

2SAMUEL 1

2Samuel 1:1–1

A Post-Mortem and an Ode to Saul

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Introduction: 2Sam. 1 is a fascinating chapter. In it, David finds out about Saul's death from an Amalekite, which is quite interesting, as David had just finished slaughtering the Amalekites which had invaded his camp and taken his women (1Sam. 30). This Amalekite claims that Saul asked him to kill him and that he brought some of Saul's personal effects to prove that this is true. David orders the execution of this man, as he struck down the Lord's anointed.

The second half of this chapter is a lament by David for Saul and Jonathan, which the author/editor of 2Samuel apparently found in the book of Jasher.

Let's break down this chapter even more. David has just returned to Ziklag from defeating the Amalekites who had invaded his camp and taken his women and things (weapons, food, ipods, x-boxes, etc.). Bear in mind that all of this was simultaneous with Saul's final battle against the Philistines where the Philistines soundly defeated Saul's army. We established a parallel time line for this back in the introduction to 1Sam. 31.

On the third day of David's being in camp, a man with torn clothes and dust on his head comes to David, saying that he had come out of Saul's camp, and that the Israelites retreated, and Saul and Jonathan were killed (vv. 1–4). David asks this young man how he knows that Saul and Jonathan are dead, and the young man tells David that he just happened to be on Mount Gilboa when this battle was taking place (vv. 5–6). According to the young man's story, Saul calls over to the man and asks him to kill him, as he was in great pain (vv. 7–9). The young man killed Saul, and then took his crown and royal arm bracelet for proof, which he has brought to David (v. 10).

David then goes into a period of mourning, with the rest of the camp, during which time he possibly composes an ode to Saul and Jonathan (vv. 11–12). After this period of mourning (apparently), David tries the man and has him executed for killing Saul (vv. 13–16).

Then David teaches the sons of Judah an ode that he has written—an ode to Saul and Jonathan (vv. 17–18). David first asks that the deaths of Saul and Jonathan not be proclaimed in the Philistine territories, lest they celebrate their deaths (vv. 19–20). David apparently asks for a time of mourning in the mountains of Gilboa, and then praises the bravery of Saul and Jonathan (vv. 21–23). The women whose freedom has been protected for all of these years by Saul and Jonathan are called upon to mourn (v. 24). Finally, David proclaims his great sorrow over the death of Jonathan, a man whose love for him was greater than that even of women (vv. 25–27). So ends this first chapter of 2Samuel.

If you went through 1Samuel with me, you heard me complain incessantly about the division of chapters and verses. Well, here we have a division of this book of Samuel, but I have no complaints. If someone had to divide this book in any way, then as we find it divided makes the most sense. Saul, Jonathan and Samuel have all died in 1Samuel and now we begin 2Samuel with David and how he will take the power given him by God. Bear in mind, that the original book of Samuel was one book, and that there is no book or chapter division between 1Sam. 31:13 and 2Sam. 1:1. However, if one desires to break up the book, this is the place to do it.

Let me include a couple of additional summaries of this chapter:

2Samuel 1 Summarized by Great Theologians of the Past

Clarke: An Amalekite comes to David, and informs him that the Philistines had routed the Israelites; and that Saul and his sons were slain (2Sam. 1:1–4). And pretends that he himself had despatched Saul, finding him ready to fall alive into the hands of the Philistines, and had brought his crown and bracelets to David (2Sam. 1:5–10). David and his men mourn for Saul and his sons (2Sam. 1:11–12). He orders the Amalekite, who professed that he had killed Saul, to be slain (2Sam. 1:13–16). David's funeral song for Saul and Jonathan (2Sam. 1:17–27).¹

Matthew Henry: In the close of the foregoing book (with which this is connected as a continuation of the same history) we had Saul's exit; he went down slain to the pit, though he was the terror of the mighty in the land of the living. We are now to look towards the rising sun, and to enquire where David is, and what he is doing.

In this chapter we have,

- I. Tidings brought him to Ziklag of the death of Saul and Jonathan, by an Amalekite, who undertook to give him a particular narrative of it (2Sam. 1:1–10).
- II. David's sorrowful reception of these tidings (2Sam. 1:11–12).
- III. Justice done upon the messenger, who boasted that he had helped Saul to dispatch himself (2Sam. 1:13–16).
- IV. An elegy which David penned upon this occasion (2Sam. 1:17–27). And in all this David's breast appears very happily free from the sparks both of revenge and ambition, and he observes a very suitable demeanor.²

Keil and Delitzsch: David received the intelligence of the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul in the war with the Philistines from an Amalekite, who boasted of having slain Saul and handed over to David the crown and armlet of the fallen king, but whom David punished with death for the supposed murder of the anointed of God (vv. 1–16). David mourned for the death of Saul and Jonathan, and poured out his grief in an elegiac ode (2Sam. 1:17–27). This account is closely connected with the concluding chapters of the first book of Samuel.³

Even though this is fairly repetitive, I want you to at least see that, in the language of these ancient scholars, most of them saw the story of the Amalekite as being a fabrication.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

There are a couple of issues that I need to deal with. How and when did David know what happened in 1Sam. 31? Also, we have to deal with the differences between the account of Saul's death in this chapter and the previous one. My thinking is, this Amalekite was there, watching what transpired, hiding. After all, he seemed to have a pretty good idea as to what happened. How he avoided the onslaught of the Philistines is unknown; we might assume that he had a well-hidden place to hide in; something which may have been the result of some amount of time living on that mountain in the midst of the Jews. David, in retrospect, may have sorted all of this out in his own mind as to what really transpired.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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An Amalekite Claims to Have Killed Saul

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1 introduction.

² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1 introduction.

³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 1 introduction.

And so he is after a death of Saul, and David returned from an assaulting of the Amalekite; and so remains David in Ziklag days two. 2Samuel 1:1 And it was after the death of Saul, after [lit., **and**] David returned from defeating the Amalekites, that he [lit., **David**] remained in Ziklag for two days.

After the death of Saul and after David returned from defeating the Amalekites, he had been in Ziklag for a couple of days,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts: Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts (using the Douay-Rheims translation; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation, respectively). When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's, I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). Now and again, I update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.).

Masoretic Text And so he is after a death of Saul, and David returned from an assaulting of the Amalekite; and so remains David in Ziklag days two.

Septuagint And it came to pass after Saul was dead, that David returned from smiting Amalec, and David abode two days in Sekelac.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Saul was dead. Meanwhile, David had defeated the Amalekites and returned to Ziklag.

The Message Shortly after Saul died, David returned to Ziklag from his rout of the Amalekites.

NJB Saul was dead and David, returning after his victory over the Amalekites, had been at Ziklag for two days.

NLT After the death of Saul, David returned from his victory over the Amalekites and spent two days in Ziklag.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ After Saul died and David returned from defeating the Amalekites, David stayed in Ziklag two days.

HCSB After the death of Saul, David returned from defeating the Amalekites and stayed at Ziklag two days.

JPS (Tanakh) After the death of Saul—David had already returned from defeating the Amalekites—David stayed two days in Ziklag.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

MKJV And it happened after the death of Saul, David returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David stayed two days in Ziklag,...

Young's Updated LT And it comes to pass, after the death of Saul, that David has returned from striking down the Amalekite, and David dwells in Ziklag two days,...

The gist of this verse? The scene is set for us: Saul has died; David has just defeated the Amalekites who had invaded his camp and he was in Ziklag, his camp, for a couple of days.

2Samuel 1:1a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| hâyâh (הָיָא) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>] | <i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #1961 BDB #224 |
| Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject). | | | |
| ʿachârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>] | <i>hinder parts; behind, after; following; after that, afterwards</i> | preposition; plural form | Strong's #310 BDB #29 |
| mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced <i>MAW-veth</i>] | <i>death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4194 BDB #560 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |

Translation: [And it was after the death of Saul,...](#) In 1Sam. 31, we saw Saul commit suicide prior to an attack which would have probably left him dead anyway. His armor bearer also committed suicide. When we begin this chapter, Saul's death is news. That is, it took time for the results of the battle between Saul and the Philistines to be noised abroad. It was not until the next day after Saul died that his body had been identified by the Philistines. It probably was another day or so after that before they hung his headless body in Bethshan (his head and weapons were taken to Philistia in celebration of their victory). At this point, it is likely that David does not know all that happened. He did know that the Philistines and Saul were about to face off, as he was a part of the Philistine army for a short time (1Sam. 29); but the results of the war were probably not yet available to him (this would have been perhaps a day or two after Saul was killed).

2Samuel 1:1b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>] | <i>beloved and is transliterated David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>] | <i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #7725 BDB #996 |

2Samuel 1:1b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>] | <i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i>] | <i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i> | Hiphil infinitive construct | Strong #5221 BDB #645 |
| ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>] | generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i> | indicates that the following substantive is a direct object | Strong's #853 BDB #84 |
| ʿAmâlêq (עַמְלֵק) [pronounced <i>ʿah-maw-LAYK</i>] | transliterated <i>Amalek</i> | masculine proper noun; used as an gentilic adjective here; with the definite article | Strong's #6002 BDB #766 |

Translation: ...after [lit., and] David returned from defeating the Amalekites,... David had been pressed into service by the king of Gath and had joined up to ride with the Philistine army. However, the other Philistine leaders were not about to enter into a war against Israel with David riding next to them, so they demanded that he be sent back. When David returned to his camp in Ziklag, he found that the Amalekites had raided his camp and had taken the women, children and the possessions of David and his men. You may recall that David tracked the Amalekites and slaughtered them, retrieving all that they had taken. As amazing as it might seem, none of their women or children had been harmed yet. This paragraph, by the way, is a summary of 1Sam. 29–30.

2Samuel 1:1c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAH^BV</i>] | <i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #3427 BDB #442 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>] | <i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| Tsiq ^e lag (צִיקְלָג) [pronounced <i>tzihk^e-LAHG</i>] | transliterated <i>Ziklag</i> | Proper noun; location | Strong's #6860 BDB #862 |

2Samuel 1:1c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw- MEEM] | days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year | masculine plural noun | Strong's #3117 BDB #398 |
| sh ^e nayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced sh ^e NAH- yim] | two (the cardinal number); both, double, twice; second; (the ordinal number); [and with other numbers]: both | masculine dual numeral; pausal form | Strong's #8147 BDB #1040 |

Translation: ...that he [lit., David] remained in Ziklag for two days. You may recall that David and his men were completely exhausted after these things—going up to join the Philistines, being sent back; and then going to battle against the Amalekites that invaded their camp. Some of David's men were so exhausted that they could not even continue with David into battle against the Amalekites. Therefore, David and his men are resting, enjoying the return of their women and property.

It might be instructive to review what we know about Ziklag: Ziklag is even with the lower third of the Dead Sea, but much closer to the Mediterranean Sea. It is about midway on the diagonal line between Ashkelon and Beer-Sheba. It was originally Judæan property, gained by Joshua and first deeded over Judah and then to Simeon in the great land distribution (Joshua 15:31–19:5). Given the location of Ziklag and the nature of Philistine aggression, and this passage, we would expect this city to have fallen into Philistine possession. It is also possible that the Judæans never really took control of it; however, Judges 1:17–18 seems to imply that they did (Ziklag is not named specifically; but it would have been in that general area). No matter what the case, this city is under the control of Achish during this time period. Given the nature of the relationship between Israel and Philistia, it is reasonable to suppose that some border cities and territories changed hands one or more times.⁴

Even after defeating the Amalekites, there was a great deal which needed to be done. First of all, David and his men required rest, as they had been on the move for several days without rest. Secondly, their camp in Ziklag had been burned down, so some sort of makeshift shelter had to be devised. More than likely, they simply slept out under the stars for the first night. However, recall that these men had just defeated a large camp of Amalekites; therefore, they very likely had all the tents that they needed. Other exegetes⁵ suggest that they were able to secure some sort of lodging by the locals; however, I don't see that as likely. Recall that David made some unauthorized raids all over this southern area and lied about it to the King of Gath; and if his associations were too close with the locals of Ziklag (assuming that there are people living in a city here), then the King of Gath would have known the truth about what David was doing. For this reason, I see David as taking an unoccupied portion of land outside the city of Ziklag (again, assuming that there is a functioning city here at this time). Thirdly, there was all of the booty seized from the Amalekites—more than David and his men could possibly use (I would assume that this would primarily be flocks and herds of animals). David had to organize the distribution of these things throughout Judah (1Sam. 30:26–31). We do not know how far along David was on this third task when the events of this chapter unfold. There was a fourth thing which was also occurring: men from all over Israel were coming down to David, their hearts moved by God, to be in service to David—primary as a military force for Israel (1Chron. 12). Keep in mind an historical perspective here: the Philistines have just defeated Saul, his sons, and the Israeli army. At this point, there are not a lot of options. The Philistines will set up garrisons throughout Israel (primarily central Israel), as they had before, and probably exact tribute from the local Israelites. Those men who are able to fight cannot just attack the Philistines in groups of a dozen or so; therefore, they know of David, they know where he is (remember the gifts from David?), and they are coming down to him, to pledge their allegiance

⁴ I took this paragraph verbatim from my exegesis of 1Sam. 27:6

⁵ For instance, Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 1:1.

to him. This will take place primarily between this chapter and the next, so I will exegete **1Chron. 12** at the end of this chapter.

And so he is in the day the third and behold, a man came from the camp from with Saul; and his clothes torn and ground upon his head. And so he is in his coming unto David and so he falls ground-ward and so he bows down.

2Samuel
1:2

And it is on the third day that [lit., and behold] a man came from the camp from being with Saul, and his clothes were torn and there was dirt on his head. And it is, when he comes in to David that he falls to the ground and prostrates himself.

On the third day, a man from Saul's encampment came to David—his clothes were torn and he had dirt on his forehead. When he came in to David, he fell to the ground, prostrating himself.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

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|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | And so he is in the day the third and behold, a man came from the camp from with Saul; and his clothes torn and ground upon his head. And so he is in his coming unto David and so he falls ground-ward and so he bows down. |
| Septuagint | And it came to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came from the camp, from the people of Saul, and his garments were rent, and earth was upon his head: and it came to pass when he went in to David, that he fell upon the earth, and did obeisance to him. |

Significant differences: In the LXX, this man comes from *the people of* Saul, rather than simply *from being with* Saul. The Syriac and Latin are in agreement with the Hebrew (as usual).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| CEV | Three days later, a soldier came from Saul's army. His clothes were torn, and dirt was on his head. He went to David and knelt down in front of him. |
| <i>The Message</i> | Three days later a man showed up unannounced from Saul's army camp. Disheveled and obviously in mourning, he fell to his knees in respect before David. |
| NLT | On the third day after David's return, a man arrived from the Israelite battlefield. He had torn his clothes and put dirt on his head to show that he was in mourning. He fell to the ground before David in deep respect. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>God's Word</i> TM | On the third day a man came from Saul's camp. His clothes were torn, and he had dirt on his head. When he came to David, he immediately bowed down with his face touching the ground. |
| JPS (Tanakh) | On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes rent and earth on his head; and as he approached David, he flung himself to the ground and bowed low. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|-----|--|
| ESV | And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage. |
|-----|--|

LTHB

And it happened on the third day, behold, a man came in out of the camp from Saul. And his garments were torn, and earth on his head. And it happened as he came to David, he fell to the earth and prostrated himself.

Young's Updated LT

...and it comes to pass, on the third day, that lo, a man has come in out of the camp from Saul, and his garments are torn, and earth on his head; and it comes to pass, in his coming in unto David, that he falls to the earth, and does obeisance.

The gist of this verse?

On the third day, a man comes from Saul's camp to David. His garments are torn and there is dirt on his face and forehead. When he comes in to speak with David, he first prostrates himself before David.

2Samuel 1:2a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW] | to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #1961 BDB #224 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm] | day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately | masculine singular noun with a definite article | Strong's #3117 BDB #398 |
| sh ^e lishîym (שְׁלִישִׁים) [pronounced sh ^e li-SHEEM] | third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story] | masculine/feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article | Strong's #7992 BDB #1026 |

Translation: *And it is on the third day...* This chapter along with the previous several chapters all occur simultaneously. We carefully examined a time-line in 1Sam. 31 the introduction. We followed the various armies and where they went and at what time they moved from point A to point B. 1Sam. 28–2Sam. 1 all take place within a week's time. These chapters are not ordered chronologically, but topically, which makes more sense. So, David was sent back from the Philistine front as the kings of Philistia did not trust him. He returns to his camp in Ziklag, in a territory in southern Judah which is controlled by the Philistines. His camp had been raided by Amalekites and David had struck them and had returned to his camp. It was three days after his successful raid against the Amalekites.

2Samuel 1:2b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh] | and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY] | lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out | interjection, demonstrative particle | Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243 |

2Samuel 1:2b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced eesh] | a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone | masculine singular noun | Strong's #376 BDB #35 |
| bôw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced boh] | to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH] | camp, encampment; an army camp; those who are camped [army, company, people]; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #4264 BDB #334 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced geeem] | with, at, by, near | preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #5973 BDB #767 |
| Together, these prepositions mean: <i>from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.</i> | | | |
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL] | which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |

Translation: ...that [lit., and behold] a man came from the camp from being with Saul,... Seemingly out of nowhere, a man comes to David. He was with Saul in his camp when Saul warred against the Philistines. The prepositions used here indicate that he did not just come from that general vicinity, but that he came from exactly where Saul was at his death.

This is actually not an unusual situation; God is going to move the hearts of hundreds, if not thousands, of men, to come down to David in Ziklag, as we will examine when we exegete [1Chron. 12](#).

For whatever reason, people have tried to identify this man—and it is suggested that he is Doeg the Edomite or that he is Saul's armor-bearer.⁶ Now, as you know, I have no problems with speculating about this or that; however, this man is nowhere identified; and there are enough people in this territory for this to be someone that we have never heard of. God the Holy Spirit may have purposely left his name out; and, similarly, included the names a hundreds of heroes to flocked to David in 1Chron. 12. This man is trying to take advantage of this tragic situation, so there is no reason that we need to know his name.

⁶ See Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:2. Gill correctly points out that Saul's armorbearer was killed along with Saul, but that the Amalekites were a race of Edom.

Now, we already know that Saul has foreigners in his army, as we have dealt with Doeg the Edomite back in 1Sam. 21–22. Therefore, it is possible that this man is a mercenary serving under either the Philistines or the Israelites. He is not fighting for the freedom of the Israelites, but is rather an opportunist, as this narrative will bear out. For him to be found right where Saul was killed very likely indicates that he fought on one side or the other. In the midst of the battle, when he saw Saul dead, he very likely began to formulate in his mind a plan to exploit this situation. Now, if this speculation is true, the man cannot tell David that he belonged to either army. He does not want to come to David, an Israelite, and say, “I fought along the Philistines against your people.” However, he does not want to represent himself as part of Saul’s army, else David would ask him, “Why did you not die there with your lord?” That is, how could he and Saul be in the same place, and he is unscathed and Saul is killed?

2Samuel 1:2c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong’s Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong’s # BDB #251 |
| b ^e gâdîym (בגדי) [pronounced <i>b^e-gaw-DEEM</i>] | <i>garments, clothes, clothing, apparel</i> | masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong’s #899 BDB #93 |
| qâra ^ʿ (קטף) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAHG</i>] | <i>to bend, to tear apart; to tear out, to tear away; to cut in pieces [with a knife]; to cut out; to tear with words [i.e., to curse]</i> | Qal passive participle | Strong’s #7167 BDB #902 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong’s # BDB #251 |
| ʾădâmâh (אדמה) [pronounced <i>uh-daw-MAWH</i>] | <i>ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth</i> | feminine singular noun | Strong’s #127 BDB #9 |
| ʿal (על) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong’s #5921 BDB #752 |
| rô ^ʿ sh (ראש) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>] | <i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong’s #7218 BDB #910 |

Translation: ...and his clothes were torn and there was dirt on his head. This man has torn clothes and there is dirt on his face and forehead. Probably, this was done to indicate great sorrow, as the Jews have always been very demonstrative. Had this man been a Lutheran, he would be dressed in a clean black suit and he would have a somber expression, rather than dirt, on his face.

As we will soon find out, this man is looking to play David here, so his torn clothes and the dirt on his forehead were probably something which he did, anticipating this meeting with David. Maybe he intends to convey mourning and maybe he wants to suggest recent involvement in a war. I want you to recognize that either approach is incongruous with what the man will say. Let’s say that he tore his clothing and put dust on his forehead to indicate mourning; this will be incongruous with his bragging to David that he killed King Saul. This man is not coming to David simply to give him the news of King Saul’s death, as he will claim to have killed Saul, and will expect that David will want to reward him in some way for doing so. Therefore, looking like he is in mourning makes little sense. The other possibility is, this man wants it to appear as though he was just in a war, but, he was not just in a war. We will find out that he is an Amalekite. The war was between the Philistines and the Israelites. He will claim to have simply been on Mount Gilboa on this particular day. He makes no claims to

fighting for either side (as we have previously discussed, if he claims to have been on either side, he will be in trouble with David). However, he shows up before David as though he has been in this battle himself (or, as if he is in mourning). Again, this is incongruous with his story.

Some men, who are the bearer of bad tidings, show up with torn clothing and dust on their heads to indicate that they are bringing bad news to the hearers. We observed this back in 1Sam. 4:12, when a man came to Shiloh to tell the people and to tell Eli that Eli's sons were killed in battle, Israel lost the war against the Philistines, and that the Ark had been captured. This man—the Amalekite—was probably following protocol. However, and follow my reasoning here: what reason would an Amalekite have to come to David to tell him this bad news? It would be reasonable for a fellow Israelite to come down to Ziklag and gives David a heads up on what happened. However, this man makes no claim on being an official messenger from Saul's army. He comes to David because he wants something. He is going to use this to his advantage to parlay Saul's death into some kind of a reward or high governmental position (perhaps David will appoint him the head of FEMA).

2Samuel 1:2d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW] | <i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #1961 BDB #224 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| bôw ^ʿ (בֹּוֹא) [pronounced boh] | <i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i> | Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |
| The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb. | | | |
| ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | <i>beloved and is transliterated David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |

Translation: *And it is, when he comes in to David...* This man apparently speaks to David's guards and convinces them that he needs to speak to David. No doubt he said, "I have news about King Saul." They speak with David and he gives this man an audience.

Despite the fact that the Amalekites had burned down Ziklag (at least, the tents and buildings where David and his men stayed), apparently something had been done in order to separate David from the rest of the men. Recall that they had just successfully invaded the Amalekites who plundered them; therefore, they probably had a wealth of tents from that raid.

McGee: *David did not know what had happened in the battle. He and his men had been recovering their own loved ones from the Amalekite marauders. They had been back in Ziklag for two days without hearing a word. Finally a man all disheveled, covered with mud and dirt and wearing torn clothes, stumbled into David's camp. He said he had come from the war. He told David that the Philistines had won the war and that Saul was dead. Then he told David what happened.*⁷

2Samuel 1:2e

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets] | <i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, ground, soil</i> | feminine singular noun with the directional hê | Strong's #776 BDB #75 |
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW] | <i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect | Strong's #7812 BDB #1005 |

Translation: *...that he falls to the ground and prostrates himself.* The first thing that this stranger does is he prostrates himself before David. This is something which is commonly done before a world leader. (Gen. 37:7–10 43:28 2Sam. 14:4 Psalm 66:3 Rev. 3:9) Furthermore, this was not something completely unknown to David (see 1Sam. 20:41 24:8 25:23, 41). However, even given these passages, it is unclear whether this was common to David. Nevertheless, this man is not going to screw up protocol. He is certainly going to be, if anything, too polite and too ingratiating.

Matthew Henry comments: *The messenger presents himself to David as an express, in the posture of a mourner for the deceased prince and a subject to the succeeding one. He came with his clothes rent, and made obeisance to David, pleasing himself with the fancy that he had the honour to be the first that did him homage as his sovereign, but it proved he was the first that received from him sentence of death as his judge.*⁸ So, in Henry's opinion, this man was trying to convey that he was also in mourning.

At this point, Clarke makes the comment: *The whole account which this young man gives is a fabrication: in many of the particulars it is grossly self-contradictory. There is no fact in the case but the bringing of the crown, or diadem, and bracelets of Saul; which, as he appears to have been a plunderer of the slain, he found on the field of battle; and he brought them to David, and told the lie of having despatched Saul, merely to ingratiate himself with David.*⁹

⁷ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 168.

⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:2.

⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:2.

And so says to him David, “Where from this do you come?” And so he says unto him, “From a camp of Israel I was delivered.”

2Samuel 1:3

So David asks him [lit., *said to him*], “From where do you come?” And he answered him [lit., *said to him*], “I escaped from the camp of Israel.”

So David asked him, “Where did you come from?” And he answered David, “I have just escaped from the encampment of Israel.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so says to him David, “Where from this do you come?” And so he says unto him, “From a camp of Israel I was delivered.”

Septuagint And David said to him, “From where did you come?” And he said to him, “I have escaped out of the camp of Israel.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV David asked, "Where did you come from?" The man answered, "From Israel's army. I barely escaped with my life."

The Message David asked, "What brings you here?" He answered, "I've just escaped from the camp of Israel."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM "Where did you come from?" David asked him. "I escaped from the camp of Israel," he answered.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

LTHB And David said to him, From where do you come? And he said to him, I have escaped out of the camp of Israel.

Young's Updated LT And David says to him, “From Where did you come?” And he says unto him, “Out of the camp of Israel I have escaped.

The gist of this verse? David asks from whence this man came and he answers that he has escaped out from the camp of Israel. .

2Samuel 1:3a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |

2Samuel 1:3a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|--|
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | <i>beloved and is transliterated David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| ʿêy (אֵי) [pronounced āy] | <i>where</i> | adverb; with a suffix, the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied | Strong's #335 BDB #32 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh] | <i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i> | demonstrative adjective with a definite article | Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260 |
| These 3 particles together mean <i>from where, whence</i> . | | | |
| bôwʿ (בֹּוֹא) [pronounced boh] | <i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i> | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |

Translation: *So David asks him* [lit., *said to him*], “*From where do you come?*” David first of all wants to ascertain where this man came from. David is the one in authority, so he asks the questions. The man does not initiate any of this dialogue. He shows David respect, but it is a pseudo respect. We are dealing with a man who intends to manipulate David and to get from him what he can.

As Gill points out, it is very likely that David knew where this man came from, and suggests this because of the man’s appearance. However, this man was probably screened by David’s underlings before he came in to speak to David; so David probably knew some of these things up front. However, given this man’s appearance, and given that David knew Saul was going to war against the Philistines, even without being briefed, I am sure that David could have made a reasonable guess that he came from the battle.

2Samuel 1:3b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʿâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |

2Samuel 1:3b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| ʿel (לְאֵל) [pronounced e]l] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| machāneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH] | <i>camp, encampment; an army camp; those who are camped [army, company, people]; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4264 BDB #334 |
| Yisʿrāʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE] | transliterated <i>Israel</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3478 BDB #975 |
| mālaṭ (מָלַט) [pronounced maw-LAH]T] | <i>to be delivered; to deliver oneself, to escape, to slip away, to slip through [or past]; to go away in haste</i> | 1 st person singular; [often a reflexive meaning in the] Niphal perfect | Strong's #4422 BDB #572 |

Translation: *And he answered him* [lit., *said to him*], “*I escaped from the camp of Israel.*” David and Saul’s falling out was well-known throughout Israel. It had gone on for several years—possibly as long as a decade. That David was exiled was also well-known; and, apparently, this man knew where to find David (how he knows this makes from some interesting speculation later on). He tells David that he has come from the camp of Saul. Obviously, this will be of interest to David.

And so says unto him David, “How is the word? Make [this] known please to me.”

David then said, “How is the matter? Please make [this] known to me.”

And so he says, “Have fled the people from the battle and also many have fallen from the people and so they die. And also Saul and Jonathan his son are dead.”

2Samuel
1:4

He answered [lit., *And so he said*], “The people fled from the battle and many of the people fell and they have died. Also, Saul and his son Jonathan have died.”

David then asked, “What happened exactly? Please make this clearly known to me.”

He answered, “The people fled the battle and many of them fell and died. Also, Saul and his son Jonathan died as well.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says unto him David, “How is the word? Make [this] known please to me.” And so he says, “Have fled the people from the battle and also many have fallen from the people and so they die. And also Saul and Jonathan his son are dead.”

