

1 SAMUEL

“Elkanah, son of Jeroham, had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none and Peninnah kept provoking her in order to irritate her. This went on year after year till she wept and would not eat. Elkanah her husband would say to her, ‘Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?’” (1 Sam 1:2,7-8)

“Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh (where sacrifices were made), Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the Lord's temple. In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. Hannah made a vow, saying, ‘O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.’” (1 Sam 1:9-11)

“As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, ‘How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine.’ ‘Not so, my lord,’ Hannah replied, ‘I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.’ Eli answered, ‘Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.’ Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.” (1 Sam 1:12-18)

“Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. So, in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel.” (1 Sam 1:19-20)

“When Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfill his vow, Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, ‘After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the Lord, and he will live there always.’ Elkanah told her ‘Do what seems best to you.’ ‘Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the Lord make good his word.’” (1 Sam 1:21-23)

“After he was weaned, Hannah took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. When they had slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli, and she said to him, ‘As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.’ And he worshiped the Lord there. Then Hannah prayed and said: “My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance. ‘There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you.’ ... Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under Eli the priest.” (1 Sam 1:24-2:1-2)

Comment: Vows are to be kept whether with the Lord of anyone else. Hanna's joy of having a son was greater than not having him near her to hold and love. The question is do today's children of God keep their vows and promises? Or, for that matter make promises or vows.

Eli, the Priest

"Eli's sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the Lord, treating the Lord's offering with contempt. ... But Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing a linen ephod and Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord. ... Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. So, he said to them, 'Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear spreading among the Lord's people. If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?' His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke, for it was the Lord's will to put them to death." (1 Sam 2:12, 18, 22-25)

Comment: Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and men. The same was said about Jesus in Luke 2:52

"Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him 'The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your family line and you will see distress in my dwelling. Although good will be done to Israel, in your family line there will never be an old man. Every one of you that I do not cut off from my altar will be spared only to blind your eyes with tears and to grieve your heart, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life. Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas will both die on the same day. I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his house, and he will minister before my anointed one always.'" (1 Sam 2:27-35)

"In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. One night, Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. The Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, 'Here I am.' And he ran to Eli and said, 'Here I am; you called me.' But Eli said, 'I did not call; go back and lie down.' The Lord call Samuel three more times. After the fourth call, Samuel answered the Lord saying 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.' So, Samuel went and lay down in his place." (1 Sam 3:1-5)

"The Lord said: 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. At that time, I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family.' ... Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, but Eli called him and said, 'Samuel, my son.' 'What was it he said to you?' 'Do not hide it from me.' So, Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, 'He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes.'" (1 Sam 3:11-12, 15-18)

Comment: Eli's heart and attitude were good but he did not discipline his children in the way of the lord.

"Now the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek. The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel

was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield. When the soldiers returned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, 'Why did the Lord bring defeat upon us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh, so that it may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies.' When the ark of the Lord's covenant came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great shout that the ground shook." (1 Sam 4:1-3, 5)

"Hearing the uproar, the Philistines asked, 'What's all this shouting in the Hebrew camp?' When they learned that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp, the Philistines were afraid. 'A god has come into the camp,' they said. Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!' So, the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated and every man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; Israel lost thirty-thousand foot-soldiers. The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died." (1 Sam 4:6-11)

"That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh, his clothes torn and dust on his head. When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry. Eli heard the outcry and asked, 'What is the meaning of this uproar?' The man hurried over to Eli, who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes were set so that he could not see. He told Eli, 'I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day.' Eli asked, 'What happened, my son?' The man who brought the news replied, 'Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also, your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.' When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man and heavy. He had led Israel forty years." (1 Sam 4:12-18)

The Ark of the Covenant

"After the Philistines had captured the ark of God, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. They carried the ark into Dagon's temple and set it beside Dagon. The next day Dagon had fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! They took Dagon and put him back in his place. But the following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained. ... When the men of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, 'The ark of the god of Israel must not stay here with us, because his hand is heavy upon us and upon Dagon our god.' ... So, they moved the ark of the God of Israel to Gath then Ekron, but they demanded. 'Send the ark of the god of Israel away; let it go back to its own place.'" (1 Sam 5:1-4, 7, 11)

