they call *Eleutheropolis*.

Verse 2. And every one that was in distress-debt-discontented] It is very possible that these several disaffected and exceptionable characters might at first have supposed that David, unjustly persecuted, would be glad to avail himself of their assistance that he might revenge himself upon Saul, and so they in the mean time might profit by plunder, &c. But if this were their design they were greatly disappointed, for David never made any improper use of them. They are never found plundering or murdering; on the contrary, they always appear under good discipline, and are only employed in services of a beneficent nature, and in defence of their country. Whatever they were before they came to David, we find that he succeeded in civilizing them, and making profitable to the state those who were before unprofitable. It is not necessary to strain the words of the original in order to prove that these were *oppressed* people, and not exceptionable characters, as some have done.

Verse 3. He said unto the king of Moab] David could not trust his parents within the reach of Saul, and he found it very inconvenient to them to be obliged to go through all the fatigues of a military life, and therefore begs the king of Moab to give them shelter. The king of Moab, being one of Saul's enemies, would be the more ready to oblige a person from whom he might at least expect *friendship*, if not considerable *services*.

Verse 5. Get thee into the land of Judah] Gad saw that in this place alone he could find safety.

Verse 6. Saul abode in Gibeah] Saul and his men were in pursuit of David, and had here, as is the general custom in the East, encamped on a *height*, for so *Ramah* should be translated, as in the margin. His *spear*, the ensign of power (see on ^{<091811>}**1 Samuel 18:11**,) was at hand, that is stuck in the ground where he rested, which was the *mark* to the soldiers that *there* was their general's tent.

And all his servants were standing about him] That is, they were encamped around him, or perhaps here there is a reference to a sort of council of war called by Saul for the purpose of delivering the speech recorded in the following verses.

Verse 8. There is none that showeth me] He conjectured that Jonathan had made a league with David to dethrone him, and he accuses them of disloyalty for not making the discovery of this unnatural treason. Now it was impossible for any of them to show what did not exist, no such league having ever been made between David and Jonathan.

Verse 9. Doeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants of Saul] In ^{<092107>}**1 Samuel 21:7** he is said to be *the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul*, and the *Septuagint* intimate that he was *over the mules of Saul*. Probably he was what we call the king's *equery* or *groom*.

Verse 10. And he inquired of the Lord for him] This circumstance is not related in history; but it is probably true, as David would most naturally wish to know where to direct his steps in this very important crisis.

Verse 14. And who is so faithful] The word [^]*man neeman*, which we here translate *faithful*, is probably the name of an *officer*. See Clarke's note on ^{<041207>}**Numbers 12:7**".

Verse 15. Did I then begin to inquire of God] He probably means that his inquiring *now* for David was no *new thing*, having often done so before, and without ever being informed it was either wrong in itself, or displeasing to the king. Nor is it likely that Ahimelech knew of any disagreement between Saul and David. He knew him to be the king's son-in-law, and he treated him as such.

Verse 17. But the servants of the king would not] They dared to disobey the commands of the king in a case of such injustice, inhumanity, and irreligion.

Verse 18. And Doeg-fell upon the priests] A ruthless Edomite, capable of any species of iniquity.

Fourscore and five persons] The Septuagint read **τριακοσious και πεντε ανδρας**, *three hundred and five men*; and Josephus has *three hundred and eighty-five men*. Probably the eighty-five were priests; the three hundred, the families of the priests; three hundred and eighty-five being the whole population of Nob.

That did wear a linen ephod.] That is, persons who did actually administer, or had a right to administer, in sacred things. The *linen ephod* was the ordinary clothing of the priests.

Verse 19. And Nob-smote he with the edge of the sword] This is one of the worst acts in the life of Saul; his malice was implacable, and his wrath was cruel, and there is no motive of justice or policy by which such a barbarous act can be justified.

Verse 20. Abiathar, escaped] This man carried with him his *sacerdotal garments*, as we find from ^{<0236>}**1 Samuel 23:6, 9**.

Verse 22. I knew it that day] When I saw Doeg there, I suspected he would make the matter known to Saul.

I have occasioned the death of all the persons] I have been the innocent cause of their destruction.

Verse 23. He that seeketh my life seeketh thy life] The enmity of Saul is directed against thee as well as against me, and thou canst have no safety but in being closely attached to me; and I will defend thee even at the risk of my own life. This he was bound in duty and conscience to do.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 23

David succours Keilah, besieged by the Philistines; defeats them, and delivers the city, 1-6. Saul, hearing that David was at Keilah, determines to come and seize him, 7, 8. David inquires of the Lord concerning the fidelity of the men of Keilah towards him; is informed that if he stays in the city, the men of Keilah will betray him to Saul, 9-12. David and his men escape from the city, and come to the wilderness of Ziph, 13-15. Jonathan meets David in the wood of Ziph, strengthens his hand in God, and they renew their covenant, 16-18. The Ziphites endeavour to betray David to Saul, but he and his men escape to Maon, 19-22. Saul comes to Maon; and having surrounded the mountain on which David and his men were, they must inevitably have fallen into his hands, had not a messenger come to call Saul to the succour of Judah, then invaded by the Philistines, 25-27. Saul leaves the pursuit of David, and goes to succour the land; and David escapes to En-gedi, 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. The Philistines fight against Keilah] Keilah was a fortified town in the tribe of Judah near to Eleutheropolis, on the road to Hebron.

Rob the threshing-floors.] This was an ancient custom of the Philistines, Midianites, and others. See ~~1000~~ **Judges 6:4**. When the corn was ripe and fit to be threshed, and they had collected it at the threshing-floors, which were always in the open field, then their enemies came upon them and spoiled them of the fruits of their harvest.

Verse 2. Therefore David inquired of the Lord] In what way David made this inquiry we are not told, but it was probably by means of Abiathar; and therefore I think, with Houbigant that the sixth verse should be read immediately after the first. The adventure mentioned here was truly noble. Had not David loved his country, and been above all motives of private and personal revenge, he would have rejoiced in this invasion of Judah as producing a strong diversion in his favour, and embroiling his inveterate enemy. In most cases a man with David's wrongs would have joined with the enemies of his country, and avenged himself on the author of his adversities; but he thinks of nothing but succouring Keilah, and using his power and influence in behalf of his brethren! This is a rare instance of disinterested heroism.

The Lord said-Go and smite] He might now go with confidence, being assured of success. When God promises success, who need be afraid of the face of any enemy?

Verse 4. David inquired of the Lord yet again] This was to satisfy his men, who made the strong objections mentioned in the preceding verse.

Verse 5. Brought away their cattle] The forage and spoil which the Philistines had taken, driving the country before them round about Keilah.

Verse 6. Came down with an ephod.] I think this verse should come immediately after ^{<0230>}1 Samuel 23:1. See Clarke's note there, "^{<0230>}1 Samuel 23:1".

Verse 8. Saul called all the people together] That is, all the people of that region or district, that they might scour the country, and hunt out David from all his haunts.

Verse 9. Bring hither the ephod.] It seems as if David himself, clothed with the ephod, had consulted the Lord; and ^{<0230>}1 Samuel 23:10-12 contain the words of the consultation, and the Lord's answer. But see on ^{<0230>}1 Samuel 23:2.

Verses 11. - 12. In these verses we find the following questions and answers:-David said, *Will Saul come down to Keilah?* And the Lord said, *He will come down. Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?* And the Lord said, *They will deliver thee up.* In this short history we find an ample proof that there is such a thing as *contingency* in human affairs; that is, God has poised many things between a possibility of being and not being, leaving it to the will of the creature to turn the scale. In the above answers of the Lord the following *conditions* were evidently implied:-IF thou *continue* in Keilah, Saul will certainly come down; and IF *Saul come down*, the men of Keilah will deliver thee into his hands. Now though the text positively asserts that Saul would come to Keilah, yet he did not come; and that the men of Keilah would deliver David into his hand, yet David was not thus delivered to him. And why? Because David left Keilah; but had he stayed, Saul would have come down, and the men of Keilah would have betrayed David. We may observe from this that, however positive a declaration of God may appear that refers to any thing in which man is to be employed, the prediction is not

intended to *suspend or destroy free agency*, but always comprehends in it some particular condition.

Verse 14. Wilderness of Ziph] Ziph was a city in the southern part of Judea, not far from Carmel.

Verse 16. And Jonathan-strengthened his hand in God.] It is probable that there was always a secret intercourse between David and Jonathan, and that by this most trusty friend he was apprised of the various designs of Saul to take away his life. As Jonathan well knew that God had appointed David to the kingdom, he came now to encourage him to trust in the Most High, and to assure him that the hand of Saul should not prevail against him; and at this interview they renewed their covenant of friendship. Now all this Jonathan could do, consistently with his *duty* to his *father* and his *king*. He knew that David had delivered the kingdom; he saw that his father was ruling unconstitutionally; and he knew that God had appointed David to succeed Saul. This he knew would come about in the order of Providence; and neither he nor David took one step to hasten the time. Jonathan, by his several interferences, prevented his father from imbruing his hands in innocent blood: a more filial and a more loyal part he could not have acted; and therefore, in his attachment to David, he is wholly free of blame.