Septuagint And David said to him, "What is the matter? Tell me." And he said, "The people fled out of the war, and many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead."

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV "Who won the battle?" David asked. The man said, "Our army turned and ran, but many were wounded and died. Even King Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

The Message "So what happened?" said David. "What's the news?" He said, "The Israelites have fled the battlefield, leaving a lot of their dead comrades behind. And Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM "What happened?" David asked him. "Please tell me." The man answered, "The army fled from the battle, and many of the soldiers died. Saul and his son Jonathan are dead too."

HCSB "What was the outcome? Tell me," David asked him. "The troops fled from the battle," he answered. "Many of the troops have fallen and are dead. Also, Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

WEB David said to him, How did it go? Please tell me. He answered, The people have fled from the battle, and many of the people also have fallen and are dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

Young's Updated LT And David says unto him, "What has been the matter? Declare, I pray you, to me." And he says, that "The people has fled from the battle, and also a multitude has fallen of the people, and they die; and also Saul and Jonathan his son have died."

The gist of this verse? David asks about the battle, and the young man tells him that the people (i.e., *the Israelites*) retreated in defeat, and that many of them were killed, including Saul and Jonathan.

2Samuel 1:4a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʾel (אל) [pronounced el] | unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |

2Samuel 1:4a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | <i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw] | <i>what, how, why</i> | interrogative; exclamatory particle | Strong's #4100 BDB #552 |
| hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW] | <i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #1961 BDB #224 |
| dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR] | <i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i> | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #1697 BDB #182 |

These three words have been translated in a myriad of ways: *How is the matter?* (Kukis ML) *How did the matter go?* (LTHB, NKJV, MKJV); *How did it go?* (*The Amplified Bible*, ESV, Owen); *How went the matter?* (HNV, WEB); *How did things go?* (NASB, NRSV); *What has been the matter?* (Updated Young Translation); and then we have the less literal renderings of this phrase: *What happened?* (God's Word™, NIV, the Tanakh); *What was the outcome?* (HCSB); *What is the news?* (REB); *What has happened?* (NJB).

Translation: David then said, “How is the matter? David was of course aware of the war between the Philistines and the Israelites. He had been recruited by Achish king of Gath to go to war against the Israelites and against King Saul, who had chased him out of Israel—which put David into a very difficult spot, morally speaking. However, God kept David from being involved in this sort of battle. However, even with his own personal drama, David wanted to know what had happened in this war.

2Samuel 1:4b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD] | <i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i> | 2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative | Strong's #5046 BDB #616 |
| nâ' (נָא) [pronounced naw] | <i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i> | particle of entreaty | Strong's #4994 BDB #609 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |

Translation: Please make [this] known to me.” David is polite in his request for information. He wants all that this man knows to be made known to him.

2Samuel 1:4c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʾasher (אשר) [pronounced uh-SHER] | that, which, when, who, whom | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| nûwç (נוּוַח) [pronounced noose] | to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away] | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #5127 BDB #630 |
| ʿam (עם) [pronounced gahm] | people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals] | masculine singular collective noun with the definite article | Strong's #5971 BDB #766 |
| min (מן) [pronounced min] | from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| mil ^e châmâh (מלחמה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW] | battle, war | feminine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #4421 BDB #536 |

Translation: He answered [lit., And so he said], “The people fled from the battle... He tells David that the citizen-soldiers began by retreating. There is no indication that they put up a battle against the Philistines. Recall that there was no indication that Saul’s forces put up much of a fight. Almost immediately, they are said to retreat and to be killed as they retreated (1Sam. 31:1). Now, bear in mind that there are times when we are given little detail about this or that matter in the Bible; however, also realize that Saul went into battle knowing that he and his sons would die and that Israel would lose (1Sam. 28:19). Given this, it makes sense that Israel would have retreated almost from the beginning.

Furthermore, in the next chapter, we will see the Saul’s youngest son will be set up as king by Abner, Saul’s general and uncle; and that Abner will have an army. As I suggested back in 1Sam. 31:1, Saul probably set all of this up the morning of the battle. I have speculated that Saul told Abner to go east across the Jordan with a small army and with his son Ishbosheth (who may have been home because of his age and not at war at this time). In other words, I think a lot went on at the beginning of this battle between the Israelites and the Philistines which caused Israel to retreat early on.

2Samuel 1:4d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|------------------------|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| gam (גם) [pronounced gahm] | also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover | adverb | Strong's #1571 BDB #168 |

2Samuel 1:4d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean <i>together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore</i> . | | | |
| râbâh (רַבָּה) [pronounced raw ^b -VAWH] | <i>to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]</i> | Hiphil infinitive construct | Strong's #7235 BDB #915 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| 'am (אָמ) [pronounced gahm] | <i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i> | masculine singular collective noun with the definite article | Strong's #5971 BDB #766 |

Translation: ...and many of the people fell... This matches the historical account from 1Sam. 31:1—the Israelites began to retreat from the Philistines and were killed as they ran from them.

I have suggested that this young man—this Amalekite—was a mercenary for the Philistines. Notice how his description of the battle is consistent with his view, as an aggressor against Israel.

2Samuel 1:4e

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced mooth] | <i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |

Translation: ...and they have died. This verb is applied to the people of Israel, the citizen-soldiers, who fought under Saul (or, in this case, retreated while under Saul's command). Saul apparently was fairly well-hidden at this time, but, as you may recalled, had been struck by any arrow (1Sam. 31:3). This does not mean that Saul could be seen. He could have been in heavy cover and hit with an arrow while in this heavy cover. Apparently, the Philistines knew approximately where he was.

2Samuel 1:4f

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>] | <i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i> | adverb | Strong's #1571 BDB #168 |
| Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean <i>together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore</i> . | | | |
| Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |
| mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>] | <i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |

Translation: *Also, Saul and his son Jonathan have died.*” This is an interesting statement. Saul was in this war with 3 of his sons, all of whom died in this battle (1Sam. 31:2). I don't think that this man mentioned Saul and all 3 sons by name, but I think he knew enough about David to know that Saul's and Jonathan's deaths would be those which would be most affecting.

I have suggested that there are problems with this Amalekite and his story, and this is one of them: he tells David that both Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle. Now, his story is, he is some lone soul who just happened to be on Mount Gilboa when this battle broke out. From whatever vantage point he had, he observed the death of Saul, and Saul could see him and speaks to him. How can this man *also* observe Jonathan's death? If Jonathan died near his father, why is that not included in the narrative of 1Sam. 31? Why doesn't this Amalekite tell David something about Jonathan's death, since he observed it? My point is, if this Amalekite is a mercenary for the Philistines, then he would have been in a position to observe several deaths—probably hundreds; and his location during the battle would not have been so specific as to be standing near Saul the whole time.

Now, Matthew Henry suggests that David has heard more information from other sources about this war; however, given his very general line of questioning, and given the final disposition of this matter, I believe that this Amalekite is the first one to deliver this news to David. Not only does he observe that Saul is killed, but he apparently doubles back and takes personal possessions of Saul to show to David. The Philistines were more disciplined than that. They continued to fight unto the next day; then they went back for the bodies of Saul and his sons (1Sam. 31:8). This Amalekite would have had to get to Saul's body before the Philistines did; and then he would need to get to David as quickly as possible with the news. Therefore, I believe him to be the first to report to David news of this battle. Recall that a time frame had been given at the beginning of this chapter. David and his men had been camped for 2 days and this was the beginning of the 3rd. Recall that, simultaneous with David and his men fighting the Amalekites, the Philistines had charged the Israelites. These are simultaneous events.

Therefore, David has been in camp for 1–2 days about the same time the Philistines go back to Saul’s body to desecrate it.

David did, on a later date, receive a more accurate accounting of Saul’s death, which information we find recorded in 1Sam. 31. It is possible that even this Amalekite, when he finds out that he is to be executed, tells David the real story (however, this is not recorded in Scripture).

Bear in mind that someone had to know what happened when Saul was killed, and that there would not be a lot of people who observed this. This young Amalekite probably did observe Saul’s death, even though he gives an incorrect accounting of it. It would be unlikely that any other survivors would have seen this, apart from the Philistine aggressors. Although Saul could have kept Abner nearby until his death, I don’t think that is what happened.

And so says David unto the young man the one making known to him, “How do you know that are dead Saul and Jonathan his son?”

2Samuel
1:5

So David said to the young man who made [this] known to him, “How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?”

David then asked him, “How do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | And so says David unto the young man the one making known to him, “How do you know that are dead Saul and Jonathan his son?” |
| Septuagint | And David said to the young man who brought him the tidings, How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead? |

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| CEV | David asked, "How do you know Saul and Jonathan are dead?." |
| <i>The Message</i> | David pressed the young soldier for details: "How do you know for sure that Saul and Jonathan are dead?" |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>God’s Word™</i> | "How do you know Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" David asked the young man who had brought him the news. |
|--------------------|---|

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| ESV | Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" |
| Young’s Updated LT | And David says unto the youth who is declaring it to him, “How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?” |

The gist of this verse?

David then asks, “How do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead?” Does this Amalekite actually know how to recognize them? Why did he stick around in the battle?

2Samuel 1:5a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | beloved and is transliterated David | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| ʾel (אל) [pronounced el] | unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| naʿar (נער) [pronounced NAH-ghar] | boy, youth, young man, personal attendant | masculine singular noun with a definite article | Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654 |
| nâgad (נגד) [pronounced naw-GAHD] | to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that | Hiphil participle with the definite article | Strong's #5046 BDB #616 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced le] | to, for, towards, in regards to | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |

Translation: So David said to the young man who made [this] known to him,... David asks for more information here. This is a life-changing event for David and a very significant event in the history of Israel; so David needs to put together more information.

2Samuel 1:5b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| ʾêyk (אֵיךָ) [pronounced ayeche] | how | interrogative adverb | Strong's #349 BDB #32 |
| yâdaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHG] | to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #3045 BDB #393 |

We would translate this as a present tense, even though it is a Qal perfect. In the Hebrew, this young man has already come to this know this. This young man is not in the process of coming to this conclusion. So, in the Hebrew, this properly reads, "How did you know that..." In the English, it simply sounds better to say, "How do you know that..."

2Samuel 1:5b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>] | <i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |

Translation:...“How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?” David solicits more information by asking, “How do you know that they are both dead?” The fact that David asks this question indicates to me that they discussed Saul and Jonathan only (Saul’s other two sons are not mentioned). This question also indicates to me that David is seeking information; that he has not been given this information from some other source. That is, I don’t think that David is asking questions of this young man in order to trip him up. At least one commentator thought that many people brought information to David, and that this guy is just one out of those many. I don’t see it that way. I see him as being David’s first source of information about Saul and Jonathan’s deaths. I believe that all we read in this narrative is consistent with this understanding.

At this point, David is going to lean back in his chair and just listen. He is going to let this young Amalekite give the complete story, which he will do in the next 4 verses.

And so says the young man the one making know to him, “To meet by chance I met in a mountain of Gilboa and behold, Saul was leaning upon his spear; and behold, the chariots and the lords of the horses were caused to adhere [to] him.

2Samuel
1:6

So the young man—the one making [this] known to him—said, “[It was] by chance I happened [to be] on Mount Gilboa, and I saw [lit., and behold], Saul leaning upon his spear and [lit., and behold] the chariots and horsemen were coming upon him.

The young man then said, “I just happened to be on Mount Gilboa by chance this day, and I saw Saul leaning upon his spear with chariots and horsemen coming upon him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says the young man the one making know to him, “To meet by chance I met in a mountain of Gilboa and behold, Saul was leaning upon his spear; and behold, the chariots and the lords of the horses were caused to adhere [to] him.

Septuagint And the young man that brought the tidings, said to him, "I happened accidentally to be upon mount Gelbue; and, behold, Saul was leaning upon his spear, and, behold, the chariots and captains of horse pressed hard upon him.

Significant differences: The final couple verbs are somewhat different; but this may have been the best guess of the Greek translators.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV The young man replied: I was on Mount Gilboa and saw King Saul leaning on his spear. The enemy's war chariots and cavalry were closing in on him.

The Message "I just happened by Mount Gilboa and came on Saul, badly wounded and leaning on his spear, with enemy chariots and horsemen bearing down hard on him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ The young man answered, "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa. Saul was there leaning on his spear, and the chariots and horsemen were catching up with him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him.

Young's Updated LT And the youth who is declaring it to him says, "I happened to meet in mount Gilboa, and lo, Saul is leaning on his spear; and lo, the chariots and those possessing horses have followed him;...

The gist of this verse? The young man tells David that he just happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and he observes Saul leaning on his sword while the Philistines follow after him.

2Samuel 1:6a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|------------------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| naʿar (נער) [pronounced <i>NAH-ġahr</i>] | <i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654 |
| nâgad (נגד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i>] | <i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i> | masculine singular, Hiphil participle with the definite article | Strong's #5046 BDB #616 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |

Translation: *So the young man—the one making [this] known to him—said,...* David is trying to elicit enough information from this young man to make certain that what he tells him is credible. Also, as mentioned, the information will impact Israel and David greatly. So this young man continues.

| 2Samuel 1:6b | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| qârâh (קָרָה) [pronounced kaw- <i>RAWH</i>] | <i>to meet, to be made to meet; to be by chance, to happen</i> | Niphal infinitive absolute | Strong's #7136 BDB #899 |
| qârâh (קָרָה) [pronounced kaw- <i>RAWH</i>] | <i>to meet, to be made to meet; to be by chance, to happen</i> | 1 st person singular, Niphal perfect | Strong's #7136 BDB #899 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| har (הַר) [pronounced har] | <i>hill; mountain, mount; hill-country</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #2042 (and #2022) BDB #249 |
| Gil ^e bbô ^r a (גִּלְבּוֹא) [pronounced gil- <i>BÖH-ahó</i>] | transliterated <i>Gilboa</i> | proper noun; location | Strong's #1533 BDB #162 |

Translation: *"[It was] by chance I happened [to be] on Mount Gilboa,...* Although the verb is doubled, intensifying its meaning, it's exact meaning is difficult to determine here, unless you understand this man's motivation. The verb is often used for actually meeting someone—coming face to face with them; however, Saul is not named yet in this phrase. So, the idea is, this young man came to find himself on Mount Gilboa. It just happened. That is, he was just out walking one day, and he's out by Mount Gilboa, and all of a sudden, he finds himself in the middle of a war. There is little explanation given here as to why this man—an Amalekite, as we will see later—found himself to be on Mount Gilboa during a battle between the Jews and the Philistines. We actually have no idea how he happens to find himself here. It is by chance that he happens to be there. Here is the idea he is selling: "I wasn't there as a soldier for the Israelites or the Philistines. I just happened to be here."

This man has left out a lot of details in this regard. He doesn't tell us why he is there, miles and miles away from the souther Amalekite population. He never tells us what business he is on. He doesn't tell us if he was extremely well-hidden, for whatever reason, and observed what occurred here. What is clear is, he probably did witness what occurred. At the very least, he did come through this area just at the right moment, after the battle had moved from where Saul was, so that Saul's body was lying there, but the Philistines had continued to pursue the Israelites. Do you see the problems here? Do you see what a wild coincidence that this Amalekite just happens to be here? There is no reason to assume that this young man is telling the complete truth here—but, he is certainly offering a half-truth. It is my opinion that this young man was a mercenary for the Philistine army.

This is not the general area where Amalekites live and roam. To be caught up in the middle of a war seems like the last place anyone would want to be. Furthermore, this war did not start suddenly. The armies moved into place first. And, if this man observes Saul's death (he will claim to have caused it), then he is right at the hottest part of the battle. Why would anyone stay that close?

In any case, Mount Gilboa is where Saul and his army retreated to. Their backs were to this mountain, possibly with the idea that retreat would be possible. Even if that were the reasoning, there were simply too many Philistines to hide from.

2Samuel 1:6c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|--|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>] | <i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i> | interjection, demonstrative particle | Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| shâ'an (שָׂאן) [pronounced <i>shaw-AHN</i>] | <i>to lean [rest] upon [against], to support oneself against; it can be used figuratively for faith or confidence in someone</i> | Niphal participle | Strong's #8172 BDB #1043 |
| This verb is generally found with a preposition of some sort. | | | |
| al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| chănîyth (חַנִּיִּת) [pronounced <i>k huh-NEETH</i>] | <i>spear</i> | feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #2595 BDB #333 |

Translation: ...and I saw [lit., and behold], [Saul leaning upon his spear...](#) Now, this partially accurate. According to what we read in 1Sam. 31, which seems to be a fairly straightforward narrative of the events which transpired, Saul first asked his sword-bearer to kill him and then he leaned on his own sword and died. Always, when presenting a lie, it needs to be mixed with as much truth as possible in order to sell it. Saul, at first, leans on his sword, and then falls upon it to kill himself. However, that part of the story the Amalekite changes. He says nothing about Saul trying to kill himself, and that he was leaning upon his spear, not his sword.

Remember, this man has had some time, a day or so, to get his story straight as he goes to find David. Saul is clearly wounded by the Philistines, so he cannot change that part of the story. However, it is going to seem like a bit much for Saul to be severely wounded, then he falls on his sword, and then, that doesn't kill him, so he calls out to this Amalekite who just happens to be nearby, to kill him again. That seems like just too many wounds, so the Amalekite decides to modify this story so that Saul only leans on his spear, but does not try to commit suicide. David would not buy that it took 3 sets of wounds to take Saul out, including a self-inflicted wound by a seasoned soldier who knew how to kill. So, instead of Saul killing himself, this Amalekite will claim to do that.

2Samuel 1:6d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|------------------------|---------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |

2Samuel 1:6d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|--|
| hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>] | <i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i> | interjection, demonstrative particle | Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243 |
| mer ^e kâbâh (מִרְכָּבָה) [pronounced <i>mer^e-kaw^b-VAW</i>] | <i>chariot, war chariot</i> | feminine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #4818 BDB #939 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ba ^ʿ al (בַּעַל) [pronounced <i>BAH-gah</i>] | <i>owner, lord, husband; transliterated Baal when referencing the heathen god</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #1167 BDB #127 |
| pârâsh (פָּרָשׁ) [pronounced <i>paw-RASH</i>] | <i>horse, steed; horseman</i> | masculine plural noun with the definite article | Strong's #6571 BDB #832 |
| dâbaq (דָּבַק) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHK</i>] | <i>to cause to adhere, to make to cleave; to follow hard; to come upon, to reach, to be caused to reach</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1692 BDB #179 |

Translation:... “[It ...and [lit., and behold] the chariots and horsemen were coming upon him. The Philistine soldiers were closing in on Saul. They had chariots, something which Saul and his men did not have, which made it easy for them to overtake the Israeli army. The Philistine soldiers apparently pinpointed where Saul was (it is not clear whether they knew this was Saul or not) and pelted that area with arrows, one of which wounded Saul severely.

Now, I want you to picture this. Saul is not going anywhere. We know that he is conversing with his armorbearer asking him to kill him. The Philistines have wounded him and are coming up fast on him. We are talking, at the most, a minute. If Saul is not moving, and the Philistines spot him and come after him, not much time can transpire. And, somehow, this Amalekite is hanging around somewhere observing this. In fact, as we will see, Saul even strikes up a brief conversation with him. He just happens to find himself far north of where the Amalekites usually are; and he just happens to find himself not on the periphery of the battle, but almost dead smack in the middle of the most intense part of the battle, as this is Saul, and the Philistines want to kill him more than anyone else. Do you see, this story just makes little sense?

And he turns around behind him and so he sees me and so he calls unto me, and so I say, ‘Behold me.’ 2Samuel 1:7 **So he turned around and saw me and he called to me, and I answered [lit., said] ‘Here I am.’**

So, when he turned around, he saw me and called to me. I answered, ‘Here I am.’

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And he turns around behind him and so he sees me and so he calls unto me, and so I say, ‘Behold me.’

Septuagint And he looked behind him, and saw me, and called me; and I said, Behold, me.

Significant differences: Even though the first verb is different, this is probably a loose translation from the Hebrew into the Greek. As usual, there is no real change in the overall meaning.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV When he turned around and saw me, he called me over. I went and asked what he wanted.

The Message He looked behind him, saw me, and called me to him. 'Yes sir,' I said, 'at your service.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ When he looked back and saw me, he called to me, and I said, 'Yes?'

HCSB When he turned around and saw me, he called out to me, so I answered: 'I'm at your service.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

MKJV And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, Here *am* I.

Young's Updated LT ...and he turns behind him, and sees me, and calls unto me, and I say, 'Here am I.'

The gist of this verse? The young man is still giving David his view of the events. Saul looks around and he sees the young man and he calls out to him. The young man answers, "Here I *am*."

2Samuel 1:7a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| pânâh (פָּנָה) [pronounced <i>paw-NAWH</i>] | <i>to turn, to turn away from, to turn toward, to turn one's face away from, to turn one's face to</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #6437 BDB #815 |
| ʾachărêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>] | <i>hinder parts; behind, after; following; after that, afterwards</i> | preposition; plural form with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #310 BDB #29 |

Translation: So he turned around... Or, more literally, *he turned toward behind himself*. For some reason, in all of the panic of war and his impending death, Saul decides to look behind himself. Bear in mind, this is the account of this young Amalekite, who may or may not be telling the entire truth. Now, even though this might be unusual for a king to do, facing certain death within minutes; this does not mean that Saul did not do this. This is not an impossible situation that Saul is leaning on his spear, wounded (not mentioned by this young man), that he looks behind himself. It is possible that he thought, for an instant, maybe there is somewhere to hide. Obviously, this is speculation. Furthermore, this is speculation which assumes the young man is telling the truth, and we already know of one clear discrepancy: in the narratives of 1Sam. 31 and 1Chron. 12, Saul falls on his sword; and, in this young man's account, Saul leans on his spear, as if it is holding him up.

2Samuel 1:7b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| râ`âh (ראה) [pronounced raw-AWH] | <i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #7200 BDB #906 |

Translation: ...and saw me... Now, when Saul turns around, in the midst of this battle, he sees this Amalekite. Now, this is a bit suspicious. Saul and his armorbearer cannot find a safe place to hide; Saul has been hit with an arrow; and yet, there is an Amalekite there, not struck by the arrows; and someone who would be able to escape. This is not an impossibility; but it is highly unlikely. It is unusual for the Amalekite to be standing right there; it is unusual for the Amalekite to manage to walk away from this battle unhurt; and it is unusual for Saul to turn around and see him.

Have you ever seen the movie where this guy and this girl are in love, but they are estranged, and then, they just happen to run into each other on the streets of New York City. The movie plot just won't move along unless they just happen to be on the same street at the same time, walking toward one another; so, we often accept these things in the movies. However, this man just happens to find himself in the middle of a war, not on either side, and here he is, just standing right next to the king of Israel just before he dies, and before the Philistines come upon him. He just happens to be here. If we like the movie, sure, we are going to let these two people meet by accident in the middle of a city of 10 million, because we want them to. However, I just don't really like this Amalekite and I'm not buying into the idea that he just happens to be on Mount Gilboa, standing next to Saul, seconds after Saul is mortally wounded by Philistines, who are advancing toward him on horseback and by chariot. I'll believe it in a movie, but not in real life.

2Samuel 1:7c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| qârâ' (קרא) [pronounced kaw-RAW] | <i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #7121 BDB #894 |
| `el (ל) [pronounced e/] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |

Translation: ...and he called to me,... When Saul sees this young man (according to the young man), he calls out to him. Interestingly enough, arrogant Saul uses a preposition which often implies deference. The king of Israel calls *unto* this Amalekite, showing him great respect and deference.

| 2Samuel 1:7d | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>] | <i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i> | interjection, demonstrative particle; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243 |

Translation: ...and I answered [lit., *said*] 'Here I am.' the young man answers Saul and says, "I am right here." What better time to chat things up than right in the midst of the battle, with the mortally wounded king, and the enemy fast approaching. Of course, it is time to strike up a conversation with someone who just happens to be walking by.

And so he says to me, 'Who [are] you?' 2Samuel 1:8 **So he asked me [lit., and so he says to me], 'Who [are] you?'**

And so I say unto him, 'An Amalekite [am] I.' **I answered [lit., and so I said unto him], 'I [am] an Amalekite.'**

So he asked me, 'Who are you?'

and I answered, 'An Amalekite, sir.'

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text **And so he says to me, 'Who [are] you?'**

Septuagint **And he said to me, 'Who are you?' and I said, 'I am an Amalekite.'**

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV **Saul asked me, "Who are you?" "An Amalekite," I answered.**
The Message **He asked me who I was, and I told him, 'I'm an Amalekite.'**

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM **"He asked me, 'Who are you?' "I said to him, 'I'm an Amalekite.'**

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

MKJV **And he said to me, Who *are* you? And I answered him, I *am* an Amalekite.**
 Young's Updated LT **And he says to me, 'Who are you?' And I say unto him, 'An Amalekite I am .'**

The gist of this verse? Saul asks the young man “Who are you” and the young man admits to being an Amalekite.

2Samuel 1:8a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| mîy (מי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>] | <i>who, whom; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i> | pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied | Strong's #4310 BDB #566 |
| ʾattâh (אתה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i>] | <i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied) | 2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun | Strong's #859 BDB #61 |

Translation: *So he asked me* [lit., *and so he says to me*], ‘*Who [are] you?*’ According to this young man’s story, Saul looks and sees this man, and recognizes that he is a foreigner. When he asks “Who are you?” Saul is not looking for the man’s name, but, essentially asking, “Are you friend or foe?” Again, this is from the standpoint of the Amalekite standing before David. Although part of what he tells David is true, it will become obvious that part of what he tells David is a lie as well.

2Samuel 1:8b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʾel (אל) [pronounced <i>el</i>] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| For some reason, Owen lists two prepositions here, but there is only one. It is a typo. | | | |
| ʿAmâlêq (עמלק) [pronounced <i>ʿah-maw-LAYK</i>] | transliterated <i>Amalek</i> | masculine proper noun; used as an gentilic adjective here | Strong's #6002 BDB #766 |

2Samuel 1:8b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|
| ʾānōkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>] | <i>I, me;</i> (sometimes a verb is implied) | 1 st person singular personal pronoun | Strong's #595 BDB #59 |

Read *I*; written *he*. However, in 3 early printed editions, and in the Aramaic, Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate, this is both written and read *I*.¹⁰

Translation: *I answered* [lit., *and so I said unto him*], '*I [am] an Amalekite.*' The Amalekite understands the nature of Saul's question and answers that he is an Amalekite.

Now, it is fair to ask at this point, *does this question which Saul asks really mean, "Are you my enemy?"* This may or may not be the case. However, this in and of itself is not necessarily a lie. The young man can simply be putting this in the Hebrew language the best that he can. We do not have difficult Hebrew in this narrative of the young man. Therefore, we cannot point to this particular question and say, "This can't be right; this is not what Saul was asking; it does not mean this in the Hebrew." Bear in mind, you are hearing an Amalekite speak in Hebrew, so the Hebrew is going to be overly-simplified. I know a smattering of Spanish. I once held a short conversation with a Mexican in Acapulco and we pretty much covered everything from chapter 1 of my Freshman high school book. After that, I was at a loss, and he knew it. I spoke to one person on the internet in Spanish, and, since I had time to think and to type, I did slightly better. However, everything that I said sounded, to one who speaks Spanish, like I was a moron. So, when speaking another language that he does not know from birth, we can grant certain allowances to this Amalekite. Of course, rather than try to explain this as though it really happened, bear in mind, this is mostly a fabricated story.

I hope you see the irony here: Saul was supposed to wipe out the Amalekites, and here is one, right at the end of his life. I do believe the Amalekite to be there, but that he is among the Philistines advancing against Saul.

And so he says unto me, 'Take a stand please upon me; kill me, for the anguish has seized me; for all yet my soul in me.'

2Samuel
1:9

Then he said, 'Stand over me, please [and] kill me, for horrible pain [lit., *anguish*] has taken a hold of me; [and] because my soul [is] yet whole within me.'

Then he said, 'Kill me, because I am in great pain, yet death eludes me.'

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so he says unto me, 'Take a stand please upon me; kill me, for the anguish
Septuagint

And he said to me, Stand, I pray you, over me, and slay me, for a dreadful darkness has come upon me, for all my life [is] in me.