"They took two such cows and hitched them to the cart and placed the ark of the Lord on the cart and along with it the chest containing the gold rats and the models of the tumors. Then the cows went straight up toward Beth Shemesh where the people were harvesting their wheat in the valley, and when they looked up and saw the ark, they rejoiced at the sight. The cart came to the field of Joshua and stopped beside a large rock. The people chopped up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. ... God struck down 70 men because they had looked into the ark of the Lord. The people mourned because of the heavy blow the Lord had dealt them, and the men of Beth Shemesh asked, "Who can stand in the presence of the Lord, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from here?" The men of Kiriath Jearim came and took up the ark of the Lord. They took it to Abinadab's house on the hill and consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the Lord. The ark remained at Kiriath Jearim, for twenty years and all the people of Israel mourned and sought after the Lord." (1 Sam 6:11-14, 19-20; 7:2)

“Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, ‘If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.’ So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only. Then Samuel said, ‘Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede with the Lord for you.’ When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, ‘We have sinned against the Lord.’” (1 Sam 7:3-6)

“When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah they came up to attack them. When the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. They said to Samuel, ‘Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines.’ Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him. While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. ... Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far has the Lord helped us.’ So, the Philistines were subdued.” (1 Sam 7:7-13)

“When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.” (1 Sam 8:1-3)

Comment: Apparently Samuel did not seek God before appointing his sons as judges. It is so important to seek God's guidance.

“So, all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, ‘You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.’ This displeased Samuel; so, he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him: ‘Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.’ ... ‘Listen to them and give them a king.’” (1 Sam 8:4-8)

Comment: Wanting to be like those around us rather than wanting to be what God desires is rebellion against God.

“There was a Benjamite whose name was Kish He had a son named Saul, an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites — a head taller than any of the others. Now the donkeys belonging to Saul's father Kish were lost, and Kish said to his son Saul, ‘Take one of the servants with you and go and look for the donkeys.’ So, he passed through the hill country of Ephraim, Shalisha and Shaalim and when they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, ‘Come, let's go back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us.’ But the servant replied, ‘Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take.’ ‘So, they set out for the town where the man of God was.’” (1 Sam 9:1-6)

“Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed this to Samuel: ‘About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him leader over my people Israel; he will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines. I have looked upon my people, for their cry has reached me.’ When Samuel caught sight of Saul, the Lord said to him, ‘This is the man I spoke to you about; he will govern my

people." Saul approached Samuel in the gateway and asked, "Would you please tell me where the seer's house is?" "I am the seer," Samuel replied. 'Go up ahead of me to the high place, for today you are to eat with me, and in the morning, I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found.'" (1 Sam 9:15-20)

"After they came down from the high place Samuel talked with Saul on the roof of his house. They rose about daybreak and Samuel called to Saul on the roof, 'Get ready, and I will send you on your way.' When Saul got ready, he and Samuel went outside together. As they were going down to the edge of the town, Samuel said to Saul, 'Tell the servant to go on ahead of us' - and the servant did so - 'but you stay here awhile, so that I may give you a message from God.' Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, 'Has not the Lord anointed you leader over his inheritance.' ... 'Go to Gibeah of God, where there is a Philistine outpost. As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.'" (9:25-27; 10:5-7)

"Samuel summoned the people of Israel to the Lord at Mizpah and said 'you have said set a king over us. So, now present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and clans.' The tribe of Benjamin was chosen. Then Matri's clan was chosen. Finally, Saul son of Kish was chosen. Samuel said to all the people. This is the man the Lord has chosen. ... Samuel explained to the people the regulations of the kingship. He wrote them down on a scroll and deposited it before the Lord." (1 Sam 10:17-21, 25)

The Ammorites

"Saul also went to his home in Gibeah, accompanied by valiant men whose hearts God had touched. But some troublemakers said, 'How can this fellow save us?' They despised him and brought him no gifts. But Saul kept silent." (1 Sam 10:26-27)

Comment: "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." (Matt 13:57)

"Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh Gilead saying 'I will make a treaty with you only on the condition that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you and so bring disgrace on all Israel.' The elders of Jabesh said to him, 'Give us seven days so we can send messengers throughout Israel; if no one comes to rescue us, we will surrender to you.' ... Saul mustered three hundred and thirty thousand and sent word to Jabesh Gilead, 'By the time the sun is hot tomorrow, you will be delivered.' Then they said to the Ammonites, 'Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you can do to us whatever seems good to you.' The next day Saul separated his men into three divisions; during the last watch of the night, they broke into the camp of the Ammonites and slaughtered them until the heat of the day. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together." (1 Sam 11:1-3, 8-11)