Verse 25. The wilderness of Maon.] Maon was a mountainous district in the most southern parts of Judah. Calmet supposes it to be the city of *Menois*, which Eusebius places in the vicinity of Gaza; and the *Maenæmi Castrum*, which the Theodosian code places near to Beersheba.

Verse 26. Saul went on this side of the mountain] Evidently not knowing that David and his men were on the other side.

Verse 27. There came a messenger] See the providence of God exerted for the salvation of David's life! David and his men are almost surrounded by Saul and his army, and on the point of being taken, when a messenger arrives and informs Saul that the Philistines had invaded the land! But behold the workings of Providence! God had already prepared the invasion of the land by the Philistines, and kept Saul ignorant how much David was in his power; but as his advanced guards and scouts must have discovered him in a very short time, the messenger arrives just at the point of time to prevent it. Here David was delivered by God, and in such a manner too as rendered the Divine interposition visible.

Verse 28. They called that place Sela-hammah-lekoth.] That is, *the rock of divisions*; because, says the *Targum*, *the heart of the king was divided to go hither and thither*. Here Saul was obliged to *separate* himself from David, in order to go and oppose the invading Philistines.

Verse 29. Strong holds at En-gedi.] En-gedi was situated near to the western coast of the *Dead Sea*, not far from Jeshimon: it literally signifies *the kid's well*, and was celebrated for its *vineyards*, ^{<2014>}**Song of Solomon 1:14**. It was also celebrated for its *balm*. It is reported to be a mountainous territory, filled with caverns; and consequently proper for David in his present circumstances.

How *threshing-floors* were made among the ancients, we learn from CATO, *Deuteronomy Revelation Rustica*, chap. 91, and 129. And as I believe it would be an excellent method to make the most durable and efficient *barn-floors*, I will set it down:—

Aream sic facito. Locum ubi facies confodito; postea amurca conspergito bene, sinitoque combibat. Postea comminuito glebas bene. Deinde coæquato, et paviculis verberato. Postea denuo amurca conspergito, sinitoque arescat. Si ita feceris neque formicæ nocebunt, neque herbæ nascentur: et cum pluerit, lutum non erit. “Make a threshing-floor thus: dig the place thoroughly; afterwards sprinkle it well with the lees of oil, and give it time to soak in. Then beat the clods very fine, make it level, and beat it well down with a paver’s rammer. When this is done, sprinkle it afresh with the oil lees, and let it dry. This being done, the mice cannot burrow in it, no grass can grow through it, nor will the rain dissolve the surface to raise mud.”

The directions of COLUMELLA are nearly the same; but as there are some differences of importance, I will subjoin his account:—

Area quoque si terrena erit, ut sit ad trituram satis habilis, primum radatur, deinde confodiatur, permixtis paleis cum amurca, quæ salem non accipit, extergatur; nam ea res a populatione murium formicarumque frumenta defendit. Tum æquate paviculis, vel molari lapide condensetur, et rursus subjectis paleis inculcetur, atque ita solibus siccanda relinquatur.

Deuteronomy Revelation Rustica, lib. ii., c. 20. “If you would have a threshing-floor made on the open ground, that it may be proper for the purpose, first pare off the surface, then let it be well digged, and mixed with lees of oil, unsalted, with which chaff has been mingled, for this

prevents the mice and ants from burrowing and injuring the corn. Then level it with a paver's rammer, or press it down with a millstone. Afterwards scatter chaff over it, tread it down, and leave it to be dried by the sun."

This may be profitably used within doors, as well as in the field; and a durable and solid floor is a matter of very great consequence to the husbandman, as it prevents the flour from being injured by sand or dust.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 24

Saul is informed that David is at En-gedi, and goes to seek him with three thousand men, 1, 2. He goes into a cave to repose, where David and his men lay hid; who, observing this, exhort David to take away his life: David refuses, and contents himself with privily cutting off Saul's skirt, 3-7. When Saul departed, not knowing what was done, David called after him; showed him that his life had been in his power; expostulates strongly with him; and appeals to God, the Judge of his innocence, 8-15. Saul confesses David's uprightness, acknowledges his obligation to him for sparing his life; and causes him to swear that, when he should come to the kingdom, he would not destroy his seed, 17-21. Saul returns home, and David and his men stay in the hold, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. Saul was returned] It is very probable that it was only a small marauding party that had made an excursion in the Israelitish borders, and this invasion was soon suppressed.

Verse 2. Rocks of the wild goats.] The original (μυλ [yh yrwx tsurey haiyeelim) is variously understood. The VULGATE makes a *paraphrase*: *Super abruptissimas petras quæ solis ibicibus perviæ sunt*; "On the most precipitous rocks over which the ibexes alone can travel." The TARGUM: *the caverns of the rocks*. The SEPTUAGINT make the original a proper name; for out of μυλ [yh yrwx tsurey haiyeelim, they make σαδδαιεμ *Saddaiem*, and in some copies αειαμειν *Aeiamein*, which are evidently corruptions of the Hebrew.

Verse 3. The sheep-cotes] Caves in the rocks, in which it is common, even to the present time, for shepherds and their flocks to lodge. According to *Strabo* there are caverns in Syria, one of which is capable of containing *four thousand men*: ων εν και τετρακιςχιλιους ανθρωπους δεξασθαι δυναμενον; lib. xvi. p. 1096. Edit. 1707.

Saul went in to cover his feet] Perhaps this phrase signifies exactly what the *Vulgate* has rendered it, *ut purparet ventrem*. The *Septuagint*, the *Targum*, and the *Arabic* understand it in the same way. It is likely that, when he had performed this *act of necessity*, he lay down to repose himself, and it was while he was asleep that David cut off the skirt of his

robe. It is strange that Saul was not aware that there might be men lying in wait in such a place; and the rabbins have invented a most curious conceit to account for Saul's security: "God, foreseeing that Saul would come to this cave, *caused a spider to weave her web over the mouth of it*, which, when Saul perceived, he took for granted that no person had lately been there, and consequently he entered it without suspicion." This may be *literally* true; and we know that even a *spider* in the hand of God may be the instrument of a great salvation. This is a Jewish tradition, and one of the most elegant and instructive in their whole collection.

David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.] This is no hyperbole; we have not only the authority of *Strabo* as above mentioned, but we have the authority of the most accurate travellers, to attest the fact of the vast capacity of caves in the East.

Dr. *Pococke* observes: "Beyond the valley (of Tekoa) there is a very large grotto, which the Arabs call *El Maamah*, a hiding place; the high rocks on each side of the valley are almost perpendicular, and the way to the grotto is by a terrace formed in the rock, which is very narrow. There are two entrances into it; we went by the farthest, which leads by a narrow passage into a large grotto, the rock being supported by great natural pillars; the top of it rises in several parts like domes; the grotto is perfectly dry. There is a tradition that the people of the country, to the number of *thirty thousand*, retired into this grotto to avoid a bad air. This place is so strong that one would imagine it to be one of the strong holds of *En-gedi*, to which David and his men fled from Saul; and possibly it may be that very cave in which he cut off Saul's skirt, for David and his men might with great ease lie hid there and not be seen by him."-*Pococke's Travels*, vol. ii., part 1, p. 41.

Verse 4. And the men of David said] We know not to what promise of God the men of David refer; they perhaps meant no more than to say, "Behold, the Lord hath delivered thine enemy into thy land, now do to him as he wishes to do to thee."

Then David arose] Though I have a high opinion of the character of David, yet the circumstances of the case seem to indicate that he arose to take away the life of Saul, and that it was in reference to this that his heart smote him. It appears that he rose up immediately at the desire of his men to slay his inveterate enemy, and one whom he knew the Lord had rejected; but when about to do it he was prevented by the remonstrance of God in

his conscience, and instead of cutting off his head, as he might have done, an act which the laws and usages of war would have justified, he contented himself with cutting off the skirt of his robe; and he did this only to show Saul how much he had been in his power.

Verse 6. The Lord's anointed] However unworthily Saul was now acting, he had been appointed to his high office by God himself, and he could only be removed by the authority which placed him on the throne. Even David, who knew he was appointed to reign in his stead, and whose life Saul had often sought to destroy, did not conceive that he had any right to take away his life; and he grounds the reasons of his forbearance on this—He is my *master*, I am his *subject*. He is the *Lord's anointed*, and therefore *sacred* as to his *person* in the Lord's sight. It is an awful thing to kill a king, even the most untoward, when he has once been constitutionally appointed to the throne. No experiment of this kind has ever succeeded; the Lord abhors *king killing*. Had David taken away the life of Saul at this time, he would, in the sight of God, have been a *murderer*.

