The Battle Narrative of David and Saul

A Literary Study of 1 Sam 13 – 2 Sam 8 and its Genre in the Ancient Near East

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Introduction

In the summer of 1986 I defended my doctoral dissertation, and in the fall I was ordained a priest and became vice rector of our School of Theology. Although I made some attempt to publish my dissertation at that point, that concern faded amid what seemed like many pressing needs. The private publication of the dissertation as defended more than twenty-five years later is an attempt to take care of old business. Too much has appeared since 1986 to attempt any revision, and while there are a few judgment I might question, I remain satisfied with what wrote and so have left the text basically as it was.

Fr. Dennis J. McCarthy, SJ directed this thesis until his death on August 29, 1983. I shall always be indebted to him for more than I realize. Fr. Luis Alonso Schökel, SJ became the new director, and my debt to him, already considerable, grew. Fr. McCarthy was a Renaissance man who had read so much of western civilization. Though a hemophiliac, he did not let this stop him from engaging life on his own terms. Fr. Alonso Schökel loved to read Hebrew poetry aloud—revealing both his and its passion and power. Both were fine churchmen and dedicated Jesuits who loved the Word of God and communicated that love to others.

The topic of battle narrative emerged from my study of ancient Near Eastern Languages. Like so many students at that time, I studied a semester of Ugaritc with Fr. Mitchell Dahood, SJ. However I was more captured by Akkadian which I studied for five semester with Fr. Werner Meyer, SJ. For two years I had the honor of being the last Egyptian student of Fr. Adhémar Massart, SJ. Both Fr. Meyer and Fr. Massart taught me something of how a master works even though I did not become a master of their languages.

While reading stories of Egyptian and Akkadian battles, I began to recognize similarities in the stories of battle, and I traced these even into Homer. Whether these similarities are grounded in the sad ubiquity of war or reflect a common literary tradition is a difficult question to answer. I have been content to identify both the likenesses and the differences among these texts. Form-critical studies have typically emphasized the likeness to the form, but the differences are as important if not more so because they reveal the uniqueness of each text.

The topic held my attention through the ups and downs of writing a dissertation much of which was completed after returning to teach and work as an administrator. In looking again at what I wrote, I am amazed at how many important concepts I learned in that process—things that have sustained my teaching and also my life. For all of that I am grateful especially to my teachers mentioned above, but to others who taught me at the Biblicum and before that at Saint Meinrad and Indiana University and St. Thomas Seminary.

There are many others to thank. While in Rome, the English speaking group the Biblicum provided encouragement for each other with Alice Laffey playing a special role. Fr. Aelred Cody, OSB, my confrere teaching in Rome for a large part of my stay,

provided long evenings of interesting conversation on seemingly an infinite variety of topics. Fr. Aelred Kavanagh OSB, Br. Timothy McGrath, OSB, Fr. Christopher Gorst, OSB and Abbot Placid Solari, OSB, among thers at Sant' Anselmo, brought freindship and fun to the otherwise eremitical life of a doctoral student. My family, especially my parents Harry and Louise Hagan, were ever supportive. Likewise my monastic community made sacrifices and offered encouragement so that I could carry out this work, and I thank them.

Chapter I:
The Boundaries of the Text

A. History and Literature

In this thesis, I offer a literary study of 1 Sam 13 – 2 Sam 8. As such, this work belongs to a growing body of scholarship which is shifting its focus from a historical to a literary approach. This phenomenon is not new; the reaction to nineteenth century historicism has been a common feature of American and European literary studies during the twentieth century.[1] Often the reaction has caused a polarization of historical and literary advocates, a polarization which I hope to avoid, for both are necessary and complementary.

The difference between historical and literary studies can be stated, if somewhat simplistically, as the difference between an interest in the history of or behind the text and an interest in the text as literature. This simple dichotomy is seldom absolute in practice. The literary critic, especially when studying ancient literature, cannot be indifferent to the history of language and culture, or of religion and events. Likewise, the historian must be aware of the literary dimension of the text in order to weigh its historical value properly. An example will help to clarify the difference and the problem.

N.P. Lemche has recently tried to isolate the historical facts in 1 Sam 15 - 2 Sam 5. His assessment of 1 Sam 16 (David's anointing and appearance at Saul's court as a musician) concludes that only two details can be considered as historical fact: David was a musician, and he became Saul's armor-bearer.[2] This judgment, first made by Hugo Greßmann, is based on the plausibility and realism of these two details. Be this as it may, the literary critic will want to point out that these two images have important literary function in the narrative and cannot be regarded just as gratuitous, realistic details. While either image could serve my purposes, I leave the musician for a later discussion in the thesis.

The image of the armor-bearer functions in the narrative on two levels. First of all, the image follows immediately after the phrase, "and he (Saul) loved him (David)."[3] The

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[1] R. Wellek, *Concepts of Criticism* (New Haven CT 1965) 1-18. R. Wellek and A. Warren, *Theory of Literature* (Middlesex [3]1963) ch. 4: "Literary Theory, Criticism, and Literature."

[2] N.P. Lemche, "David's Rise," *JStOT* 10 (1978) 2-25, esp. 5.

[3] Although the Hebrew is not explicit with regard to subject and object, this is the common interpretation of the tradition; cf. P.K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (AB 8; NY 1980) 280. P.D. Miscall notes the possible ambiguity of the Hebrew pronouns and suggests David as a possible subject, but he does not develop this possibility. *The Workings of Old Testament Narrative* (SBL Semeia Studies; Philadelphia/Chico CA 1983) 54. In 1 Sam 18:1,16,20,28, however, David is the object of *ʾhb*.

image thus becomes a concrete expression of Saul's love and of his desire to have David near. This idea of nearness is further emphasized by Saul's sending to David's father for permission to keep the boy at court and thereby to become David's protector *in loco parentis* (1 Sam 16:21-22). At one level then the image of the armor-bearer seals the affective relationship between David and Saul. However, the term "love" also has a political dimension, for it describes the relationship between servant and king in the ancient Near East.[4] Thus the image of the armor-bearer also seals the political relationship between king and boy with its attendant duties of faithfulness, protection, and service. These two connotations, the affective and the political, are complementary; there can be no question of excluding one in favor of the other.