"Then Samuel said to the people, 'Come, let us go to Gilgal and there reaffirm the kingship.' So, all the people went to Gilgal and confirmed Saul as king in the presence of the Lord. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings before the Lord, and Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration." (1 Sam 11:14-15)

"But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was moving against you, you said to me, 'No, we want a king to rule over us'-even though the Lord your God was your king. Now here is the king the Lord has set over you. If you fear the Lord and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and

if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the Lord your God — good! But if you do not obey the Lord, and if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you, as it was against your fathers. ‘Now then, stand still and see this great thing the Lord is about to do before your eyes!’ It was wheat harvest time so, the Lord sent thunder and rain to damage the wheat. The people stood in awe.” (1 Sam 12:12-17)

“‘Do not be afraid,’ Samuel replied. ‘You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. For the sake of his great name the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own. As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right. But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you. Yet if you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will be swept away.’” (1 Samuel 12:20-25)

Comment: Refusing to follow God’s commands brings disaster, sometimes in the present world but always in the spiritual world unless one repents, seeks forgiveness and returns to God.

The Philistines

“Later Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba. When the Philistines heard about it assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. ... When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns ... quaking with fear. Saul waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. So, he said, ‘Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.’ And Saul offered up the burnt offering. Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him. ‘What have you done?’ asked Samuel. Saul replied, ‘When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord's favor. So, I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.’” (1 Sam 13:3, 6-12)

“‘You acted foolishly,’ Samuel said. ‘You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command.’” (1 Sam 13:13-14)

“One day Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man bearing his armor, ‘Come, let's go over to the Philistine outpost on the other side.’ But he did not tell his father. ... Jonathan said, if the Philistines say, ‘Come up to us,’ we will climb up, because that will be our sign that the Lord has given them into our hands.’ ... Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and feet, with his armor-bearer right behind him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer followed and killed behind him. In that first attack Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed some twenty men in an area of about half an acre. Panic struck the whole army and the ground shook. It was a panic sent by God. ... While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the Philistine camp increased more and more. Then Saul and all his men assembled and went to the battle.” (1 Samuel 14:1, 8-15, 19-20)

“Now the men of Israel were in distress that day, because Saul had bound the people under an oath, saying, ‘Cursed be any man who eats food before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!’ So, none of the troops tasted food. ... But Jonathan had not heard that his father had bound the people with

the oath, so he reached out the end of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb. He raised his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened. Then one of the soldiers told him, 'Your father bound the army under a strict oath, saying, 'Cursed be any man who eats food today!' That is why the men are faint. Jonathan said, 'My father has made trouble for the country. See how my eyes brightened when I tasted a little of this honey. How much better it would have been if the men had eaten today some of the plunder they took from their enemies. Would not the slaughter of the Philistines have been even greater?' That day, after the Israelites had struck down the Philistines, they were exhausted. They pounced on the plunder and, taking sheep, cattle and calves, they butchered them on the ground and ate them, together with the blood. ... sinning against the Lord by eating meat that has blood in it.' ... Then Saul built an altar to the Lord; it was the first time he had done this.'" (1 Sam 14:24, 27-32, 35)

Comment: Rash demands and statements may cause many to sin.

The Amalekites

"Samuel said to Saul, listen now to the message from the Lord 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.' So, Saul summoned the men — two hundred thousand foot-soldiers and ten thousand men from Judah. Saul went to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the ravine. Then Saul attacked the Amalekites and took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs. Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: 'I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.' ... When Samuel reached him, Saul said, 'The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions.' Samuel said the Lord told you to 'Go and completely destroy those wicked people. ... Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?' 'But I did obey the Lord,' Saul said. 'I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.'" (1 Sam 15:1-11, 13, 19-21)

Comment: Doing only part of God's commands is not obeying Him. Neither does not accepting responsibility while blaming others for actions of sin of which you approved, relieve you of guilt.

"But Samuel replied: 'Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because, you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.'" (1 Sam 15:22-23)

"The Lord said to Samuel 'fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.' But Samuel said, 'How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me.' The Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.' Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him.