Verse 7. Suffered them not to rise against Saul.] As he could restrain them, it was his duty to do so; had he connived at *their* killing him, David would have been the *murderer*. In praying for the king we call God *the only Ruler of princes*, for this simple reason, that their authority is the *highest* among men, and next to that of God himself; hence he alone is above them. We find this sentiment well expressed by an elegant poet:—

*Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
Reges in ipsos imperium est Jovis.
HORACE, Odar. lib. iii., Od. i., ver. 5.*

*Kings are supreme over their own subjects;
Jove is supreme over kings themselves.*

Verse 12. The Lord judge between me and thee] Appeals of this kind to God are the common refuge of the poor and oppressed people. So also among the *Hindoos*: *God will judge between us. Mother Kalee will judge*. Sometimes this springs from a consciousness of innocence, and sometimes from a desire of revenge.

Verse 13. Wickedness proceeded from the wicked] This proverb may be thus understood: He that does a wicked act, gives proof thereby that he is a wicked man. From him who is wicked, wickedness will proceed; he who

is wicked will add one iniquity to another. Had I conspired to dethrone thee, I should have taken thy life when it was in my power, and thus added *wickedness* to *wickedness*.

Verse 14. After a dead dog] A term used among the Hebrews to signify the most sovereign contempt; see ^{<orig>}**2 Samuel 16:9**. One utterly incapable of making the least resistance against Saul, and the troops of Israel. The same idea is expressed in the term *flea*. The *Targum* properly expresses both thus: *one who is weak, one who is contemptible*.

Verse 15. The Lord therefore be judge] Let God determine who is guilty.

Verse 16. My son David?] David had called Saul his *master, lord, and king*. Saul accosts him here as his *son*, to show that he felt perfectly reconciled to him, and wished to receive him as formerly into his family.

Verse 19. If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?] Or rather, *Will he send him in a good way?* But *Houbigant* translates the whole clause thus: *Si quis, inimicum suum reperiens, dimittit eum in viam bonam, redditur ei adomino sua merces*; “If a man, finding his enemy, send him by a good way, *the Lord will give him his reward*.” The words which are here put in italic, are not in the *Hebrew text*, but they are found, at least in the sense, in the *Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic*, and seem necessary to complete the sense; *therefore*, adds Saul, *the Lord will reward thee good for what thou hast done unto me*.

Verse 20. I know well that thou shalt surely be king] Hebrew, *Reigning, thou shalt reign*. He knew this before; and yet he continued to pursue him with the most deadly hatred.

Verse 21. Swear now] Saul knew that an oath would bind *David*, though it was insufficient to bind *himself*; see ^{<orig>}**1 Samuel 19:6**. He had sworn to his son Jonathan that David should not be slain; and yet sought by all means in his power to destroy him!

Verse 22. Saul went home] Confounded at a sense of his own baseness, and overwhelmed with a sense of David’s generosity.

David and his men gat them up unto the hold.] *Went up to Mizpeh*, according to the *Syriac* and *Arabic*. David could not trust Saul with his life; the utmost he could expect from him was that he should cease from

persecuting him; but even this was too much to expect from a man of such a character as Saul. He was no longer under the Divine guidance; an evil spirit had full dominion over his soul. What God fills not, the devil will occupy.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 25

The death of Samuel, 1. The history of Nabal, and his churlishness towards David and his men, 2-12. David, determining to punish him, is appeased by Abigail, Nabal's wife, 13-35. Abigail returns, and tells Nabal of the danger that he has escaped: who on hearing it is thunderstruck, and dies in ten days, 36-38 David, hearing of this, sends and takes Abigail to wife, 39-42. He marries also Ahinoam of Jezreel, Saul having given Michal, David's wife, to Phalti, the son of Laish, 43, 44.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. And Samuel died] Samuel lived, as is supposed, about *ninety-eight* years; was in the government of Israel before Saul from *sixteen* to *twenty* years; and ceased to live, according to the Jews, about *four months* before the death of Saul; but according to *Calmet* and others, *two years*. But all this is very uncertain; how long he died before Saul, cannot be ascertained. For some account of his character, see the end of the chapter. See Clarke “~~10254~~ **1 Samuel 25:44**”.

Buried him in his house] Probably this means, not his *dwelling-house*, but the *house* or *tomb* he had made for his sepulture; and thus the *Syriac* and *Arabic* seem to have understood it.

David-went down to the wilderness of Paran.] This was either on the confines of Judea, or in Arabia Petræa, between the mountains of Judah and Mount Sinai; it is evident from the history that it was not far from *Carmel*, on the south confines of Judah.

Verse 3. The name of the man was Nabal] The word *l bn nabal* signifies to be *foolish*, *base*, or *villanous*; and hence the Latin word *nebulo*, *knave*, is supposed to be derived.

The name of his wife Abigail] The *joy* or *exultation of my father*. A woman of sense and beauty, married to the boor mentioned above, probably because he was *rich*. Many women have been thus sacrificed.

Of the house of Caleb] *ybl k awhw vehu Chalibbi*, “he was a Calebite.” But as the word *caleb* signifies *a dog*, the *Septuagint* have understood it as

implying a man of a *canine disposition*, and translate it thus, **καὶ ὁ ἀνθρώπος κύνικος**, *he was a doggish man*. It is understood in the same way by the *Syriac* and *Arabic*.

Verse 6. Peace be both to thee] This is the ancient form of sending greetings to a friend: *Peace to THEE, peace to thy HOUSEHOLD, and peace to all that THOU HAST*. That is, *May both thyself, thy family, and all that pertain unto thee, be in continual prosperity!*

Perhaps David, by this salutation, wished Nabal to understand that he had acted so towards him and his property that nothing had been destroyed, and that all had been protected; see ^{<02515>}**1 Samuel 25:15-17**.

Verse 7. Thy shepherds which there with us, we hurt them not] It is most evident that David had a *claim* upon Nabal, for very essential services performed to his herdmen at Carmel. He not only did them *no hurt*, and took none of their *flocks* for the supply of his necessities, but he protected them from the rapacity of others; *they were a WALL unto us*, said Nabal's servants, *both by night and day*. In those times, and to the present day, wandering hordes of Arabs, under their several *chiefs*, think they have a right to exact contributions of provisions, &c., wherever they come; David had done nothing of this kind, but protected them against those who would.

Verse 8. Whatsoever cometh to thine hand] As thou art making a great feast for thy servants, and I and my men, as having essentially served thee, would naturally come in for a share were we present; send a portion by my ten young men, for me and my men, that we also may rejoice with you. Certainly this was a very reasonable and a very modest request. This mode of address is not unfrequent among the Hindoos: "O father, fill the belly of thy son; he is in distress."

Verse 10. Who is David?] Nabal's answer shows the *surliness* of his disposition. It was unjust to refuse so reasonable a request; and the *manner* of the refusal was highly insulting. It is true what his own servants said of him, *He is such a son of Belial that one cannot speak to him*, ^{<02517>}**1 Samuel 25:17**.

Verse 18. Took two hundred loaves] The Eastern bread is ordinarily both *thin* and *small*; and answers to our *cakes*.

Two bottles of wine] That is, two goat-skins full. The hide is pulled off the animal without *ripping up*; the places where the legs, &c., were are sewed up, and then the skin appears one *large bag*. This is properly the Scripture and Eastern *bottle*. There is one such before me.

Five sheep] Not one sheep to one hundred men.

Clusters of raisins] Raisins dried in the sun.

Cakes of figs] Figs cured, and then pressed together. We receive the former in jars, and the latter in small *barrels*; and both articles answer the description here given.

Now all this provision was a matter of little worth, and, had it been granted in the first instance, it would have perfectly satisfied David, and secured the good offices of him and his men. Abigail showed both her wisdom and prudence in making this provision. Out of *three thousand sheep* Nabal could not have missed *five*; and as this claim was made only in the time of sheep-shearing, it could not have been made more than once in the year: and it certainly was a small price for such important services.

Verse 20. She came down-and David-came down] David was coming down Mount Paran; Abigail was coming down from Carmel.-*Calmet*.

Verse 22. So and more also do God] Nothing can justify this part of David's conduct. Whatever his provocation might have been, he had suffered, properly speaking, no wrongs; and his resolution to cut off a whole innocent family, because Nabal had acted ungenerously towards him, was abominable and cruel, not to say diabolic. He who attempts to vindicate this conduct of David is, at least constructively, a foe to God and truth. David himself condemns this most rash and unwarrantable conduct, and thanks God for having prevented him from doing this evil, ~~1~~ **Samuel 25:32**, &c.

Any that pisseth against the wall.] This expression certainly means either *men* or *dogs*, and should be thus translated, *if I leave-any male*; and this will answer both to *men* and *dogs*, and the offensive mode of expression be avoided. I will not enter farther into the subject: *Bochart* and *Calmet* have done enough, and more than enough; and in the *plainest language* too.

Verse 28. And evil hath not been found in thee] Thou hast not committed any act of this kind hitherto.

Verse 29. Shall be bound in the bundle of life] Thy life shall be precious in the sight of the Lord: it shall be found in the bundle of life; it shall be supported by Him who is the *Spring and Fountain of life*, and ever be found *united* to those who are most favoured by the Almighty.

Them shall he sling out] Far from being *bound* and *kept together* in union with the Fountain of life, he will cast them off from himself as a stone is cast out from a sling. This betokens both *force* and *violence*.