Significant differences: The noun which is different is found only here in the Hebrew; therefore, we would expect the Greeks (and ourselves) to have some difficulty translating it.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

¹⁰ Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 322.

CEV Then he said, "Kill me! I'm dying, and I'm in terrible pain."
 The Message "Come here," he said, "and put me out of my misery. I'm nearly dead already, but my life hangs on."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ "He said to me, 'Please stand over me and kill me. I'm alive, but I'm suffering.'
 HCSB Then he begged me, 'Stand over me and kill me, for I'm mortally wounded, but my life still lingers.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

WEB He said to me, Stand, I pray you, beside me, and kill me; for anguish has taken hold of me, because my life is yet whole in me.
 Young's Updated LT "And he says unto me, Stand, I pray you, over me, and put me to death, for seized me has the arrow, for all my soul is still in me.

The gist of this verse? This is still the account of the young Amalekite, and we are continuing in his supposed conversation with Saul. Saul tells him to stand over him and kill him because he is in great pain and agony.

2Samuel 1:9a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾâmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʾel (אל) [pronounced el] | unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| ʾâmad (עמד) [pronounced ʻaw-MAHD] | to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative | Strong's #5975 BDB #763 |
| nâʾ (נא) [pronounced naw] | now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you | particle of entreaty | Strong's #4994 BDB #609 |
| ʾal (אל) [pronounced ʻahl] | upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to | preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |

Translation: Then he said, 'Stand over me, please... Saul asks the young man to come to him and stand over him. The verb is used often for a person who takes a decisive stand (or is urged to take a decisive stand). Again, all of this is occurring according to the story of the young Amalekite.

2Samuel 1:9b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| mûwth (מת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>] | <i>to kill, to cause to die, to execute</i> | 2 nd person masculine singular, Polel imperative; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |

Translation:...[and] kill me,... In the Hebrew, it is common to string together two imperatives without a conjunction; whereas, we tend to string imperatives together with conjunctions. The request of Saul is for this young man to kill him.

This story is probably mostly a fabrication and that this Amalekite is looking to capitalize on the situation. He does not want to take any chances. He cannot say, "I saw Saul there, so I went up and killed him." He does not know exactly how David is going to respond to that. However, it sounds better if Saul personally requested that he be killed. This is a service to Saul and a service to David. This young man, if he is fabricating this story, has thought it out well. He just happened to be there and Saul just happened to ask his help in killing him. In his own mind, he cannot be faulted for what he did. He expects that David is going to reward him for this.

2Samuel 1:9c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| ʾâchaz (אחז) [pronounced <i>aw-KHAHZ</i>] | <i>to grasp, to take hold of, to seize; to take [by hunting, fishing]; to hold [something taken]; to take possession of</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #270 BDB #28 |
| shâbâts (שבט) [pronounced <i>shaw-BAWTS</i>] | <i>pain, agony; vertigo, giddiness, confusion of the senses; breastplate, coat of mail</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #7661 BDB #990#7661 |

This noun is found only here; the only cognate verb has to do with weaving. Therefore, we can only guess at its meaning from the context.

Some render the words, "my embroidered coat," or "breastplate," or "coat of mail," holds me or hinders me from being pierced through with the sword or spear.¹¹ This would be in line with the cognates for this noun; however, now the verb does not really seem to fit.

Translation: ...for horrible pain [or, *anguish*] **has taken a hold of me;**... Even Owen has a question mark here. The general consensus of most translators is, Saul claims to be seized by great overwhelming pain. However,

¹¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:9. Gill quotes some really old guys: "tunica scutulata", Braunius; "ocellata chlamys", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "thorax villosus seu pelliceus", Texelii Phoenix, p. 210. Also, Vid. Braunium de Vest. Sacredot. Heb. I. 1. c. 17. sect. 9.

this is a word whose meaning is taken principally from the context rather than from its usage elsewhere or its cognates.

| 2Samuel 1:9d | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]; also kol (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kol</i>] | <i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i> | masculine singular noun without the definite article | Strong's #3605 BDB #481 |
| ʿôwd (עוֹד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i>] | <i>still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet</i> | adverb | Strong's #5750 BDB #728 |
| nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i>] | <i>soul, life, living being, desire</i> | feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #5315 BDB #659 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #88 |

Translation: ...[and] because my soul [is] yet whole within me.' Saul knows that he is going to die. That is a given at this point. Samuel had told him this the night before (1Sam. 28). So he simply asks this young man to kill him. He is in great pain and his soul still clings to life.

Again, you will notice that the vocabulary does not convey this exactly. It is close, but it does not seem to say this precisely. Again, this is an Amalekite speaking Hebrew; therefore, we cannot fault him for his weak language skills. He speaks better Hebrew than I do Spanish.

Also, as we study this, bear in mind that the Amalekite has most certainly fabricated portions of this story. Most people realize that David will become king of Israel. What better way to ingratiate yourself to the man at the top than to say that you have killed his rival—and killed his rival at his rival's request. The plan seems foolproof to the young Amalekite.

And so I stand upon him and so I killed him for I knew that he would not live after his falling. And so I take [the] crown [?] which [was] upon his head and [the] armllet [?] which [was] upon his arm and so I bring them unto my lord here."

2Samuel 1:10

So I stood over him and I killed him, because I knew that he would not live after he fell. Then I took the crown which was on his head and the armllet from around [lit., which was upon] his arm and I bought them here to my lord."

Then I stood over him and killed him, for I knew that he could not survive his wounding. Then I took the crown from his head and his royal armllet and brought them here to my lord."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | And so I stand upon him and so I killed him for I knew that he would not live after his falling. And so I take [the] crown [?] which [was] upon his head and [the] armlet [?] which [was] upon his arm and so I bring them unto my lord here." |
| Septuagint | So I stood over him and slew him, because I knew he will not live after he was fallen; and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was upon his arm, and I have brought them hither to my lord. |

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| CEV | So I killed him. I knew he was too badly wounded to live much longer. Then I took his crown and his arm-band, and I brought them to you, Your Majesty. Here they are. |
| <i>The Message</i> | "So I did what he asked--I killed him. I knew he wouldn't last much longer anyway. I removed his royal headband and bracelet, and have brought them to my master. Here they are." |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>God's Word™</i> | "So I stood over him and killed him, since I knew he couldn't survive after he had been wounded. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm and brought them here to you, sir." |
| HCSB | So I stood over him and killed him because I knew that after he had fallen he couldn't survive. I took the crown that was on his head and the armband that was on his arm, and I've brought them here to my lord." |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| ESV | So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord." |
| Young's Updated LT | And I stand over him, and put him to death, for I knew that he doth not live after his falling, and I take the crown which is on his head, and the bracelet which is on his arm, and bring them in unto my lord hither.' |

The gist of this verse? This Amalekite continues telling David his story. He killed Saul not only at his request, but also because he could not continue to live. He also brought Saul's crown and bracelet to David.

2Samuel 1:10a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wāw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʿāmad (אָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i>] | <i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #5975 BDB #763 |

2Samuel 1:10a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| mûwth (מִוּת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>] | <i>to kill, to cause to die, to execute</i> | 1 st person singular, Polel imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |

Translation: *So I stood over him and I killed him,...* Although the preposition could mean *beside*, it probably means that this Amalekite stood over Saul. Again, recall this is an Amalekite speaking Hebrew, so we cannot even pin down his story for complete and total accuracy simply because of the language barrier. He stood over Saul and killed him—but, recall, Saul asked him to do this (according to the Amalekite). Not only did Saul ask him to do this, but Saul used these exact words (according to the Amalekite).

You may recall our difficulties with one word in the Hebrew in the previous verse. If this Amalekite did have to pierce Saul's coat of mail (as per his story), then standing over Saul would have been the proper position for him in inflict a death blow.

2Samuel 1:10b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| yâdaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>] | <i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #3045 BDB #393 |
| lôʿ (לֹא or לֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i>] | <i>not, no</i> | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i>] | <i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310 |

2Samuel 1:10b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| ʿachârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY] | <i>hinder parts; behind, after; following; after that, afterwards</i> | preposition; plural form | Strong's #310 BDB #29 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |

Translation: ...because I knew that he would not live after he fell. The Amalekite quickly adds, “But I knew for certain that there is no way that he would live after falling.” The Amalekite is quick to qualify what he has done. He wants to be careful here. He just killed the king of Israel (according to his own story), but there are two mitigating factors: (1) Saul asked him to do it and (2) there is no way that Saul would live after falling. By the way, the *falling* which he speaks about is, Saul is propping himself up on his spear (according to the Amalekite).

We have 3 things which tell us that this Amalekite was standing over Saul while Saul is on the ground: (1) we have the use of the preposition ʿal, which generally means *over*; (2) we have Saul suffering from a mortal wound (which means that it is unlikely that Saul is actually standing up, even though the Amalekite says he is propped up on his spear); (3) and we have a verb applied to Saul which means *to fall, to lie, to die, to be brought down*. Now, one of these reasons alone does not tell us that Saul was on the ground and that this young Amalekite man stood over him. However, all of them taken together, even with the language barrier, would indicate that we can pretty well bet that this is the story which the Amalekite wants to convey. Now, there is a problem: back in v. 6, Saul is leaning upon his spear. This would indicate that he is, more or less, standing. Now, he may have fallen before the Amalekite got to him (which fact the Amalekite leaves out); but then, why didn't Saul fall upon his spear and die? This causes us more doubt as to the veracity of this man's story.

2Samuel 1:10c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH] | <i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #3947 BDB #542 |
| nêzer (נֵזֶר) [pronounced NAY-zer] | <i>crown; dedication, consecration; Nazariteship</i> | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #5145 BDB #634 |
| ʿâsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] | <i>that, which, when, who, whom</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| rôʿsh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced rohsh] | <i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #7218 BDB #910 |

Translation: [Then I took the crown which was on his head...](#) He has just killed Saul. Apparently, this Amalekite looks at the dead king and decides that David needs to know about this and that he needs to bring some proof of Saul's death.

Now, also bear in mind that we have a very different account of Saul's death in 1Sam. 31—Saul does ask his armor-bearer to kill him, but his armor-bearer refuses to do so, so Saul falls upon his own sword—he commits suicide. Now, for this Amalekite to come so close to giving David the same account as we find in 1Sam. 31 and for him to have Saul's crown and armband, we know that this young man really did observe Saul's death and he really did go to Saul's body and remove these things. This is the only proof that the young man submits to David, which is pretty much all he could submit, even if his story is true.

Now, you may wonder, *how did the Philistines later identify Saul's body?* Recall, in the ancient world, Saul's picture had not been posted on the internet and downloaded by his enemies. In fact, the internet was barely in its infancy at that time and probably very few of Saul's enemies had wireless access. However, Saul had armor, which his soldiers would not have. He had an iron sword, which his men did not have. He had a spear with an iron tip, which his soldiers did not have. And, Saul had an armor bearer who died beside him. Therefore, these things would have indicated to the soldiers who went back to check the Israelites bodies that this was Saul.

| 2Samuel 1:10d | | | |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʿets ^e ʾādâh (אֶצִּיט אֲדָה) [pronounced ehts'-gaw-DAW] | <i>leg chain [iron]; armlet, bracelet</i> | feminine singular noun | Strong's #685 BDB #858 |
| Context usually makes it quite clear whether this is an <i>armlet</i> , <i>anklet</i> or <i>leg chain</i> . | | | |
| ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] | <i>that, which, when, who, whom</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| z ^e rôwâʿ (זְרוּעַ) [pronounced z ^e ROH-ahg] | <i>arm, shoulder and figuratively means strength</i> | feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #2220 BDB #283 |

Translation: [...and the armlet from around \[lit., which was upon\] his arm...](#) Now, it is possible that *armlet* is not the primary meaning of the word used here. Again, this is an Amalekite doing the best that he can with the Hebrew language.

Freeman: *Saul's armlet is supposed to be have a part of the insignia of his royalty. Egyptian monarchs are often represented on the monuments wearing armlets and bracelets. The Persian kings often wore them, and they are still common among Oriental sovereigns, many of them being elaborately wrought and richly ornamented with jewels.*¹²

It is this crown and armlet which would have identified Saul as the King of Israel. Interestingly enough, this is one of the few facts which is in agreement with the accounts given in 1Sam. 31 and 1Chron. 10. The Philistines find

¹² *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 142.

Saul's armor, but nothing is said about his crown or armband (or, about his spear or sword for that matter—1Sam. 31:8–10).

What most men would have taken, under these same circumstances, is Saul's head; there is no better proof than Saul's head that this man is dead (see 2Sam. 4:7–8, for instance). This is not what this Amalekite did, and for probably two reasons: (1) if the Philistines returned and found a headless Saul, they would have gone after the Amalekite; the Philistines want this head for their display case in one of their temples (1Chron. 10:10). (2) Although a head does not weigh that much, it is more difficult to transport than a crown or armband, which can be easily fastened to a quiver, and more easily hidden, if necessary.

| 2Samuel 1:10e | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh] | <i>to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry</i> | 1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |
| 'el (עַל) [pronounced e] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| ba' al (בַּעַל) [pronounced BAH-gah] | <i>owner, lord, husband; transliterated Baal when referencing the heathen god</i> | masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #1167 BDB #127 |
| hênneh (הֵנָּה) [pronounced HAYN-naw] | <i>hither, here</i> | adverb | Strong's #2008 BDB #244 |

Translation: *...and I bought them here to my lord.* Notice how this Amalekite shows great deference to David. He brings these things immediately to David (Saul's body is probably still warm). The indication is, this man would certainly not steal these items, but David would be the man who should most be the recipient of the crown and royal armband of Israel. This tells us that a great deal was known about David and Saul and that God would bring David to the throne (even though David was not publically proclaimed as king, he was the only person in all Israel who could reasonably be considered as the next king, as most of Saul's sons were killed in battle).

McGee comments: *It sounds as though [the young man] expected David to give him a medal for his deed and put him on a life pension.*¹³

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown makes some summary comments on this man's story: *As the narrative of Saul's death, given in the last chapter, is inspired, it must be considered the true account, and the Amalekite's story a fiction of his own, invented to ingratiate himself with David, the presumptive successor to the throne. David's question, "How went the matter?" evinces the deep interest he took in the war, an interest that sprang from feelings of high and generous patriotism, not from views of ambition. The Amalekite, however, judging him to be actuated by a selfish principle, fabricated a story improbable and inconsistent, which he thought would procure him a reward. Having probably*

¹³ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 169.

witnessed the suicidal act of Saul, he thought of turning it to his own account, and suffered the penalty of his grievously mistaken calculation (compare 2Sam. 1:9 with 1Sam. 31:4–5).¹⁴

If you personally buy into the Amalekite's story, then check out Matthew Henry who tries to merge this story with the 1Sam. 31 narrative. However, bear in mind that they simply offer this as one of the two alternatives.

Matthew Henry Believes the Amalekite's Story

Very particular. That he happened to go to the place where Saul was (2Sam. 1:6) as a passenger, not as a soldier, and therefore an indifferent person, that he found Saul endeavoring to run himself through with his own spear, none of his attendants being willing to do it for him; and, it seems, he could not do it dexterously for himself: his hand and heart failed him. The miserable man had not courage enough either to live or die; he therefore called this stranger to him (2Sam. 1:7), enquired what countryman he was, for, provided he was not a Philistine, he would gladly receive from his hand the coup de grace (as the French call it concerning those that are broken on the wheel) – the merciful stroke, that might dispatch him out of his pain. Understanding that he was an Amalekite (neither one of his subjects nor one of his enemies), he begs this favor from him (2Sam. 1:9): Stand upon me, and slay me. He is now sick of his dignity and willing to be trampled upon, sick of his life and willing to be slain. Who then would be inordinately fond of life or honour? The case may be such, even with those that have no hope in their death, that yet they may desire to die, and death flee from them (Rev. 9:6). Anguish has come upon me; so we read it, as a complaint of the pain and terror his spirit was seized with. If his conscience now brought to mind the javelin he had cast at David, his pride, malice, and perfidiousness, and especially the murder of the priests, no marvel that anguish came upon him: moles (they say) open their eyes when they are dying. Sense of unpardoned guilt will make death indeed the king of terrors. Those that have baffled their convictions will perhaps, in their dying moments, be overpowered by them. The margin reads it as a complaint of the inconvenience of his clothes; that his coat of mail which he had for defense, or his embroidered coat which he had for ornament, hindered him, that he could not get the spear far enough into his body, or so straitened him, now that his body swelled with anguish, that he could not expire. Let no man's clothes be his pride, for it may so happen that they may be his burden and snare. "Hereupon," saith our young man, "I stood upon him, and slew him" (2Sam. 1:10) at which word, perhaps, he observed David look upon him with some show of displeasure, and therefore he excuses himself in the next words: "For I was sure he could not live; his life was whole in him indeed, but he would certainly have fallen into the hands of the Philistines or given himself another thrust."

Matthew Henry Does not Believe the Amalekite's Story

It is doubtful whether this story be true. If it be, the righteousness of God is to be observed, that Saul, who spared the Amalekites in contempt of the divine command, received his death's wound from an Amalekite. But most interpreters think that it was false, and that, though he might happen to be present, yet he was not assisting in the death of Saul, but told David so in expectation that he would reward him for it, as having done him a piece of good service. Those who would rejoice at the fall of an enemy are apt to measure others by themselves, and to think that they will do so too. But a man after God's own heart is not to be judged of by common men. I am not clear whether this young man's story was true or no: it may consist with the narrative in the chapter before, and be an addition to it, as Peter's account of the death of Judas (Acts 1:18) is to the narrative (Matt. 27:5). What is there called a sword may here be called a spear, or when he fell upon his sword he leaned on his spear.

These are the two basic positions; obviously, I hang with the second one. J. Vernon McGee¹⁵, by the way, believes that this Amalekite came upon Saul *after* Saul fell on his sword—which still leaves us with some unresolved issues, as we will discuss.

Quoted from Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:1–10.

¹⁴ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 1:2–12.

¹⁵ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 169.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge reads: *The story of this young man appears to be wholly a fiction, formed for the purpose of ingratiating himself with David, as the next probable successor to the crown. There is no fact in the case, except for the bringing of the diadem and bracelets of Saul, as a sufficient evidence of his death, which, as he appears to been a plunderer of the slain, he seems to have stripped from the dead body of the unfortunate monarch. It is remarkable, that Saul, who had forfeited his crown by his disobedience and ill-timed clemency with respect to the Amalekites, should now have the insignia of royalty stripped from his person by one of those very people.*¹⁶

What we should look at now are problems with this Amalekite's story. Why does his story not ring true?

Why Does the Story Told by the Amalekite not Ring True?

1. The young man is wearing torn clothes and dust on his head. This could imply that he was fighting in this war, which he never admits to. It could imply that he is in mourning; but he seems to think that this is good news for David. He could be acting like a messenger bearing bad news—that Israel was defeated in battle. Even though this third possibility makes sense, there is no reason for him to go to David and tell him this. There is no alliance between David and the Amalekites; they are bitter enemies. The only reason this man goes to David is to get something from him.
2. The Amalekite says that he just happens to be on Mount Gilboa. However, this is far north of the usual stomping grounds of the Amalekites. This would make perfect sense if this Amalekite was a part of the Philistine army. He never suggests this or admits to this.
3. This Amalekite just happens to find himself in a position to observe Saul leaning on his spear with the Philistine troops closing in on him. He is not simply observing a war, but he is observing the most intense fighting, standing right next to the king of Israel. How does he happen to be there, but no one sees him? If he could hide, why couldn't Saul hide?
4. What this man observed would have occurred in just a few seconds. Saul was wounded; and the Philistine troops are pursuing him *closely* in chariots and horseback; and Saul is leaning on his sword. Saul knows that he is about to be killed, in a matter of seconds; and yet he chats up this young man. "Who are you?" He and the young man will actually have a short conversation. This is just no time for this to take place. Saul would, if this were true, ask him to kill him immediately. Who cares who the young man is?
5. Saul politely calls out to the young man; he says *unto him*, which is a sign of deference and respect; the king of Israel is showing this young Amalekite respect.
6. According to the Amalekite's story, Saul would have died on his own just by falling over. If Saul wanted to die, why didn't he let go of the spear and just fall over?
7. In the Amalekite's story, he is mostly standing *over* Saul. This is the meaning of the verb and preposition which are used. Saul's request indicates that the Amalekite needs to stand over Saul to kill him. Yet, the Amalekite says he approaches Saul while he is propped up on his spear. And he tells us that in falling, Saul would die. Did Saul fall then? If he fell, why didn't he die? All of the verbiage in this verse indicates that the Amalekite is standing over Saul, which is not in complete agreement with the rest of the Amalekite's story.
8. His story is just too nice at the end; he kills Saul at Saul's request; but Saul was about to die anyway. He has set this up so that, in his mind, he could not be faulted for what he did.

¹⁶ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 1:6.

This is why most commentators just don't buy into this Amalekite's story. What we find in the Open Bible is typical: *A comparison [of this passage] with 1Sam 31:4 would indicate that the young Amalekite fabricated the story (vv. 6–10) to curry favor with David. He probably found Saul dead on the battle field, took his crown and bracelets (v. 10), and brought them to David. His misjudgment of David's character cost him his life.*¹⁷

Of course, there are detractors from Scripture who point to his inconsistencies and claim that the problem is, this is some story that has been passed down and messed up as it was passed down.¹⁸

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

What we should look at now are problems with this Amalekite's story. Why does his story not ring true?

Why We Think This Amalekite is a Mercenary Fighting on the Philistine Side

1. This explains why this man is able to go to David and find him; and realize the political intrigue which is going on. He may be aware of these things already, but, recall, David almost joined up with the Philistines back in 1Sam. 29. That David was going to do this would have been the talk of the troops for several days—before David arrived until after he left. This Amalekite could have gleaned all the information about David and his location that he needed, as this would have been the campfire discussion.
2. This easily explains why this young man *just happens to be on Mount Gilboa* in the middle of a great battle.
3. This explains how he could observe what happened to Saul, and yet not be killed by either Israelites or by Philistines.
4. Recall that this Amalekite told David that both Saul and Jonathan had been killed in this battle. Now, if he is somewhat hidden in a place where he can observe Saul and Saul's death, how does he know about Jonathan? Did Saul and Jonathan die in the same place? If that is so, why don't we know something about Jonathan's death from 1Sam. 31? If this Amalekite is a mercenary, he would have been advancing against Israel and he would have had the opportunity to see several groups of Israelites killed in battle. As some lone soul who just happened to find himself on Mount Gilboa on this day, he would not have been able to observe as much.
5. This explains why this man thinks he can go to David with the news that he has killed David's rival and expect to be rewarded. He is a mercenary; he is a man for hire. He has no loyalties to the Philistines, to the Israelites or to his own people. He goes to the highest bidder.
6. He is not going to reveal to David that he fought against the Israelites, as that could land him in trouble.
7. This explains why this man could double-back from pursuing the Israelites (something the Philistine army would be too disciplined to do) and go back to Saul's body. The Philistines went and checked the bodies the next day, so this Amalekite had to get to Saul's body before the victory was declared. Doing so would be easy; the Amalekite is obviously near Saul, so he pursues some Israelites into the mountains, and suddenly stops and waits there, possibly for darkness, and returns to Saul's body, takes these things, and leaves under the cover of darkness.

Bear in mind that this is all speculation, but it does cause this entire narrative to be easily strung together.

¹⁷ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 406.

¹⁸ Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; p. 156. Robinson takes every opportunity to disparage the inspiration of Scripture.

Keil and Delitzsch suggest that this man happened to come across Saul's dead body after the fighting had moved to the south and the east. A possible scenario would be, this man knew about the war, actually went to where the battle would take place, and then, when the fighting moved, he would go and strip the bodies of their possessions.¹⁹ This is also a reasonable explanation for what the Amalekite was doing there. When he came across Saul, it was as if he had hit the motherload. This ties almost as many things together as does the idea that this Amalekite is a mercenary in the Philistine army. The only unanswered questions are, *how did he know Jonathan was also dead? How did he know that David would be the next king of Israel? How did he know where to find David?* I am not saying that we could not come up with plausible answers to these questions; I am simply saying that this new approach would require a little more speculation.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

And so takes David in his clothes and so he tears them and also all men who [were] with him.

2Samuel
1:11

So David took a hold of his clothing and tore it; and the men who [were] with him [did likewise].

Dave then took a hold of his own clothing and tore it; and the men with him did likewise.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so takes David in his clothes and so he tears them and also all men who [were] with him.

Septuagint

And David laid hold of his garments, and tore them; and all the men who were with him rent their garments.

Significant differences: The verb and direct object are repeated in the Greek; there is no change in the actual meaning of this verse.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Right away, David and his soldiers tore their clothes in sorrow.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

Then David grabbed his own clothes and tore them in grief. All the men with him did the same.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV

Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him.

Young's Updated LT

And David takes hold on his garments, and rends them, and also all the men who are with him,...

The gist of this verse?

After allowing the Amalekite to finish his story, David is terribly upset—very likely because of the death of his close and dear friend, Jonathan—and so he tears his clothing in his great sadness.

¹⁹ This would have been my second explanation for the Amalekite being there and this appears to be the first choice of *the NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 419.

2Samuel 1:11a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| châzaq (חַזַּק) [pronounced <i>khaw-ZAHK</i>] | <i>to take, to strengthen, to repair, to hold fast, to grab</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect | Strong's #2388 BDB #304 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>] | <i>beloved and is transliterated David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| b ^e gâdîym (בְּגָדִים) [pronounced <i>b^e-gaw-DEEM</i>] | <i>garments, clothes, clothing, apparel</i> | masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #899 BDB #93 |

Read *garments*; written *garment*. In 2 early printed editions, the Aramaic, Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate, it is both written and read *garments, clothes*.²⁰

Translation: [So David took a hold of his clothing...](#) Again recall that the Jews of old were very demonstrative, so David grabs a hold of his own clothing. This is a very deliberate gesture indicating great soul grief.

2Samuel 1:11b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| qâra' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAHG</i>] | <i>to bend, to tear apart; to tear out, to tear away; to cut in pieces [with a knife]; to cut out; to tear with words [i.e., to curse]</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #7167 BDB #902 |

Translation: [...and tore it;...](#) David tears his own clothing, as this, in the ancient world, was an indication of his grief. A Lutheran would wear a clean (and possibly musty) dark suit to indicate his personal grief. David's grief, by the way, is genuine. He mourns for the Saul that was; and for Saul the great freedom fighter of Israel. And, of course, David grieves for his near and dear friend, Jonathan.

At this point, the Amalekite is, no doubt, a little confused. He has brought David the one piece of information that tells David that he can now assume a position of power in Israel; but David does not react by jumping up and down for joy. David does not have power lust. He was willing to wait on God.

²⁰ Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 322.

Application: David is called a man after God's own heart. Here is one illustration: David was willing to wait on God. He felt no need to hurry God's plan along. He had several chances to shortcut his promise of the throne. David twice could have killed Saul, but he chose not to. He was willing to wait on God's time. He was willing to go along with God's timing.

Application: Throughout your life, there will be places where you think God should place you, and, quite frankly, it is not time yet. For instance, you might think that you need to be married at 21 or 25 or 29. You have to wait for God's timing. There are also things which are going to happen, and you'll think, "Not yet." This might be a move, a job change, a child being born. You may not feel like you are ready yet, and God tells you, "It's time." I've had some major changes in my life, and many which I thought I'd rather wait before this change comes about; but, God has perfect timing. We have to go along with His timing. And, just so you know, it isn't going to do you a bit of good to drag your feet.

2Samuel 1:11c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| gam (גם) [pronounced gahm] | <i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i> | adverb | Strong's #1571 BDB #168 |
| Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean <i>together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore</i> . | | | |
| kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl] | with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i> | masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun | Strong's #3605 BDB #481 |
| ʾānāsîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced uh-NAW-seem]; also spelled ʾīyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced ee-SHEEM] | <i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #376 BDB #35 |
| ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] | <i>that, which, when, who, whom</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| ʾēth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth] | <i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i> | preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #854 BDB #85 |

Translation: ...and the men who [were] with him [did likewise]. David's men observe him and do the same. No doubt that many of them wanted to jump up and down with joy. Recall that, when David had the opportunity to kill Saul (on two occasions), some of his men encouraged him to do so. Therefore, David's grief is genuine; as would be the grief of some of his men. However, despite tearing their clothing, some of David's men were likely relieved. This meant that they could return to Israel and that they might make up a part of the royal cabinet.