The argument for the literary function of this image can be broadened, for the armor-bearer returns in 1 Sam 31:4. Saul's armor-bearer refuses to kill his king, "For he feared (*yr*ʾ) greatly." The theme of the king's inviolability is tied specifically to David in 1 Sam 24 and 26 where the hero has opportunities to kill the king but refuses. This theme returns in 2 Sam 1 where an Amalekite messenger announces to David that he has killed the wounded Saul. To him David replies, "How is it that you were not afraid (*yr*ʾ) to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed" (2 Sam 1:14)? David has the Amalekite put to death, and he acts similarly with the murderers of Ishbaal the king in 2 Sam 4.

Commentators, with typical caution, have recognized the similarity between the armor-bearer's reaction and that of David elsewhere.[5] I would go further and call the armor-bearer in 1 Sam 31 a symbolic figure for David because he acts as David himself would act. This link between the two is prepared for by the theme of the king's inviolability (1 Sam 24; 26; 2 Sam 1), and also by 1 Sam 16:21 where David and Saul's armor-bearer are first identified. For this interpretation to stand, one must also justify the armor-bearer's self-inflicted death with the character of David.

As E.B. Oikonomou has shown, self-inflicted death in this type of situation did not carry the common moral overtones of suicide for the ancient world.[6] Rather, as Stoebe says,

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[4] W. L. Moran has demonstrated, the verb "to love" (*ʾhb*) is part of the treaty terminology used to describe the political relationship between the parties of a treaty; "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *CBQ* 25 (1963) 77-87. Recently J.A. Thompson has shown that in the David-Saul narrative, the verb "to love" carries two levels of meaning: one affective and the other political; cf. "The Significance of the Verb *LOVE* in the David Jonathan Narrative in I Samuel," *VT* 24 (1974) 334-338. The argument for a political dimension is supported by H.J. Stoebe's observation that the phrase "he stood before him" (*ʿmd lpnyw*) in 1 Sam 16:21b should be translated: "So kam David zu Saul und stand in seinem personlichen Dienst"; *Das Erste Buch Samuelis* (KAT VIII; Gutersloh 1973) 507; cf. 1 Kgs 12:8.

[5] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 526. Cf. also H.W. Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel* (OT Library; Philadelphia 1964; *ad loc.*

[6] Elia B. Oidonomou, Παριστατικα αυτοκτονιν εν ται Π. Διαθηκη (Parnasso 1964) 607-612, as reported in ZAW 77 (1965) 230, and cited by Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 527.

the armor-bearer's self-inflicted death is a sign of final loyalty which throws a kindly light on the death of Saul.[7] The armor-bearer's action in 1 Sam 31 becomes an illustration of David's loyalty to Saul. Furthermore, it functions as the false death of the hero which marks an important shift in the story and is a traditional feature of this type of literature as I shall argue in Chapter X.

The analysis above does not necessarily deny or affirm that David was in actual fact Saul's armor-bearer as Lemche argues. However, it demonstrates that the image is neither a gratuitous detail nor just a transparent account of historical fact. The analysis shows that we are dealing with an image which has a literary function both in its immediate context of 1 Sam 16:14-23 and also in 1 Sam 31. All of this suggest a narrative of some sophistication.

Historical scholarship has not been oblivious to the literary dimension of this narrative and has relied upon literary analysis—though often unconsciously. As a result, insights into the literary dimension have been cautious and tentative. Some scholars, no doubt, will not find my argument convincing because it depends largely upon a relationship which is implicit in the text read as a whole. I dare say that skepticism may grow when I suggest that Jonathan's armor-bearer in 1 Sam 14 should also be viewed as a figure for David.

When Jonathan proposes to his armor-bearer that they engage the Philistines in battle, the companion replies in 1 Sam 14:7:

> Behold I am with you
> even as your heart (is with you).

The union of these two soldiers suggests David, in part, because of the friendship of David and Jonathan (1 Sam 18:3-4). The armor-bearer's statement also recalls Samuel's prophecy concerning Saul's successor in 1 Sam 13:14:

> The LORD has sought out a man (belonging) to Himself
> even as His heart (belongs to Himself).[8]

The word "heart" links the two passages. Furthermore, Jonathan, who fells the Philistines is followed by the armor-bearer who kills them (14:13) and thereby foreshadows David's decisive victories over the Philistines in 1 Sam 17; 18; 2 Sam 5:17-25; 8:1. This insight depends upon the reader's ability to discover the implicit links within the text. Also the insight, like those above, lies outside the realm of historical fact and has value only for the story itself. As a result, the interpretation can only be verified by arguments which relate the insights to the whole story and to the tradition of storytelling from which the narrative emerges. The boundaries of the "whole story,"

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[7] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 527; brushing aside many of the extraneous comments on this passage, Stoebe says: "wichtig allein ist die Gefolgschafstreue des Mannes, die nun doch ein freundliches Licht auch auf Saul wirft."

[8] Cf. n. 301.

however, are much disputed. Most scholars would agree that 1 Sam 16:14-23 and 31:1-13 belong to the same traditional unit, but it is generally assumed that 1 Sam 14 belongs to a different narrative complex as the survey below will demonstrate. Before turning to that, I want to clarify the kinds of insights which I have been making.

In *The Nature of Narrative*, R. Scholes and R. Kellogg discuss two basic types of narrative: mimetic narrative and tradition-bound narrative. They distinguish the two on the basis of the relationship between "the fictional world created by the author and the 'real' world, the apprehendable universe."[9]

Mimesis seeks a realistic relationship between these two worlds and draws upon the real world to reproduce a narrative which conforms to the truth of sensation and environment and which may or may not conform to historical fact. The realism of mimetic narrative creates the sense of unique characters and situations such as we encounter in real life. Saul's taking David as his armor-bearer is mimetic in the sense that it portrays the desire to want another person near. As a result, this detail of the story appears natural and believable, and a reader needs little, if any, historical knowledge to explore this affective level which draws on our common human experience.