They asked, ‘Do you come in peace?’ Samuel replied, ‘Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.’ Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. Each son passed before Samuel. But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height but his heart.’ The Lord rejected Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah and four other sons who passed before Samuel. So, Samuel asked Jesse, ‘Are these all the sons you have?’ ‘There is still the youngest,’ Jesse answered, ‘but he is tending the sheep.’ Samuel said, ‘Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.’ So, he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then, the Lord said, ‘Rise and anoint him; he is the one.’ Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.” (1 Sam 16:1, 6-13)

“Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him. Saul's attendants said to him, ‘See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better.’ One of the servants answered, ‘I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man and the Lord is with him.’ Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, ‘Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.’” (1 Sam 16:14-19)

“David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much. ... Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.” (1 Sam 16:21, 23)

“Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war. Their champion, over nine feet tall, named Goliath came out of the Philistine camp stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, ‘Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.’ For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.” (1 Sam 17:1-16)

“Now Jesse said to his son David, ‘Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them.’ Early in the morning David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. As he was talking with them, Goliath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.” (1 Samuel 17:17-24)

“David asked the men standing near him, ‘What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?’ ... What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. David said to Saul, ‘Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.’ Saul replied, ‘You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth.’ But David said to Saul, ‘Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock. I went after it, struck it and rescued the

sheep from its mouth. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” (1 Sam 17:26, 31-37)

“Saul said to David, ‘Go, and the Lord be with you.’ ... Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand he approached the Philistine. Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. He said to David, ‘Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?’ And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ‘Come here,’ he said, ‘and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!’” (1 Sam 17:37 ...40-44)

“David said to the Philistine, ‘You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands.’” (1 Sam 17:45-47)

“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.” (1 Sam 17:48-51)

“As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul. After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father's house. Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.” (1 Sam 17:57, 18:1-4)

“Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well. When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "From that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.” (1 Samuel 18:5-8)

Comment: Neither pride nor the desire for power and prominence is God's nature. These types of attitudes can create jealousy among rivals.

“When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns. Saul said to David, ‘Here is my older daughter Merab. I will give her to you in marriage; only serve me bravely and fight the battles of the Lord.’ For Saul said to himself, ‘I will

not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!' ... But when the time came for Merab to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel of Meholah." (1 Samuel 18:15-17, 19)

"Now Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they told Saul about it, he was pleased. 'I will give her to him,' he thought, 'so that she may be a snare to him and so that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.' David said, 'Do you think it is a small matter to become the king's son-in-law? I'm only a poor man and little known.' Saul's attendant said, all the 'The king wants no other price for the bride than a hundred Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.' Saul's plan was to have David fall by the hands of the Philistines. So, before the allotted time elapsed, David and his men went out and killed two hundred Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king so that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage." (1 Samuel 18:20-21-27)

"While David was playing the harp, Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape. ... When David had fled and made his escape, he went to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to Natioth and stayed there." (1 Samuel 19:9-10, 18)

"Then David went to Jonathan and asked, 'What have I done? What is my crime? How have I wronged your father, that he is trying to take my life?' 'Never!' Jonathan replied. 'You are not going to die! Look, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without confiding in me. Why would he hide this from me? It's not so!' But David took an oath and said, 'Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said to himself, 'Jonathan must not know this or he will be grieved.' Yet as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death.' Jonathan said to David, 'Whatever you want me to do, I'll do for you.'" (1 Samuel 20:1-4)

"So, David said, 'Look, tomorrow is the New Moon festival, and I am supposed to dine with the king; but let me go and hide in the field until the evening of the day after tomorrow. If your father misses me at all, tell him, 'David earnestly asked my permission to hurry to Bethlehem, his hometown, because an annual sacrifice is being made there for his whole clan.' If he says, 'Very well,' then your servant is safe. But if he loses his temper, you can be sure that he is determined to harm me. As for you, show kindness to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with you before the Lord. If I am guilty, then kill me yourself! Why hand me over to your father?' 'Never!' Jonathan said. 'If I had the least inkling that my father was determined to harm you, wouldn't I tell you?'" (1 Samuel 20:5-9)

"So, Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, 'May the Lord call David's enemies to account.' And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself." (1 Samuel 20:16-17)