Meanwhile, this Amalekite is observing all of this, wondering to himself, *just what is going on here exactly?* He expected them to be celebrating. Of course, they would be sad that Israel was defeated; but David is a great general and he can save Israel, as their new king. Their reaction is not what this young man expected.

And so they mourn and so they weep and so they fast as far as the evening upon Saul and upon Jonathan his son and upon [the] people of Y^ehowah and upon [the] house of Israel, for they had fallen in the sword.

2Samuel
1:12

Then they mourned and they wept and they fasted until that [lit., *the*] evening because of Saul and his son Jonathan—and because of the people of Y^ehowah and the house of Israel—for they [Saul and Jonathan] had fallen by the sword.

David and his men mourned and wept and fasted until that evening for Saul and his son Jonathan—and for the people of Jehovah and the house of Israel—because Saul and Jonathan had both fallen by the sword.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so they mourn and so they weep and so they fast as far as the evening upon Saul and upon Jonathan his son and upon [the] people of Y^ehowah and upon [the] house of Israel, for they had fallen in the sword.

Septuagint

And they lamented, and wept, and fasted till evening, for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of Judah, and for the house of Israel, because they were struck down with the sword.

Significant differences: The primary difference is, they mourn for *the people of Jehovah* in the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin, and for *the people of Judah* in the Greek. The Greek seems to make sense when one takes parallelism into account (*Judah* is southern Israel; *Israel* is northern Israel). However, the Philistines seemed to strike primarily central and northern Israel. That is, they did not go on a campaign into southern Israel (Judah). Since Judah is relative free of Philistines (David will move into Hebron and rule over Judah), what we find in the Hebrew seems to be even more appropriate. However, in either case, there is no significant difference between the Hebrew and the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

They cried all day long and would not eat anything. Everyone was sad because Saul, his son Jonathan, and many of the LORD's people had been killed in the battle.

The Message

They wept and fasted the rest of the day, grieving the death of Saul and his son Jonathan, and also the army of GOD and the nation Israel, victims in a failed battle.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM

They mourned, cried, and fasted until evening because Saul, his son Jonathan, the LORD'S army, and the nation of Israel had been defeated in battle.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV

And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

Young's Literal Translation

...and they mourn, and weep, and fast till the evening, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of Jehovah, and for the house of Israel, because they have fallen by the sword.

The gist of this verse?

David and his men mourn and weep and do not eat until that evening because of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, and because of the defeat of Israel.

2Samuel 1:12a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| çâphad (פָּחַד) [pronounced saw-FAHD] | <i>to lament, to grieve, to wail, to bewail</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #5594 BDB #704 |

Translation: *Then they mourned...* David's initial reaction was to mourn for Saul, Jonathan, the people of God and the people of Israel; he and the men with him mourned for them all.

2Samuel 1:12b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced baw-KAW] | <i>to weep, to cry, to bewail</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #1058 BDB #113 |

Translation: *...and they wept...* Saul was David's father-in-law; David did calm Saul at one time by playing music for him. There were some points in time when Saul treated David as his own son—in fact, better than his own father at first—and David would have been very young and impressionable at that time. There are many occasions when David thought to go back to Saul and see about repairing their relationship. There has been time and distance between David and Saul. David is not the kind of person to recall only negative memories of Saul, who was, at a time, almost a father-figure to David. So, David's weeping was not forced or disingenuous. We do not know about his men, as many of them hooked up with David after David had been an outcast, and they could relate to that. However, since this verb is a masculine plural, we may rest assured that David's men participated in the mourning and the weeping.

David and his men wept for Jonathan, whose bravery was legend and whose personal integrity could not be questioned. They wept for those who were defeated in battle as well.

2Samuel 1:12c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| tsûwm (צוּם) [pronounced zoom] | <i>to abstain from food, to fast</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #6684 BDB #847 |
| ʿad (עַד) [pronounced gahd] | <i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i> | preposition | Strong's #5704 BDB #723 |
| ʿereb (עֶרֶב) [pronounced ĠEH-re ^b v] | <i>evening, sunset</i> | masculine singular noun in the pausal form; with the definite article | Strong's #6153 BDB #787 |

Translation: ...and they fasted until that [lit., the] evening... One area where Christians tend to get mixed up is, they see what is done in the Bible and they simply try to imitate it. In our culture, sorrow and grief are often accompanied by a great many casseroles. In the culture of Israel, they often fasted. Now, note that this was not a long fast. At most, they fasted for 10 hours. However, it is possible and reasonable to be so overcome by grief so that you have no interest in eating. In part, this would be their reaction (or, at least the reaction of David and maybe a couple of others). However, all of them fasted until that evening.

| 2Samuel 1:12d | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |

Translation: ...because of Saul and his son Jonathan—... For some of them, it is possible that they knew Jonathan as David knew him. David and Jonathan had a very warm and close relationship; it is one of the great friendships found in Scripture. So, bear in mind that some of David's mourning (if not the greater portion of it) would be because he had lost his great friend Jonathan. No doubt, this would be the reason for genuine sorrow on the part of some of David's men who knew Jonathan or knew of him through David.

As I discussed earlier, Saul was, to some extent, a father figure for David. Saul was suffering from a mental illness as well. So David's mourning for Saul was not just a show. Many of us would have been fueled by hatred and revenge at this point, but not David.

Let me also point out that, even though David had chosen to live outside of Israel in land controlled by the Philistines, this was his choice that he made, and he did not make this choice by divine guidance. If you will recall, we went into great detail about how David’s flight out of the country was not God’s first choice for David; and it was not until that David got to a point where he was ready to march against Israel, where he may have begun to experience some moral ambiguity. When he and his soldiers returned to Ziklag, and they camp had been raided, that was a wake up call to David, and it is at that point that David got back into fellowship. I say that so that you may understand, David and Saul parted on good terms in their final meeting. This was 1Sam. 26: David had the opportunity to kill Saul a second time, but he did not. Realizing this, Saul called out to David, “I have sinned...I have played the fool and I have committed serious error.” (1Sam. 26:21b, 21d). Emotionally, at this point in time, Saul was deeply saddened by his own actions and was repentant. That he might have gathered the troops and gone after David a month later is not an issue. You see, I have read several commentators where they wonder aloud, *It is obvious that David would mourn for Jonathan, but why would he mourn for Saul?* All you have to do is read the historical narrative to understand why.

Gill writes *it is no wonder that David and his men should mourn for Jonathan, a good man, and a valiant one, and a dear and faithful friend of David's; but it may seem not so clear a thing that they should, mourn for Saul, a wicked man, and a persecutor of David without cause.*²¹ Therefore, let us explain...

Why David Mourns for Saul

1. David first exposure to Saul was as a musician to help calm Saul and his bouts with his mental illness.
2. David was very young then and there seemed to be some estrangement with his brothers and father. Therefore, at this young age (David was probably around 15), Saul was a father figure to him.
3. David married Saul’s youngest daughter, Michal, and Saul was David’s father-in-law.
4. David’s closest male friend was Jonathan, and Saul was his father. David would have felt a great attachment to Saul, as he was the father of the two most important people in David’s life.
5. At David and Saul’s final meeting, they had reconciled. This did not mean that David trusted Saul, but it did mean that they parted for the final time on good terms. Saul was in emotional turmoil over what he had done to David, and made this know aloud before David and his own soldiers.
6. Despite Saul’s many faults, he defended Israel again and again against her enemies, fighting bravely and almost constantly against the tribes of people who, on all sides, sought to destroy Israel.
7. We read in Prov. 24:17: **Don't gloat when your enemy falls, and don't let your heart rejoice when he stumbles.** Or Matt. 5:44–45a: **But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.** God holds man to the highest of standards, even in the Age of Israel. With regards to Saul, David fulfilled the sentiment in this verse.

My point in all of this is, David’s mourning for Saul was neither disingenuous nor forced; his mourning for Saul was real and spontaneous.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

| 2Samuel 1:12e | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong’s Numbers |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong’s # BDB #251 |

²¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:12. Gill himself does not actually wonder about this, as he gives a brief explanation as to why David truly mourns for Saul.

2Samuel 1:12e

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| ʿal (על) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| ʿam (עם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>] | <i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i> | masculine singular collective noun in the construct form | Strong's #5971 BDB #766 |
| YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>] | transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i> | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

In the Greek, this reads *Judah*; in the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin, it reads *Jehovah* (or, *the Lord*).

Translation: ...and because of the people of Y^ehowah... The loss of Saul and Jonathan was a great loss for Israel. Whenever a nation loses its king, it is a great loss to that nation. God installed Saul over Israel as their king, so His people are suffering a loss. Furthermore, Jonathan, his son, will not become Israel's king, so this is even a greater loss.

2Samuel 1:12f

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʿal (על) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| bayith (בית) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>] | <i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #1004 BDB #108 |
| Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis'-raw-ALE</i>] | transliterated <i>Israel</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3478 BDB #975 |

Translation: ...and the house of Israel—... What we have here is probably a balancing out of the sentence structure. The *house of Israel* is going to be almost equivalent to the *people of Jehovah*; but, since we have the mention of Saul and Jonathan in the same structure, naming these two sets of people, although almost equivalent, adds balance to the structure. However, these sets of people actually overlap; they are not equivalent. The house of Israel would refer to anyone in the nation Israel—or, any racial Jew. However, the *people of Jehovah* refer only to the believers in Israel.

In the Greek, we have *the people of Judah and the house of Israel*, which refers to northern and southern Israel.

Some may differentiate between these two sets of people as *the soldiers of Jehovah and the house of Israel*; so that the first phrase refers to those in the military and the second phrase refers to those who are civilians. The problem with this interpretation is, we do not have the correct words here to make that specific distinction. In order for us to interpret this verse in that way, we would have expected to find *the host [army] of Jehovah* or *the men [soldiers] of Jehovah*. Those are constructs which are typically used to refer to the armed forces and which are not used here. So the real differentiation which God the Holy Spirit is making here is between the believers and unbelievers in Israel. Both were subject to suffering, and David and his men mourned for both sets.

| 2Samuel 1:12g | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i>] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE^{BV}</i>] | <i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i> | feminine singular noun, pausal form; with the definite article | Strong's #2719 BDB #352 |

Translation: ...for they [Saul and Jonathan] had fallen by the sword. This phrase indicates that the use of the preposition found 4 times in the verse is used somewhat differently the first two times as compared to the 3rd and 4th time. The house of Israel and the people of Jehovah have experienced a loss, because they have lost Saul and Jonathan. In this final phrase of this verse, we have why they have experienced this great loss—because Saul and Jonathan died by the sword. Bear in mind, even if Israel had the worst king ever, when that king dies by an enemy sword, it is a bad situation for Israel in general. Furthermore, even with his mental illness, Saul was still a great military leader who fought for the freedom of Israel. David and his men mourned for Israel because their military leaders, Saul and Jonathan, had died by the sword (obviously, not all of Israel died by the sword).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

David Executes the Amalekite Based on his own Testimony

And so says David unto the young man, the one making [this] known to him, “Where from this you?”

2Samuel
1:13

Then David asked [lit., **said to**] the young man, the making [this] known to him, “Where [are] you from?”

And so he says, “A son of a man of an immigrant—an Amalekite I [am].”

And he answered [lit., **said**], “[I am] the son of an immigrant—I [am] an Amalekite.”

Then David asked the young man, “Where are you from?”

And he answered, “I am the son of an immigrant; I am an Amalekite.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says David unto the young man, the one making [this] known to him, “Where from this you?”

Septuagint

And so he says, “A son of a man of an immigrant—an Amalekite I [am].”

And David said to the young man who brought the tidings to him, “Where are you from?” And he said, “I am the son of an Amalekite sojourner.”

Significant differences: There was a slight reordering of the answer of the young man in the Greek. Still, there is no significant difference between the Hebrew and the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

David asked the young man, "Where is your home?" The man replied, "My father is an Amalekite, but we live in Israel."

The Message

Then David spoke to the young soldier who had brought the report: "Who are you, anyway?" "I'm from an immigrant family--an Amalekite."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

HCSB

David inquired of the young man who had brought him the report, "Where are you from?" "I'm the son of a foreigner" he said. "I'm an Amalekite."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Young's Updated LT

And David says unto the youth who is declaring *it* to him, “Whence *are* you?” and he says, “Son of a sojourner, I *am* an Amalekite.”

The gist of this verse?

David asked this young man where he is from, and he tells David that he is an Amalekite.

2Samuel 1:13a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |

2Samuel 1:13a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|---|
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | <i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced e/] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced NĀH-ġahr] | <i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654 |
| nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD] | <i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i> | masculine singular, Hiphil participle with the definite article | Strong's #5046 BDB #616 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced /] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| ʿêy (אֵי) [pronounced āy] | <i>where</i> | adverb; with a suffix, the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied | Strong's #335 BDB #32 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced min] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh] | <i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i> | demonstrative adjective | Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260 |
| ʿattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aĥt-TAW] | <i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied) | 2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun | Strong's #859 BDB #61 |

These four tiny words together apparently mean *where [are] you from?*

Translation: Then David asked [lit., *said to*] the young man, the making [this] known to him, “Where [are] you from?” David has got the general background of what happened with Saul. Now, he needs to determine the background of this man. David is going to make a determination here, part of which will be dependent upon whether this man knew who Saul was and what he was doing by killing Saul. The young man has no idea at this point that David and he have completely different agendas.

It is interesting that David asks this question, as, in the young man’s account of Saul’s death, he tells Saul that he is an Amalekite. David is allowing this young man to confirm his previous testimony, and, in addition, reveal that he should know that Saul is God’s anointed over Israel. In generation after generation, it was made clear to the heathen of that land that Israel belonged to God; therefore, her rulers would be men anointed by God. That God brought the Jews out of Egypt was known throughout the land; that God cursed those who took His sacred objects lightly was known among Jews and heathen alike (1Sam. 5–6). You must also realize that God is fair; the heathen of the land were always offered the opportunity to turn toward Him. This young man claims to have killed God’s anointed, and David here determines that he knew what he was doing.

2Samuel 1:13b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| bên (בן) [pronounced bane] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |
| ʾiysh (ישׁ) [pronounced eesh] | <i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #376 BDB #35 |
| gêr (גר) [pronounced gare] | <i>sojourner, stranger, immigrant [or, outsider], temporary resident</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #1616 BDB #158 |

Translation: *And he answered* [lit., *said*], “[I am] *the son of an immigrant—...* This is actually what condemns this young man—he is not simply an immigrant himself, but he is the son of an immigrant; so, he knows about Israel, he knows about Jehovah God, and he knows that the king has been chosen by God. According to his own testimony, he knows what is going on in Israel. He knows that an assault against the king is an assault against God (presuming that he is the son of an immigrant). Furthermore, look who this Amalekite went to see—David. This man knows enough about Israel to realize that David is God’s choice for the next king; he even is able to figure out where David is living. So, we are not dealing with some man who has no concept as to the customs and laws of Israel; he is even familiar with the politics in Israel, so he stands without excuse before David.

I should point out that this testimony is moderately problematic for my theory that this young man is a mercenary for the Philistines. The term *gêr* essentially means that his father was a resident of Israel by choice, likely a proselyte of the Jews. This would also explain why this man was in this area, in northern Israel. However, his testimony could be true, and he could have still joined up with the Philistines to fight against Israel. The possibility exists that this young man was even a part of the Israeli army, although I still favor the position that he is a mercenary for the Philistines. Also, bear in mind, that this young man is a liar. What he is saying here may or may not be true. After all, he is expecting some kind of reward from David, so it is in his best interest for his father to be an immigrant to Israel.

I should also point out that, this man could live among the Israelites, and still fight on the side of the Philistines. His father was very likely a believer who chose to live among the Jews; and this man is simply an opportunist who may or may not have been a believer. Having known his political situation, he may have chosen to side with the Philistines, simply to be on the winning side. This would be in character for an opportunist. Just happening to be in the action where Saul is killed gives him an even better idea.

David, thus far, may have his suspicions (as evidenced by this question), but he allows the man’s own testimony to stand against himself. There are several factors at play here. David is in mourning for his closest friend and his father-in-law; David has just had a run-in with a large band of Amalekites (this young man probably was not aware of this); and David knew that he is God’s anoint and that he was going to become the ruler over Israel (being a man of humility, this was not a responsibility that he took lightly). My point is, this young Amalekite walked in at the wrong time and with the wrong story.

We’ve actually got several options here, so let me see if I can sort them out:

Is this Young Amalekite Lying about His Citizenship Status?

| Options | Logical Conclusions |
|---|---|
| The man is telling the truth; he is an Amalekite, the son of an immigrant | He actually does not know enough about Israel to realize that an assault upon Saul is an assault against God. |
| | He may have surmised that, since David is next in line for the throne (which means he knows a lot about Israel) that killing Saul would not be viewed as a crime, but as something that David would reward him for. |
| The man is lying; he is actually not the son of an immigrant to Israel. | We have almost the same logical conclusions. He may not know enough about Saul being chosen by God and that killing Saul would mean dire consequences for him. |
| | As above, he knew Saul was a king chosen by God, but he also clearly knew that David was next in line, also chosen by God (if he knew about Saul then he would have known about David). He assumes that there would be no negative consequences for claiming to have killed Saul; in fact, he expects a reward. |
| Whether he is the son of an immigrant or not.... | <p>(1) Although it is possible that this Amalekite just happened to wander into this battle, that is very unlikely.</p> <p>(2) This Amalekite fought on the side of the Israelites. This would suggest that he is the son of an immigrant, but it would not explain how he survived this battle and was able to return to where Saul was struck unharmed.</p> <p>(3) This young Amalekite fought on the side of the Philistines. His origins are less important, and he probably picked the side he believed would win. He would obviously have no real loyalty to Israel (probably not to the Philistines either). This would place him in a good position to observe the deaths of both Saul and Jonathan, which he testified to, and it would allow him a little more freedom when pursuing Jewish enemies; i.e., he could disappear into Mount Gilboa, chasing after Jews, and suddenly stop and return to Saul's body when he saw that he was safe from detection.</p> |

Obviously, there are a many possibilities here. Personally, I believe that this young man is truly an Amalekite, but one whose father did live in Israel under special immigrant status. However, this young man had no real loyalties to Israel, and fought on the side of the Philistines, as he expected them to be victorious. But, when he saw that Saul had been killed, and that the Philistines soldiers continued to pursue Israel without stopping there, he managed to return to Saul's body, take the king's jewelry, and go down to Judah to speak to David. He was an opportunist looking to improve his place in the world.

You may object, questioning, *how does he know the Philistines will not attack and conquer David next?* If he is with the Philistine soldiers, then he knows that David came at the behest of the king of Gath and that David left at the request of the other kings. Although he may see northern and central Israel as falling completely under Philistine control, he may see Judah as a different story, and that David would probably rule over Judah (he obviously knew enough to go to talk to David about Saul's death).

In other words, I am suggesting that this young Amalekite probably had a maximum amount of political knowledge of this situation; however, what apparently eluded him was spiritual knowledge. He figured out the power bases and the political struggles as if he were a master chess player, and knew that his best move would be to throw down with David. What he did not realize was that David was not willing to shortcut anything, and that anyone who killed Saul would face the high court of David.

All of this man's actions are consistent with one who has great political discernment, but absolutely no spiritual understanding.

Application: I hope that the application here is obvious—you can have the most accurate and learned perception of current politics, and still not be on the right side of history. If you lack spiritual discernment and if you lack knowledge of the spiritual issues, then your knowledge of things political is inconsequential. If you understand what is going on spiritually, then your politics may be accurate or not, but your relationship with God will transcend political I.Q.

2Samuel 1:13c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| ʿAmâlêq (אֲמֹלֵק) [pronounced <i>áh-maw-LAYK</i>] | transliterated <i>Amalek</i> | masculine proper noun; used as an gentilic adjective here | Strong's #6002 BDB #766 |
| ʾânôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>] | <i>I, me</i> ; (sometimes a verb is implied) | 1 st person singular personal pronoun | Strong's #595 BDB #59 |

Translation: ...I [am] an Amalekite.” In the narrative, this young man has revealed that he is an Amalekite; however, he repeats this information in a slightly different context. Being an Amalekite does not endear this man to David either. Recall, God had told Saul to wipe out the Amalekites completely (David would probably be aware of this, as this act of disobedience caused Samuel to anoint David as king of Israel). David’s camp had also just been raided by Amalekites, so David did not have any love for this group of people.

And so says unto him, David, “How are you not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy an anointed [one] of Y^ehowah?”

2Samuel
1:14

Then David asked him [lit., *says to him*], “How [is it that] you are not afraid to put forth your hand to lay waste [to] Y^ehowah’s anointed?”

Then David asked him, “How is it that you were not afraid to reach out and kill Jehovah’s anointed?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says unto him, David, “How are you not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy an anointed [one] of Y^ehowah?”

Septuagint

And David said to him, “How was it you were not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the anointed of the Lord?”

Significant differences: Even though a pair of verbs are different in the Greek and the Hebrew, the essential meaning remains unchanged.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

David said to him, "Why weren't you afraid to kill the LORD's chosen king?

The Message

"Do you mean to say," said David, "that you weren't afraid to up and kill GOD's anointed king?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

HCSB

David questioned him, "How is it that you were not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Young's Updated LT

And David says unto him, "How were you not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the anointed of Jehovah?"

The gist of this verse?

Then David asks this young man, "How is it that you are not afraid to kill the anointed of Jehovah?"

2Samuel 1:14

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾâmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʾel (אל) [pronounced e/] | unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | beloved and is transliterated David | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| ʾêyk (אֵיךָ) [pronounced ayche] | how | interrogative adverb | Strong's #349 BDB #32 |
| lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low] | not, no | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| yârêʾ (אָרַע) [pronounced yaw-RAY] | to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #3372 BDB #431 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced leʰ] | to, for, towards, in regards to | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH] | to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out | Qal infinitive construct | Strong's #7971 BDB #1018 |
| yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd] | generally translated hand | feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #3027 BDB #388 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced leʰ] | to, for, towards, in regards to | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| shâchath (שָׁחַת) [pronounced shaw-KHAHTH] | to destroy, to ruin, to lay waste [to]; to act wickedly | Piel infinitive construct | Strong's #7843 BDB #1007 |

2Samuel 1:14

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>] | generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i> | indicates that the following substantive is a direct object | Strong's #853 BDB #84 |
| mâshîyach (מָשִׁיחַ) [pronounced <i>maw-SHEE-ahkh</i>] | <i>anointed, anointed one, transliterated Messiah</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4899 BDB #603 |
| YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>] | transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i> | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

Translation: Then David asked him [lit., *says to him*], “How [is it that] you are not afraid to put forth your hand to lay waste [to] Y^ehowah’s anointed?” All of a sudden, this interview takes a turn for the worse, as far as this Amalekite was concerned. This Amalekite is expecting to hear some congratulations; he is expecting a commendation. He had it figured out perfectly: Saul asked him to kill him and Saul was going to die anyway; there is no way that David could argue with that; there is no way that David could fault him for his choices. However, this Amalekite was wrong. David takes no satisfaction whatsoever from hearing about Saul's death. David is not carefully trying to remain within the law by not killing Saul himself, but not having a problem if someone else does. Saul was chosen by God to lead Israel, and, insofar as David was concerned, only God could remove Saul from this life.

This young Amalekite has been living in Israel for some time—probably all of his life (according to his testimony)—and he should know that God has chosen Saul as the king of Israel.; Saul is the anointed of Israel. David asks him, “If Jehovah God chose Saul and set him over Israel as king, isn’t it presumptuous for you to kill Saul under any circumstance?” You see, David, on two separate occasions, restrained himself from killing Saul, because Saul was God’s anointed over Israel. He knew that, even as the next in line, it was not up to him to take Saul out of this world—God would do this Himself. If David, God’s next-in-line for the throne, could not kill Saul, then just what the hell does this man think he is doing by killing Saul?

At this point, there was no doubt a little panic going on in the mind of this Amalekite, who thought he had this whole thing figured out. He thought could play David here. He thought he could parlay his coming upon the body of Saul to his advantage. He was expecting a reward or a position of power; but instead, he has caused David to become somewhat angry with him.

Barnes comments: *Whether David believed the Amalekite’s story, or not, his anger was equally excited, and the fact that the young man was an Amalekite, was not calculated to calm or check it. That David’s temper was hasty, we know from 1Sam. 25:13 25:32–34.*²²

What does the Scripture tell us about striking God’s anointed? Even if God’s anointed is your enemy, we are told that we cannot avenge ourselves against them.

²² Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:13–14.

We are not Allowed to Harm God's Anointed Ones

| Scripture | Passage |
|-----------------|---|
| 1Sam. 24:6 | He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed." David said this when it was suggested that he kill Saul. |
| 1Sam. 26:9 | David was given a second opportunity to kill Saul, but he explains to Abishai, "But do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?" |
| Psalm 105:12–15 | God's policy here was long-established; He says of Israel upon entering the land: When they were few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, He allowed no one to oppress them; He rebuked kings on their account, saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!" |
| Matt. 5:43–47 | In fact, we are not even allowed to avenge ourselves against our own enemies: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?" |

Chapter Outline

And so calls David to one of the young men and so he says, "Go near, fall in him." And so he strikes him and he dies.

2Samuel
1:15

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

David then called out to one of the young men and said, "Come here [and] fall upon him."

And he [one of the young men] struck him [the Amalekite] [down] and he died.

David then called out to one of his young men, saying, "Come here and execute this man." So one of the young men struck down the Amalekite, killing him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so calls David to one of the young men and so he says, "Go near, fall in him." And so he strikes him and he dies.

Septuagint

And David called one of his young men, and said, "Go and fall upon him." And he struck him, and he died.

Significant differences: The Greek appears to have left out an adverb. The meaning has not changed, however.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

And you even told what you did. It's your own fault that you're going to die!" Then David told one of his soldiers, "Come here and kill this man!" [vv. 15–16]

The Message

Right then he ordered one of his soldiers, "Strike him dead!" The soldier struck him, and he died.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

HCSB

Then David summoned one of his servants and said, "Come here and kill him!" The servant struck him, and he died.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV

Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go, execute him." And he struck him down so that he died.

Young's Updated LT

And David calls to one of the youths, and says, "Draw near—fall upon him;" and he strikes him, and he dies.

The gist of this verse?

David has one of the young men execute this Amalekite.

| 2Samuel 1:15a | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>] | <i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #7121 BDB #894 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>] | <i>beloved and is transliterated David</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| 'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>] | <i>one, first, certain, only; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular</i> | numeral construct | Strong's #259 BDB #25 |
| na'ar (נְעָר) [pronounced <i>NAH-gahr</i>] | <i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i> | masculine plural noun with the definite article | Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654 |

Translation: David then called out to one of the young men... David has several young soldiers under his command and right in the near vicinity. The way this is worded is, it sounds as though David is speaking to a particular young man. However, the author is making certain that we do not get this confused with the Amalekite, who is also referred to on several occasions as a young man.

2Samuel 1:15b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced naw-GASH] | to come near, to draw near, to approach, to come hither | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative | Strong's #5066 BDB #620 |

Translation: ...and said, "Come here..." David is not calling for the young man to go near to the Amalekite, but to come near to him. That is, David first says to one of the young men, "Come in here." We do not know how private this conversation was or who sat in on it; however, apparently, right outside David's door are some young men, and David instructs one of them to come into this room.

2Samuel 1:15c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| pâgaʿ (פָּגַע) [pronounced paw-GAHG] | to fall upon, to meet, to encounter, to reach | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative | Strong's #6293 BDB #803 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within | a preposition of proximity; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #88 |

Translation: ...[and] fall upon him." This imperative indicates that this young man is to execute the Amalekite. Although, this word can mean several things, it is clear in this context what David is asking to be done.