Verse 37. His heart died within him, and he became as a stone.] He was thunderstruck, and was so terrified at the apprehension of what he had escaped, that the fear overcame his mind, he became insensible to all things around him, probably refused all kinds of nourishment, and died in ten days.

Verse 39. To take her to him to wife.] It is likely that he had heard before this that Saul, to cut off all his pretensions to the throne, had married Michal to Phalti; and this justified David in taking Abigail or any other woman; and, according to the then custom, it was not unlawful for David to take several wives. By his marriage with Abigail, it is probable he became possessed of all Nabal's property in Carmel and Maon.

Verse 43. David also took Ahinoam] Many think that this was his wife before he took Abigail; she is always mentioned first in the list of his wives, and she was the mother of his eldest son Ammon.

Of Jezreel] There were two places of this name; one in the tribe of Issachar, the other in the tribe of Judah.

Verse 44. Phalti] Called also *Phaltiel*, ^{<10B16>}**2 Samuel 3:16**.

Of Gallim.] Probably a city or town in the tribe of Benjamin; see ^{<23100>}**Isaiah 10:30**. It is likely therefore that Saul chose this man because he was of his own tribe.

In this chapter we have the account of the death of Samuel, who from his infancy had been devoted to God and the service of his people. He was born at a time in which religion was at a very low ebb in Israel, as there were but very few prophets, and *no open vision*-scarcely any revelation from God. Those who might be called *prophets* had no regular ministry of God's word; they were extraordinary messengers sent for a particular

purpose, and not continued in the work any longer than the time necessary to deliver their extraordinary message.

Samuel is supposed to have been the first who established *academies* or *schools for prophets*, at least we do not hear of them before his time; and it is granted that they continued till the Babylonish captivity. This was a wise institution, and no doubt contributed much to the maintenance of pure religion, and the prevention of idolatry among that people.

Samuel reformed many abuses in the Jewish state, and raised it to a pitch of political consequence to which it had been long a stranger. He was very zealous for the honour of God, and supported the rights of pure religion, of the king, and of the people, against all encroachments. He was *chief magistrate* in Israel before the appointment of a *king*, and afterwards he acted as *prime minister* to Saul, though without being chosen or formally appointed to that station. Indeed, he seems on the whole to have been the *civil and ecclesiastical governor*, Saul being little more than *general of the Israelitish forces*.

In his office of *minister* in the state, he gave the brightest example of zeal, diligence, inflexible integrity, and uncorruptedness. He reproved both the people and the king for their transgressions, with a boldness which nothing but his sense of the Divine *authority* could inspire, and yet he tempered it with a sweetness which showed the interest he felt in their welfare, and the deep and distressing concern he felt for their back-slidings and infidelities.

He was incorrupt; he received no man's *bribe*; he had no *pension* from the *state*; he *enriched* none of his *relatives* from the *public purse*; left no *private debts* to be discharged by his country. He was among the Hebrews what *Aristides* is said to have been among the Greeks, so poor at his death, though a minister of state, that he did not leave property enough to bury him. *Justice* was by him duly and impartially administered, and oppression and wrong had no existence.

If there ever was a *heaven-born minister*, it was Samuel; in whose public and private conduct there was no blemish, and whose parallel cannot be found in the ancient or modern history of any country in the universe.

Let ministers of state who have sought for nothing but their own glory, and have increased the public burdens by their improvident expenditure; who have endeavoured, by their wordy representations, to dazzle and elude the people, and impose *false grandeur* in the place of *true greatness* and *solid*

prosperity; who have *oppressed* the many, and *enriched* the *worthless few*; fall down at the feet of THIS *heaven-born man*, and learn, from this immaculate judge of Israel, what a faithful servant to his king, and an incorruptible *minister of state*, means, and in retiring from their high station, or in going to appear before the judgment-seat of God, see whether, in the presence of their king, and in the face of the thousands of their people, they can boldly say, “Behold, here am I! Witness against me before the Lord and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose ass have I seized? Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed, by the imposition of heavy taxes for the support of *needless expenses*, and the payment of *venal men*? Or of whose hand have I taken any bribe to blind my eyes? Scrutinize my conduct, examine the state of my family, compare their present circumstances with what they were previously to my administration, and see if you can find aught in my hands.” See ^{<0120>}1 **Samuel 12:1**, &c.

O, how seldom in the annals of the world, from the assembled heads of the great body politic, can the departing prime minister hear, “Thou hast not defrauded us, thou hast not oppressed us; neither hast thou taken aught of any man’s hand! “ This voice call be heard from Gilgal; but of what other minister can this be spoken but of *Samuel the seer*, who was the gift of God’s mercy to the people of Israel; whose memory was too precious to be intrusted to public monuments, but stands, and alas; almost *unique* in the BOOK OF GOD? Of *Daniel*, and his administration, I shall have occasion to speak elsewhere.

A prime minister, deeply devoted to God and faithful to his king and to his country, is so rare a character in the world, that when he does occur, he should be held up to public admiration. But I have no *parallel* for Samuel. See the notes on ^{<0121>}1 **Samuel 12:1-25** and on ^{<0246>}1 **Samuel 24:6**.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 26

The Ziphites inform Saul of David's hiding place, 1. Saul, with three thousand men, goes in pursuit of him, 2, 3. David sends out spies; and finds where Saul had pitched his camp; and he and Abishai come to the camp by night, find all asleep, and bring away Saul's spear, and the cruse of water that was at his head, 4-12. David goes to the opposite hill; awakes Abner, captain of Saul's host; chides him for being so careless of his master's life; and calls on Saul to send one of his servants for the spear; and severely chides him for his continued hostility to him, 13-24. Saul humbles himself to David; promises to persecute him no more; and returns to his own place, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. The Ziphites came] This is the second time that these enemies of David endeavoured to throw him into the hands of Saul. See ^{<092319>} **1 Samuel 23:19.**

Verse 2. Three thousand chosen men] Though they knew that David was but six hundred strong, yet Saul thought it was not safe to pursue such an able general with a less force than that mentioned in the text; and, that he might the better depend on them, they were all *elect* or *picked men* out of the whole of his army.

Verse 5. David arose] As David and his men knew the country, they had many advantages over Saul and his men; and no doubt could often watch them without being discovered.

Saul lay in the trench] The word **l g[mb** *bammaegal*, which we translate *in the trench*, and in the margin *in the midst of his carriages*, is rendered by some *in a ring of carriages*, and by others *in the circle*, i.e., which was formed by his troops. Luther himself translates it *wagenburg*, a *fortress* formed of *wagons* or *carriages*.

As **l g[agal** signifies any thing *round*, it may here refer to a *round pavilion* or *tent* made for Saul, or else to the *form* of his *camp*. The Arabs, to the present day, always form a *circle* in their encampments, and put their principal officers in the centre.

Verse 6. Abishai the son of Zeruiah] She was David's sister; and therefore Abishai and Joab were nephews to David.

Verse 8. God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand] Here Abishai uses the same language as did David's men, when Saul came into the cave at En-gedi, (see ^{<0204>}1 Samuel 24:4, &c.,) and David uses the same language in reply.

Verse 10. The Lord shall smite him] He shall die by a stroke of the Divine judgment; *or his day shall come to die*-he shall die a natural death; which in the course of things must be before mine, and thus I shall get rid of mine enemy; *or he shall descend into the battle, and perish*-he shall fall by the enemies of his country. These are the *three* ordinary ways by which man accomplishes, as a hireling, his day. *Murder* David could not consider to be lawful; this would have been taking the matter out of God's hand, and this David would not do.

Verse 12. David took the spear and the cruse] The *spear*, we have already seen, was the emblem of *power* and *regal* dignity. But it is usual, in Arab camps, for every man to have his lance stuck in the ground beside him, that he may be ready for action in a moment. The cruse of water resembled, in some measure, the *canteens* of our soldiers. In such a climate, where water was always scarce, it was necessary for each man to carry a little with him, to refresh him on his march.

A deep sleep from the Lord] It is the same word which is used, ^{<0021>}Genesis 2:21, to describe the *sleep* which God caused to fall upon Adam, when he formed Eve out of his side.

Verse 15. Art not thou a valiant man?] This is a strong irony. *Ye* are *worthy to die*; *ye are sons of death*-ye deserve death for this neglect of your king. And had not Saul been so deeply affected with David's generosity in preserving his life, he had doubtless put Abner and his chief officers to death; though they were not to blame, as their apparent neglect was the effect of a supernatural sleep.

Verse 19. Let him accept an offering] If God have stirred thee up against me, why, then, let him deliver my life into thy hand, and accept it as a sacrifice. But as the word is **hj nm minchah**, a gratitude-offering, perhaps the sense may be this: Let God accept a gratitude-offering from thee, for

having purged the land of a worker of iniquity; for, were I not such, God would never stir thee up against me.

But if they be the children of men] If men have, by false representations, lies, and slanders, stirred thee up against an innocent man, then *let them be cursed before the Lord*. If I am guilty, I deserve to die; if not, those who seek my life should be destroyed.

Saying, Go, serve other gods.] His being *obliged* to leave the tabernacle, and the place where the true worship of God was performed, and take refuge among *idolaters*, said in effect, *Go, serve other gods*.

