

## 2 Samuel 1

Before we get into the text it should be mentioned that the books of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel were originally one volume. But due to the nature of ancient scrolls Samuel was divided into two scrolls in order to reduce the size of the one scroll.

Verses 1 - 10

**Now it came about after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, that David stayed two days in Ziklag. <sup>2</sup> And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. And it happened when he came to David, he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. <sup>3</sup> Then David said to him, "From where do you come?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." <sup>4</sup> David said to him, "How did things go? Please tell me." And he said, "The people have fled from the battle, and many of the people also have fallen and are dead; and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead." <sup>5</sup> Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" <sup>6</sup> The young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and behold, Saul was leaning on his spear. And behold, the chariots and the horsemen had overtaken him. <sup>7</sup> When he looked behind himself, he saw me, and called to me. And I said, 'Here I am.' <sup>8</sup> Then he said to me, 'Who are you?' And I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' <sup>9</sup> And he said to me, 'Please stand next to me and finish me off, for agony has seized me because my life still lingers in me.' <sup>10</sup> So I stood next to him and finished him off, because I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown which was on his head and the band which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."**

**<sup>5</sup> Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" <sup>6</sup> The young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and behold, Saul was leaning on his spear. And behold, the chariots and the horsemen had overtaken him.**

We know the Amalekite's report was a lie and in fact he must have found Saul after he had died but before the Philistines returned to strip the slain. There was no need to tell this lie other than his desire to be rewarded in some way by David. This one lie will cost him his life.

**<sup>7</sup> When he looked behind himself, he saw me, and called to me. And I said, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>8</sup> Then he said to me, ‘Who are you?’ And I answered him, ‘I am an Amalekite.’**

This man had no way of knowing that David had just returned from a battle with the Amalekites who had carried away the wives and children of David and his 600 men. Oops. A person never knows how or when a lie will catch up to them but in this case it was sooner rather than later.

**<sup>10</sup> So I stood next to him and finished him off, because I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown which was on his head and the band which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord.”**

If this was true it would have been a noble gesture.

Verses 11 - 16

**<sup>11</sup> Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so also *did* all the men who were with him. <sup>12</sup> And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the people of the Lord and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. <sup>13</sup> Then David said to the young man who informed him, “Where are you from?” And he answered, “I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.” <sup>14</sup> And David said to him, “How is it you were not afraid to reach out with your hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed?” <sup>15</sup> Then David called one of the young men and said, “Come forward, put him to death.” So he struck him and he died. <sup>16</sup> And David said to him, “Your blood is on your head, because your *own* mouth has testified against you, saying, ‘I have finished off the Lord’s anointed.’”**

**<sup>11</sup> Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so also *did* all the men who were with him.**

Maybe the WWF adopted this tradition from the brave men in the bible. ☺

In any case David and his men mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul, Jonathan, the people of the Lord, and the other men of Israel.

During a battle there were often priests and other Levites present.

**14 And David said to him, “How is it you were not afraid to reach out with your hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed?”**

This was a firm principle in David’s code of ethics.

See 1 Samuel 24:8-11

**8 Afterward, however, David got up and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, saying, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. 9 And David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Behold, David is seeking to harm you’? 10 Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the Lord had handed you over to me today in the cave, and *someone* said to kill you, but I spared you; and I said, ‘I will not reach out with my hand against my lord, because he is the Lord’s anointed.’**

**15 Then David called one of the young men and said, “Come forward, put him to death.” So he struck him and he died.**

Some people see a contradiction between what is said here and in 2 Samuel 4 where it is implied that David slew the Amalekite.

See 2 Samuel 4:9 -10

**9 But David replied to Rechab and his brother Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, 10 when the one who informed me, saying, ‘Behold, Saul is dead,’ also viewed himself as the bearer of good news, I seized him and killed him in Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for *his* news.**

Whatever a man commands a servant to do, when done, may also be said to have been done by the one who commanded it.

This principle is true throughout scripture so the argument that this is a contradiction in the Word of God is hardly worth mentioning.

We see this same principle at work in the New Testament.

See John 4:1-2

**So then, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that He was making and baptizing more disciples than John <sup>2</sup> (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing; rather, His disciples *were*),**

Verses 17 -27

<sup>17</sup> Then David sang this song of mourning over Saul and his son Jonathan, <sup>18</sup> and he told *them* to teach the sons of Judah *the mourning song of the bow*; behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar.

<sup>19</sup> “Your beauty, Israel, is slaughtered on your high places!

**How the mighty have fallen!**

<sup>20</sup> Tell *it* not in Gath,

Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,

Or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice,

The daughters of the uncircumcised will celebrate.

<sup>21</sup> Mountains of Gilboa,

*May there be* no dew nor rain on you, or fields of offerings!

For there the shield of the mighty was defiled,

The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

<sup>22</sup> From the blood of those slaughtered, from the fat of the mighty,

The bow of Jonathan did not turn back,

And the sword of Saul did not return unstained.

<sup>23</sup> Saul and Jonathan, beloved and delightful in life,

And in their deaths they were not separated;

They were swifter than eagles,

They were mightier than lions.

<sup>24</sup> Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,

Who clothed you in scarlet, with jewelry,

Who put gold jewelry on your apparel.

<sup>25</sup> How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan is slaughtered on your high places.

<sup>26</sup> I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;

You have been a close friend to me.

Your love for me was more wonderful

Than the love of women.

**<sup>27</sup> How the mighty have fallen,**

And the weapons of war have perished!”