As you would no doubt expect, a great many commentators discuss David's sentencing of this young man:

Commentary About David's Sentencing of this Young Amalekite

| Commentators | Quotation |
|---------------|---|
| Matthew Henry | <i>If he did as he said, he deserved to die for treason (2Sam. 1:14), doing that which, it is probable, he heard Saul's own armour-bearer refuse to do; if not, yet by boasting that he had done it he plainly showed that if there had been occasion he would have done it, and would have made nothing of it; and, by boasting of it to David, he showed what opinion he had of him, that he would rejoice in it, as one altogether like himself, which was an intolerable affront to him who had himself once and again refused to stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed. And his lying to David, if indeed it was a lie, was highly criminal, and proved, as sooner or later that sin will prove, lying against his own head²³.</i> |

²³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:11–16.

Commentary About David's Sentencing of this Young Amalekite

| Commentators | Quotation |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Jamieson, Fausset and Brown | <i>David's reverence for Saul, as the Lord's anointed, was in his mind a principle on which he had faithfully acted on several occasions of great temptation. In present circumstances it was especially important that his principle should be publicly known; and to free himself from the imputation of being in any way accessory to the execrable crime of regicide was the part of a righteous judge, no less than of a good politician.²⁴</i> |
| Keil and Delitzsch | <i>David regarded the statement of the Amalekite as a sufficient ground for condemnation, without investigating the truth any further; though it was most probably untrue, as he could see through his design of securing a great reward as due to him for performing such a deed (vid., 2Sam. 4:10), and looked upon a man who could attribute such an act to himself from mere avarice as perfectly capable of committing it. Moreover, the king's jewels, which he had brought, furnished a practical proof that Saul had really been put to death. This punishment was by no means so severe as to render it necessary to "estimate its morality according to the times," or to defend it merely from the standpoint of political prudence, on the ground that as David was the successor of Saul, and had been pursued by him as his rival with constant suspicion and hatred, he ought not to leave the murder of the king unpunished, if only because the people, or at any rate his own opponents among the people, would accuse him of complicity in the murder of the king, if not of actually instigating the murderer. David would never have allowed such considerations as these to lead him into unjust severity. And his conduct requires no such half vindication. Even on the supposition that Saul had asked the Amalekite to give him his death-thrust, as he said he had, it was a crime deserving of punishment to fulfil this request, the more especially as nothing is said about any such mortal wounding of Saul as rendered his escape or recovery impossible, so that it could be said that it would have been cruel under such circumstances to refuse his request to be put to death. If Saul's life was still "full in him," as the Amalekite stated, his position was not so desperate as to render it inevitable that he should fall into the hands of the Philistines. Moreover, the supposition was a very natural one, that he had slain the king for the sake of a reward. But slaying the king, the anointed of the Lord, was in itself a crime that deserved to be punished with death. What David might more than once have done, but had refrained from doing from holy reverence for the sanctified person of the king, this foreigner, a man belonging to the nation of the Amalekites, Israel's greatest foes, had actually done for the sake of gain, or at any rate pretended to have done. Such a crime must be punished with death, and that by David who had been chosen by God and anointed as Saul's successor, and whom the Amalekite himself acknowledge in that capacity, since otherwise he would not have brought him the news together with the royal diadem.²⁵</i> |

I believe that David later on did realize that this young man may have lied to him, with the intent of seeking a reward of some sort from him. David later says, "[When the person told me, 'Listen, Saul is dead,' he thought he was a bearer of good news, but I seized him and put him to death at Ziklag. That was my reward to him for his news!](#)" (2Sam. 4:10). By this time, David realized that this man had been seeking a reward by reporting the death of Saul, but David *does not* say that the young man was put to death for killing Saul.

Now, don't misinterpret this. David did not put this man to death for bringing him bad news; David put him to death for testifying that he had killed Saul, the anointed one of God. However, in retrospect, David—and perhaps through God the Holy Spirit—does not accuse the Amalekite of having actually killed Saul.

²⁴ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 1:13–15.

²⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 1:14–16.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

| 2Samuel 1:15d | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| nâkâh (נָכָה) [pronounced naw-KAWH] | <i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong #5221 BDB #645 |

Translation: *And he [one of the young men] struck him [the Amalekite] [down]...* The young man called to goes right to the Amalekite and executes him. Apparently, he has a sword, and he cuts this man down (although we are not really told what weapon is used).

| 2Samuel 1:15e | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced mooth] | <i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |

Translation: *...and he died.* The result is complete; the young Amalekite man is executed.

And so says unto him, David, “Your blood [be] upon your head for your mouth testified in you, to say, ‘I [even] I killed [the] anointed of Y^ehowah.’ ” 2Samuel 1:16

Finally [lit., and] David said to him, “Your blood [is] upon your head for your [own] mouth testified against you, saying, ‘I [even] I killed the anointed one of Y^ehowah.’ ”

Finally, David told him, “Your blood is upon your head for you yourself testified against you, saying, ‘I killed Jehovah’s anointed one.’ ”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says unto him, David, “Your blood [be] upon your head for your mouth testified in you, to say, ‘I [even] I killed [the] anointed of Y^ehowah.’ ”

Septuagint

And David said to him, “Your blood be upon yours own head; for your mouth has testified [lit., answered] against you, saying, I have slain the anointed of the Lord.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV "You asked for it," David told him. "You sealed your death sentence when you said you killed GOD's anointed king."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ ...while David said, "You are responsible for spilling your own blood. You testified against yourself when you said, 'I killed the LORD'S anointed king.'"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

WEB David said to him, Your blood be on your head; for your mouth has testified against you, saying, I have slain Yahweh's anointed.

Young's Updated LT And David says unto him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, I— I put to death the anointed of Jehovah."

The gist of this verse? David justifies the sentence by the man's own testimony.

| 2Samuel 1:16a | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced le] | to, for, towards, in regards to | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | beloved and is transliterated David | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |
| dâm (דָּם) [pronounced dawm] | blood, often visible blood; bloodshed, slaughter; bloodguilt; blood of the grape [wine] | masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1818 BDB #196 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| rô`sh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced rohsh] | head, top, chief, front, choicest | masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #7218 BDB #910 |

This is simply an idiom meaning *you are guilty for this crime that you have testified about.*

Translation: Finally [lit., and] David said to him, "Your blood [is] upon your head... Blood upon one's head means that they are responsible for the death of someone—in this case, the Amalekite is said to be responsible for his own death. David, in essence, is saying, "You are guilty of a capital crime."

2Samuel 1:16b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| peh (פ) [pronounced <i>peh</i>] | <i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i> | masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #6310 BDB #804 |
| ʿânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i>] | <i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #6030 BDB #772 |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #88 |

Translation: ...for your [own] mouth testified against you,... The Amalekite testified against himself. No additional witness was needed. It was not as if David heard testimony which he needed to carefully weigh and consider, to determine the accuracy of the witness and the truthfulness of the witness; this witness was there and he has unequivocally testified against himself.

2Samuel 1:16c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| ʿâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | Qal infinitive construct | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʿânôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>] | <i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i> | 1 st person singular personal pronoun | Strong's #595 BDB #59 |
| mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>] | <i>to kill, to cause to die, to execute</i> | 1 st person singular, Polel perfect | Strong's #4191 BDB #559 |
| ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>] | generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i> | indicates that the following substantive is a direct object | Strong's #853 BDB #84 |
| mâshîyach (מָשִׁיחַ) [pronounced <i>maw-SHEE-ahkh</i>] | <i>anointed, anointed one, transliterated Messiah</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4899 BDB #603 |

2Samuel 1:16c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|------------------|----------------------------|
| YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>] | transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i> | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

Translation: ...saying, 'I [even] I killed the anointed one of Y^ehowah.'” The young Amalekite made it clear that he killed Saul. Even though he gave mitigating circumstances (Saul requested that he be killed; Saul was going to die anyway), his essential testimony was that he killed Saul, the king of Israel, God’s anointed, which leaves David no choice but to execute him.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Now, one thing that comes to my mind is, *what is David doing, acting as judge and jury here?* Does this mean, if we come across a criminal and the evidence against him is overwhelming, so we can simply execute him then and there and save the state some money?

Is David a Vigilante?

1. Samuel is dead. Samuel was the judge of the land, and he died several years previously; this man cannot be taken to Samuel.
2. Although we are never told about the disposition of Samuel’s sons, it is clear that they no longer had a function in Israel. When the elders spoke to Samuel some 40 years ago, one of the reasons that they requested a king was that Samuel’s sons took bribes and could not be trusted as judges.
3. Saul, the king of the land, is dead. David cannot bring this man to Saul to be judged, as this man just testified that he himself killed Saul.
4. Now, who would logically be the next man in Israel who could actually made judgments concerning life and death? Give up? David. David is God’s anointed. God chose David a long time ago to rule over Israel and Samuel has anointed David in a private ceremony as well. Therefore, the most logical person to decided a court case of this magnitude is David—and that is what happened.

Gill comments [David’s] *orders were instantly obeyed. Kings and generals of armies had great power in those times and countries to execute a man immediately, without any other judge or jury: what may serve, or David might think would serve, to justify him in doing this, is what follows*²⁶. Furthermore, we have several examples of this in Judges 8:20; 1Sam. 22:17–18 1Kings 2:25, 34, 46. For all intents and purposes, David was the law. It would be illogical for anyone else to be the law at this time, at that place.

This does not mean that, when you live in a country with a police force and a court system that you can go about and dispense justice like some vigilante. You don’t get to burn down abortion clinics or shoot at the people who work there; you don’t get to avenge people who have committed crimes and got off (or, got off easy, in your opinion). Your concerns along these lines may be addressed lawfully, but by no other means.

You do not get to riot or break into buildings or burn down buildings because you believe you live in an unjust society or that others are better off than you are or because some bad, unjust thing has happened.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

We may want to take a few moments and examine...

²⁶ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:15.

| What Really Happened on Mount Gilboa? | | |
|--|---|--|
| Facts | Speculations | Lies of the Amalekite |
| Saul was severely wounded in battle (1Sam. 31:3). | | |
| He asked his armorbearer to kill him, but his armorbearer refused (1Sam. 31:4a). | Saul requested to be killed either because his wound was extremely painful and fatal; or he did not want the Philistines to come back and torture him. | Saul has a brief conversation with the Amalekite, and then asks the Amalekite to kill him, because he was suffering from a painful and deadly wound (2Sam. 1:9). |
| Saul fell upon his own sword (1Sam. 31:4b). | | Saul is leaning on his spear (2Sam. 1:6). The Amalekite obliges Saul by killing him (2Sam. 1:10). |
| When Saul's armorbearer saw that Saul had died, he fell upon his own sword (1Sam. 31:5). | | The armorbearer is never mentioned. |
| The Amalekite apparently did take Saul's crown and bracelet (2Sam. 1:10). | I suspect the Amalekite was fighting on the side of the Philistines; however, when he saw that Saul was dead, he made sure to come back in time to take these things, and then he went straightway to David (and he would know where David was, since David almost went with the Philistines to fight Israel) | The Amalekite offers up Saul's crown and bracelet as proof of his account of Saul's death. |

Although it would be possible to fabricate a story where the account in 1Sam. 31 and the Amalekite's account of what happened are in agreement, it would be difficult and convoluted, if not downright impossible. *Hard Sayings of the Bible* comments: *Although there have been attempts at harmonizing the two accounts, the effort always seems to fall short of being convincing.*²⁷ Essentially, the armorbearer, when he looked at Saul after he fell on his sword, he would have to *think* that Saul is dead. He kills himself, and the Amalekite is watching. The Amalekite sees Saul leaning on his sword from a distance. Once the armorbearer kills himself, the Amalekite moves closer—Saul fell on his sword—but is still alive. Then Saul begs the man to kill him. Like I said, both accounts could be made to make sense, but that seems to make this whole thing much more convoluted than we really have to.

One of the keys is, there are several problems with the Amalekite's story—chiefly, him showing up as the bearer of bad news, and yet thinking that his killing of Saul would bring him something valuable from David.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

I need to make one additional comment. Some commentators justify what David does here, because God called for the destruction of all Amalekites. Let us assume that what this Amalekite says in v. 13 is true—that he is the son of an Amalekite who had immigrated to Israel. Generally speaking, when a person moves to Israel, that indicates that he believes in the God of Israel, which means they are saved. This young Amalekite would have

²⁷ *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 218.

had an equal opportunity to be saved as well, and therefore, he cannot be killed simply because he is an Amalekite—this is because, he is an Amalekite who willingly assimilated into the culture and people of Israel.

We know what happened to Saul—he asked his armorbearer to kill him, and since the armorbearer would not kill him, Saul committed suicide, followed by the suicide of his armorbearer. We have also seen that, it is nearly impossible to make the story of the Amalekite and 1Sam. 30 agree. That is, it is much easier and makes much more sense to view the Amalekite’s story to be a fabrication and that 1Sam. 30 is an accurate accounting of the events. This leads us to ask, *how do we know what really happened?*

Who Witnessed Saul’s Death and Why is it Accurately Recorded?

| Possible Witness | Comments |
|------------------|---|
| The Amalekite | <p>My opinion is, the Amalekite was on the side of the Philistines as a mercenary; and when he saw Saul die in battle, he formulated a plan as to how to exploit Saul’s death. He knew about David at least through the conversations of the Philistines (recall that there was a debate as to whether David should join the Philistines or not); and David was well known anyway. The Amalekite formulated his plan and returned to Saul’s body before the Philistines did (this Amalekite would have known of Philistine discipline, that the Philistines would not stop and take from the bodies of their victims until after the war had been won).</p> <p>The Amalekite could have returned the night of the battle or the very day of the battle; grabbed a couple of Saul’s personal items, and headed down to David. Being at the foot of Mount Gilboa, pursuing Jewish soldiers into the forested mountain area, the Amalekite could have made him scarce and double-backed to Saul’s body.</p> <p>The Amalekite eventually told David the truth, but, by that time, his testimony had already convicted him; however, David, sometime later, recognized the validity of the Amalekite’s second story (which additional conversation was not recorded in Scripture), and recorded that view of the events in 1Sam. 30 a few years later.</p> |
| The Philistines | <p>The Philistines were obviously there at the battle. It appears as though they were moving in on Saul at the time that Saul killed himself, and that they witnessed these events. Rather than record some made-up story of their historical crushing of the king of Israel, the recorded Saul’s cowardly actions to further humiliate Saul’s name.</p> <p>These accounts would have been a part of the display of Saul’s head and body (which were displayed in different places). It would make sense that, Saul’s body would be hung on the wall in Bethshan, and for men to make periodic announcements as to the manner of his death or for there to be a posting of the details of his death near the body. Enough Israelites heard or viewed this account, and it became widely known.</p> |
| God | <p>God obviously knew from eternity past the exact details of Saul’s death and somehow made these known to David, who is likely the human author of much of the book of Samuel.</p> <p>Personally, I tend to stay away from supernatural explanations such as this. It is not a matter of, God did not know what happened or that God is unable to tell us what has occurred through revelation to David; it is simply that, whenever God directly reveals something in Scripture, it is generally so documented, as such an event is extraordinary (e.g., God speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai).</p> |

In my opinion, the first two explanations are equally likely.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

David's Ode to Saul and Jonathan

And so laments David with the lamentation the this over Saul and over Jonathan his son. 2Samuel 1:17 Then David lamented over Saul and his son Jonathan with this lamentation.

Then David wrote a lamentation about Saul and his son Jonathan.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so laments David with the lamentation the this over Saul and over Jonathan his son.
Septuagint And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV David sang a song in memory of Saul and Jonathan,...
The Message Then David sang this lament over Saul and his son Jonathan,...
NAB Then David chanted this elegy for Saul and his son Jonathan,...
NLT Then David composed a funeral song for Saul and Jonathan.
REB David raised this lament over Saul and Jonathan his son;...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ David wrote this song of mourning for Saul and his son Jonathan.
HCSB David sang the following lament for Saul and his son Jonathan,...
JPS (Tanakh) And David intoned this dirge over Saul and his son Jonathan—...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Young's Updated LT And David laments with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son:

The gist of this verse? David writes a lamentation about Saul and Jonathan.

2Samuel 1:17

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah] | and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| qûwn (קוּן) [pronounced koon] | to sing a mourning song, to lament | 3 rd person masculine singular, Polel imperfect | Strong's #6969 BDB #884 |
| Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED] | beloved and is transliterated David | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1732 BDB #187 |

2Samuel 1:17

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|---|
| ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth] | <i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i> | preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object) | Strong's #854 BDB #85 |
| qîynâh (קִינָה) [pronounced kee-NAW] | <i>a mournful song, a lamentation, an elegy, a dirge</i> | feminine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #7015 BDB #884 |
| zô`th (זֹאת) [pronounced zoth] | <i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i> | feminine singular of zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb; with the definite article | Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced y ^e -hoh-naw-THAWN] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |

Translation: [Then David lamented over Saul and his son Jonathan with this lamentation.](#) As we have seen in 1Sam. 18–20, David had a very close relationship with Jonathan. David also gave a great deal of respect to Saul—much more than he deserved—partially out of respect for Jonathan and partially out of respect for the office (Saul's authority was established by God). Although it does not specifically say this, David writes this lamentation, which will be recorded in vv. 19–27. You might say it is one way that he emotionally deals with this loss. As we have already discussed, back in [v. 12](#), David's grief for Saul was not forced or phony.

What most commentators say, as they get further and further to the end of Saul's life is, what a son-of-a-bitch Saul is, and how he disobeys God over and over again. Even God the Holy Spirit tells us this about Saul: [And Saul died for his sin which he committed against Jehovah, against the Word of Jehovah, which he did not keep, and also for seeking of a medium, to inquire, and inquired not of Jehovah](#) (1Chron. 10:13–14a). We are told this after Saul's death is recorded. So, why do we have the next 9 verses, which, in part, pay homage to Saul? 2Samuel is inspired by God the Holy Spirit just as 1Chronicles is. Certainly, David, as the human author, decided to place this funeral dirge into the Word of God; but God the Holy Spirit, Who oversees the composing of Holy Writ also placed this in His Word.

Why is Saul Honored in God's Word?

1. First of all, we need to define inspiration of Scripture. Inspiration may be defined as: God so

Why is Saul Honored in God's Word?

supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture, without waiving their human intelligence, their individuality, their literary style, their personal feelings, or any other human factor, to record His Own complete coherent message to man with perfect accuracy, the very words of Scripture bearing the authority of divine authorship.¹

2. Therefore, we cannot simply say, *this dirge is what David wrote and stuck into the Bible*. There is a reason that God the Holy Spirit allowed this into His Word.
3. Saul's bravery and importance to the people of Israel is acknowledged in this psalm, something which few theologians seem to take into account.
4. Saul was a believer in Jesus Christ, something which many theologians argue over. We covered this in 1Sam. 10:6 11:6.
5. When the people of Israel demanded that Samuel install a king over them, God *did not* go out and find the worst possible person in Israel and make him king. Saul was God's man and Saul was a man of the people. As we observed, Saul *became* the popular candidate for king. God did not choose him, place him in office, and that was that. God chose him, Samuel anointed him, and then Saul proved himself before the people of God. They wanted a leader who would deliver them from their enemies, and Saul did exactly that. Under pressure, Saul showed himself to be a great military leader.
6. We do not follow all of Saul's life; however, in one verse, his great victories over a half-dozen enemies is acknowledged: 1Sam. 14:47. So, Saul accomplished a great deal in the realm of protecting Israel, that we do not examine in any depth.
7. Therefore, for the first half of Saul's kingship, he acquitted himself as a great military king, with a number of important military victories to his credit, which preserved the freedom of the nation Israel.
8. In the latter half of his reign, Saul's life was marred by disobedience to God, mental illness, attempted murder, a squandering of Israel's resources, and consorting with mediums. One might say, *how the mighty have fallen!*
9. Despite Saul's numerous and persistent failures recorded in God's Word, he also had a great many successes. God worked through Saul to preserve the freedom and independence of Israel.
10. Therefore, God's Word gives some credit to Saul; and therefor, we should not be so stingy with our own acknowledgments.
11. What does this mean by way of eternal rewards for Saul? Was his life so unspeakably evil at the end as to wipe out any eternal blessing whatsoever? Although I am only speculating, I think the Saul will enjoy some great rewards in heaven.
12. Was Saul disciplined in life for his behavior? Absolutely; we have studied again and again at the end of Saul's life that he was miserable, that God eventually took him out in the sin unto death, and that God did not even allow his crown to be passed to his great son, Jonathan.

¹ Slightly paraphrased from Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*; Abridged Edition; Victor Books, ©1984, Vol. 2, p. 71. One of my great regrets in life is buying the abridged edition and making all my notes in it.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Application: I don't know about you, but my life is sometimes marred by sins, bad decisions and personal failure. I am consistently my own worse enemy. There are times when I have been unjustly treated by others, but, the bulk of my own problems stem from my own sins and not from the sins of others. I know God has not saved me because of my good behavior or good life; God saved me by His mercy and grace. There is no good thing that I have done to deserve what God has given me. Quite frankly, I can better relate to Saul than I can to David. However, at this point in time, I am still alive, I am filled with God the Holy Spirit, and God continues to have a plan for me. If you are alive, and I strongly suspect that you are, God still has a plan for you.

And so he says, “To teach sons of Judah: a Bow [or, a *Bowman*].” (Behold, she is written upon a scroll of the upright [or, a *book of Jashar*]).

2Samuel
1:18

Then he said, “To teach the sons of Judah: ‘The Bowman.’ ” (Observe, this is written in the Book of Jashar).

He then said, “This is to be taught to the sons of Judah: ‘The Bowman.’ ” (This psalm may also be found in the Book of Jashar).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Latin Vulgate | (Also he commanded that they should teach the children of Juda the use of the bow, as it is written in the book of the just.) |
| Masoretic Text | And so he says, “To teach sons of Judah: a Bow [or, a <i>Bowman</i>].” (Behold, she is written upon a scroll of the upright [or, a <i>book of Jasher</i>]). |
| Septuagint | And he told to teach it the sons of Juda: behold, it is written in the book of Right [or, <i>straight, upright</i>]. |

Significant differences: Apart from the name of this poem (*the Bow* or *Bowman*), the Greek and Hebrew are in agreement. Jerome (who translated the Hebrew into Latin) apparently did not know what to make of this, so he possibly embellished the text; instead of giving the name of this psalm, he states a supposed purpose instead (this is a supposition which I am making; however, it reads the same in the Peshitta).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| CEV | ...and he ordered his men to teach the song to everyone in Judah. He called it "The Song of the Bow," and it can be found in The Book of Jashar. This is the song |
| <i>The Message</i> | ...and gave orders that everyone in Judah learn it by heart. Yes, it's even inscribed in The Book of Jashar. |
| NAB NLT | ...which is recorded in the Book of Jashar to be taught to the Judahites. He sang:.... Later he commanded that it be taught to all the people of Judah. It is known as the Song of the Bow, and it is recorded in <i>The Book of Jashar</i> [or, <i>The Book of the Upright</i>]. |
| REB | ...and he ordered that this dirge over them should be taught to the people of Judah. It was written down and may be found in the Book of Jashar. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>God's Word</i> TM | He said, "Teach this kesheth to the people of Judah." (It is recorded in the Book of Jashar.) |
| HCSB | ... and he ordered that the Judahites be taught The Song of the Bow. It is written in the Book of Jashar |
| JPS (Tanakh) | He ordered the Judites to be taught [The Song of the] Bow. It is recorded in the Book of Jashar. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i> | And he commanded to teach it, The Bow, to the Israelites. Behold, it is written in the book of Jashar. |
| HNV | (and he bade them teach the children of Yehudah [the song of] the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Yashar): |

MKJV

And he said to teach the sons of Judah *The Song of the Bow*. Behold, it is written in the Book of Jasher.

Young's Updated LT

And he says to teach the sons of Judah "The Bow;" lo, it is written on the book of the Upright.

The gist of this verse?

David wants his lamentation song about Saul and Jonathan taught to the sons of Judah; furthermore, this song is found in the book of Jasher.

2Samuel 1:18a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾâmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| lâmad (למד) [pronounced <i>law-FAHD</i>] | <i>to train, to accustom, to teach</i> | Piel infinitive construct | Strong's #3925 BDB #540 |
| bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>] | <i>son, descendant</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #1121 BDB #119 |
| Y ^e hûwdâh (יהודה) [pronounced <i>y^ehoo-DAW</i>] | possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised; and is transliterated Judah</i> | masculine proper noun/location | Strong's #3063 BDB #397 |

Translation: Then he said, "To teach the sons of Judah:... Israel eventually became a divided kingdom and there were seeds of that division for several centuries prior to the nation becoming two. When the Philistines last struck Israel, it was in the center of Israel, further causing division between the north and the south territories. David, as we will see, will first become ruler over Southern Palestine (Judah) and later, over northern Palestine (Israel or Samaria). We use the term *Israel* to refer both to the original (unified) kingdom and to the northern portion of the divided kingdom. Recall that David has been staying in southern Judah, and as Saul was being killed, David was avenging his men against the Amalekites, who had raided his camp. He sent the excess of their spoil to various cities throughout Judah. I suspect that David was inspired to almost immediately write a psalm to Saul and Jonathan, and that, before even assuming any power, David felt that this psalm should be learned by those in the southern kingdom, so that they would recognize that there were good things about Saul.

As we saw in the previous book, David on two occasions refused to kill Saul, God's anointed, even though Saul had pursued him relentlessly with the intention of killing him. Even though David acted with great integrity previously, we would suspect that he would quietly rejoice at Saul's death: "Finally, a little down time; and maybe I can take control of Israel now." But this is not David's reaction. He reacts with great sadness—certainly more at the loss of Jonathan; but he will reveal great personal respect for Saul in this psalm.

2Samuel 1:18b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| qesheth (קֶשֶׁת) [pronounced KEH-sheth] | bow; bowman, archer; strength, power; rainbow | feminine singular noun; pausal form | Strong's #7198 BDB #905 |

Translation:... [‘The Bowman.’](#)” Although most render this as *The Bow*; I think that *The Bowman* is more apropos. Unlike the Latin and Syriac interpretations, I don’t believe that David is encouraging the men of Judah to learn how to use the bow, but he instead, with this word, refers to the warrior skills of Saul and Jonathan. Since this term is in the singular, we might view it as representative of the Israeli soldier. Saul will be named as using a sword and Jonathan as using a bow (v. 22), but I don’t think that David is, with this name, giving pre-eminence to Jonathan; I think the idea is, these men were both great soldiers of Israel, to be honored with this psalm.

There are commentators²⁸ who was eloquently about how the skill of the bow had fallen on hard times and that David was here encouraging Israel to relearn these skills. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown write: *David took immediate measures for instructing the people in the knowledge and practice of archery, their great inferiority to the enemy in this military arm having been the main cause of the late national disaster*²⁹. However, this is nonsensical for at least several reasons: (1) Up until this point in time, Saul's army had been quite successful against the nations surrounding Israel; it is hard to imagine that, after at least a half-dozen major wars that the bow had somehow fallen into disuse. There were a lot of wars which took place during the reign of Saul. Suggesting that Israel had become lax in the use of any of their weapons makes no sense. (2) The men of Benjamin were known for being skilled with the bow (1Chron. 8:40 12:2; 2Chron. 14:7 17:17). This may reasonably be seen as a long tradition beginning at least with Saul and the formation of Israel's army under him. (3) David's own men had also been very successful in conflict, indicating that they had not become lax either in their use of the bow. (4) This is a psalm about Saul and Jonathan; not a psalm about learning how to use the bow or about how important the use of the bow is. The very psalm itself makes such an assertion absurd.

There is an alternate suggestion made by Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *The Bow is probably the title of the following threnody; so called, in the oriental style, because Saul's death was occasioned by that weapon, and because the bow of Jonathan, out of which “the arrow was shot beyond the lad” (1Sam. 20:36), is celebrated in this song.*³⁰ Although I do not agree with this entirely, this is a better explanation than David taking this time to teach his men how to use the bow.

After I have exegeted a verse and have written my commentary, I do look at several other commentators, and, when they have something to say, I do not mind repeating it. However, when reading any commentator, you cannot just put your mind in neutral. You must examine what they write critically. Sometimes a commentator is quite insightful, and other times, they are so far off the mark, it is hard to believe.