Verse 20. As when one doth hunt a partridge] It is worthy of remark that the Arabs, observing that partridges, being put up several times, soon become so weary as not to be able to fly; they in this manner hunt them upon the mountains, till at last they can knock them down with their clubs.

It was in this manner that Saul hunted David, coming hastily upon him, and putting him up from time to time, in hopes that he should at length, by frequent repetitions of it, be able to destroy him. See *Harmer*.

Verse 21. I have sinned] Perhaps the word *ytacj chatathi*, “I have sinned,” should be read, *I have erred*, or, *have been mistaken*. I have taken thee to be a very different man from what I find thee to be. Taken literally it was strictly true. He often purposed the spilling of David’s blood; and thus, again and again, *sinned* against his life.

Verse 25. Thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail.] The Hebrew is *l kw t l ky µgw hc [t hc [µg gam asoh thaaseh, vegam yachol tuchal*; “Also in doing thou shalt do, and being able thou shalt be able; which the Targum translates, *also in reigning thou shalt reign, and in prospering thou shalt prosper*; which in all probability is the meaning.

There is a vast deal of dignity in this speech of David, arising from a consciousness of his own innocence. He neither begs his life from Saul, nor offers one argument to prevail upon him to desist from his felonious attempts, but refers the whole matter to God, as the judge and vindicator of oppressed innocence. Saul himself is speechless, except in the simple acknowledgment of his sin; and in the behalf of their king not one of his officers has one word to say! It is strange that none of them offered now to injure the person of David; but they saw that he was most evidently under the guardian care of God, and that their master was apparently abandoned

by him. Saul invites David to *return*, but David knew the uncertainty of Saul's character too well to trust himself in the power of this infatuated king. How foolish are the counsels of men against God! When he undertakes to save, who can destroy? And who can deliver out of his hands?

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 27

David flies to Achish, king of Gath, who receives him kindly, and gives him Ziklag to dwell in, where he continues a year and four months, 1-7. David invades the Geshurites and Amalekites, and leaves neither man nor woman alive, 8, 9. He returns to Achish, and pretends that he had been making inroads on the Israelites, and Achish believes it, 10-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul] This was a very hasty conclusion: God had so often interposed in behalf of his life, that he was authorized to believe the reverse. God had hitherto confounded all Saul's stratagems, and it was not at all likely that he would now abandon him: there was now no *additional* reason why he should withdraw from David his helping hand.

Verse 2. David arose, and he passed over-unto Achish] There is not one circumstance in this transaction that is not blameable. David joins the enemies of his God and of his country, acts a most inhuman part against the Geshurites and Amalekites, without even the pretense of a Divine authority; tells a most deliberate falsehood to Achish, his protector, relative to the people against whom he had perpetrated this cruel act; giving him to understand that he had been destroying the Israelites, his enemies. I undertake no defence of this conduct of David; it is all bad, all defenceless; God vindicates him not. The inspired penman tells what he did, but passes no *eulogium* upon his conduct; and it is false to say that, because these things are *recorded*, therefore they are *approved*. In all these transactions David was in no sense a man after God's own heart. Chandler attempts to vindicate all this conduct: those who can receive his saying, let them receive it.

Verse 3. Every man with his household] So it appears that the men who consorted with David had wives and families. David and his company resembled a tribe of the wandering Arabs.

Verse 5. Why should thy servant dwell in the royal city] He seemed to intimate that *two princely establishments* in the same city were too many.

Achish appears to have felt the propriety of his proposal, and therefore appoints him Ziklag.

Verse 6. Achish gave him Ziklag] Ziklag was at first given to the tribe of *Judah*, but afterwards it was ceded to that of *Simeon*, ^{<653>}**Joshua 15:31; 19:5**. The Philistines had, however, made themselves masters of it, and held it to the time here mentioned; it then fell into the tribe of *Judah* again, and continued to be the property of the kings of *Judah*. This verse is a proof that this book was written long after the days of *Samuel*, and that it was formed by a later hand, out of materials which had been collected by a contemporary author. See the *preface*.

Verse 9. David smote the land] Here was a complete extirpation of all these people, not one being left alive, lest he should carry tidings of the disasters of his country! The *spoil* which *David* took consisted of *sheep*, *oxen*, *asses*, *camels*, and *apparel*.

Verse 10. Whither have ye made a road today?] He had probably been in the habit of making predatory excursions. This seems to be implied in the question of *Achish*.

Verse 12. He hath made his people-utterly to abhor him] This deception, which *Dr. Delaney* says “*did harm to nobody, and to the account of which he is at an utter loss what degree of guilt to charge,*” imposed upon *Achish*, had the most direct tendency to make him imagine himself secure, while in the utmost danger; and to have a faithful friend and able ally in *David*, while he was the veriest enemy he could possibly have. Shame on him who becomes the apologist of such conduct! As to *Dr. Chandler*, he should know that no *lie* is of the *truth*, and that all *falsity* is an abomination to the Lord.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 28

The Philistines prepare to attack the Israelites, and Achish informs David that he shall accompany him to battle, 1, 2. Saul, unable to obtain any answer from God, applies to a witch at En-dor to bring up Samuel that he may converse with him on the issue of the war, 3-11. Samuel appears, 12-14. He reproaches Saul with his misconduct, and informs him of his approaching ruin, 15-19. He is greatly distressed; but at the solicitations of the woman and his own servants, he takes some food, and departs the same night, 20-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. The Philistines gathered their armies together] Sir Isaac Newton conjectures that the Philistines had got a great increase to their armies by vast numbers of men which *Amasis* had driven out of Egypt. This, with Samuel's death, and David's disgrace, were no inconsiderable motives to a new war, front which the Philistines had now every thing to hope.

Thou shalt go out with me to battle] This he said, being deceived by what David had told him.

Verse 2. Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do] This was another equivocal answer; and could only be understood by his succeeding conduct. It might imply what he *could do* in favour of the *Philistines* against Israel; or in favour of *Israel* against the Philistines. Achish understood it in the former sense; and therefore he said to David, *I will make thee keeper of my head for ever*; i.e., Thou shalt be captain of my life-guards.

Verse 3. Samuel was dead] And there was no longer a public accredited prophet to consult.

Those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards] See Clarke's note on "^{<B1931>}Leviticus 19:31", and "^{<D2218>}Exodus 22:18".

Verse 5. When Saul saw] He saw from the superiority of his enemies, from the state of his army, and especially from his own state towards God, that he had every thing to fear.

Verse 6. The Lord answered him not] He used the *three methods* by which supernatural intelligence was ordinarily given:—

1. *Dreams*.—The person prayed for instruction; and begged that God would answer by a significant dream.

2. *Urim*.—This was a kind of oracular answer given to the high priest when clothed with the ephod, on which were the *Urim* and *Thummim*. How these communicated the answer, is not well known.

3. *Prophets*.—Who were requested by the party concerned to consult the Lord on the subject in question, and to report his answer. The *prophets* at that time could only be those in the *schools of the prophets*, which Samuel had established at *Naioth* and *Gibeah*. These were the only successors of Samuel that we know of.

Verse 7. Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit] Literally, Seek me a woman, *bwa ti* [*b baalath ob, the mistress of the Obadiah* or *Pythonic spirit*—one who had a familiar spirit, whom she could invoke when she pleased, and receive answers from him relative to futurity.

Strange that a man, who had banished all such from the land, as dangerous to the state, as impostors and deceivers, should now have recourse to them as the only persons in whom he could safely put his confidence in the time in which *Jehovah* had refused to help him!

At En-dor.] This was a city in the valley of Jezreel, at the foot of Mount Gilboa, where the army of Saul had now encamped.

Verse 8. Saul disguised himself] That he might not be known by the woman, lest she, being terrified, should refuse to use her art.

Verse 11. Whom shall I bring up] The woman certainly meant no more than making her *familiar* personify whomsoever the querist should wish. In the evocation of spirits this is all that, according to the professed rules of their art, such persons pretend to; for over human souls in *paradise* or in the *infernal regions* they have no power. If we allow that there is such an art founded on true principles, all it can pretend to is, to bring up the familiar; cause him when necessary to assume the *form* and *character* of some particular person, and to give such notices relative to *futurity* as he is able to collect. And this even in the cases to which authenticity is generally

allowed, is often scanty, vague, and uncertain, for fallen spirits do not abound in *knowledge*: this is an attribute of God, and rays of this perfection are imparted to pure and holy intelligences; and even *Satan* himself, as may be seen from most of his temptations, is far from *excelling in knowledge*. He may be *cunning* and *insidious*, but he certainly is not *wise* and *prudent*; we in general give this fallen spirit credit for much more wisdom than he possesses.

Verse 12. When the woman saw Samuel] That *Samuel did* appear on this occasion, is most evident from the text; nor can this be denied from any legitimate mode of interpretation: and it is as evident that he was neither raised by the power of the devil nor the incantations of the witch, for the appearances which took place at this time were such as she was wholly unacquainted with. Her *familiar* did not appear; and from the confused description she gives, it is fully evident that she was both surprised and alarmed at what she saw, being so widely different from what she expected to see.

