

Chapter 30

v.1 In the past Ziklag provided David with a base of operations against the Amalekites (27.8), the archetypal bandits of biblical tradition. Now the Amalekites have returned the favor, raiding in the Negeb in David's absence and burning his unguarded city." (McCarter) "From the probable site of Aphek...to the probable site of Ziklag is about seventy miles." (Missler)

v.6 "the people spoke of stoning him." David's low point before his turn of fortune.

vv.23-25 "Victory belongs to Yahweh alone. No man...whatever his contribution to the battle, has any claim over another; all share the spoils alike." (Mccarter)

v.26 "David sent the plunder as an expression of gratitude to those who had assisted him during his flight from Saul." (NIV)

Chapter 31

v.2 "The surviving son, Ish-Bosheth or Esh-Baal was afterward promoted by Abner, who somehow survived the battle, to succeed his father as king." (NIV)

v.4 "There are only four examples of suicide in the Bible, those of Ahithophel (2 Sam 17.23), Zimri (1 Kgs 16.18), Judas (Mt 27.5), and Saul, here. This doesn't include Samson, which can be argued was a suicide." (Missler)

v.5 "Because Saul refused to slay all of the Amalekites (15), one of them ended up killing him. *The sin that we fail to deal with, eventually causes our downfall.*" (Missler)

v.6 "How sad that his innocent son, Jonathan, had to suffer because of the father's sins. Had David continued in his office of minister to Saul, he, too, would probably have perished in this battle. God, however, had stationed him in a place of safety." (Missler)

v.12 "The men of Jabesh Gilead had not forgotten how Saul had come to their defense when they were threatened by the Ammonites (ch. 11)." (NIV) "Perhaps they feared that the Philistines would remove the bodies and add further insult... Cremation, except in the case of criminals (Josh 7.25), was not a normal Hebrew practice." (Missler)

2 Samuel — Chapter 1

“The story of David’s rise to power that extends from I Samuel 16 to II Samuel 7...can be divided into three major sections. The first tells of the days David spent at the court of Saul (I Samuel 16-20), the second of the period of estrangement between the two men (I Sam 21-31), and the third of the consolidation of David’s rule over Judah and Israel after Saul’s death (II Sam 1-7). The present passage begins the third section.” (McCarter)

v.1 “After the death of Saul. The book begins in the same way as Joshua (‘After the death of Moses...’) and Judges (‘After the death of Joshua...’).” (McCarter)

v.8 “It is not necessary to conclude from v.3 that this Amalekite was a member of Saul’s army. His statement that he ‘happened to be on Mount Gilboa’ (v.6) is probably not as innocent as it appears. He may have been there as a scavenger to rob the fallen soldiers of their valuables and weapons. It is ironic that Saul’s death is reported by an Amalekite (see 1 Sam 15).” (NIV) Note also that David had just returned three days previously from a slaughter of Amalekites.

“The testimony of the Amalekite in the present episode contradicts [the account in I Samuel 31.3-5].... As soon as the ancient audience learned the messenger’s identity, it would have begun to suspect him of treachery.” (McCarter)

v.15 David continues to be portrayed as blameless in Saul’s death—even more, taking no joy in it; more still, avenging it.

v.26 “In the ancient Near East “love” terminology belonged to the language of political discourse, and many of the statements made about Jonathan’s love for David are charged with political overtones. But as the present passage illustrates well, there was also warm personal intimacy in the relationship between the two men.” (McCarter)

“The death of Saul and three of his sons has raised the question of succession. One son of Saul remains alive and must be regarded as a candidate for the throne. David, too, must be considered a candidate.” (McCarter) Remember—Saul was the first king so there was no historically agreed-upon path for succession.

“In the writer’s time...much circumstantial evidence seemed to condemn David. The principle of *cui bono* was against him; He was the chief beneficiary of the fall of the house of Saul. He had been a mercenary in the Philistine army at the time Saul died fighting against the Philistines. Indeed, the forces of Achish of Gath, David’s Philistine overlord, were known to have been involved in the battle. Moreover, after the battle and the death of Saul and his sons, the diadem and bracelet of the slain king turned up in the possession of David! We can hardly doubt that all of these things were publicly known in the reign of David and that, taken collectively, they cast a shadow over his kingship.” (McCarter)