The second type of narrative is bound by tradition. Characters and actions are not primarily realistic presentations of unique people and events; they are rather part of a continuum of recurring images. In this sense, the tradition bound image may be called a symbol according to the simple definition of Warren and Wellek: a symbol is a persistent, recurrent image.[10] Because of its recurrence, the image gathers meaning and evokes memory. Warren and Wellek discuss three realms of recurring images: natural, cultural, and private.

Natural images, such as fire and water, recur in various and even contradictory contexts and thereby evoke a complexity of suggestion. Cultural images take their content from a specific culture known to both author and audience; the study of a culture, of its changes and development, of the relation of a particular work to its tradition is in large measure a historical study. Finally, the private realm refers to those recurring images appearing in a specific work or in the works of a specific author which gain special meaning within that narrow framework.

Above I have argued that the armor-bearer is both a cultural and a private symbol within this narrative. It is cultural because it evokes the political relationship of "love" between a lord and his servant. This level of meaning is often heavily dependent upon historical studies. The image of the armor-bearer is also a private symbol because its recurrence in this text alone evokes the image of David and what David stands for: the

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[9] R. Scholes and R. Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (Oxford 1968), ch. 4: "Meaning in Narrative."

[10] Warren and Wellek, *Theory*, 189.

inviolability of the king. Some may object that the armor-bearer is hardly a persistent image since it recurs but three times in the story. Admittedly, if it were not part of a larger scheme of recurrence, the private symbolic meaning would be unrecognizable, but it is part of a larger scheme as I have argued above; admittedly, a minor image within a much more complex scheme of recurrence.

I also pointed out that the armor-bearer is a cultural symbol which recalls the specific dimensions of political relationship within that culture. Historical scholarship is, of course, a necessary tool for exploring this dimension of the image. Furthermore, history saves the modern reader from making a false comparison with the modern *aide-de-camp*. At times, history is indispensable, and the most glaring example above is the interpretation of the armor-bearer's death which turns on an understanding of self-inflicted death within that culture as opposed to moral judgment of later commentaries.

Ultimately I shall argue that David and Saul function at the level of natural symbols, that the story presents them as more than just unique historical personages; they become images of a more basic human conflict. We continue to read this story primarily for this reason.

Though Scholes and Kellogg, for clarity's sake, draw a sharp distinction between mimetic and tradition-bound narrative, a story gains complexity by the subtle combination of both. In 1 Sam 31, the armor-bearer's actions are both realistic and symbolic; perhaps with the emphasis falling on the latter. This double dimension is characteristic of the whole which combines traditional imagery, characters, and plot with a developing sense of mimesis.

Frank Kermode makes another distinction which is helpful: the distinction between a "naive literal reading" and an "esoteric reading." He defines a "literal reading" as the most naive reading of a text that treats it, for example, as a transparent account of reality, and picks up only the clues that enable it to satisfy the most conventional expectations, say of coherence and closure.[11] If we would apply this criterion to the image of the armor-bearer, the naive, literal reader would be unable to make the connections between 1 Sam 16 and 31.

Kermode contrasts the "naive literal reading" with what he calls, among other things, the "esoteric reading" which exposes the implications of the images and the implicit relations within the text which create its latent orders. The esoteric reading is not a rejection of the literal reading, for this second level depends upon the literal terms. However, the esoteric reading rejects any exclusive claims made for the literal reading. As such, the esoteric reading is dependent upon the reader who must discover the latent connections within the text.

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[11] F. Kermode draws on Dilthey and calls these angles or viewpoints "impression points"; *The Genesis of Secrecy* (Cambridge MA 1979) ch. 1. Much of the remainder of this section has been influenced by Kermode; however, I insists on the literal text as the basis of interpretation, a point not entirely clear in Kermode's presentation.

An esoteric reading presumes, as Kermode says, that the text is "of sufficient value" and thus is not exhausted by its literal reading as is a Mari administrative text for example. Nor is the text exhausted by a single esoteric reading, as are most mystery stories which challenge the reader to find the one, continuous latent order. The text "of sufficient value" has a depth and complexity which allows it to be approached from several or even many viewpoints with each providing a somewhat different perspective on the meaning of the text.

Modern biblical scholarship, of course, has rejected the "naive literal reading" and has replaced it with various methods of esoteric reading. Perhaps the most famous example is the source-critical reading of Genesis. Source critics took as their viewpoint the words *YHWH* and *Elōhîm* to recover two latent texts within the composition. Modern criticism has also searched for the history latent in the literal text.

Lemche's analysis of 1 Sam 15 - 2 Sam 5 is an example. He sets aside everything within the narrative which he judges unhistorical; from the remainder, he reconstructs a latent order which is proposed as the actual past events. On the basis of this, he offers an interpretation of the historical David as a shrewd, ambitious leader of men who at times did what was expedient to establish himself as king, not unlike other world leaders such as Julius Caesar.[12]

I am uncomfortable with Lemche's analysis because I am not convinced that he understands the function of tradition bound images such as that of the armor-bearer. I fear that he takes mimetic details as a "transparent account of reality" and thereby confuses the realism of the literal text with history, as does Greßmann before him.[13] Admittedly, the historian's plight is made difficult by the paucity and type of extent materials; however, literary criticism can offer some help in this project as I shall point out in time.

Just as historical criticism is based on its own criteria for judgment, so also literary criticism. Below I offer four basic principles adapted from Kermode's discussion.[14]

> First of all, the text is not an isolated entity. It has a historical context which must be respected by the literary critic. For this, historical studies are essential.
>
> Second, the text belongs to a genre, and Kermode calls this the first

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[12] Lemche, "David's Rise," 18: "David unscrupulously and consistently followed his own aims whether these aims were of a private character (as for example in the case of Bathsheba) or political ... The later history of David shows evidence of the fact that he was a tough practitioner of Realpolitik who was not too particular about his means." Cf. below, p. 180.

[13] H. Greßmann, *Die Älteste Geschichtsschreibung und Prophetie Israels* (SAT II,1; Göttingen [1]1910, [2]1921) ad loc.