Verse 13. I saw gods ascending out of the earth.] The word **μwhl a elohim**, which we translate *gods*, is the word which is used for the Supreme Being throughout the Bible; but all the *versions*, the *Chaldee* excepted, translate it in the *plural* number, as we do. The *Chaldee* has, *I see yyd akal m malacha dayeya, an angel of the Lord, ascending from the earth*. This sight alarmed the woman; it was what she did not expect; in this she could not recognise her familiar, and she was terrified at the appearance.

Verse 14. An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle.] This seems to have been a *second* apparition; she cannot mean that she had seen *gods* ascending out of the earth, and these *gods* were like an *old man with a mantle*. The angelic appearance first mentioned prepared the way for Samuel; and the whole was done so as to show to the woman that her art had not prevailed in the present instance, and that what was now taking place was wholly independent of *her incantations*.

Saul perceived that it was Samuel] The description was suitable to his person and clothing.

Verse 15. Why hast thou disquieted me] The complaint is not directed against the *woman* but against *Saul*. Indeed, her incantations had no influence in the business, and it does not appear that she had commenced

her operations before the *angels* had prepared the way of the prophet, and before the *prophet* himself had made his appearance.

That thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.] In his former difficulties, and when pressed by his enemies, he was in the habit of consulting Samuel; and now he applies to him as his former preceptor. God, he knew, might answer by such a man as Samuel, when he would answer by no other means.

Verse 16. Wherefore then dost thou ask of me] Was ever I wont to give answers that were not dictated by the Lord? It is his counsel alone that I communicate.

Verse 17. The Lord hath done to him] I believe these words are spoken of Saul; and as they are spoken *to* him, it seems evident that *him* should be *thee*. The Vulgate has *tibi*, the Septuagint $\sigma\omicron\iota$, to THEE: and this is the reading of *five of Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., as well as of both the Bibles printed at Venice in 1518, where we read $\text{E}\dot{\iota}$ *lecha*, to THEE, instead of wl *lo*, to HIM.

As he spake by me] Here was no illusion; none but *Samuel* could say this.

Verse 18. Nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek] See ^{<0150>}1 Samuel 15:1-9 and the notes there.

Verse 19. To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me] What an awful message! In the course of the ensuing day thou shalt be slain, thy three sons shall be slain, and the armies of Israel shall be delivered into the hands of the Philistines! Can any person read this, properly considering the situation of this unfortunate monarch, the triumph of the enemies of God, and the speedy ruin in which the godlike Jonathan is about to be involved, without feeling the keenest anguish of heart?

But Samuel says, "He and his sons should be *with him*." Does not this mean that they were to go to *paradise*? I suppose it means no more than that they should all *die*. Yet the paraphrase of the Rev. C. Wesley is beautiful:—

*“What do these solemn words portend?
A ray of hope when life shall end.
Thou and thy sons, though slain, shall be
To-morrow in repose with me.*

*Not in a state of hellish pain,
If Saul with Samuel do remain:
Not in a state of damn'd despair,
If loving Jonathan be there."*

Saul had committed *the sin unto death*—the sin to be visited with a violent death, while the mercy of God was extended to the soul. Thus say my *faith*, my *hope*, and my *charity*; and doth not the *mercy* of God say the same?

Verse 20. Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth.] Literally, *he fell with his own length*, or *with the fullness of his stature*. He was so overwhelmed with this most dreadful message, that he swooned away, and thus *fell at his own length upon the ground*. The woman, being terrified, had probably withdrawn to some distance at the first appearance of the prophet; and Saul was left alone with Samuel. After some short time, *the woman came* again unto Saul, found him *sore troubled*, and offered him those succours which humanity dictated.

Verse 23. I will not eat.] It is no wonder that not only his *strength*, but also his *appetite*, had departed from him.

And sat upon the bed] *Beds* or *couches* were the common places on which the ancients sat to take their repasts.

Verse 24. The woman had a fat calf] The ancients used great despatch in their cookery. In hot countries they could not keep flesh meat by them any length of time; hence they generally kept young animals, such as *calves*, *lambs*, and *kids*, ready for slaughter; and when there was occasion, one of them was killed, and dressed immediately.

Unleavened bread] There was not time to bake *leavened bread*; that would have taken considerable time, in order that the leaven might leaven the whole lump.

Verse 25. They rose up, and went away that night.] The transactions of this chapter occupy one night only. 1. Saul came by night to *En-dor*, ~~1~~ **Samuel 28:8**. 2. He consulted the woman, and had his conference with Samuel the same night; for no time whatever appears to have been lost after his arrival at *En-dor*. 3. He was overcome by the heavy tidings which he heard; and which for a time appear to have deprived him of all power. 4. The woman kills a calf; dresses a part; makes and bakes bread; and Saul

and his servants eat. And, 5. They rose and went away *that night*, ~~10285~~ **1 Samuel 28:25**. The *next day*, in all probability, the battle happened in which Israel was defeated, and Saul and his sons lost their lives.

THERE is a considerable diversity of opinion, both among learned and pious men, relative to the subject mentioned in this chapter, that of *raising Samuel from the dead*. Some deny the *possibility* of the thing, and say that it was the *devil* that personified *Samuel*; and others, that the whole was the *imposition* of this cunning woman, and that there was no *supernatural* agency in the business. This is not a proper place to argue the point. I have given my opinion in the notes. I may sum up in a few particulars.

1. I believe there is a *supernatural* and *spiritual* world, in which HUMAN *spirits*, both good and bad, live in a state of consciousness.
2. I believe there is an *invisible world*, in which various orders of *spirits*, not *human*, live and act.
3. I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God, in the laws of their place of residence, have intercourse with this world, and become visible to mortals.
4. I believe there is a possibility, by arts not strictly good, to evoke and have intercourse with spirits, *not* HUMAN; and to employ, in a certain limited way, their power and influence.
5. I believe that the woman of En-dor had no power over *Samuel*; and that no *incantation* can avail over any *departed saint of God*, nor indeed over any *human* disembodied spirit.
6. I believe *Samuel did actually appear to Saul*; and that he was sent by the especial *mercy of God* to warn this infatuated king of his approaching death, that he might have an opportunity to make his peace with his Maker.
7. I believe that the woman found, from the *appearances*, that her *real* or *pretended charms* had no effect; and that what now took place came from a totally different disposition of things from those with which she was conversant.
8. I believe that direct, circumstantial, and unequivocal oracles were now delivered concerning things which neither human nor diabolical wisdom could foresee or penetrate; that the defeat of the Israelites, and the death of Saul and his three sons on the following day, were matters which, from

their nature, could only be known to God himself; and that no demon or bad spirit could be employed in such a transaction.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 29

The Philistines gather their armies together against Israel, and encamp at Aphek; while the Israelites encamp at Jezreel, 1. The lords of the Philistines refuse to let David go to battle with them, lest he should betray them, 2-5. Achish expresses his confidence in David; but begs him to return, 6-10. David and his men return, 11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. To Aphek] This was a place in the valley of Jezreel, between Mounts Tabor and Gilboa.

Pitched by a fountain] To be near a *fountain*, or *copious spring of water*, was a point of great importance to an army in countries such as these, where water was so very scarce. It is supposed, as William of Tyre says, that it was at this *same fountain* that Saladin pitched his camp, while Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, pitched his by another fountain between Nazareth and Sefhoris; each being anxious to secure that without which it was impossible for their armies to subsist.

Verse 2. By hundreds, and by thousands] They were probably divided, as the Jewish armies, by *fifties*, *hundreds*, and *thousands*; each having its proper officer or captain.

Verse 3. These days, or these years] I suppose these words to mark no *definite time*, and may be understood thus: "Is not this David, who has been with me for a considerable time?"

Verse 4. The princes of the Philistines were wroth] It is strange that they had not yet heard of David's destruction of a village of the Geshurites, Gezrites, and Amalekites, ¹⁹²⁷⁸**1 Samuel 27:8, 9**. Had they heard of this, they would have seen much more cause for suspicion.

Verse 6. Thou hast been upright] So he thought, for as yet he had not heard of the above transaction; David having given him to understand that he had been fighting against Israel.

Verse 8. David said-what have I done?] Dr. Chandler and others may say what they will to make David act a *consistent* part in this business; but

it is most evident, whatever his *intentions* might be as to the part he was to take in the approaching battle, he did intend to persuade Achish that he would fight *against Israel*; and affects to feel his reputation injured by not being permitted on this occasion to show his fidelity to the king of Gath.

It was in the order of God's gracious providence that the Philistine lords refused to let David go with them to this battle. Had he gone, he had his choice of two sins—*First*, If he had fought *for the Philistines*, he would have fought *against God* and his *country*. *Secondly* If he had in the battle *gone over to the Israelites*, he would have deceived and become a *traitor* to the hospitable Achish. God, therefore, so ordered it in his mercy that he was not permitted to go to a battle in which he was sure to be disgraced, whatever side he took, or with what success soever he might be crowned.