"When the New Moon festival came, the king sat down to eat. He sat in his customary place by the wall, opposite Jonathan, and Abner sat next to Saul, but David's place was empty. Saul said nothing that day, for he thought, 'Something must have happened to David to make him ceremonially unclean — surely he is unclean.' But the next day, the second day of the month, David's place was empty again. Then Saul said to his son Jonathan, 'Why hasn't the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?' Jonathan

answered, 'David earnestly asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem. He said, 'Let me go, because our family is observing a sacrifice in the town and my brother has ordered me to be there. If I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away to see my brothers.' That is why he has not come to the king's table.'" (1 Sam 20:24-29)

"Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, 'You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!' 'Why should he be put to death? What has he done?' Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.'" (1 Sam 20:30-33)

"Jonathan and David now knew Saul's intent to kill David. Jonathan said to David, 'Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord is witness between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants forever.' Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.'" (1 Sam 20:41-42)

"David went to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech trembled when he met him, and asked, 'Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?' David answered Ahimelech 'The king charged me with a certain matter and said to me, 'No one is to know anything about your mission and your instructions.' As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find.' But the priest answered David, 'I don't have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here. ... So, the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the Lord and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away. ... David asked Ahimelech, 'Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king's business was urgent.' the sword of Goliath was there so David took it.'" (1 Sam 21:1-4, 6, 8-8)

"That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. But the servants of Achish said to him, 'Isn't this David, the king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances: "'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?'" David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. So, he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard. Achish said to his servants, 'Look at the man! He is insane! Why bring him to me? Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?'" (1 Sam 21:10-15)

"David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and his father's household heard about it, they went down to him there. All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him. From there David went to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king of Moab, 'Would you let my father and mother come and stay with you until I learn what God will do for me?' So, he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him as long as David was in the stronghold. But the prophet Gad said to David, 'Do not stay in the stronghold. Go into the land of Judah.' So, David left and went to the forest of Hereth.'" (1 Sam 22:1-5)

"Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul, spear in hand, was seated under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing around him. Saul said to them, 'Listen,

men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? Is that why you have all conspired against me? No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today.” (1 Sam 22:6-8)

“But Doeg who had overheard the conversation between David and Ahimelech was standing with Saul's officials, said, ‘I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelech son of Ahitub at Nob. Ahimelech inquired of the Lord for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.’ Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and his father's whole family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. Saul said, ‘Listen now, son of Ahitub.’ ... ‘Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?’ ... ‘You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and your father's whole family.’ Then the king ordered the guards at his side: ‘Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.’ But the king's officials were not willing to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord. The king then ordered Doeg, ‘You turn and strike down the priests.’ So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep. But Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech escaped and fled to join David and told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. Then David said to Abiathar: ... I am responsible for the death of your father's whole family. Stay with me; don't be afraid; the man who is seeking your life is seeking mine also. You will be safe with me.” (1 Sam 22:9-12, 17-23)

The Philistines go up against

“When David was told, ‘Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors,’ he inquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I go and attack these Philistines?’ The Lord answered him, ‘Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah’ ... for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand.’ So, David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah. (Now Abiathar son of Ahimelech had brought the ephod down with him when he fled to David at Keilah).” (1 Sam 23:1-6)

“Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah, and he said, ‘God has handed him over to me, for David has imprisoned himself by entering a town with gates and bars.’ And Saul called up all his forces for battle, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men. When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, ‘Bring the ephod.’ David said, ‘O Lord, God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me. Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O Lord, God of Israel, tell your servant.’” And the Lord said, “He will.’ David stayed in the desert strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands.” (1 Sam 23:7-11, 14)

Wicked Nabal

“Then David moved down into the Desert of Maon where a very wealthy man in Maon had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel. His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband, a Calebite, was surly and mean

in his dealings. David sent ten young men and said to them, 'Go up to Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name. Say to him 'Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs was missing. Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore, be favorable toward my young men, since we come at a festive time. Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them.' Nabal answered David's servants, 'Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?' When they arrived, they reported every word. David said to his men, 'Put on your swords!' So, they put on their swords, and David put on his. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred stayed with the supplies.'" (1 Sam 25:1-13)

"One of the servants told Abigail: what Nabal told David's men. Abigail lost no time. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. Then she told her servants, 'Go on ahead; I'll follow you.' But she did not tell her husband Nabal." (1 Sam 25:17-19)

"As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending toward her, and she met them. When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. She fell at his feet and said: 'My lord, let the blame be on me alone. Please let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. May my lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name — his name is Fool, and folly goes with him. But as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my master sent.'" (1 Sam 25:20-25)

"David said to Abigail, 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. Otherwise, as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak.' Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, 'Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request.'" (1 Sam 25:32-35)

Comment: Vengeance belongs to God.