[14] Kermode, *Genesis of Secrecy*, 16-18.

constraint upon interpretation. The brunt of much in this thesis will be concerned with genre.

Third, the interpretation of a part must square with the interpretation of the whole,[15] a principle which I have tried to observe in my analysis of the armor-bearer.

Finally, the literal text and its boundaries must be respected.

For most modern novels, this presents minimal problems because the story begins on the first page and ends on the last. For biblical texts, boundaries of individual texts can be a complex problem because there are many boundaries. The Dtr history is one, yet within it lie individual stories which may have belonged to other traditions before being incorporated into the final context. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to this problem of boundaries.

B. The Textual Boundaries of Previous Scholarship.

As Hans Frei argues, Christians (and Jews with the proper modification) were in basic agreement about the literal and esoteric readings of the Bible until the rise of historical criticism. The literal reading accepted the "received text" as the order of events in which they were to be understood. And the esoteric reading was a figural reading which took as its focus Jesus Christ and the theology or theologies of that event.[16] With the rise of historical criticism, the credibility of the "received text" was challenged, and the story of modern scholarship can be summed up very broadly as various attempts to discover "latent texts" within the "received text." H.J. Stoebe presents an exhaustive survey of the modern scholarship on 1 Samuel which touches the related parts of 2 Samuel.[17] Here I wish to discuss only the major turning points.

The modern search began with questions of authorship and quickly expanded as internal contradictions, vocabulary shifts, repetitions, and interruptions of narrative sequence were identified by the close reading of modern scholars. To solve the problems of discrepancies and contradictions, a theory of sources, proposed originally for the Pentateuch, was expanded to other historical books. This classic nineteenth century solution finds its most important statement for the Books of Samuel in Karl Budde's commentary in which he argues that the Pentateuch sources continue into the later historical books. Although the approach has waned, it continued to attract sponsors well into this century.[18] The problem is one of narrative logic, but the method

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[15] Ibid. 18.

[16] H. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (Cambridge MA 1974) 1-18.

[17] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 32-52.

[18] Karl Budde, *Die Bücher Samuelis*, KHC VIII (Tübingen 1902). As Stoebe points out (*Kommentar*, 46), Budde's influence can be found in P. Dhorme's *Les Livres de Samuel* (Paris 1910) and extends to G. Holscher's *Geschichtsschreibung in Israel* (Lund 1952). A theory of pentateuchal sources containing two Jahwistic strands has been proposed by Rudolph Smend in *ZAW* 39 (1921) 181ff, and by O. Eissfeldt in *Die*

has suffered from the type of logic demanded by critics of these ancient texts; still the question of narrative logic remains a real avenue of inquiry.

Hugo Greßmann, a founder of form criticism with Herman Gunkel, turned away from the search for continuous sources and divided the text on the basis of forms into individual narrative units only loosely connected with what precedes and follows.[19] This approach, called the "fragmentary hypothesis," led to a multiplication of "latent texts" and argued against any overriding latent order for the larger whole. Greßmann's work is important because it has formed the basis for much of the later scholarship. The tradition critics, like Hertzberg and Carlson,[20] have continued to focus on the independence of the units in an attempt to discover latent orders based on locality, custom, theology, date, etc.

A second group which accepts Greßmann's argument has argued nevertheless that a *Verfasser* (author, as I shall call him/them) played an important role in shaping the traditional material into a whole. In this they have been influenced by L. Rost who first argued that the Books of Samuel were created by laying larger narrative blocks side by side to create the "received text." Though his insights into other parts of the Books of Samuel remain a starting point for scholarly discussion, his reconstruction of an "Abiathar Narrative" from the David-Saul material was very fragmentary and more akin to the source critical efforts.[21]

Albrecht Alt proposed a much larger "latent text" covering the history of David's rise to power which begins with the entrance of David at Saul's court (1 Sam 16:13) and reaches its climax with the anointing of David as king over Israel in 2 Sam 5:1-3 with 2 Sam 8 forming the denouement of that story.[22] Alt's work, which comprises a few

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Komposition der Samuelbücher (Leipzig 1931). Other source critics, however, have not tried to identify the sources in these books with those of pentateuchal traditions: H.P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel* (ICC; NY 1904); R.H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (NY 1941).

[19] H. Greßmann, *Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung*. This approach was then pursued by Wilhelm Caspari, *Die Samuelbücher* (KAT VII; Leipzig 1926).

[20] For traditio-historical studies, cf. H.W. Hertzberg *I & II Samuel*, (OT Library; Philadelphia 1964); R.A. Carlson, *David the Chosen King*. A Traditio-Histoical Approach to the Second Book of Samuel (Stockholm 1964).

[21] L. Rost, *Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge,* (BWANT 3,6; Stuttgart 1926), reprinted in *Credo und andere Studien zum Alten Testament* (1965); cf. especially p. 7, n. 27 and p. 13 in the original edition which equals p. 125, n. 27 and p. 238 in the reprint.

[22] A. Alt, *ZAW* 54 (1936) 149-152; "The Formation of the Israelite State," *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (Garden City NY 1968) 223-310, a translation of "Die Staatenbildung der Israeliten in Palastina" in *Kleine Schriften* (Munich 1955) II 1-65. Alt's theory, interestingly, is close to that of J. Wellhausen, the major dissenting voice to the source critical solutions of the nineteenth century; *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Berlin [4]1963) 246-255. Although Wellhausen treats 1 Sam 14:52 to 2 Sam 8 as a block, he finds additions in the text; he is the first to note the similarity between 2 Sam 5:25 and 8:1; thus he concludes that 2 Sam 6-7 is an addition (p. 255). Alt takes a similar

footnotes and a three page article, has become the seed for much of the succeeding scholarship; yet there has been little consensus about the exact boundaries of the narrative as is clear from the summary presented below.