Verse 9. As an angel of God] There is some reason to think that Achish had actually embraced or was favourably disposed towards the Jewish religion. He speaks here of *the angels of God*, as a Jew might be expected to speak; and in ¹⁹²⁰⁶1 Samuel 29:6 he appeals to, and swears by *Jehovah*; which, perhaps, no Philistine ever did. It is possible that he might have learned many important truths from David, during the time he sojourned with him.

Verse 10. With thy master's servants] Who were these? has been very properly asked; and to this question there can be but two answers:—

1. The *six hundred Israelites* which were with him; and who might still be considered the *subjects of SAUL*, though now residing in a foreign land.
2. The servants of ACHISH; i.e., David's men thus considered; because on his coming to Gath, he had in effect given up himself and his men to Achish. But Saul may be the master to whom Achish refers, and the words convey a delicate information to David that he is no vassal, but still at liberty.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 30

While David is absent with the army of Achish, the Amalekites invade Ziklag, and burn it with fire, and carry away captive David's wives, and those of his men, 1, 2. David and his men return; and, finding the desolate state of their city, are greatly affected, 3-5. The men mutiny, and threaten to stone David, who encourages himself in the Lord, 6. David inquires of the Lord, and is directed to pursue the Amalekites, with the promise that he shall recover all, 7, 8. He and his men begin the pursuit, but two hundred, through fatigue are obliged to stay behind at the brook Besor, 9, 10. They find a sick Egyptian, who directs them in their pursuit, 11-15. David finds the Amalekites secure, feasting on the spoils they had taken; he attacks and destroys the whole host, except four hundred, who escape on camels, 16, 17. The Israelites recover their wives, their families, and all their goods, 18-20. They come to the two hundred who were so faint as not to be able to pursue the enemy, with whom they divide the spoil; and this becomes a statute in Israel, 21-25. David sends part of the spoil which he had taken to different Jewish cities, which had suffered by the incursion of the Amalekites; and where David and his anew had been accustomed to resort, 26-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. On the third day] This was the third day after he had left the Philistine army at Aphek. *Calmet* supposes that Aphek was distant from Ziklag more than *thirty* leagues.

The Amalekites had invaded] These were, doubtless, a travelling predatory *horde*, who, availing themselves of the war between the Philistines and the Israelites, plundered several unprotected towns, and among them Ziklag. It is likely they had not heard of what David did to some of their tribes, else they would have avenged themselves by slaying all they found in Ziklag.

Verse 4. Wept, until they had no more power to weep.] This marks great distress; they wept, as says the Vulgate, till their tears failed them.

Verse 6. The people spake of stoning him] David had done much to civilize those men; but we find by this of what an unruly and ferocious spirit they were; and yet they strongly felt the ties of natural affection, they “grieved every man for his sons and for his daughters.”

David encouraged himself in the Lord] He found he could place very little confidence in his men; and, as he was conscious that this evil had not happened either through his neglect or folly, he saw he might the more confidently expect succour from his Maker.

Verse 7. Bring me hither the ephod.] It seems as if David had put on the ephod, and inquired of the Lord for himself; but it is more likely that he caused Abiathar to do it.

Verse 9. The brook Besor] This had its source in the mountain of Idumea, and fell into the Mediterranean Sea beyond Gaza. Some suppose it to have been the same with the river of the wilderness, or the river of Egypt. The sense of this and the following verse is, that when they came to the brook Besor, there were found *two hundred* out of his *six hundred* men so spent with fatigue that they could proceed no farther. The baggage or *stuff* was left there, ^{<0924>}**1 Samuel 30:24**, and they were appointed to guard it.

Verse 12. A cake of figs] See on ^{<02518>}**1 Samuel 25:18**.

Verse 13. My master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.] This was very inhuman: though they had booty enough, and no doubt asses sufficient to carry the invalids, yet they left this poor man to perish; and God visited it upon them, as he made this very person the means of their destruction, by the information which he was enabled to give to David and his men.

Verse 14. Upon the south of the Cherethites] Calmet and others maintain, that the *ytrk kerethi*, which, without the points, might be read *Creti*, were not only at this time *Philistines*, but that they were aborigines of *Crete*, from which they had their name *Cherethites* or *Cretans*, and are those of whom Zephaniah speaks, ^{<3015>}**Zephaniah 2:5**: *Wo to the inhabitants of the sea-coasts, the nation of the Cherethites*. And by Ezekiel, ^{<32516>}**Ezekiel 25:16**: *Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and will cut off the Cherethim*. In ^{<10518>}**2 Samuel 15:18** we find that the *Cherethites* formed a part of David's guards.

South of Caleb] Somewhere about *Kirjath-arba*, or Hebron, and *Kirjath-sepher*; these being in the possession of Caleb and his descendants.

Verse 15. Swear unto me] At the conclusion of this verse, the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* add, that *David swore to him*. This is not expressed in the *Hebrew*, but is necessarily implied.

Verse 16. Out of the land of the Philistines] That *these* Amalekites were enemies to the Philistines is evident, but it certainly does not follow from this that *those* whom David destroyed were enemies also. This, I think, has been too hastily assumed by Dr. Chandler and others, in order the better to vindicate the character of David.

Verse 17. There escaped not a man of them] It is well known to every careful reader of the Bible, that the *Amalekites* were a proscribed people, even by God himself, and that in extirpating them it has been supposed David fulfilled the express will of God. But all this depends on whether *he* had an express commission to do so, received from God himself, as Saul had.

Verse 20. And David took all the flocks] He and his men not only recovered all their own property, but they recovered all the spoil which these Amalekites had taken from the south of Judah, the Cherethites, and the south of Caleb. When this was separated from the rest, it was given to David, and called *David's spoil*.

Verse 22. Men of Belial] This is a common expression to denote the *sour*, the *rugged*, the *severe*, the *idle*, and the *profane*.

Verse 23. That which the Lord hath given us] He very properly attributes this victory to God; the numbers of the Amalekites being so much greater than his own. Indeed, as many fled away on camels as were in the whole host of David.

Verse 25. He made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel] Nothing could be more just and proper than this law: he who stays at home to defend house and property, has an equal right to the booty taken by those who go out to the war. There was a *practice* of this kind among the Israelites long before this time; see ^{<43127>}Numbers 31:27; ^{<6218>}Joshua 22:8; and the note on this latter verse. See Clarke "^{<6218>}Joshua 22:8".

Unto this day.] This is another indication that this book was composed long after the facts it commemorates. See the hypothesis in the preface.

Verse 26. Unto the elders of Judah] These were the persons among whom he sojourned during his exile, and who had given him shelter and protection. Gratitude required these presents.

Verse 27. To them which were in Beth-el] This was in the tribe of Ephraim.

South Ramoth] So called to distinguish it from *Ramoth Gilead*, beyond Jordan. This *Ramoth* belonged to the tribe of *Simeon*, ^{<061908>}**Joshua 19:8**.

In Jattir] Supposed by Calmet to be the same as *Ether*, ^{<061542>}**Joshua 15:42**, but more probably *Jattir*, ^{<061548>}**Joshua 15:48**. It was situated in the mountains, and belonged to *Judah*.

Verse 28. In Aroer] Situated beyond Jordan, on the banks of the river Arnon, in the tribe of *God*.

Siphmoth] Supposed to be the same with *Shepham*, ^{<043410>}**Numbers 34:10**, on the eastern border of the promised land.

Eshtemoa] Another city in the tribe of *Judah*. See ^{<061550>}**Joshua 15:50**.

Verse 29. Them which were in Rachal] We know not where this place was; it is mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. Calmet conjectures that *Hachilah*, ^{<092319>}**1 Samuel 23:19**, may be the same place; here we know David did conceal himself for some time, till the Ziphites endeavoured to betray him to Saul.

The cities of the Jerahmeelites] See before, ^{<092710>}**1 Samuel 27:10**.

And-the cities of the Kenites] A very small tract on the southern coast of the *Dead Sea*.

Verse 30. Hormah] The general name of those cities which belonged to *Arad*, king of Canaan; and were devoted to destruction by the Hebrews, and thence called *Hormah*. See ^{<042101>}**Numbers 21:1-3**.

In Chor-ashan] Probably the same as *Ashan* in the tribe of *Judah*: see ^{<061542>}**Joshua 15:42**. It was afterwards ceded to *Simeon*, ^{<061907>}**Joshua 19:7**.

To them which were in Athach] Probably the same as *Ether*, ^{<061907>}**Joshua 19:7**.

Verse 31. To them which were in Hebron] This was a place strongly attached to David, and David to it, and the place where he was proclaimed king, and where he reigned more than seven years previously to the death of Ishbosheth, Saul's son, who was, for that time, his competitor in the kingdom.

David's having sent presents to all these places, not only shows his sense of *gratitude*, but that the *booty* which he took from the Amalekites must have been exceedingly great. And we learn from this also that David sojourned in many places which are not mentioned in the preceding history; for *these* are all said to be places *where David and his men were wont to haunt*.