What David is doing here is not teaching his men how to use the bow, but he is teaching them the psalm that he had written, *the Bowman*. Proper homage would be paid to Saul and his house, and it would begin with this psalm. Recall that some of David's men encourage him to kill Saul when he had the chance, and he refused, accurately calling Saul, God's anointed. Now that Saul is dead, David is not going to allow his men to disparage Saul in his death. This psalm properly honors Saul and Jonathan, and it is something which David's men need to know.

²⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:18.

²⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 1:18.

³⁰ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 2:18.

2Samuel 1:18c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|--|
| hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>] | <i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i> | interjection, demonstrative particle; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243 |
| kâthab (כָּתַב) [pronounced <i>kaw-THAHB</i> '] | <i>that which was written, the written [thing, book], the writing</i> | feminine singular, Qal passive participle | Strong's #3789 BDB #507 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| <p>When not showing a physical relationship between two things, ʿal can take on a whole host of new meanings: <i>on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>. It is one of the most versatile prepositions in Scripture. This word often follows particular verbs. In the English, we have <i>helping verbs</i>; in the Hebrew, there are <i>helping prepositions</i>.</p> | | | |
| çêpher (סֵפֶר) [pronounced <i>SAY-fur</i>] | <i>missive, book, document, writing, scroll, tablet, register</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #5612 BDB #706 |
| yâshâr (יָשָׁר) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAWR</i>] | <i>right, correct, accurate, lacking in contradictions, upright, straight, uniform, having internal integrity, even</i> | masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive; with a definite article | Strong's #3477 BDB #449 |

It is unclear whether this is a proper noun, as in the name of the book or of the person who wrote it; or whether this is a description of sorts of the book.

Translation: (Observe, this is written in the Book of Jashar). This is a parenthetical comment; probably a gloss.³¹ There is some disagreement here. This reads as if this psalm had been written in the Book of Jashar, which suggests that David wrote this psalm, and then affixed it to the scroll of the Book of Jashar. On the other hand, Bullinger tells us that it has not yet been written down in the book of Jashar and that David is, in essence, commanding that it be included in this book. The various options will be discussed after we cover the **Doctrine of the Book of Jashar** below:

Let us therefore examine...

The Doctrine of the Book of Jashar

1. The Book of Jashar is mentioned only twice in Scripture:
 - a. The first reference is in Joshua 10:12–14: *At that time Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD obeyed the voice of a man, for the LORD fought*

³¹ A *gloss* is something which was added later by way of explanation or elaboration. This might be done by an editor who assembled the document originally (who may have used several sources, quoting most of them verbatim); and it might be done by a very early scribe.

The Doctrine of the Book of Jashar

for Israel. This is the famous *long day* of Joshua. If you will recall, I spent a great deal of time discussing this miracle and was personally unable to take a position.

- i. It is clear that God is the author of time and space, as well as the laws of physics;
 - ii. It is clear that God can overrule these laws, no matter how fantastic a miracle that may be.
 - iii. However, this passage stands out from the rest of Joshua as not feeling like it is his writing (it is poetry, however).
 - iv. Furthermore, Joshua does something very unusual—he seems to appeal to an outside source for confirmation: *The Book of Jashar*.
 - v. Interestingly enough, the LXX does not refer to the Book of Jashar (although it does contain the miracle of the long day of Joshua).
 - vi. I spent about a page in my exegesis of the book of Joshua examining both sides of this question; and bear in mind, the problem was *not* that this particular event was just too fantastic to occur.
- b. The second unequivocal reference to *The Book of Jashar* is found in our passage, written about 400 years after the time of Joshua.
- i. Again, we are nonplused by this reference.
 - ii. Did someone at a later date take this reference to *The Book of Jashar* and use it back in the book of Joshua?
 - iii. Is this a book which authors have added to for centuries? This option is not without precedent—the book of Genesis appears to have been a book which was added to generation after generation.
 - iv. Whereas, we have some questions as to the authenticity of Joshua 10:12–14, we have no reason to question the authenticity of this passage. Therefore, even if we side with that short passage of Joshua as being one added years later, we still must deal with the Book of Jashar in this passage.
- c. There is a 3rd possible reference to the Book of Jashar in 1Kings 8:53, which is found in the Greek, but not in the Hebrew. The Greek adds **Behold, is this not written in the Book of the Song?** The word *song* in Hebrew is hashîyr (הַשִּׁיר) [pronounced *hah-SHEER*], which could be seen as a copyist error for *ha Yashar*. However, I cannot confirm this with *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament*, which gives about a half dozen words in the Hebrew which are translated *song*, none of which is *hashîyr*. Furthermore, I cannot even find this word in any form in my BDB. Perhaps *hashîyr* is a later Hebrew word meaning *song*; I am simply unable to verify that.
2. In ISBE, we read: *It is conjectured that it may have included the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), and older pieces now found in the Pentateuch (e.g. Gen. 4:23–24 9:25–27 27:27–29); this, however, is uncertain.*¹ In other words, hundreds, if not thousands, of years later, we have some unsubstantiated theories about what may or may not have been included in the book of Jashar.
 3. Gill's opinion: *This book seems to have been a public register or annals, in which were recorded memorable actions in any age, and had its name from the uprightness and faithfulness in which it was kept.*²
 4. There is apparently a theory by Rabbis (but I have no idea from what time period) that the Book of Jashar is actually the book of Genesis, the books of the Law and additional history as well. Of course, we have an English translation of this (I found it at this website: <http://www.kivits.com/Jashar1.htm>). The unnamed writer prefaces *The Book of Jashar* with: *Thought to be lost, some claim the current versions to be forged in the 18th century in an attempt to fill the gap otherwise left in the mentioning's of the above Bible books. Reading it one will immediately feel familiar with its content. There exist two ancient rabbinical works and also an anonymous Jewish work of the 12th century AD. which are titled 'Book of Jashar'.*³ On this website is the full text of *The Book of Jashar*, which was translated in 1840, but it is not clear if this is the anonymous Jewish work of the 12th century A.D., or if it is some other work. In any case, we do not have the manuscript evidence for this book going back to before the time of Christ, which we do have for almost every Old Testament book. One reference in this *Book of Jashar* does not include the actual psalm written by David, but insists that Jacob himself was concerned about the men of Judah learning how to use the bow. **And Jacob said to Yahudah, I know my son that you are a mighty man for**

The Doctrine of the Book of Jashar

your brothers; reign over them, and your sons will reign over their sons forever. Only teach your sons the bow and all the weapons of war, in order that they may fight the battles of their brother who will rule over his enemies (Jashar 56:8–9). In our passage, it sounds as though David (or a later editor) is saying that his psalm is found in the book of Jashar; and in the book of Jashar, this sounds like a warning issued by Jacob to his 12 sons that they need to know how to use the bow.² Although I am sure that, with a little mental effort, I could make these passages complimentary to one another, there is no reason to do so. Although I have no doubt that *The Book of the Upright [Jashar]* existed; I have no reason to assume that it is the same as this work from the 12th century A.D. For anyone who has studied apocryphal literature, it is clear that there is an abundance of this sort of literature from all eras just about. We really have no reason to seize upon this book or that and try to incorporate it into the canon of Scripture.

5. ZPEB comments on this spurious book: *The uncertain and mysterious character of the missing Book of Jashar has led to attempts to reproduce, imitate, or falsify it. One of the last compositions of the haggadic literature of Judaism, call the "Book of Jashar," is a falsification of the missing book in an attempt to reproduce it. It is written in good Hebrew and has to do with the era from Adam to Judges. The greater part of this work is concerned with the pre-Mosaic material. Much of the material is invention, interpolated between Biblical texts, in the author's desire to reconstruct the original book of Jashar. Many legends are added to the Biblical narrative. The account of Abraham is given in elaborate detail, inducing stories of his two journeys to see his son Ishmael, and of an apparition of a star. It contains a detailed explanation of the murder of Abel by Cain. It is believed by some scholars that this attempt to reconstruct the Old Testament Book of Jashar originated in southern Italy. The author was familiar with Italian place names. The Arabic names in the book are due to the strong influence of Arabic culture on southern Italy.*⁴
6. Bulling sees this as a book of national songs (probably), about which we know nothing.⁵
7. I know that it would be nice to wrap this up into some nice, obvious conclusion, but, truth be told, we know little about this book, except that there was a book by this name; it existed during the time of David and possibly as far back as the time of Joshua; and that material was added to this book from time to time. It is very possible that this source material was used on several occasions, but not credited.

Barnes places several psalms and portions of Scripture into the book of Jasher. *It has been further suggested that in the Book of Jasher there was, among other things, a collection of poems, in which special mention was made of the bow. This was one of them. 1Sam. 2:1–10 was another; Num. 21:27–30 was another; Lam. 2 was another; Lam. 3 was another; Jacob's blessing (Gen. 49); Moses' song (Deut. 32); perhaps his Blessing (Deut. 33. See 2 Sam. 1:29); and such Psalms as Psalm 44 46:1–11 76:1–12, etc.; Habak. 3; and Zech. 9:9–17, also belonged to it. The title by which all the poems in this collection were distinguished was qesheth, "the bow." When therefore the writer of 2Samuel transferred this dirge from the Book of Jasher to his own pages, he transferred it, as we might do any of the Psalms, with its title.*³²

Because this is a relatively short doctrine, I covered it in its entirety within the exegesis of 2Sam. 1.

¹ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Jashar, the Book of.

² Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:18.

³ This was taken from <http://www.kivits.com/Jashar1.htm>. I have added additional commentary.

⁴ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 407.

⁵ *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 116.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The entire verse reads: **Then he said, "To teach the sons of Judah: 'The Bowman.' "** (Observe, this is written in the Book of Jashar). There are a couple of theories even as to what is being said here:

³² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:18. Barnes does not include the names of those who make these suggestions, and possibly just offers them up, as I do, not with the idea that this is true, but that this is one suggestion which has been made by others.

The Relationship between this Psalm and the Book of Jasher

(1) A later editor notes that this particular psalm can also be found in the Book of Jasher.

(2) David is saying that he lifted this psalm from the Book of Jasher.

(3) David is saying that he adapted his psalm from a psalm found in the Book of Jasher.

(4) David is saying that he also wrote this psalm into the Book of Jasher, which would therefore be a collection of writings and poetry, not necessarily seen as divinely inspired.

(5) Let me offer you my theory, at this point. David really wrote this psalm honoring Saul and Jonathan, and he placed it into the book of Jasher, apart from his other writings. David continued to add to the book of Samuel, a book begun by Samuel, but did not include this psalm in his addition. A later editor went back, found the ode to Saul and Jonathan, and put it back into God's Word, under the approval of God the Holy Spirit.

(6) Bullinger says that David is herein commanding those within his hearing to add this psalm to the Book of Jasher.

These are merely off-the-cuff speculations on my part. Even though I lean toward the last one, there is no real doctrinal issue in preferring any of these possibilities. However, it does sound more like a gloss than something David would have included here; assuming that this chapter is written by David.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Bear in mind that God the Holy Spirit chose to include this psalm in the book of Samuel. It is an ode to Saul and the last thing that we will hear about Saul. We cannot simply pass this off as David's viewpoint or David's emotions, because we find it in Scripture. The recording of a psalm in Scripture is different than recording what a person says in Scripture. A person may say something in the Bible and it may be a lie—e.g., what Satan said to Eve in the garden is a lie. That it is found in the Bible means, this accurately reflects what Satan said; but it does not guarantee the veracity of what he says. Any quotations found in Scripture are accurate records of the words and thoughts of the person, but the fact that these are found in the Bible does not mean that what is said or thought is accurate. Even when David, in 1Sam. 27:1, when he says, "I just need to get out of Dodge because of Saul," accurately depicts his thinking and his rationale for leaving Israel. This in no way means that his choice to leave Israel temporarily was God's geographical will for his life (and we discussed this in great detail back in 1Sam. 27). However, in this case, we have half a chapter dedicated to a psalm written by David. We cannot blow this off as David's sincere, but inaccurate thoughts. God the Holy Spirit places this psalm in here, so that we have a balanced picture of Saul's life. Many commentators do not like this. They do not like Saul; they do not like what he has done to David, and they sure as hell don't want Saul in heaven. For these reasons, they disparage any good thing said about Saul after his mental illness began to kick in. However, we need to be more objective. What Saul did to David may have been unforgivable in our eyes; but not in God's. God is able to forgive all the sins and evil that we do, which is something I know I require—on a daily basis.

Application: There are some people whose spiritual lives take a turn for the worse as they get older. This may not be quite as dramatic as Saul's life, but it is a turn for the worst nonetheless. God does not forsake us because we go bad. There are not a set number of sins that we can commit in this life, and then God says, "You've just gone too far; I hereby revoke your salvation." I am not saying this by way of permission, so that you think that you can do any damn thing you want right now. God is also our Father and He disciplines us in life as well. Furthermore, once we get to a certain point, God takes us out of this life via the sin unto death. That we die the sin unto death does not mean we have lost of salvation; it means that we are taken out of this life for our constant and repeated disobedience. Saul is one of these people. My point is, if you are alive, then God still has a plan for your life. No matter how far you have gone into reversionism,³³ the fact that you are still breathing means that God still has things for you to do.

³³ A term from Bob Thieme Jr. It is moving in the opposite direction from spiritual growth.

**The glory, O Israel, upon your high places
slain!
How have fallen mighty ones!**

2Samuel
1:19

**O Israel! The glory is slain upon your high
places!
How the soldiers have fallen!**

**The glory, O Israel, has been slain in the high places!
How your mighty soldiers have fallen!**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Latin Vulgate | The illustrious of Israel are slain upon thy mountains. How are the valiant fallen? |
| Masoretic Text | The glory, O Israel, upon your high places slain! How have fallen mighty ones! . |
| Septuagint | Set up a pillar, O Israel, for the slain that died upon your high places. How are the mighty fallen! |

Significant differences: The Greek has Israel erecting a pillar (ostensibly to honor those who have died in battle). This first difference is a matter of translation. Apart from that, the Greek and Hebrew are the same. The Latin is quite similar to the Hebrew and the differences are probably a matter of translation.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----|---|
| CEV | Israel, your famous hero lies dead on the hills, and your mighty warriors have fallen! |
| NLT | Your pride and joy, O Israel, lies dead on the hills! How the mighty heroes have fallen! |
| TEV | "On the hills of Israel our leaders are dead! The bravest of our soldiers have fallen!" |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|-------------|--|
| God's Word™ | "Your glory, Israel, lies dead on your hills. See how the mighty have fallen! |
| HCSB | The splendor of Israel lies slain on your heights. How the mighty have fallen! |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Edersheim | The adornment of Israel on thy heights thrust through! Alas, the heroes have fallen! |
| LTHB | The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places. How are the mighty fallen! |
| Young's Updated LT | "The Roebuck, O Israel, On your high places is wounded; How have the mighty fallen!" |

The gist of this verse? David begins his ode to Saul and Jonathan by speaking of the mighty soldiers who have fallen (which would have included Saul and Jonathan).

2Samuel 1:19a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| ts ^e bîy (צבִי) [pronounced ts ^{eb} -VEE] | glory, splendor, honor; beauty; roebuck, gazelle | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #6643 BDB #840 |

2Samuel 1:19a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| Yis ^o râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis'-raw-ALE] | transliterated <i>Israel</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3478 BDB #975 |
| `al (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| bâmâh (בָּמֶה) [pronounced baw-MAW] | <i>a high place, elevation, height, mountain; fortress, castle; legitimate altar [built in a high place]</i> | feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1116 BDB #119 |
| châlâl (חָלַל) [pronounced chaw-LAWL] | <i>slain, fatally wounded, wounded, pierced; from a verb which means to bore, to pierce</i> | masculine singular noun (or adjective) | Strong's #2491 BDB #319 |

Translation: **O Israel! The glory is slain upon your high places!** The glory of Israel would refer to Israel's ruling family, the family of Saul. He was killed on Mount Gilboa (the *high places*), along with his 3 sons (1Sam. 31:1).

2Samuel 1:19b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| `êyk (אֵיךְ) [pronounced ayche] | <i>how</i> | interrogative adverb | Strong's #349 BDB #32 |
| With regards to translating this <i>alas</i> , Edersheim writes: <i>Our translation is an attempt at a literal rendering, which in poetry is specially desirable. The word renders in our Authorized Version "How," has been translated, "Alas," not only because this gives more fully the real meaning, but also because our word "how" might be taken interrogatively instead of exclamatorily.</i> ³⁴ | | | |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced gib-BOAR] | <i>strong men, mighty men, soldiers</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #1368 BDB #150 |

Translation: **How the soldiers have fallen!** The word here could refer to strong men or mighty men; however, after a battle with the Philistines when so many died, it certainly refers to soldiers. The brave soldiers of Israel were killed in battle. *How the mighty have fallen* is the chorus of this psalm. We will find this refrain repeated in vv. 25 and 27. Keil and Delitzsch use these verses to separate this psalm into 3 parts, something we will look at, at the end of this chapter.

³⁴ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 511.

**Do not make known in Gath;
do not announce in streets of Askelon;
lest rejoice daughters of Philistines;
lest exalt daughters of uncircumcised ones.**

2Samuel
1:20

**Do not make [this] known in Gath;
do not make a public announcement in the
streets of Askelon;
so that the daughters of the Philistines are
not joyful;
so that the daughters of the uncircumcised
do not rejoice.**

**Do not make this news known in Gath; and do not make a public announcement of this in Askelon;
so that the daughters of the Philistines are not overjoyed, and so that the daughters of the
uncircumcised do not rejoice over their deaths.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Do not make known in Gath;
do not announce in streets of Askelon;
lest rejoice daughters of Philistines;
lest exalt daughters of uncircumcised ones.

Septuagint

Tell it not in Geth, and tell it not as glad tidings in the streets of Ascalon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Don't tell it in Gath or spread the news on the streets of Ashkelon. The godless Philistine women will be happy and jump for joy.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

Don't tell the news in Gath. Don't announce the victory in the streets of Ashkelon, or the daughters of the Philistines will be glad, and the daughters of godless men will celebrate.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

LTHB

Tell it not in Gath; do not make it known in the streets of Ashkelon, that the daughters of the Philistines not rejoice; that the daughters of the uncircumcised not exult.

Young's Updated LT

Declare it not in Gath, Proclaim not the tidings in the streets of Ashkelon, Lest they rejoice—The daughters of the Philistines, Lest they exult—The daughters of the Uncircumcised!

The gist of this verse?

David asks that the news of Saul's defeat not be announced publically in the land of the Philistines, so that their daughters do not rejoice.

2Samuel 1:20a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| ʾal (לֹא) [pronounced a/] | <i>not; nothing; none</i> | adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done | Strong's #408 BDB #39 |
| nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD] | <i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i> | 2 nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect | Strong's #5046 BDB #616 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| Gath (גַּת) [pronounced gath] | <i>wine-press and is transliterated Gath</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #1661 BDB #387 |

Translation: Do not make [this] known in Gath;... David is asking that the defeat of Saul and Jonathan not be made known in Gath. The idea here is a public announcement, so that everyone hears what happened. Gath is one of the major cities in Philistia. Interestingly enough, David had just sought refuge in Gath and had spent about a year and a half in that general area (he was further south, but granted that area by Achish, king of Gath).

David has no way of preventing an announcement of victory in the Philistine cities. This is not a command and it is not necessarily even a prayer. He is simply stating a strong, wishful preference.

You will note a very simple Hebrew parallelism being set up. This line will be complimented by the line below; and then two lines will be given as reasons why David does not want this publically announced.

2Samuel 1:20b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| ʾal (לֹא) [pronounced a/] | <i>not; nothing; none</i> | adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done | Strong's #408 BDB #39 |
| 3 early printed editions, the Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate read <i>neither</i> . | | | |
| bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced baw-SAHR] | <i>to make one cheerful [with good news]; to announce [good news]; to bear glad tidings, to bring good news</i> | 2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect | Strong's #1319 BDB #142 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |

2Samuel 1:20b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| chûts (חֲטִי) [pronounced <i>khoots</i>] | <i>outside, street; out of the city (the fields, country, deserts); our of doors, abroad</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #2351 BDB #299 |
| ʿAsh ^e q ^e lôwn (אַשְׁקֹנָיִם) [pronounced <i>ash^e-k^el-OHN</i>] | <i>weighing place [market]; and is transliterated Ashkelon</i> | proper noun; location | Strong's #831 BDB #80 |

Translation: ...do not make a public announcement in the streets of Askelon;... The parallel line again requests that no public announcement be made in Askelon, another Philistine city. David does not really expect this not to occur—that is, he does not really think that there will be no public announcements made in the cities of Philistia. This is simply poetic license and possibly, a prayer.

Askelon, by the way, is a city of heathen worship for the Philistines (1Sam. 31:10).

2Samuel 1:20c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| pen (וְ) [pronounced <i>pen</i>] | <i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i> | conjunction | Strong's #6435 BDB #814 |
| sâmach (נָשׂוּ) [pronounced <i>saw-MAHKH</i>] | <i>to rejoice, to be glad, to be joyful, to be merry</i> | 3 rd person feminine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #8055 BDB #970 |
| bath (בָּתִּים) [pronounced <i>bahth</i>] | <i>daughter; village</i> | feminine plural construct | Strong's #1323 BDB #123 |
| P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>] | transliterated <i>Philistines</i> | masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) | Strong's #6430 BDB #814 |

Translation: ...so that the daughters of the Philistines are not joyful;... In any war, the women often are very appreciative of the victory achieved. This again is poetic license; David is asking that this news of Israel's defeat not be announced, so that no one rejoices in Philistia.

2Samuel 1:20d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| pen (וְ) [pronounced <i>pen</i>] | <i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i> | conjunction | Strong's #6435 BDB #814 |
| ʿâlaz (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAHZ</i>] | <i>to exult, to rejoice; to triumph</i> | 3 rd person feminine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #5937 BDB #759 |

2Samuel 1:20d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i>] | <i>daughter; village</i> | feminine plural construct | Strong's #1323 BDB #123 |
| ʿârêl (אֲרֵל) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAY</i>] | <i>having foreskins, foreskinned ones; generally rendered uncircumcised [ones, men]</i> | masculine plural adjective | Strong's #6189 BDB #790 |

Translation: ...so that the daughters of the uncircumcised do not rejoice. This is our final parallel line in this verse, asking that these Philistine women not rejoice. Obviously, at the news of Israel's defeat, all Philistia will rejoice.

In the ancient world, it was typical for the women of a victorious people to sing and dance when victory is announced (Ex. 15:20 Judges 11:34 1Sam. 18:6).

**Mountains in the Gilboa, [there is] no mist;
and [there is] no rain upon you [all];
and fields of offerings;
for there was defiled a shield of mighty ones,
a shield of Saul;
not anointed in oil.**

2Samuel
1:21

**[There is] no mist [upon] the mountains in
Gilboa,
[there is] no rain upon you [all]
or [upon] fields of offerings,
for the shield of [Israel's] soldiers were
defiled [or, cast away]—[even] the shield of
Saul;
[for they were] not anointed with oil.**

**There is no mist on the mountains of Gilboa;
and there is no rain upon all of you or upon your fields of offerings,
for the shield of Israel's soldiers are defiled—even the shield of Saul,
for they were not anointed with oil.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Latin Vulgate | You mountains of Gelboe, let neither dew, nor rain come upon you, neither be they fields of firstfruits; for there was cast away the shield of the valiant, the shield of Saul as though he had not been anointed with oil. |
| Masoretic Text | Mountains in the Gilboa, [there is] no mist; and [there is] no rain upon you [all]; and fields of offerings; for there was defiled a shield of mighty ones, a shield of Saul; not anointed in oil. |
| Septuagint | You mountains of Gelbue, let not dew nor rain descend upon you, nor fields of first-fruits <i>be upon you</i> , for there the shield of the mighty ones has been grievously assailed; the shield of Saul was not anointed with oil. |

Significant differences: The translators of the LXX, Vulgate and Peshitta interpret this as a poetic request that David is making. I have interpreted it more as a statement.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----|---|
| CEV | Don't let dew or rain fall on the hills of Gilboa. Don't let its fields grow offerings for God. There the warriors' shields were smeared with mud, and Saul's own shield was left unpolished. |
| NLT | O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you or your slopes. For there the shield of the mighty was defiled; the shield of Saul will no longer be anointed with oil. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|--------------|---|
| God's Word™ | You mountains in Gilboa, may there be no dew or rain on you or on your slopes, because warriors' shields were tarnished there. Saul's shield was never rubbed with olive oil. |
| JPS (Tanakh) | O hills of Gilboa— Let there be no dew or rain on you, Or bountiful fields [meaning of Hebrew uncertain; emendation yields "springs from the deep"] For there the shield of warriors lay rejected, The shield of Saul, Polished with oil no more. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Edersheim | O mountains in Gilboa—no dew, nor rain upon you, nor fields of first-fruit offerings— For there defiled is the shield of the heroes, The shield of Saul, no more anointed with oil! |
| Updated <i>Emphasized Bible</i> | You mountains in Gilboa! Be there neither dew nor rain upon you, Nor [upon] the fields of offerings, For there the shields of the mighty were cast away, The shield of Saul, no longer anointed with oil. |
| KJV (Scofield) | Ye mountains of Gilboa, <i>let there be</i> no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, <i>as though he had not been</i> anointed with oil. |
| LTHB | Mountains of Gilboa, <i>let</i> not dew or rain <i>be</i> on you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, not <i>being</i> anointed with oil.. |
| NRSV | You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor bounteous fields! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no more. |
| Young's Updated LT | Mountains of Gilboa! No dew nor rain be on you, And fields of heave-offerings! For there has become loathsome The shield of the mighty, The shield of Saul—without the anointed with oil. |

The gist of this verse?

Because the shields of the mighty soldiers of Israel lie on the ground of Mount Gilboa, David calls for no more rain or dew upon them. These hills have been defiled.

2Samuel 1:21a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|--|
| har (הַר) [pronounced <i>har</i>] | <i>hill; mountain, mount; hill-country</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #2042 (and #2022) BDB #249 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| Gil ^e bbō ^r a (גִּלְבּוֹא) [pronounced <i>gil-BOH-ahg</i>] | transliterated <i>Gilboa</i> | proper noun; location; with the definite article | Strong's #1533 BDB #162 |
| ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a</i>] | <i>not; nothing; none</i> | adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done | Strong's #408 BDB #39 |
| ṭal (טַל) [pronounced <i>tahl</i>] | <i>night mist, mist, dew</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #2919 BDB #378 |

Translation: [There is] no mist [upon] the mountains in Gilboa,... Mount Gilboa is where the army of Israel was soundly defeated (1Sam. 31:1 1Chron. 10:1, 8). David curses the mountain, because the army of Israel was cursed upon this mountain.

Israel is an agricultural economy at this time, and rain and mist are good things. They depend upon the rain and the mist to water their crops. For those who have plants, you know that misting your plants makes them happy (well, as happy as plants can be). It is good for the crops in Israel—those in the mountains of Gilboa—to have a daily mist come down upon them and envelop them. However, the military defeat ruins the lives of those in Israel, which is illustrated with the lack of mist in the mountains of Gilboa.

In many translations, David calls for there to be no more mist upon the mountains of Gilboa; the idea being, that the crops and the trees of that area should just die off as did the soldiers of Israel who fell there.

2Samuel 1:21b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wāw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a</i>] | <i>not; nothing; none</i> | adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done | Strong's #408 BDB #39 |
| māṭâr (מָטָר) [pronounced <i>maw-TAWR</i>] | <i>rain</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #4306 BDB #564 |

2Samuel 1:21b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity; with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |

Translation:...[there is] no rain upon you [all]... Where the Jews lived, there was no rain—metaphorically speaking. A specific place is not named here, as military defeat put all Israel at risk for slavery, rape and destruction. No rain to an agricultural economy indicates economic depression. This simply represents an abhorrence on the part of David for what happened on this mountain.³⁵

Again, many translators interpret this as a jussive—that David calls for the rain not to fall. Again, the idea is for the land to become as barren and as dead as the soldiers who fell there. Similar cursings are found in Scripture: Judges 5:23 Job. 3:3–10 Isa. 5:6 Jer. 20:14–16. In fact, when Jesus curses the fig tree (Mark 11:12–14, 20–21), we may be confused; but He uses His cursing of the fig tree as an object lesson.