J. Wellhausen[23]	1 Sam 14:52 – 2 Sam 8:8
A. Alt[24]	1 Sam 16:14 – 2 Sam 5:25; 8
M. Noth[25]	1 Sam 16:14 – 2 Sam 5:25
Th.C. Vriezen[26]	1 Sam 16:14 – 2 Sam 7
H.U. Nübel[27]	1 Sam 16:1 – 2 Sam 9
F. Mildenberger[28]	1 Sam 13:2 – 2 Sam 7
A. Weiser[29]	1 Sam 16:1 – 2 Sam 7

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position in *ZAW* 54 (1936) 150. As for 2 Sam 6-7, Alt is basically in agreement with Rost (*Thronnachfolge* 105-106 = *Credo* 213): 2 Sam 6 belongs to the "Ark Narrative" and 2 Sam 7 is related to the "Succession Narrative."

[23] Wellhausen, *Composition*, 246-255.

[24] Alt, *ZAW* 54 (1936) 149-152; "Formation" 243, n. 35.

[25] M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Tübingen ²1957) 62-66. Noth argues that 2 Sam 5:10 formed the final sentence of the narrative; thus he takes the victory over the Philistines in 5:17-25 and places it after 5:1-3. This had already been suggested by S.R. Driver in his *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel* (Oxford 1913); he, in turn, cites A.R.S. Kennedy, *Samuel* (Century Bible; 1905) 215, 218. Noth assigns 2 Sam 5:4-5 to the Dtr redaction on the basis of the forty year reign (p. 25); as other Dtr additions, Noth cites Hiram's supply of wood (5:11-12), the list of sons (5:13-16) along with 3:2-5 (p. 63, n. 5 and p. 68). Noth also rejects the annalistic account in 2 Sam 8 (p. 65, 68).

[26] Th.C. Vriezen, *De Compositie van de Samuelboeken*, (Orientalia Neerlandica; Leiden 1948) 187.

[27] H.U. Nübel, *Davids Aufstieg in der fruhe israelisticher Geschichtsschreibung* (Diss. Bonn 1959). According to Stoebe, Nübel argues for a Grundschrift which was reworked in the northern kingdom during the latter part of the ninth century or the beginning of the next; the reworking is of such an extent that his theory borders on a two source theory which tends to split the work into half verses (*Kommentar* 50). Grønbæk cites as the most novel aspect of this theory Nübel's rearrangement of the final chapters: 2 Sam 8; 9; 6; 7; cf. J.H. Grønbæk, *Die Geschichte vom Aufstieg Davids (1. Sam. 15 2. Sam. 5)*: *Tradition und Komposition* (Copenhagen 1971) 30.

[28] F. Mildenberger, *Die vordeuteronomische Saul-Davidsüberlieferung* (Diss. Tübingen 1962). Mildenberger also argues for a *Grundtext* and a *Bearbeitung*. According to Grønbæk (*Aufstieg*, 27), Mildenberger is the only scholar to include 1 Sam 13-14 in his narrative; he bases this on Noth's observation that these chapters had been combined with the David narrative before their inclusion in the Dtr history (*Saul-David*, 121-121; Noth, *Studien*, 61-63). For the *Bearbeitung*, Mildenberger focuses especially on *nāgîd* as the key word, and he includes in this redaction 1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 11; 13:4b,5,7b-15a; 15; 16:1-14a; 18:10-16; 25(?); 28:3-25; 2 Sam 3:18; 5:1,2,12; 6:16,20-23; 7:8-17. In addition, Mildenberger sees other motifs which could be lifted out of the narrative, such as the units containing oracles (*Saul-David*, 191ff; so Stoebe, *Kommentar* , 51, n. 175). Thus Mildenberger's study borders on a source theory built around motifs.

[29] A. Weiser, "Legitimation des Königs David: Zur Eigenart und Entstehung der sogen. Geschichte von

R.L. Ward[30]	1 Sam 16:14 – 2 Sam 5:25
J.H. Grønbæk [31]	1 Sam 15:1 – 2 Sam 5:25
T.N.D. Mettinger[32]	1 Sam 15:1 – 2 Sam 7
P.K. McCarter[33]	1 Sam 16:14 – 2 Sam 5:25

The problem of boundaries stems, first of all, from the composite nature of this text which Greßmann underlined, and different starting points account for much of the shifting of boundaries by scholars. A short survey of the positions taken by Weiser, Grønbæk and Mettinger will help to clarify this point.

Weiser sees the text as "a mosaic of traditions" which nevertheless have been marshaled into a unity.[34] He takes 2 Sam 7 as his starting point, especially 7:8-11 in which he finds a "dense summary" of 1 Sam 16 to 2 Sam 6.[35] This point leads him to conclude (or perhaps vice versa) that this narrative is not concerned with David's secular kingship over Israel as a secular state but with the incorporation of David's kingship into the Israelite religion, already foreshadowed in 1 Sam 16:1-13.[36] The prophecy of Nathan in 2 Sam 7, with its divine promise of eternal kingship, becomes the solution to the problem and the climax of the narrative.[37] Weiser's starting point thus becomes his conclusion; still the argument is tightly woven.

Jakob Grønbæk sets his boundaries of the text on the basis of two factors. First he argues that the story of David's rise is also the story of Saul's collapse. Second he places great emphasis on David's victory cover the Amalekites in 1 Sam 30 which becomes the occasion for his rise to the throne. Grønbæk then points out the link between 1 Sam 30 and 1 Sam 15 in which Saul also triumphs over the Amalekites but is rejected as king. On the basis of this insight, Grønbæk argues that the original text began with 1 Sam 15.[38] This argument is basically literary in character. However, Grønbæk 's interest lies

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Davids Aufstieg," *VT* 16 (1966) 325-354.

[30] R.L. Ward, *The Story of David's Rise: A Tradition-Historical Study of 1 Sm XVI 14 II Samuel V* (Diss. Vanderbilt University 1967). His position is basically the same as Noth's position.

[31] Grønbæk, *Aufstieg*.

[32] T.N.D. Mettinger, *King and Messiah: The Civil and Sacred Legitimation of the Israelite Kings* (ConB OT Series 8; Lund 1976) 33-47.

[33] P.K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (Anchor Bible 8; NY 1980) 27.

[34] Weiser, "Legitimation," 329-333.

[35] Ibid. 335, 347-348.

[36] Ibid. 328, 335, 347.