WE are not to suppose that the transactions mentioned here and in the preceding chapter took place after Saul's interview with the woman of *En-dor*, they were considerably antecedent to this, but how long we do not know. What is recorded in the following chapter must have taken place the next day after Saul left En-dor.

I SAMUEL

CHAPTER 31

A battle in Mount Gilboa between Israel and the Philistines; in which the former are defeated, and Saul's three sons slain, 1, 2. Saul, being mortally wounded, and afraid to fall alive into the hands of the Philistines, desires his armour-bearer to despatch him; which he refusing, Saul falls on his sword, and his armour-bearer does the same, 3, 6. The Israelites on the other side of the valley forsake their cities, and the Philistines come and dwell in them, 7. The Philistines, finding Saul and his three sons among the slain, strip them of their armour, which they put in the house of Ashtaroth, cut off their heads, send the news to all the houses of their idols, and fasten the bodies of Saul and his three sons to the walls of Beth-shan, 8-10. Valiant men of Jabesh-gilead go by night, and take away the bodies; burn them at Jabesh; bury their bones under a tree; and fast seven days, 11-13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. Now the Philistines fought] This is the continuation of the account given in ^{<0290>}1 Samuel 29:1-11.

The men of Israel fled] It seems as if they were thrown into confusion at the first onset, and turned their backs upon their enemies.

Verse 2. Followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons] They, seeing the discomfiture of their troops, were determined to sell their lives as dear as possible, and therefore maintained the battle till the three brothers were slain.

Verse 3. He was sore wounded of the archers.] It is likely that Saul's sons were slain by the archers, and that Saul was now mortally wounded by the same. Houbigant translates, *The archers rushed upon him, from whom he received a grievous wound.* He farther remarks that had not Saul been grievously wounded, and beyond hope of recovery, he would not have wished his armour-bearer to despatch him; as he might have continued still to fight, or have made his escape from this most disastrous battle. Some of the versions render it, *He FEARED the archers greatly;* but this is by no means likely.

Verse 4. Draw thy sword, and thrust me through] Dr. Delaney has some good observations on this part of the subject: "Saul and his

armour-bearer died by the same sword. That his armour-bearer died by his own sword is out of all doubt; the text expressly tells us so; and that Saul perished by the same sword is sufficiently evident. *Draw THY sword*, says he to him, *and thrust me through*; which, when he refused, *Saul*, says the text, *took THE sword*, **ta** (**brj h eth hachereb**, *the very sword*), *and fell upon it*. What sword? Not his *own*, for then the text would have said so; but, in the plain natural grammatical construction, the *sword before mentioned* must be the sword now referred to, that is, his armour-bearer's, ^{<13100>}**1 Chronicles 10:4, 5**. Now it is the established tradition of all the Jewish nation that this armour-bearer was *Doeg*, and I see no reason why it should be discredited; and if so, then Saul and his executioner both fell by that weapon with which they had before massacred the priests of God. So *Brutus* and *Cassius* killed themselves with the same swords with which they stabbed *Cæsar*; and *Calippus* was stabbed with the same sword with which he stabbed *Dio*.”

Verse 6. And all his men] Probably meaning those of his troops which were his *life* or *body guards*: as to the bulk of the army, it fled at the commencement of the battle, ^{<09101>}**1 Samuel 31:1**.

Verse 7. The men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley] They appear to have been panic-struck, and therefore fled as far as they could out of the reach of the Philistines. As the Philistines possessed *Beth-shan*, situated near to *Jordan*, the people on *the other side* of that river, fearing for their safety, fled also.

Verse 8. On the morrow] It is very likely that the battle and pursuit continued till the night, so that there was no time till the next day to strip and plunder the slain.

Verse 9. And they cut off his head] It is possible that they cut off the heads of his three sons likewise; for although only *his head* is said to be cut off, and *his body* only to be fastened to the walls of *Beth-shan*, yet we find that the men of *Jabesh-gilead* found both *his body* and the *bodies* of *his three sons*, fastened to the walls, ^{<09112>}**1 Samuel 31:12**.

Perhaps they only took off *Saul's* head, which they sent about to their temples as a trophy of their victory, when they sent the news of the defeat of the Israelites through all their coasts, and at last placed it in the temple of *Dagon*, ^{<13100>}**1 Chronicles 10:10**.

Verse 10. They put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth] As David had done in placing the sword of Goliath in the tabernacle. We have already seen that it was common for the conquerors to consecrate armour and spoils taken in war, to those who were the objects of religious worship.

They fastened his body to the wall] Probably by means of iron hooks; but it is said, ^{<10212>}**2 Samuel 21:12**, that these bodies *were fastened in the STREET of Beth-shan*. This may mean that the place where they were fastened to the wall was the main *street* or *entrance* into the city.

Verse 11. When the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard] This act of the men of Jabesh-gilead was an act of gratitude due to Saul, who, at the very commencement of his reign, rescued them from Nahash, king of the Ammonites, (see ^{<01101>}**1 Samuel 11:1**, &c.,) and by his timely succours saved them from the deepest degradation and the most oppressive tyranny. This heroic act, with the seven days' *fast*, showed that they retained a due sense of their obligation to this unfortunate monarch.

Verse 12. And burnt them there.] It has been denied that the Hebrews *burnt* the bodies of the dead, but that they *buried* them in the earth, or *embalmed* them, and often burnt spices *around them*, &c. These no doubt were the common forms of sepulture, but neither of these could be conveniently practiced in the present case. They could not have *buried* them about Beth-shan without being discovered; and as to *embalming*, that was most likely out of all question, as doubtless the bodies were now too *putrid* to bear it. They therefore *burnt* them, because there was no other way of disposing of them at that time so as to do them honour; and the *bones* and *ashes* they collected, and *buried under a tree* or in a *grove at Jabesh*.

Verse 13. And fasted seven days.] To testify their sincere regret for his unfortunate death, and the public calamity that had fallen upon the land.

THUS ends the troublesome, and I had almost said the useless, reign of Saul. A king was chosen in opposition to the will of the Most High; and the government of God in effect rejected, to make way for this king.

Saul was at first a very humble young man, and conducted himself with great propriety; but his elevation made him proud, and he soon became tyrannical in his private conduct and in his political measures. His natural

temper was not good; he was peevish, fretful, and often outrageous; and these bad dispositions, unchecked by proper application to the grace of God, became every day more headstrong and dangerous. Through their violence he seems at times to have been wholly carried away and deranged; and this derangement appears to have been occasionally greatly exacerbated by diabolical influences. This led him to take his friends for his foes; so that in his paroxysms he strove to imbrue his hands in their blood, and more than once attempted to assassinate his own son; and most causelessly and inhumanly ordered the innocent priests of the Lord at Nob to be murdered. This was the worst act in his whole life.

Saul was but ill qualified for a proper discharge of the regal functions. The reader will remember that he was chosen rather as a *general* of the *armies* than as *civil governor*. The administration of the affairs of the *state* was left chiefly to Samuel, and Saul led forth the armies to battle.

As a general he gave proof of considerable capacity; he was courageous, prompt, decisive, and persevering; and, except in the last unfortunate battle in which he lost his life, generally led his troops to *victory*.

Saul was a weak man, and very capricious; this is amply proved by his unreasonable jealousy against David, and his continual suspicion that all were leagued against him. It is also evident, in his foolish adjuration relative to the matter of the honey (see ~~<D12>~~ **1 Samuel 14:24-30, 38-44**) in which, to save his rash and nonsensical oath, he would have sacrificed Jonathan his son!

The question, "Was Saul a good king?" has already in effect been answered. He was on the whole a good *man*, as far as we know, in private life; but he was a *bad king*; for he endeavoured to reign independently of the Jewish constitution; he in effect assumed the sacerdotal office and functions, and thus even changed what was essential to that constitution. He not only offered sacrifices which belonged to the priests alone; but in the most positive manner went opposite to the orders of that God whose *vicegerent* he was.

Of his conduct in visiting the woman at *En-dor* I have already given my opinion, and to this I must refer. His desperate circumstances imposed on the weakness of his mind; and he did in that instance an act which, in his jurisprudential capacity, he had disapproved by the edict which banished all

witches, &c., from Israel. Yet in this act he only wished to avail himself of the counsel and advice of his *friend* Samuel.

To the question, "Was not Saul a *self-murderer*?" I scruple not to answer, "No." He was to all appearance mortally wounded, when he begged his armour-bearer to extinguish the remaining spark of life; and he was afraid that the Philistines might *abuse* his body, if they found him alive; and we can scarcely say how much of *indignity* is implied in this *word*; and his falling on his sword was a fit of desperation, which doubtless was the issue of a mind greatly agitated, and full of distraction. A few minutes longer, and his life would in all probability have ebbed out; but though this wound accelerated his death, yet it could not be properly the cause of it, as he was mortally wounded before, and did it on the conviction that he could not survive.

Taking Saul's state and circumstances together, I believe there is not a *coroner's inquest* in this nation that would not have brought in a verdict of *derangement*; while the pious and the humane would everywhere have consoled themselves with the hope that God had extended mercy to his soul.

MILLBROOK, June 11, 1818.

Ended this examination August 13, 1827.-A.C.