"When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. He was in high spirits and very drunk. So, she told him nothing until daybreak. Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and his heart failed him and he became like a stone. About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died. When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, 'Praise be to the Lord, who has upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept his servant from doing wrong and has brought Nabal's wrongdoing down on his own head.' Then David sent word to Abigail, asking her to become his wife. She quickly got on a donkey and, attended by her five maids, went with David's messengers and became his wife. But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish." (1 Sam 25:36-44)

“David thought to himself, ‘One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.’” (1 Sam 27:1)

Witch of Endor

“Sometime later the Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel and set up camp at Shunem. Saul gathered all the Israelites and set up camp at Gilboa. When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. Saul then said to his attendants, ‘Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.’ ‘There is one in Endor,’ they said. So, Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothes, and at night he and two men went to the woman. ‘Consult a spirit for me,’ he said, ‘and bring up for me the one I name.’ But the woman said to him, “Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?” Saul swore to her by the Lord, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this.’” (1 Sam 28:4-10)

“Then the woman asked, ‘Whom shall I bring up for you?’ ‘Bring up Samuel,’ he said. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, ‘Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!’ The king said to her, ‘Don't be afraid. What do you see?’ The woman said, ‘I see a spirit coming up out of the ground.’ ‘What does he look like?’ he asked. ‘An old man wearing a robe is coming up,’ she said. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. Samuel said to Saul, ‘Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?’ ‘I am in great distress,’ Saul said. ‘The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has turned away from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So, I have called on you to tell me what to do.’ Samuel said, ‘Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has turned away from you and become your enemy? The Lord has done what he predicted through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to David. Because you did not obey the Lord or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this to you today. The Lord will hand over both Israel and you to the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also hand over the army of Israel to the Philistines.’ Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel's words. His strength was gone, for he had eaten nothing all that day and night. After much pleading Saul ate and left.” (1 Sam 28:11-20)

“David and his men found that the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag, burned it and had taken captive the women and all who were in it, both young and old including Ahinoam and Abigail, David's wives. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way. But David found strength in the Lord his God and asked Abiathar the priest, to ‘Bring me the ephod.’ Abiathar brought it to him, and David inquired of the Lord, ‘Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?’ ‘Pursue them,’ he answered. ‘You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.’” (1 Sam 30:1-8)

“David found the raiding party scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah. David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives. Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken. David brought everything back. He took all the flocks and herds, and his men drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying, ‘This is David's plunder.’” (1 Sam 30:16-20)

“David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind at the Besor Ravine. They came out to meet David and the people with him. As David and his men approached, he greeted them. But all the evil men and troublemakers among David's followers said, ‘Because they did not go out with us, we will not share with them the plunder we recovered. However, each man may take his wife and children and go.’ David replied, ‘No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the Lord has given us. He has protected us and handed over to us the forces that came against us. Who will listen to what you say? The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike.’ David made this a statute and ordinance for Israel. When David arrived in Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah, who were his friends, saying, ‘Here is a present for you from the plunder of the Lord's enemies.’ ... and to those in all the other places where David and his men had roamed.” (1 Sam 30:21-26)

“Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them, and many fell slain on Mount Gilboa. The Philistines pressed hard after Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. The fighting grew fierce around Saul, and when the archers overtook him, they wounded him critically. Saul said to his armor-bearer, ‘Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me.’ But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so, Saul took his own sword and fell on it. When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. So, Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day.” (1 Sam 31:1-6)

“When the Israelites along the valley and those across the Jordan saw that the Israelite army had fled and that Saul and his sons had died, they abandoned their towns and fled. And the Philistines came and occupied them. The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and they sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news in the temple of their idols and among their people. They put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan. When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul, all their valiant men journeyed through the night to Beth Shan. They took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth Shan and went to Jabesh, where they burned them. Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.” (1 Sam 31:7-13)