[37] Ibid. 326-328, 344-349.

[38] Grønbæk , *Aufstieg*, 23-27; 261-262.

mainly with the history, and he understands the text primarily as a piece of propaganda used in the conflict between Judah and the northern tribes over Benjamin shortly after the division of the kingdom.[39] Because of this political orientation, he rejects Weiser's arguments for the inclusion of 2 Sam 7 and ends the text with 2 Sam 5.[40]

T.N.D. Mettinger, following both Weiser and Grønbæk , produces a synthesis of their positions; he begins the story with 1 Sam 15 and ends with a pre-Dtr version of 2 Sam 7.[41] He argues that the longer conclusion is consonant with Grønbæk's *Sitz im Leben*, that the dynastic theme, with *nāgîd* understood as the royal successor designated by God, links 2 Sam 6-7 with the preceding narrative. This he buttresses with observations on the language. Mettinger's arguments, therefore, are literary, based on links of language, motif, theme, and narrative logic.

These scholars who stand in the tradition of Alt reaffirm the basic position of Noth who argues that the Dtr redactor did little to modify the text incorporated into the larger history.[42] Although these scholars have been interested primarily in the text as a political, historical document, much of their discussion has depended upon literary insight, and the character of David has exerted the major impact. Thus even Grønbæk , who argues the importance of Saul's role, calls the text the story of "David's Rise." Recently, however, several scholars have chosen to focus on different characters; as a result, they have produced different narrative boundaries.

D. Jobling uses Jonathan as his focal point and marks the boundaries with the appearance and death of Jonathan: 1 Sam 13-31.[43] Jobling abandons the search for a *Vorgeschichte* and begins with D.J. McCarthy's argument that 1 Sam 8-12 is a literary unit in which the problem of kingship in Israel is introduced and resolved.[44] Jobling, in turn, argues that 1 Sam 13 begins a new literary unit to answer the question of why Israel's dynastic kingship cannot be traced back to the first king, Saul.[45] Although Jobling's

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[39] Ibid. 275-277; the boundary fight for Benjamin is reported in 1 Kgs 15:7; cf. 2 Chr 13:19; 1 Kgs 15:17,22; and 2 Chr 16:1,5-6. In order to strengthen Judah's claim, according to Grønbæk , the author projects the double kingdom of Judah and Israel back into the time of Saul who reigned only over Israel; Ibid. 33-36, 260-261, 274-277.

[40] Ibid. 33-34.

[41] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 34-47; he suggests that 1 Sam 15:10-26,35b may have been inserted by DtrP.

[42] Noth, *Studien*, 61-65. Recently T. Veijola in *Die Ewige Dynastie* (AnAcScFen Series B 198; Helsinki 1975) has argued that the Dtr redactors (DtrG, DtrN, DtrP) played a much more significant role in these chapters than has been supposed. Mettinger rejects this "pan-deuteronomistic" tendency (*King and Messiah*, 19-22). Likewise, I find that Veijola wants to make every recurring motif the result of a redactor, but I do not see the necessity.

[43] D. Jobling, "Jonathan: A Structural Study in I Samuel," in *The Sense of Biblical Narrative* (JStOTS 8; Sheffield 1978).

[44] D.J. McCarthy, "The Inauguration of the Monarch in Israel, A Form-Critical Study of 1 Samuel 8-12," *Int* 27 (1973) 401-412.

[45] Jobling, "Jonathan," 5-6, 17-18.

method is more consciously literary, his vision of the main theme as basically political does not differ materially from that of Alt and his successors.

D.M. Gunn has recently published two books on this material with still different boundaries. In *The Story of King David*, Gunn argues that 2 Sam 2:8 – 5:3 formed the original beginning of the "Succession Narrative."[46] By this analysis, he creates a text which covers the reign of David as king; thus the title of the book. The argument is not without difficulties which Gunn himself acknowledges.[47] In my opinion, the present position of 2 Sam 9 is explained by the cue in 1 Sam 20:15-16 in which Jonathan calls upon David to show faithfulness to his house after David cuts off his enemies. 2 Sam 9, which reports David's faithfulness to Jonathan's house, follows the summary of David's triumph over Israel's enemies in 2 Sam 8. If the "Succession Narrative" had a different beginning, I do not see that we possess it.

In his second book, *The Fate of King Saul*, Gunn uses Saul to define his boundaries; thus his text reaches from 1 Sam 8 which introduces the problem of kingship to 2 Sam 2:7 which tells of David's crowning and Saul's burial. Like Jobling's analysis of Jonathan, Gunn's study attempts to deal with the literary function of a single character from the moment of his appearance to his exit. Gunn is very clear about his goal. Unlike the study of King David in which Gunn tries to recover an original, historical unit, the study of Saul seeks to establish "the overall flow and coherence in the final product."[48] It should be pointed out that Gunn does not ignore the fruits of historical scholarship. However, if one is interested in "the overall flow and coherence in the final product," much of the historical discussion is not helpful because it seeks to highlight divergences in an attempt to reconstruct variant narrative sequences. Gunn's stance is similar to the one which I wish to assume.

Alt and his followers, as well as Gunn and Jobling, have made a character, or definable part of a character's life (i.e. "David's Rise"), the criteria for establishing the beginning and end of a narrative. The birth and death of a character provide a natural boundary for a story because they are the natural opening and closure for life in this world. As such, they offer clear boundaries to the biographer.[49] Such an approach to these texts meets with constant difficulty because the lives of major character (Samuel, Saul,

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[46] R.M. Gunn, *The Story of King David: Genre and Interpretation* (JStOTS 6; Sheffield 1978) 65-84. Rost suggested that some part of 2 Sam 7 formed part of the beginning of the "Succession Narrative"; *Thronnachfolge*. Other scholars, such as Carlson (*David*, 198-203), have felt the need for a stronger beginning. Some version of 2 Sam 21 has been suggested as a beginning for the "Succession Narrative" by Budde, *Die Bücher Samuelis*, 304; Hertzberg, *I&II Samuel*, 381; R. de Vaux, *Les Livres de Samuel* (La Sainte Bible; Paris 1955) 220; G. Anzou in *La danse devant l'arche: Étude du Livre de Samuel* (Paris 1968) 364.