2Samuel 1:21c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| sâdeh (הַשָּׂדֵה) [pronounced <i>sâw-DEH</i>] | <i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #7704 BDB #961 |
| t ^e rûmâh (תְּרוּמָה) [pronounced <i>t'roo-MAWH</i>] | <i>contribution, offering, an offering [of grain, money]</i> | feminine plural noun | Strong's #8641 BDB #929 |

Translation: ...or [upon] fields of offerings,... There is no rain upon their fields, the fields where their offerings (their cattle and sheep) graze. There is no water for these animals. Again, this is metaphorical for their military defeat. There may or may not be rain throughout Israel, but their being defeated by the Philistines is like suffering a great drought.

What is being expressed here is great sadness over Israel's defeat. Joy would be to walk out to see one's farm or ranch, and to observe the crops and trees all growing and bountiful; with the livestock and flocks healthy and active. But here, the picture is walking out to a mountain, once prosperous, and now dead from drought. The idea is, David is not really observing this, nor is he calling upon God to make this mountain into a desert mountain. He looks upon this mountain, and sees all of the dead, heroic soldiers of Israel; it is as if there will no longer be prosperity and joy in this place, due to the great defeat that Israel suffered.

³⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:21.

2Samuel 1:21d

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------|
| kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm] | <i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i> | adverb | Strong's #8033 BDB #1027 |
| gâ'al (גָּאֵל) [pronounced gaw-GAHL] | <i>to be defiled; to cast away; to be loathed or abhorred</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect | Strong's #1602 BDB #171 |
| mâgên (מָגֵן) [pronounced maw-GAYN] | <i>shield, smaller shield; protection</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4043 BDB #171 |
| gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced gib-BOAR] | <i>strong men, mighty men, soldiers</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #1368 BDB #150 |
| mâgên (מָגֵן) [pronounced maw-GAYN] | <i>shield, smaller shield; protection</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #4043 BDB #171 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL] | <i>which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |

Translation: ...for the shield of [Israel's] soldiers were defiled [or, cast away]—[even] the shield of Saul;... Here we are told *why* there is no rain in Israel; we are told *why* Israel is suffering great economic depression—the defiling of the shields of the soldiers simply means that they were defeated in battle by the Philistines. The Philistines killed huge numbers of Israeli soldiers. Furthermore, King Saul died in battle as well, as indicated by the fact that his shield was also defiled.

We may also see this as a picture of their shields being cast aside in battle, dropped to the ground as the soldiers are killed. The overall picture is one of bleakness and sadness and desolation.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown write: *To cast away the shield was counted a national disgrace. Yet, on that fatal battle of Gilboa, many of the Jewish soldiers, who had displayed unflinching valor in former battles, forgetful of their own reputation and their country's honor, threw away their shields and fled from the field. This dishonorable and cowardly conduct is alluded to with exquisitely touching pathos.*³⁶

Keil and Delitzsch³⁷ tell us that the mountains there are cursed, because this is where the shields of Saul and his soldiers were defiled; this is where their shields were cast aside. The army of Israel was cursed in that spot; so the area itself is cursed as well.

³⁶ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 1:21.

³⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 1:21. I have paraphrased and added a couple of thoughts.

2Samuel 1:21e

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| b ^e lîy (לֹא־י) [pronounced b ^e LEE] | <i>not, without</i> | negative/substantive | Strong's #1097 BDB #115 |
| In a manuscript written about the year 1200, numbered 30 in Kennicott's Bible, kely (לֹא־י) is found; and also in the first edition of the whole Hebrew Bible, printed Soncini 1488. Neither the Syriac nor Arabic versions, nor the Chaldee paraphrase, acknowledge the negative particle beli (לֹא־י), which they would have done had it been in the copies from which they translated. It was easy to make the mistake, as there is such a similarity between בּ beth and כּ caph; the line therefore should be read thus: The shield of Saul, weapons anointed with oil. ³⁸ | | | |
| k ^e lîy (לֵבָי) [pronounced meleē] | <i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i> | masculine plural noun with the 3 rd masculine singular suffix | Strong's #3627 BDB #479 |
| Even though it is clear that one could be confounded with the other, I do not see this revised translation as making more sense. | | | |
| Mâshîyach (מָשַׁח) [pronounced maw-SHEE-ahkh] | <i>anointed, anointed one, transliterated Messiah</i> | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #4899 protectorate #603 |
| Some manuscripts read.... | | | |
| mâshach (מָשַׁח) [pronounced maw-SHAHKH] | <i>to smear, to anoint</i> | Qal passive participle | Strong's #4886 BDB #602 |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| shemen (שֶׁמֶן) [pronounced SHEH-men] | <i>fat, oil</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #8081 BDB #1032 |

Translation:...[\[for they were\] not anointed with oil.](#) The shields here are said to *not* be anointed with Oil. this does not mean that Saul and his soldiers died in battle because someone forgot to oil their shields. I think, part of this may be understood to mean that Saul's shield (as well as the others) would be polished with oil no more. After a battle, the soldiers would return to their campsite and clean their weapons and shields, and polish them with oil, which protected them from rust and made them shine.

Barnes says that shields would be oiled prior to battle (Isa. 21:5), which is also reasonable. It would seem that this oiling would occur after a battle and before, much as one would clean a gun with oil. Gower tells us the leather shields were oiled so that they would not crack; the oil acted as a preservative and a protectorate.³⁹ For Saul's leather shield to never be oiled again indicates that it falls into disuse and neglect, because the owner of the shield—Saul—has died in battle.

³⁸ Quoted from Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:21. This is also the opinion of Bullinger: *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 116.

³⁹ *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*; Ralph Gower; ©1987 by Moody International; © by Moody Press; p. 117.

We may also interpret this to mean, the anointing with oil refers to protection and empowerment of God the Holy Spirit. Saul, and the soldiers with him, were estranged from God. Again and again, when there was a choice to make, Saul always chose to do that which was against God. He inspired his own men to function similarly. He even took a small army to Nob and killed all of the priests there, almost wiping out the priestly line. Although not all of his soldiers participated in the killing, they did restrain the priests until Doeg could kill them personally, acting on Saul's orders. Had these men been on trial, the soldiers would have been found as guilty as Saul and as guilty as Doeg. They were accomplices in this vile act. They were against God, and this vicious attack upon the priests at Nob is indicative of their negative volition. Although this is an alternate interpretation, I believe the former interpretation is apt. David is not laying blame; he is not saying, "Well, you wouldn't be dead if you had acted better." This is completely outside the tenor of this psalm. Therefore, the most likely meaning is, these shields just lie there in the dirt, not to be polished ever again.

As noted in the exegesis, Clarke tells us that this should read [The shield of Saul, weapons anointed with oil.](#)

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| <p>From blood of slain ones; from fat of the mighty ones; a bow of Jonathan did not turn away back; and a sword of Saul does not return empty.</p> | <p>2Samuel 1:22</p> | <p>From the blood of those [who were] slain; from the fat of the soldiers; the bow of Jonathan was not turned back and the sword of Saul did not return empty.</p> |
|---|-------------------------|---|

**The bow of Jonathan did not turn back from the blood of the slain;
the sword of Saul did not return empty from the fat of the soldiers.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | <p>From blood of slain ones; from fat of the mighty ones; a bow of Jonathan did not turn away back; and a sword of Saul does not return empty.</p> |
| Septuagint | <p>From the blood of the slain, and from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan returned not empty; and the sword of Saul turned not back empty.</p> |

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|------------|---|
| CEV NAB | <p>The arrows of Jonathan struck, and warriors died. The sword of Saul cut the enemy apart. "From the blood of the slain, from the bodies of the valiant, The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, or the sword of Saul return unstained.</p> |
| NLT | <p>Both Saul and Jonathan killed their strongest foes; they did not return from battle empty-handed.</p> |
| REB | <p>The bow of Jonathan never held back from the breast of the forman, from the blood of the slain; the sword of Saul never returned empty to the scabbard.</p> |
| TEV | <p>Jonathan's bow was deadly, the sword of Saul was merciless, striking down the mighty, killing the enemy.</p> |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

HCSB Jonathan's bow never retreated, Saul's sword never returned unstained, from the blood of the slain, from the bodies of the mighty.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Edersheim From blood of slain, from fat of heroes
The bow of Jonathan turned not backward,
And the sword of Saul returned not void (lacking)!

ESV From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Young's Updated LT From the blood of the wounded, From the fat of the mighty, The bow of Jonathan has not turned backward; and the sword of Saul does not return empty.

You no doubt notice that I have many of the less than literal translations quoted here; that means that the interpretation of this verse is difficult. The translation is fairly straightforward. I think that the easiest way to understand this is to connect the 3rd line with the 1st, and the 4th line with the 2nd, as was done in the TEV (which is reflected in my less than literal translation).

The gist of this verse? Saul and Jonathan's participation in Israel's wars was with great results of many enemies dead.

| 2Samuel 1:22a | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| dâm (דָּם) [pronounced <i>dawm</i>] | <i>blood, often visible blood; bloodshed, slaughter; bloodguilt; blood of the grape [wine]</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #1818 BDB #196 |
| châlâl (חָלַל) [pronounced <i>chaw-LAWL</i>] | <i>slain, fatally wounded, wounded, pierced; from a verb which means to bore, to pierce</i> | masculine plural noun (or adjective) | Strong's #2491 BDB #319 |
| min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>] | <i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| chêleb (חֵלֶב) [pronounced <i>KHAY-le^bv</i>] | <i>fat</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #2459 BDB #316 |
| gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i>] | <i>strong men, mighty men, soldiers</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #1368 BDB #150 |

Translation: From the blood of those [who were] slain; from the fat of the soldiers;... Here, we are speaking of those who have died in battle; their blood is pretty obvious. Less obvious is, what does David mean by the *fat of the soldiers*? Do these soldiers need to work out more? Should they have jogged a little more before going out to battle? Did they need to cut back on fatty foods? *Fat* often refers to a person's wealth, his possessions; in the battle field, we have it stained with blood of those who have died as well as their possessions (which they carried) left to be plundered. Ancient soldiers did not have the sophisticated support which we have—they had animals and things brought from home, as opposed to K-rations. After a battle, their blood and possessions were laid out in the field.

The other interpretation is, the *fat* of the soldiers refers to their flesh, as the word does when applied to animal sacrifices. This seems to be more in line with what we read in Isa. 34:6: [The LORD's sword is covered with blood. It drips with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.](#)

2Samuel 1:22b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| qesheth (קֶשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>KEH-sheth</i>] | <i>bow; bowman, archer; strength, power; rainbow</i> | feminine singular construct | Strong's #7198 BDB #905 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>] | <i>not, no</i> | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| çûwg (שׁוּג) [pronounced <i>soog</i>] | <i>to turn back [away]; to draw back; to turn oneself away; to withdraw; to be made to draw back; to be turned [driven] back</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect | Strong's #5472 (& #7734) BDB #690 |
| BDB lists this as being equivalent to Strong's #5253, which is given a separate listing by Strong, New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament, and by Gesenius; therefore, I will go with the latter 3 and list this other listing under BDB #650, although, BDB does not actually have a listing for Strong's #5253 there. This is where it would belong alphabetically. | | | |
| Strong's #7734 is just an alternative spelling for Strong's #5472 (found in some manuscripts that way in 2Sam. 1:22). The alternate spelling is sūwg (שׁוּג) [pronounced <i>soog</i>]. | | | |
| ʿâchōwr (אָחוּר) [pronounced <i>aw-KHOHR</i>] | <i>the hinder side, the back part; back, backwards [generally found in poetry]</i> | masculine singular substantive; adverb | Strong's #268 BDB #30 |

Translation: ...the bow of Jonathan was not turned back... David says that Jonathan had a successful military career. He did not go out to fight and simply die in battle. Jonathan was extremely successful as a soldier; his bow was not turned back.

2Samuel 1:22c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE^BV</i>] | <i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i> | feminine singular construct | Strong's #2719 BDB #352 |
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |

| 2Samuel 1:22c | | | |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low] | <i>not, no</i> | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v] | <i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i> | 3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #7725 BDB #996 |
| rêyqâm (רֵיקָם) [pronounced ray-KAWM] | <i>empty, empty-handed; in vain, to no purpose; without cause, without purpose, rashly</i> | adverb | Strong's #7387 BDB #938 |

Translation: ...and the sword of Saul did not return empty. Just as was true of Jonathan, so the same was true of Saul. Scripture concentrates on his shortcomings, for which Saul is legend; however, as a soldier, as a man who would risk his life to deliver his country, Saul had few equals. It was Saul's illustrious military career which qualified him as a great soldier, as a man whose sword did not return empty. His sword was not turned back; it was not used in vain. Saul maintained the freedom of Israel for many years (for most of the 40 that he was king). So David gives Saul his due—much more than we look back and give him credit for. However, David was there; David shows respect for Saul the man, as well as the office that Saul held. God the Holy Spirit kept this psalm in the Word of God. Therefore, we know that Saul had an accomplished military history.

There have been great US soldiers, who distinguished themselves with their bravery and self-sacrifice. Some of these same soldiers returned home and turned to drugs or alcohol; many leading a rather lack-luster life after their distinguished service. Think of Saul in these terms.

Let's reorganize these lines and present them:

The bow of Jonathan did not turn back from the blood of the slain;
the sword of Saul did not return empty from the fat of the soldiers.

I believe that David is applying these lines to the illustrious careers of Saul and Jonathan, rather than simply to this one battle where it appears as though there was an early retreat.

Wesley comments: *Their arrows shot from their bow, and their swords did seldom miss, and commonly pierced fat, and flesh, and blood, and reached even to the heart and bowels.*⁴⁰

**Saul and Jonathan, the loved ones and pleasant [ones];
in their lives and their deaths they were not separated;
from eagles, they were swift;
from lions they were strong.**

2Samuel
1:23

**Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous;
they were not separated in their lives nor in their deaths;
they were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.**

**Saul and Jonathan were both beloved and generous;
they were not separated in their lives nor were they separated at death.
They were swifter than eagles and they were stronger than lions in war.**

⁴⁰ John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 2:22.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Latin Vulgate | Saul and Jonathan, lovely, and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions. |
| Masoretic Text | Saul and Jonathan, the loved ones and pleasant [ones]; in their lives and their deaths they were not separated; from eagles, they were swift; from lions they were strong. |
| Septuagint | Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the beautiful, were not divided: attractive were they in their life, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, and they were stronger than lions. |

Significant differences: The second adjective to describe Saul and Jonathan has several meanings, which accounts for any differences between the Greek and Hebrew. The second line in the Greek tells us that they were attractive in their lives (in the Hebrew, we apply the verb *divided* to their lives and deaths). I suspect what happened was, the scribe repeated the word *pleasant* by accident in the manuscripts used by the LXX translators, so they used that as a verb. The Latin takes that second adjective and applies it to *their lives*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----|---|
| CEV | It was easy to love Saul and Jonathan. Together in life, together in death, they were faster than eagles and stronger than lions. |
|-----|---|

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|--------------|---|
| God's Word™ | Saul and Jonathan were loved and well-liked while they were living. They were not separated even when they died. They were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions. |
| HCSB | Saul and Jonathan, loved and delightful, they were not parted in life or in death. They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions. |
| JPS (Tanakh) | Saul and Jonathan, Beloved and cherished, Never parted In life or in death! They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions! |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| LTHB | Saul and Jonathan! They were beloved and delightful in their lives; and in their death they were not parted. They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions. |
| Young's Updated LT | Saul and Jonathan! They are loved and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they have not been parted. Than eagles they have been lighter, Than lions they have been mightier! |

The gist of this verse?

Saul and Jonathan had great qualities—they were beloved and generous. They were not separated in their lives or in their deaths. As warriors, they were fast and strong.

2Samuel 1:23a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced y ^e -hoh-naw-THAWN] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| ʾâhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced aw-HAYV ^e] | <i>to be loved; amiable</i> | masculine plural, Niphal participle | Strong's #157 BDB #12 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| nâ'îym (נְאִיִּם) [pronounced naw-GEEM] | <i>pleasant, agreeable, delightful; pleasures; generous</i> | masculine plural adjective with the definite article | Strong's #5273 BDB #653 |

Translation: *Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous;...* Both Saul and Jonathan were beloved. Even though Saul was crazy, you will recall that his soldiers sought to ease his mental anguish—no one thought to kill Saul and seize his power. Saul did give, although, with David, he gave with strings. Jonathan gave completely of his own volition, without strings. You will recall that Jonathan gave David his own personal armor and military equipment.

2Samuel 1:23b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| chayyâh (חַיִּים) [pronounced khay-YAWH] | <i>living thing, animal, life, organisms, life form; appetite, revival, renewal; community, family, assembled group, allied families, bands</i> | feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #2416 BDB #312 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced MAW-veth] | <i>death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death</i> | masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #4194 BDB #560 |

2Samuel 1:23b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced low] | <i>not, no</i> | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| pârad (פָּרַד) [pronounced paw-RAHD] | <i>to divide, to separate; to be divided, to be separated</i> | 3 rd person plural, Niphal perfect; pausal form | Strong's #6504 BDB #825 |

Translation: ...they were not separated in their lives nor in their deaths;... Saul and Jonathan remained together for all of their lives. Jonathan became one of Saul's greatest generals. Therefore, even when they went to war, they remained together.

The second line is interesting. We do not know anything about Jonathan's end—it seems unlikely that he and Saul were together at their deaths, or it seems that the account of Saul's death would mention that. I believe what is being said here is, in their deaths—that is, after they die—Saul and Jonathan remained together, both going to Abraham's bosom (the compartment of the saved in Hades). We've discussed Saul and his salvation before in great detail—there is a great deal of evidence that Saul was saved, which means he will spend eternity with God. The fact that he was a failure in his life does not make him any less saved.

There are two slightly different ways to group these phrases, giving us two interpretations.

The Two Interpretations of 2Sam. 2:23

Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous;
they were not separated in their lives nor in their deaths;

Interpretation: Saul and Jonathan were both beloved and generous. They functioned together as a team in life, although not always in the same location. They will remain together in death, both dying on the same battlefield and spending eternity in Abraham's bosom.

Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous in their lives;
and they were not separated in their deaths;

Interpretation: Throughout their lives, Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous. They died together on the battlefield and will spend eternity together in Abraham's bosom.

Although the second interpretation seems to be the most natural, the second interpretation violates a general rule of Hebrew poetry where each line does not begin with a wâw conjunction (however, in prose, we find wâw consecutives and wâw conjunctions strewn about between every phrase).

The explanation for the second interpretation is also easier: Saul and Jonathan separated over David, coming to a point where Saul almost killed Jonathan. They often commanded troops in different locations; so, Saul and Jonathan were separated in their lives—but they were beloved and generous in their lives. In their deaths, they were not separated, as they will both end up on Abraham's bosom.

However, we do not choose an interpretation because we find it to be the easiest and most logical. We must go with what is generally done in the Hebrew, which puts us with the first interpretation. In a situation like this, I would put a great deal of weight with the JPS translation (which is not a bad rule of thumb when looking for a good starting point for the interpretation of a verse).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

| 2Samuel 1:23c | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| min (מן) [pronounced <i>min</i>] | <i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| nesher (נֶשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>NEH-sheer</i>] | <i>eagles, vultures</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #5404 BDB #676 |
| qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAL</i>] | ❶ <i>to be diminished</i> (note the passive meaning); ❷ <i>to be despised, to be contemned</i> (again, a passive meaning); ❸ <i>to be swift, to be fleet</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #7043 BDB #886 |
| min (מן) [pronounced <i>min</i>] | <i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| ʾārîy (אֲרִי) [pronounce, <i>uh-REE</i>] | <i>lion</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #738 BDB #71 |
| gâbar (גָּבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>] | <i>to be strong, to be mighty, to exhibit greater strength than, to be stronger than, to prevail over</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; pausal form | Strong's #1396 BDB #149 |

Translation: ...they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Now, quite obviously, Saul and Jonathan could not move faster than eagles nor were they stronger than lions. This is poetic license, and an obvious literary exaggeration which indicates that in war, they were fast and strong.

When we interpret Scripture, we should often approach it like any other literary work. If we read in an adventure book that Charlie Brown is as strong as a bear, we would not take that literally. Therefore, when we read similar words here, we should not take it literally either.

With regards to their being **swifter than eagles**, Gill writes: *in the quick dispatch of business, in quickly moving to the relief of the distressed, as Saul to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and in the pursuit of their enemies, as of the Philistines, more than once*⁴¹. And, with regards to them being **stronger than lions**, he writes: *fighting with their enemies, who became an easy prey to them; and what is stronger than a lion among beasts (Judges 14:18)? Or swifter than an eagle among birds, which is said to cut the air with its wings?*⁴²

We have similar poetic license taken in Jer. 4:13 and Lam. 4:19.

⁴¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 2:23.

⁴² Ibid., but Gill makes reference here to Aelian (Claudius Aelianus). *Historical Animals* [probably *On the Characteristics of Animals*] I. 15. c. 22. Vid. Ciceron. de Divinatione, I. 2. prope finem.

Daughters of Israel, unto Saul weep!
The one clothing you [all] in scarlet
[clothing] with ornaments;
the one putting [on you] an ornament of gold
upon your clothing.

2Samuel
1:24

Weep regarding Saul, [you] daughters of
Israel!
[He is the one] clothing you in scarlet
clothing with ornaments;
[he is the one] who puts ornaments of gold
upon your clothing.

Weep, you daughters of Israel; weep for Saul!
He is the one who has clothed you in scarlet with adornment;
he is the one who has given you golden ornaments to add to your clothing.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Daughters of Israel, unto Saul weep!
The one clothing you [all] in scarlet [clothing] with ornaments;
the one putting [on you] an ornament of gold upon your clothing.

Septuagint

Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you with scarlet together with your
adorning, who added golden ornaments to your apparel.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Women of Israel, cry for Saul. He brought you fine red cloth and jewelry made of gold.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

Daughters of Israel, cry over Saul, who dressed you in decorated, red clothes, who
put gold jewelry on your clothes.

HCSB

Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with luxurious things,
who decked your garments with gold ornaments.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

WEB You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet delicately, who put
ornaments of gold on your clothing.

Young's Updated LT

Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul weep! Who is clothing you in scarlet with
delights? Who is lifting up ornaments of gold on your clothing?

The gist of this verse?

David calls upon the women of Israel to weep because Saul and Jonathan have
been killed in battle. It is the military of Israel which provides freedom for the
women of Israel.

2Samuel 1:24a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i>] | <i>daughter; village</i> | feminine plural construct | Strong's #1323 BDB #123 |

2Samuel 1:24a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| Yis ^o rá ^h ʻêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis'-raw-ALE] | transliterated <i>Israel</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3478 BDB #975 |
| ʻel (אֶל) [pronounced e/] | <i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| Shâ ^h ʻûwl (שָׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL] | which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #7586 BDB #982 |
| bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced baw-KAW] | <i>to weep, to cry, to bewail</i> | 2 nd person feminine plural, Qal imperative | Strong's #1058 BDB #113 |

Translation: [Weep regarding Saul, \[you\] daughters of Israel!](#) David calls upon the women of Israel to mourn for Saul. Freedom in a nation is purchased on the battlefield; no politician gives any person freedom. No king or political leader provides freedom or prosperity. Freedom is provided by those who are willing to risk their lives to deliver a nation. This was doubly true of Israel, as the nations which surrounded Israel were naturally antagonistic toward Israel—more so than to one another. Therefore, as we observed in the Book of the Judges, nations were constantly invading Israel and subjecting them to payment. Saul spent much of his life fighting Israel's enemies, and thereby providing freedom and prosperity for the nation Israel. The women of Israel were greatly blessed by what Saul had done.

2Samuel 1:24b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| lâbash (לָבַשׁ) [pronounced law-BAHSH] | <i>to put on [someone else], to clothe [someone else], to put a garment on someone</i> | Hiphil participle with the definite article and the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #3847 BDB #527 |
| shânîy (שָׁנִי) [pronounced shaw-NEE] | <i>crimson, scarlet; scarlet clothing</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #8144 BDB #1040 |
| ʻîm (עִם) [pronounced geem] | <i>with, at, by, near</i> | preposition of nearness and vicinity | Strong's #5973 BDB #767 |
| ʻădîy (עֲדִי) [pronounced guh-DEE] | <i>ornaments, ornament trappings, accessories; age; mouth</i> | masculine plural collective noun | Strong's #5716 BDB #725 |

BDB gives the meanings *luxury, dainty, delight, finery, delight*. I believe that the meanings given above are more accurate.

Translation:...[\[He is the one\] clothing you in scarlet clothing with ornaments;](#)... This is poetry. Because it is poetry, there are a different set of rules to apply. I have heard the incorrect viewpoint that *poetry should not be taken as lying prose*. The idea in that statement is that poetry should be taken as literally as narrative. This is simply not true. There were human writers of Scripture and they used a huge number of literary nuances based upon their literary style. One author might write in completely chronological narrative form (like Luke). Another might quote a variety of sources and present his subject matter topically, even within narratives. Another might

be given to metaphor and simile; another to exaggeration. A prophet like Jeremiah might do unusual things in front of those who hear him in order to make a point. These are human literary styles and human literary nuances, and we need to adjust our thinking to take these things into consideration.

With regards to poetry and prose: poetry often uses a different vocabulary. For the past several verses, I have used a large number of words not found in the first half of this chapter. Furthermore, whereas we find the wâw consecutive used over and over in prose, we practically never see it used in Hebrew poetry. A translator can be dealing with the Hebrew and can tell you almost the very moment the Hebrew changes from prose to poetry and back to prose. It stands out; it reaches out and grabs you.

Since we are clearly dealing with poetry, we tend to be less literal. Personally, my approach in interpretation is to take a passage literally first; and, if that does not seem to make sense, or if there are various literary indicators in that context which suggest something else, then I approach the interpretation differently. We do this all of the time in conversation. When talking to someone about how they slept the night before, they might say, “I tossed and turned.” Does this mean that they had a ball of some sort and tossed it in the air? Did they do a quick turn to catch the ball? Of course not and you would never even think to interpret what they said in that way. If they said, “I was dead to the world.” Do you take this to mean that they had died in their sleep, yet, are somehow, the next morning, able to talk to you (perhaps they were necessitated by a team of medical specialists?). You would never take those words to mean that. In the first case, you know that they did not sleep much and they continued to turn in their beds trying to find a position where they would fall asleep. In the second case, you know that they fell fast asleep and that nothing woke them up. These things we understand without even giving the words a second thought. When dealing in another language, it is not quite as easy; however, that simply requires that we examine the words a with a bit more care.

In this passage, we had our last wâw consecutive back in v. 18; and in the verses that we have covered since then, we have barely had a handful of wâw conjunctions. This tells us immediately that we are dealing with a completely different style of writing, which we refer to as Hebrew poetry (and most translations reflect this in the way that they format the text).

In this particular verse—do you think we are to understand that Saul and Jonathan, between wars, took scarlet clothing throughout the land and personally fitted the women with new scarlet clothing? Did they then reach into a bag of jewelry and say, “You know, dear, I have just the perfect accessory for you right here in this bag.” Of course they did nothing of the sort. Because they provided Israel freedom from outside attacks, this allowed Israel to become more prosperous, which meant that the women of Israel could clothe themselves in nice clothing with great accessories. This does not even mean that they were restricted to scarlet clothing. The idea here is, this is a specific kind of dye which was used in the ancient world. BDB tells us: *Properly, the insect ‘coccus ilicis’, the dried body of the female yielding colouring matter from which is made the dye used for cloth to colour it scarlet or crimson.*⁴³ So, not only were these women rich enough to afford nice clothing, but they could have it tailored, dyed and accessorized if they so chose. They could have more than the minimal life requirements. The idea is simply that Israel was prosperous, and that the women of Israel could enjoy this prosperity.

2Samuel 1:24c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| ʿâlâh (עלה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>] | <i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i> | Hiphil participle with the definite article | Strong's #5927 BDB #748 |
| ʿăḏîy (עֲדִי) [pronounced <i>guh-DEE</i>] | <i>ornaments, ornament trappings, accessories; age; mouth</i> | masculine singular collective construct | Strong's #5716 BDB #725 |

⁴³ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; from e-sword, Strong's #8144.