<sup>17</sup> Then David sang this song of mourning over Saul and his son Jonathan, <sup>18</sup> and he told *them* to teach the sons of Judah *the mourning song of the bow*; behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar.

What is written here is all that we know about the Book of Jashar.

<sup>19</sup> **“Your beauty, Israel, is slaughtered on your high places!  
How the mighty have fallen!”**

This phrase begins and closes the remarks of David. See verse 19 & 27.

This expression has often been used at the funerals of great men.

<sup>20</sup> **Tell it not in Gath,  
Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,  
Or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice,  
The daughters of the uncircumcised will celebrate.**

See Map 105



Gath was the city of Goliath so the death of Saul and the defeat of Israel would have been great news in this city. But David did not want them to receive the news.

The expression, **Tell *it* not in Gath**, may have become a proverb.

See Micah 1:10

**Do not tell *it* in Gath,**

**Do not weep at all.**

**At Beth-le-aphrah roll yourself in the dust in mourning.**

### <sup>21</sup> **Mountains of Gilboa,**

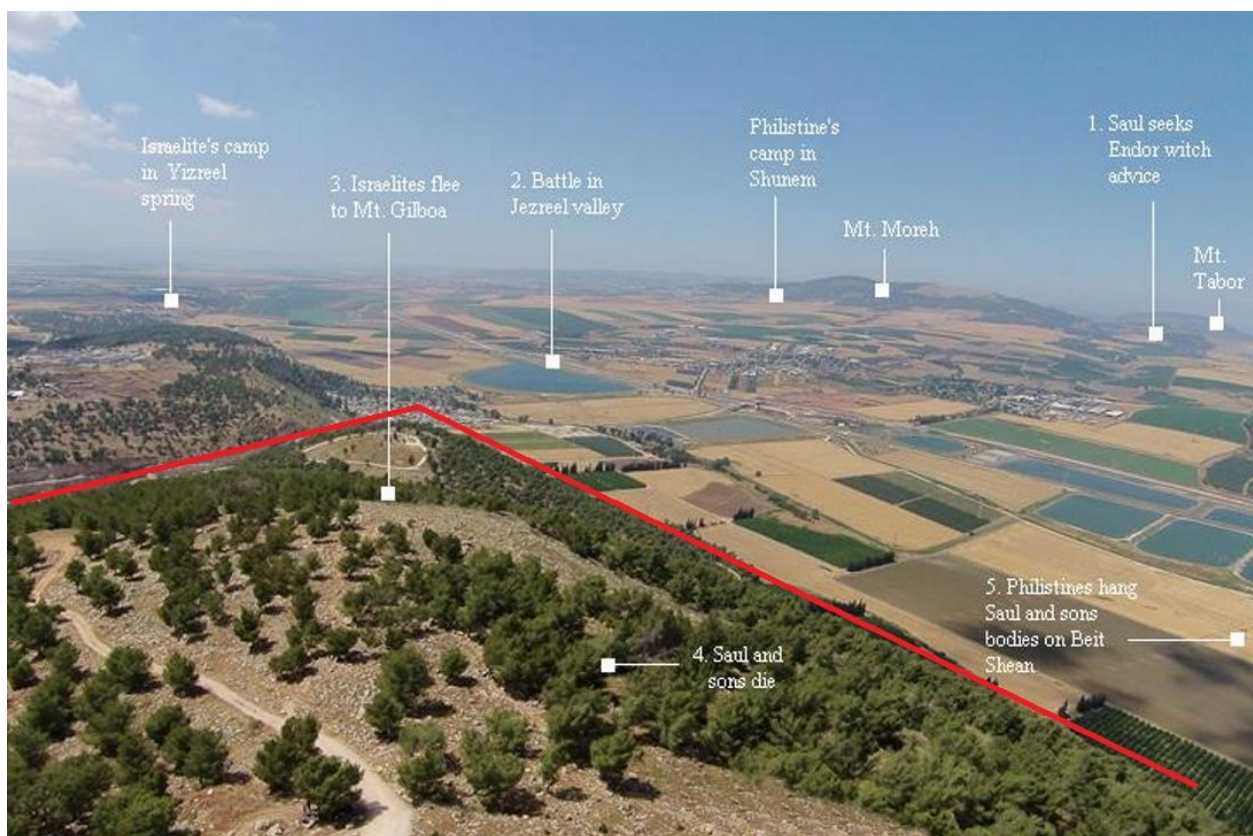
***May there be no dew nor rain on you, or fields of offerings!***

**For there the shield of the mighty was defiled,**

**The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.**

David pronounced a curse on the mountains which were the scene of Saul's death.

See Map 110



**<sup>22</sup> From the blood of those slaughtered, from the fat of the mighty,  
The bow of Jonathan did not turn back,  
And the sword of Saul did not return unstained.**

David praises the fallen warriors.

**<sup>24</sup> Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,  
Who clothed you in scarlet, with jewelry,  
Who put gold jewelry on your apparel.**

This shows the prosperity that had come to Israel during the years of Saul's monarchy.

**<sup>26</sup> I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;  
You have been a close friend to me.  
Your love for me was more wonderful  
Than the love of women.**

Jonathan was a good and close friend of David during a time of great turmoil in his life and David wanted everyone to know how much he appreciated his good friend.

**<sup>27</sup> How the mighty have fallen,  
And the weapons of war have perished!"**

Some scholars believe this is a reference to such things as swords, bows, and arrows while others believe this refers to Saul and Jonathan themselves.

David's eulogy of Saul made no reference to his sins and shortcomings because that was not the proper time to do so. His failures would be documented in the Word of God just as they would be for David.