[47] Gunn, *King David*, 68-76. Gunn is willing to cut the narrative short and begin at 2 Sam 4:12 if necessary.

[48] R.M. Gunn, *The Fate of King Saul*. An Interpretation of a Biblical Story (JStOTS 14; Sheffield 1980) 13.

[49] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 209.

David, Solomon) are continually overlapping, and this is true also for motifs and themes. References to the covenant between Jonathan and David appear in 1 Sam 18:3; 20; 23:18; 2 Sam 9:7; 19:24; and 21:7. The theme of succession, from which the "Succession Narrative" takes its name, pervades the earlier stories in the Books of Samuel, and, in some ways, the name "Succession Narrative" better suits the earlier narratives. The overlapping of character, motif, and theme binds these stories into a larger unity. Still, as scholars have recognized, smaller units have their own coherence and closure.

C. The David-Saul Narrative: 1 Sam 13 – 2 Sam 8.

I propose to solve the problems of boundaries on the basis of plot, or *mythos* as Aristotle called it. He outlines the basic elements of *mythos* in a brilliant statement of the obvious: a beginning, a middle, and an end.[50] The beginning introduces a tension; the end resolves this tension with the climax and brings the story to rest (denouement). The middle typically retards the resolution by complication and introduces the means whereby the tension is resolved.

I am interested in the story which begins in 1 Sam 13. This presumes that the story has come to rest in 1 Sam 12, and there are indications to support the assumption. Martin Noth in his famous study on the Deuteronomistic History has argued that the address in 1 Sam 12 marks the end of the period of the Judges and that the regnal formula in 1 Sam 13:1 opens the period of the kings.[51] More recently, Dennis McCarthy has argued that 1 Sam 8-12 is a literary unit in which the tension between divine and human monarchy (1 Sam 8) is resolved by the covenant (1 Sam 12); he supports this conclusion with other signs of narrative design.[52]

As noted above, the logic of beginning with 1 Sam 13:1 has been recognized already by Jobling; however, the main stream of biblical scholarship has viewed 1 Sam 13-14 as part of a Samuel-Saul complex which generally includes 1 Sam 8-15. Certainly there are links. In 1 Sam 10:8, Samuel promises to meet Saul in Gilgal, an event which takes place in 13:8-14. The promise in 1 Sam 9:16 that Saul will put an end to the Philistine threat, foreshadows the encounter with the enemy in 1 Sam 13-14 although the promise is not fulfilled. Moreover the covenant in 1 Sam 12 provides the basis for the rejection of Saul. While these elements establish a context and prepare for the possibility of new tension,

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[50] Aristotle, *De Poetica*, ch. 7.

[51] Noth, *Studien*, 47. This is the typical formula used throughout the Books of Kings to introduce the history of a reign, and its appearance in 1 Sam 13:1 marks the beginning of the period of the kings; Ibid. 65. For my purposes, it is enough to say that the formula opens a new section. As Stoebe comments (*Kommentar*, 243, v. 1, n. c), this specific form is used only for the kings of Judah with the exception of Saul here in 1 Sam 13:1 and of his son Ishbaal in 2 Sam 2:10. The problem of the Saul's age and the length of his reign is a much discussed textual problem (*Kommentar*, 242, v. 1, n. 1).

[52] D.J. McCarthy, "Inauguration of the Monarchy," 401-412; also A.D.H. Hayes, "The Rise of Israelite Monarchy," *ZAW* 90 (1978) 1-19, esp. p. 1.

the tensions raised in 1 Sam8 have been resolved and stabilized by the end of 1 Sam 12. Even so, 1 Sam 8-12 cannot be completely divorced from what follows.[53]

1 Sam 13, on the other hand, introduces two new tensions into the story. First of all, the Philistines who had been subdued by Samuel in 1 Sam 7:13, return as Israel's major foreign enemy. From 1 Sam 13:3 to 2 Sam 8:12, the name "Philistine(s)" can be found 132 times which in the chapters known as the "Succession Narrative," they appear only once in a retrospective reference (2 Sam 19:10).[54] though the threat of the Philistines is often overshadowed by the tension between David and Saul, the foreigners are the true antagonists, as indicated by 1 Sam 23:27-28 where Saul must leave his pursuit of David to deal with the renewed attack by the Philistines. The end of this tension is announced in 2 Sam 8:1 where David defeats and subdues (*knʿ*) the foe.[55]

A second, major tension of rejection is introduced in 1 Sam 13:7b-15a which must be considered with 1 Sam 15 because these two passages have often been viewed as doublets. Against this prevailing view, B. Birch has argued that both pericopes, while having a similar form, answer different questions: 13:7b-15a asserts "why Saul's dynasty was not established while David's was," and 1 Sam 15 reveals "why David was chosen before Saul's death."[56] This is a historian's point of view, and I want to rephrase the problem. Rather than answering questions, these two pericopes introduce a mounting tension.

As Birch points out, 1 Sam 13:8-14 is not a rejection of Saul himself as king. Rather Samuel announces to Saul that the Lord will not establish his kingdom forever; instead, the Lord has chosen another *nāgîd*, i.e. "designated heir to the throne."[57] Thus the

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[53] W.L. Humphreys has pushed the beginning back to 1 Sam 9 when Saul first appears as a character in the story, and there is surely justice in this. Since he is focused on Saul, he ends the story in 1 Sam 31. From a literary point of view, different perspectives will suggests different starting points. Cf. W.L. Humphreys, "The Tragedy of King Saul: A Study of 1 Sam 9-31," *JStOT* 6 (1978) 18-27; "The Rise and Fall of King Saul: A Study of an ancient Narrative Stratum in 1 Samuel," *JStOT* 8 (1980) 74-90; "From Tragic Hero to Villain: A Study of the Figure of Saul and the Development of 1 Samuel," *JStOT* 22 (1982) 95-117.

[54] During the story of 1 Sam 8-12, the Philistines are mentioned in only in 9:16 which was discussed above, and in 12:9, a reference to the period of the Judges. In 2 Sam 21 and 23, the Philistines appear fourteen times.