2Samuel 1:24c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| zâhâb (זָהָב) [pronounced zaw-HAW ^{BV}] | gold; a measure of weight [related to gold]; [figuratively used for] brilliance, splendor | masculine singular noun | Strong's #2091 BDB #262 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl] | upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside | preposition of proximity; with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| lûbûsh (לְבוּשׁ) [pronounced l ^B -ŌOSH] | garment, clothing, rainment | masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix | Strong's #3830 BDB #528 |

Translation:...[he is the one] who puts ornaments of gold upon your clothing. Again, we are not saying here that Saul and Jonathan literally put golden ornaments upon the women of Israel; we are not even saying that most of the women of Israel wore golden ornaments. It is simply that they were prosperous and could afford more than the basic clothing.

So, right now you are thinking, *duh!* You did not need to cover something this obvious in all of this detail. However, the reason I did this is, so that when we come upon a sentence here or there which is more difficult to understand; where one might think a literal understanding is more appropriate; you can recognize that, clearly we are dealing with poetry and clearly the rules are different.

What Saul did provide was an atmosphere of freedom where Israelites were able to trade and to make money and to provide the good things of that time period for their loved ones. Saul and Jonathan, by protecting the security and freedom of Israel, made it possible for them to have great prosperity, which included brilliant and festive clothing as well as jewelry for the women of Israel. It is possible that some of these things were secured as booty from wars with various surrounding nations.

Barnes comments on this verse overall: *The women of Israel are most happily introduced. They who had come out to meet king Saul with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music” in the day of victory, are now called to weep over him.*⁴⁴

| | | |
|--|-----------------|--|
| How have fallen the mighty ones in a midst of the battle! | 2Samuel 1:25 | How the mighty have fallen in the midst of war! |
| Jonathan upon Your high places [lies] slain! | | Jonathan [lies] upon Your high places slain! |

**Oh, how the mighty have fallen in battle!
Even Jonathan lies slain upon Your high places!**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Latin Vulgate | How are the valiant fallen in battle? Jonathan slain in the high places? |
| Masoretic Text | How have fallen the mighty ones in a midst of the battle! Jonathan upon Your high places [lies] slain! |
| Septuagint | How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, even the slain ones upon thy high places! |

⁴⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 2:24.

Significant differences: In the Greek, David addresses Jonathan and says, Even those who have died, have died in your mountains. In the Hebrew, it is Jonathan who has died in *Your high places* (which makes more sense). The Latin is almost the same as the Hebrew, except that there is no personal pronoun attached to *high places*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV [Our warriors have fallen in the heat of battle, and Jonathan lies dead on the hills of Gilboa.](#)

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ [See how the mighty have fallen in battle! On your hills Jonathan was killed!](#)

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV ["How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!" Jonathan lies slain on your high places.](#)

Young's Updated LT [How the mighty have fallen In the midst of the battle! Jonathan—on your high places wounded!](#)

The gist of this verse? Again the refrain, *How the mighty have fallen!* However, at this point, David will now speak about Jonathan in particular.

| 2Samuel 1:25a | | | |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| ʾêyk (אֵיךְ) [pronounced <i>ayche</i>] | <i>how</i> | interrogative adverb | Strong's #349 BDB #32 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i>] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i>] | <i>strong, mighty, valiant</i> | masculine plural adjective | Strong's #1368 BDB #150 |
| This appears to be an adjective which began to be used more commonly as a noun. | | | |
| b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| tâvek ^e (תַּוֶּכֶּה) [pronounced <i>taw-VEK^E</i>] | <i>midst, among, middle</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #8432 BDB #1063 |
| mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>] | <i>battle, war</i> | feminine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #4421 BDB #536 |

Translation: [How the mighty have fallen in the midst of war!](#) *Mighty* is a masculine plural adjective, and it refers to all of the Israeli soldiers who bravely died in battle. Specifically, it refers to Saul and Jonathan; and, more specifically, to Jonathan. For the next several verses, David will mourn Jonathan.

2Samuel 1:25b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced y ^e -hoh-naw-THAWN] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity; with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| bâmâh (בָּמֹה) [pronounced baw-MAW] | <i>a high place, elevation, height, mountain; fortress, castle; legitimate altar [built in a high place]</i> | feminine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #1116 BDB #119 |
| châlâl (חָלַל) [pronounced chaw-LAWL] | <i>slain, fatally wounded, wounded, pierced; from a verb which means to bore, to pierce</i> | masculine plural noun (or adjective) | Strong's #2491 BDB #319 |

Translation: Jonathan [lies] upon Your high places slain! Here, we apparently have a reference to God; Jonathan lies dead upon God's high places.

We covered the **Doctrine of High Places** back in 1Sam. 9:12.

Definition of the Word Bâmâh (*High Places*)

Bâmâh has several different meanings:

(1) *a high place, a height, a mountain*. It is found as a general word which can refer to mountains or hills without any religious connotation (2Sam. 1:19, 25 Jer. 26:18 Micah 3:12).

(2) Bâmâh can also refer to *a fortress, a castle* [which has been built upon a mountain or a hill]. This can be used in a figurative sense (Psalm 18:24) or a literal sense (Ezek. 43:7). It can mean

(3) *heights, high places* with regards to the seas (Job 9:8); and with regards to clouds (Isa. 14:14).

(4) The 4th meaning is the one which we so often associate with bâmâh: *high places* where idolatry took place. In some cases, bâmâh refers to the location of the cult activity and in many others, it became so closely associated with the cult activity that bâmâh came to mean the *shrine* itself.

(5) However, bâmâh also refers to legitimate altars and sanctuaries which are built upon hills or mountains as well. It is the latter two uses that we will examine.

(6) Finally, bâmâh is used for a *sepulchral mound*, a use we find in Ezek. 43:7 Isa. 53:9. Now, given all these various nuances of bâmâh, the KJV, interestingly enough, is very consistent in its rendering of this word, and uses the phrase *high place(s)* in almost every occurrence (the few exceptions being *heights* or *Bamah*, the proper noun).

Strong's #1116 BDB #119.

The actual doctrine is about 8 pages long; the shortened version about 3.

You may or may not have referred back to the **Doctrine of High Places**. However, we have the masculine singular suffix *your* added to *bâmâh*. David is first speaking to the women of Israel, telling them to respect all that Saul and Jonathan have done on their behalf; obviously, *your high places* does not refer to some elevated area where women congregate—otherwise, we would find the feminine plural suffix. One might presume that David is speaking to all of Israel in this psalm, and that is a reasonable assumption. However, he uses a masculine plural suffix in that case (see 2Sam. 1:21). Therefore, the most reasonable person to whom this would refer would be God, as David often addressed his psalms to God. As we have seen in the doctrine, even though the term *high places* often refers to an area where idolatry is practiced (which did not even have to be in an elevated area), that this term could also be neutral; and it could refer to an elevated area where God is worshiped. Let me add an additional definition or understanding: Jonathan, insofar as we know, was loyal to David and faithful to God all of his life—we have no indication to the contrary. Even though he continued to serve under Saul, his father, at no time do we find Jonathan participating in the more heinous of Saul’s actions. Jonathan was probably literally slain upon a mountain, or on higher ground; and we may reasonably interpret this passage to mean just that. However, I think that there is more implied by this simple phrase; I believe that Jonathan is seen as one who will have great reward in heaven. His dying upon the *High Places of God* is not so much indicative of a specific physical location where he was slain, but more of an indication that Jonathan would be honored in heaven after his death; that he would be rewarded in heaven after his death. Why would I suggest this? Why, given that *bâmâh* is found used in a number of different ways—none of which may be taken exactly in the way which I have presented—would I suggest that this is a reference to heavenly rewards? The key is the masculine singular suffix: this refers to God—no other reference makes sense, given what we have had so far in this psalm—and, since there is no indication that Jonathan actually died where God was worshiped (the Levites would not keep a place to worship Jehovah near an area which could easily fall under Philistine attack), we must delve further into this term to determine what is meant.

I would like you to examine one more thing; compare this verse to v. 19:

A Comparison of vv. 19 and 25

2Sam. 2:19

2Sam. 2:25

How the mighty have fallen!

Oh, how the mighty have fallen in battle!

V. 25 adds that these mighty have fallen in battle.

O Israel! The glory is slain upon your high places!

Even Jonathan lies slain upon Your high places!

In v. 19, we have the vocative *Israel*; David addresses this psalm to Israel, saying that Israel's glory, the army of Israel, has been defeated on Mount Gilboa. However, we do not have a vocative in v. 25; and, I have interpreted this to mean that David is speaking to God. Israel is the holy ground of God, and Mount Gilboa is a holy mount of God, where Jonathan fell dead in battle.

I reversed the order of v. 19 in order for the parallel to be clear.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Application: Let me add one additional thought: this means that Old Testament saints will receive rewards in heaven just as we will. However, the big difference is how many. In the Old Testament, there were a few dozen men who are associated with God the Holy Spirit. They will receive rewards for their deeds and faithfulness. However, any believer in the New Testament era can potentially be rewarded. You may lead the sorriest life on this planet, with no friends, no expectations, and nothing to look forward to—however, if you learn doctrine and apply what you have learned; discover your spiritual gift and then exploit it and God’s operating assets; you will receive great reward. You can be the biggest nobody on this planet and still reap great rewards in eternity. All you have to do is be filled with the Holy Spirit, learn doctrine, and apply doctrine. What could be simpler?

**Distress to me upon you my brother
Jonathan;
you have been pleasant to me extremely [so];
was wonderful your love to me from a love of
women.**

2Samuel
1:26

**I am distressed because of you my brother
Jonathan;
you have been extremely delightful to me;
your love to me was more extraordinary than
the love of women.**

**I am distressed and saddened because of you, my brother Jonathan;
you life was an extreme delight to me;
and your love toward me was even more extraordinary than the love of the women I have known.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Distress to me upon you my brother Jonathan;
you have been pleasant to me extremely [so];
was wonderful your love to me from a love of women.

Septuagint

I am grieved for you, my brother Jonathan; you were very lovely to me; your love to me was wonderful beyond the love of women.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Jonathan, I miss you most! I loved you like a brother. You were truly loyal to me, more faithful than a wife to her husband.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

I am heartbroken over you, my brother Jonathan. You were my great delight. Your love was more wonderful to me than the love of women.

HCSB

I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother. You were such a friend to me. Your love for me was more wonderful than the love of a woman *for me*.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV

I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was extraordinary, surpassing the love of women.

Young's Updated LT

I am in distress for you, my brother Jonathan, Very pleasant you were to me; Wonderful was your love to me, Above the love of women!

The gist of this verse?

David is particularly distressed over the loss of Jonathan, his closest friend in this world.

2Samuel 1:26a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| tsar (צַר) [pronounced tsar] | <i>an adversary, an enemy; narrow, tight and therefore, distress, affliction, intense distress [caused by an adversary]</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #6862 BDB #865 |

2Samuel 1:26a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Owen lists this as a masculine singular noun, which matches the spelling of this word in his <i>Analytical Key</i> . <i>The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament</i> lists this as the Qal perfect of the verb cognate of <i>tsar</i> . | | | |
| Generally speaking, when <i>tsar</i> means <i>enemy, adversary</i> , it is found in poetry, in the plural, and without a definite article. When in prose, in the singular, and with a definite article, it usually means <i>distress, oppression, affliction</i> . Here (in 1Sam. 13:6), it is in prose, in the singular, but it lacks a definite article. | | | |
| lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l) | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i> | directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| ʿal (על) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i> | preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #5921 BDB #752 |
| ʾâch (אח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i>] | <i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i> | masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #251 BDB #26 |
| Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>] | alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i> | masculine proper noun | Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220 |

Translation: [I am distressed because of you my brother Jonathan](#);... David was deeply upset, distressed and saddened over Jonathan's death. In the previous few verses, when Saul and Jonathan are eulogized, primarily Saul's great bravery and fight for freedom for Israel are emphasized. Nothing is said of Saul's personal character, his mood swings, etc. David correctly recognizes the greatness of Saul. However, with the loss of Jonathan, David becomes much more personal, and he now says what this loss meant to him.

To begin with, Jonathan is called David's brother here. They were brothers in several ways:

How Are David and Jonathan Brothers?

- (1) They worshiped the same God.
- (2) They belonged to the same nation, a client nation to God.
- (3) David was married to Jonathan's sister, making him Jonathan's brother-in-law.
- (4) Finally, they were brothers in terms of closeness and friendship.

David applied this term in the most affectionate way.

2Samuel 1:26b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| nâ'êm (נאם) [pronounced naw-GAME] | <i>to be pleasant, to be delightful, to be attractive</i> | 2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect | Strong's #5276 BDB #653 |
| lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e) | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i> | directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| m ^e ôd (מאד) [pronounced m ^e -ODE] | <i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i> | adverb | Strong's #3966 BDB #547 |

Translation: ...you have been extremely delightful to me;... We have only seen a few instances where David and Jonathan spent time together, and often this was directly related to Saul and his desire to kill David. However, David and Jonathan undoubtedly spent a great deal of time together—during wartime, during the few months of peace which Israel enjoyed now and again. They had a tremendous soul rapport.

2Samuel 1:26c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| pâlâ' (פאלא) [pronounced paw-LAW] | <i>to do that which is extraordinary [marvelous, incredible], to do that which is unusually difficult [which may or may not be a miracle], to do an extraordinary thing</i> | 3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal perfect | Strong's #6381 BDB #810 |
| The Niphal also includes the following meanings, if the context does not point to a particular action: <i>to be beyond one's power, be difficult to do; to be difficult to understand; to be wonderful, be extraordinary.</i> | | | |
| ʾahăbâh (אהבא) [pronounced ah-hu ^b -VAW] | love | feminine singular noun often translated like a verb; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #160 BDB #13 |
| lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e) | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i> | directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| min (מן) [pronounced min] | <i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i> | preposition of separation | Strong's #4480 BDB #577 |
| ʾahăbâh (אהבא) [pronounced ah-hu ^b -VAW] | love | feminine singular construct | Strong's #160 BDB #13 |

2Samuel 1:26c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| nâshîym (נָשִׁי) [pronounced naw-SHEEM] | women, wives | feminine plural noun; irregular plural of Strong's #802 | Strong's #802 BDB #61 |

This is the name which Adam gave the woman. Whereas his name may be used collectively for men and women together, this word strictly refers to the female gender. This word is primarily translated *woman, wife* and is used of women bearing children (Num. 31:18); for a woman as belonging to a man (Gen. 2:24, 25 Deut. 20:7); for women conceiving (Ex. 2:2 Lev. 12:2); etc. The point that I am making is this is strictly a *woman*. This can be rendered as *each one* under certain circumstances (Ex. 11:2 Ruth 1:8 Jer. 9:19).

Translation: ...[your love to me was more extraordinary than the love of women](#). Here, David's words are almost surprising, but it reveals something about David's relationships with women. Recall that, at this point in time, he has had 3 wives: Saul's daughter, Michal; Abigail and Ahinoam. Michal had fallen in love with David, and Saul tried to use this against David. It failed and Saul had to allow them to marry. Michal also warned David that he must leave when Saul's attacks against David became more pronounced. You may recall Abigail from 1Sam. 25, where he husband Nabal and David had a run-in. Abigail smoothed things over, saving Nabal's life. When Nabal realized that his life had been in danger, he died and Abigail became David's wife. She was a woman of great character. We do not know anything about David's 3rd wife, except that he was apparently married to Abigail and Ahinoam at the same time when he was on the run from Saul. And despite having these 3 close relationships, David believed that Jonathan's love was greater than the love of these 3 women.

When originally exegeting this passage (and others with David and Jonathan), it never occurred to me for an instant that these are gay men. However, this is a very popular theme in the gay community. The gay movement has two approaches to the Bible: (1) They hate it and they hate Christians and they do everything in their own power to cause harm or pain to believers; or (2) they attempt to coopt the Bible, and claim that there are many gay *relationships* found in Scripture. This is the one most often (and more incorrectly) cited.

Gays Distort the Relationship between David and Jonathan

This is taken from [Religious Tolerance](#), written by Anthony Ashford, and accessed September 3, 2015.

David and Jonathan's Relationship:

On the Surface:

Our second pair of gay lovebirds, who most Study Bibles call "besties" instead, is King David and Jonathan.

The Whole Story (with some insight sprinkled in):

First, Jonathan got googly-eyed over David and instantly became "one spirit with David" when they first met. Then, Jonathan gives this man from a different royal family his most important possessions: his sword, his bow, and even the clothes on his back. (1 Samuel 18: 1-4)

Next, David left his own family to stay with Jonathan and his father King Saul. What was that about "man leaving his father and mother to cleave to his wife?"

Then, between chapter 19 and 20 of 1 Samuel, Saul attempts to kill David numerous times (while vicious, King Saul knew that David and his family might usurp his authority and one day reign his family's kingdom), but Jonathan instead protects his love, even though killing David would ensure Jonathan's family's reign would last.

Gays Distort the Relationship between David and Jonathan

Jonathan and David meet up after a terrible tragedy, and Jonathan makes a “covenant” before the Lord, that they will be together as (Bible’s interpretation) “sworn friends” and our families will be one together for forever. (1 Samuel 20: 40-41) (I don’t know about you, but, to me, that sounds like a wedding vow.)

Finally, long after Saul and Jonathan’s deaths, King David laments his love in the beginning of 2 Samuel, saying that “Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women.” (Verse 26) King David even keeps his promise and does the unthinkable for a king, by raising Jonathan’s child as his own.

I don’t know ANYONE can spin that verse right there into saying that “David and Jonathan had the coolest platonic bromance in the Bible.”

I also had an online discussion with a gay man, who made this same assertion, and his point was, David and Jonathan made a covenant together, so that meant that they were married, because marriage is a covenant between two people.

Let’s just take this in points:

1. Nearly every male can speak to a close, non-sexual relationship which he has had with another male. This is normal. This is called friendship. It has existed since time immemorial. I recently exchanged, “I love you, man” with a friend of mine, where we have been friends for over 50 years. We discuss nearly everything under the sun. We like seeing one another and we like hanging out. We don’t have sex. Not only is this the norm for male friendships, but this is probably 90–99% of the way the male friends relate to one another. We can have deep feelings for one another, which does not include even a whit of physical attraction. I have had similar close relationships with perhaps 3 or 4 other men in my lifetime. It is common for the relationships to begin when men are young (in their teens). It is not unusual for these relationships to last for decades. And it is not unusual for these relationship to be non-touching, except for a handshake and sometimes a hug upon seeing one another first the first time in a year or three.
2. When a man does not understand this kind of relationship (like the person who wrote the article above or the person I chatted with), he is in the minority. He is in a very small minority. This is completely an experiential thing, but talk to 10 men, and 9 or 10 of them will confirm that these relationships exist.
3. Is it possible to prefer your best friend over your wife? Of course. It happens all of the time. Secondly, David had a shaky marriage to Saul’s daughter, but a good friendship with Jonathan. Therefore, him saying, in a eulogy, “[I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was extraordinary, surpassing the love of women.](#)” (2Sam. 1:26b; ESV), is not unusual. This simply describes David at a very emotional time, remembering his friend Jonathan.
4. Mr. Ashford says that Jonathan was all *googly-eyed* about David, as if he has some crush on David. This notion is inserted by Ashford and not found in the text. Did Jonathan look up to David; did he respect him? The text indicates that. I recall playing football in P.E. with a older kid named Ed Nagle. I was probably the worst play on the team, and Ed threw me a touchdown pass. I admired him; I respected him for doing that. I did not have a crush on him; I was not all *googly-eyed* over him.
5. Giving some of your possessions to a friend in need is normal behavior; it is not a prelude to a homosexual relationship. Ashford has taken normal actions, normal words, normal feelings, and has inserted his own gay thinking into them. This is not exegesis; this is simply trying to take a series of passages and read into them what is simply not there.
6. David was asked to stay at the palace to play music for Saul (1Sam. 16:15–19). This does not mean that David was married to Jonathan (or to Saul, or to any of Saul’s daughters—at that time). David was promised marriage to one daughter, but ended up marrying the younger daughter.
7. The vow made between David and Jonathan goes like this. King Saul was going mad, he was paranoid, and he wanted to kill David out of jealousy. Jonathan was looking out for his friend, David; and here, will tell David what is going on so that David can escape Saul’s anger. 1Sam. 20:41–42 [And as soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times. And they kissed one another and wept with one another, David weeping the most. Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The](#)

Gays Distort the Relationship between David and Jonathan

LORD shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever." And he rose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city. Saul, David and Jonathan all knew that David would become king (1Sam. 16:13 23:17 24:20). David and Jonathan were close friends. So, David and Jonathan agree here to put their friendship first, despite the crazy actions of King Saul. Nothing to do with homosexual acts.

8. The Bible does speak of marriage and it speaks of covenants; and one might even understand marriage to be a covenant between a man and a woman. This does not mean that, every time we read the word *covenant*, that we are talking about a marriage. In fact, everywhere that I can remember, *covenant* used in the Bible does not refer to a marriage. The word covenant occurs 285 times in the ESV Old Testament, and, although I do not want to go through these verse by verse, the first 10 uses have nothing to do with marriage; and, off the top of my head, I cannot recall a passage where covenant does refer to marriage (however, as I said, I don't feel like looking at every single passage, so there may be exceptions to this).
9. When David and Jonathan make a covenant, the details of that covenant are stated. What they agreed to was stated. A covenant is an agreement or a contract, where both parties agree to the same terms.
10. When a man and a woman have sex, the Bible very often uses the euphemism *to know*, as in *Adam knew Eve, and she had a son*. We do not have any such euphemisms used with David and Jonathan.
11. We have references to David being in bed with Saul's daughter, but *never* with Jonathan.
12. The idea that David and Jonathan had a homosexual relationship has absolutely no basis in fact. The Bible does deal with homosexuality and clearly and unequivocally condemns it. See the complete **Doctrine of Homosexuality** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

What Ashford has done is taken his own perverse norms and standards, his own need to find homosexual actions everywhere he looks, and he lays this as a lattice over the narrative of young David. Peter spoke of such people in 2Peter 3:15–16 **And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.** (ESV)

An interesting observation that I have made is, when visiting "gay Christian" websites, in nearly every single instance, the words *gay*, *homosexual* etc. are always prominent. References to articles which distort the clear teaching of Scripture are often found, However, references to Jesus Christ, to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the cross of Christ are rarely displayed. You are far more likely to come across the image a multi-colored flag (the symbol of the gay movement) at one of these sites than a typical Christian symbol.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**How have fallen mighty ones;
and so perish manufactured items of war.**

2Samuel
1:27

**How the mighty have fallen
and the weapons of war perish.**

How the might have fallen and the weapons of war perish!

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

[How have fallen mighty ones;
and so perish manufactured items of war.](#)

Septuagint

[How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!](#)

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Our warriors have fallen, and their weapons are destroyed.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ See how the mighty have fallen! See how the weapons of war have been destroyed!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

LTHB How *are* the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!
 Young's Updated LT How have the mighty fallen, Yea, the weapons of war perish!"

The gist of this verse? Again the refrain and David adds that, "The weapons of war perish."

2Samuel 1:27a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| ʿêyk (אֵיךְ) [pronounced <i>ayche</i>] | <i>how</i> | interrogative adverb | Strong's #349 BDB #32 |
| nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i>] | <i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #5307 BDB #656 |
| gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i>] | <i>strong, mighty, valiant</i> | masculine plural adjective | Strong's #1368 BDB #150 |

This appears to be an adjective which began to be used more commonly as a noun.

Translation: How the mighty have fallen... This is a refrain of this psalm; and a popular one at that. Many titles for books and movies have been taken from Scripture, this being no exception. The *mighty* refer to Saul and Jonathan in particular, and to the soldiers of Israel in general. This signaled a great defeat of Israel by the Philistines. However, the psalm was written by David in part because of the loss of his great friend Jonathan.

2Samuel 1:27b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (וְ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʿâbad (אָבַד) [pronounced <i>aw^b-VAHD</i>] | <i>to be lost, to lose oneself, to wander; to perish, to be destroyed; to be ready to perish, to be wretched [miserable or unfortunate]</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #6 BDB #1 |
| k ^e lîy (כֵּלִי) [pronounced <i>melee</i>] | <i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #3627 BDB #479 |

2Samuel 1:27b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| mil ^c châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW] | battle, war | feminine singular noun | Strong's #4421 BDB #536 |

Translation: ...and the weapons of war perish. Israel has weapons which they used in battle. These weapons did not all literally perish, but were probably taken—those which were valuable. The ones which were not valuable to the Philistines were no doubt destroyed. In relationship to Israel, their weapons perished.

Several commentators, including Keil and Delitzsch, Luther and Gill understand these *instruments of war* to refer just as much to the men of war—Saul and Jonathan—as to the weapons that they carried. Gill writes: *[The author of Samuel] may mean Saul and Jonathan, who as they were the shields of the people, so they were the true weapons and instruments of war, and with them all military glory perished; which must be understood as a poetical figure, exaggerating their military characters.*⁴⁵

Since we take this psalm verse by verse and almost word by word, it is quite difficult to see it as a whole. Therefore, let's first see this psalm as divided by its refrain; and secondly see it as divided by its vocatives:

The Bow—A Psalm Dedicated to Saul and Jonathan

| Scripture | By Refrain | By Vocatives |
|------------|---|---|
| 2Sam. 1:19 | O Israel! The glory is slain upon your high places! How the soldiers have fallen! | O Israel! The glory is slain upon your high places! How the soldiers have fallen! |
| 2Sam. 1:20 | Do not make [this] known in Gath; do not make a public announcement in the streets of Askelon; so that the daughters of the Philistines are not joyful; so that the daughters of the uncircumcised do not rejoice. | Do not make [this] known in Gath; do not make a public announcement in the streets of Askelon; so that the daughters of the Philistines are not joyful; so that the daughters of the uncircumcised do not rejoice. |
| 2Sam. 1:21 | [There is] no mist [upon] the mountains in Gilboa, [there is] no rain upon you [all] or [upon] fields of offerings, for the shield of [Israel's] soldiers were defiled [or, cast away]—[even] the shield of Saul; [for they were] not anointed with oil. | [There is] no mist [upon] the mountains in Gilboa , [there is] no rain upon you [all] or [upon] fields of offerings, for the shield of [Israel's] soldiers were defiled [or, cast away]—[even] the shield of Saul; [for they were] not anointed with oil. |
| 2Sam. 1:22 | From the blood of those [who were] slain; from the fat of the soldiers; the bow of Jonathan was not turned back and the sword of Saul did not return empty. | From the blood of those [who were] slain; from the fat of the soldiers; the bow of Jonathan was not turned back and the sword of Saul did not return empty. |

⁴⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 1:27. See also Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 1:27.

| The Bow—A Psalm Dedicated to Saul and Jonathan | | |
|--|---|--|
| Scripture | By Refrain | By Vocatives |
| 2Sam. 1:23 | Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous; they were not separated in their lives nor in their deaths; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. | Saul and Jonathan were beloved and generous; they were not separated in their lives nor in their deaths; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. |
| 2Sam. 1:24 | Weep regarding Saul, [you] daughters of Israel! [He is the one] clothing you in scarlet clothing with ornaments; [he is the one] who puts ornaments of gold upon your clothing. | Weep regarding Saul, [you] daughters of Israel! [He is the one] clothing you in scarlet clothing with ornaments; [he is the one] who puts ornaments of gold upon your clothing. |
| 2Sam. 1:25 | How the mighty have fallen in the midst of war! Jonathan [lies] upon Your high places slain! | How the mighty have fallen in the midst of war! Jonathan [lies] upon Your high places slain! |
| 2Sam. 1:26 | I am distressed because of you my brother Jonathan; you have been extremely delightful to me; your love to me was more extraordinary than the love of women. | I am distressed because of you my brother Jonathan; you have been extremely delightful to me; your love to me was more extraordinary than the love of women. |
| 2Sam. 1:27 | How the mighty have fallen and the weapons of war perish. | How the mighty have fallen and the weapons of war perish. |

Some of David's psalms show a high degree of complex organization. In this psalm, I am not seeing the same sort of organization; however, there are two ways to subdivide this, and this is by refrain and by vocatives, both of which you see done above.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

At this point, it seems as though David moves straight to Hebron; however, that is not the case. David will remain in Ziklag for a bit, and men from all over Israel will flock to him. This information is found in **1Chron. 12**, so I suggest that you examine the exegesis of **1Chron. 12** before going onto 2Sam. 2.