[55] The verb *knʿ* is typically used by the Dtr redactor to mark the end of a section: cf. Judg 3:30; 4:23; 8:28; 11:33, and 1 Sam 7:13. The use of this verb seem to suggest that 2 Sam 8 served as the conclusion of a Dtr unit which begins in 1 Sam 7:14. More than one word would be needed to sustain the hypothesis.

[56] B. Birch, *The Rise of Israelite Monarchy* (SBLDS 27; Missoula 1976), 105-106. Cf. also Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 252.

[57] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, ch. 9.2-3. Mettinger argues that *nāgîd* originally had a secular sense designating the one designated by the king as the successor to the throne. Later "a theologization takes place in the north with Jeroboam to express the charismatic basis for kingship in the north." The use of the term in the "History of David's Rise" reflects this theologizing.

tension introduced by 1 Sam 13 revolves around the question of succession. In 1 Sam 15, this tension is heightened by the rejection of Saul himself as king, and this is followed by the secret anointing of David as king in the next chapter.

The struggle between David and Saul forms the major action of the story, yet this tension is not completely resolved by the death of the rejected king, for Saul's son Ishbaal tries to perpetuate the rejected dynasty in Israel. With Ishbaal's death in 2 Sam 4, the narrative proceeds to its conclusion. David, already anointed king over Judah, is anointed king of Israel (2 Sam 5:1-5); yet even this does not resolve the question of dynasty. Only after the impossibility of Saul's line continuing through the daughter Michal is made clear in 2 Sam 6, does Nathan learn in a dream that David's house and kingdom shall be made sure before the Lord forever (2 Sam 7:16).

Both Weiser and Mettinger have emphasized the relationship of 2 Sam 7 to the preceding material. The point especially to the recurrence of *nāgîd* in 1 Sam 25:30; 2 Sam 5:2; 6:21; 7:8; and, by implication, to 1 Sam 16:1-13 which contains the shepherd motif found in 2 Sam 5:2 and 7:7.[58] To this chain I wish to add the occurrence of *nāgîd* and "the kingdom forever" in 1 Sam 13:13-14 where the tension is first introduced.

2 Sam 8 forms the denouement of the narrative. Already I have mentioned that the Philistine threat is laid to rest in 8:1, and to this is added David's victories over all of Israel's traditional enemies as prophesied by Abigail (1 Sam 25:28-29), by Abner (2 Sam 3:18), and by Nathan (2 Sam 7:9,11). The chapter ends with the repetition of "every/ all" (*kōl*) which underlines the completeness of David's conquest, kingship, just rule along with a list of official who assist king in his office (8:14b-15). With this final statement of completeness, the story has come once again to rest. Thus I mark the boundaries of the David-Saul narrative from 1 Sam 13:1 to 2 Sam 8:15.

Both Veijola and Mettinger have argued that 2 Sam 8:1,14b-15 is the work of the Dtr historian who placed this chapter in its present position.[59] If one adds to this the regnal formula in 1 Sam 13:1 which is a typical feature of the Dtr history, then the evidence suggests that I have isolated a unit of the Dtr history. However, I do not find that Dtr has played an important role in the shaping of this narrative. By choice, I have not attempted in this thesis to deal with the relationship of this text to the larger Dtr corpus although the prevalence of covenant and its implications within the story suggest a fertile area for scholarship. Neither am I concerned with the historical questions of a *Vorgeschichte* which Alt and his followers have pursued. Rather, to use a term suggested by Gerard Genette, I am interested in the "retrospective unity" of the text.

Genette applies this term to Marcel Proust's great work, *A la recherche de temps perdu*, for Proust did not write his *magnum opus* from beginning to end; rather much of the final

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[58] Weiser, "Legitimation," 347-348. Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 44-45. For the shepherd motif and its relation to kingship in the ancient Near East; cf. n. 358.

[59] Veijola, *Ewige Dynastie*, 105. Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 41.

part was written first, and the complete work was pieced together in the end.

We know that Proust, far from considering this type of unity as "illusory" (Vigneron), judged it "not fictitious, perhaps indeed all the more real for being ulterior, for being born of a moment of enthusiasm when it is discovered to exist among fragments which need only be joined together. A unity that has been unaware of itself, therefore vital and not logical, that has not banned variety, chilled execution.[60] Genette does not wish to obliterate the resistance of various pieces to the unity of the whole; on the contrary he says:

> Narrative analysis must register these shifts—and the resulting discordances—as effects of the actual genesis of the work; but in the end analysis can look at the narrating instance only as it is given in the final state of the text.[61]

Proust's work, of course, is the product of one author.

The biblical narrative of David and Saul most probably was shaped by many authors and perhaps by several redactors, yet it must be recognized that all of these people belong to a tradition. As a result, I shall argue that a "retrospective unity" exists. I do not want to obliterate the individuality of the various units. Indeed, the complexity of the narrative is created in part by the juxtaposition of different materials which form new unities like the juxtaposition of two images in a metaphor. The interpretation of the armor-bearer at the beginning of this chapter is an example.

In spite of this, my approach is more conservative than that of P.D. Miscall who has sought to reveal the ambiguity of opaque characters, and the "inconsistencies" and "contradictions" of the narrative.[62] Miscall's work might be fairly called a polemic against the those methods, whether historical or literary, which seek to establish *the* meaning of the text, and in the postscript, he identifies loosely with the concerns of the deconstructionists. In a polemical style, he seizes every opportunity which might suggest the uncertainty of meaning with interesting results. However, as Miscall

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[60] G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Ithaca NY 1980) 148-149; M. Proust, *In Search of Lost Time* (NY 1970) III 161.

[61] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 224, also 149.

[62] P.D. Miscall, *The Workings of Old Testament Narrative* (Philadelphia/Chico CA 1983) especially 139-143.

himself notes, he gives "little attention" to "intertextuality," a text's "differences from and relations to the network(s) of other texts."[63] As a result, he approaches the whole Bible as a synchronic whole. I find that he gives little attention to the "discordances" of the "retrospective unity." Furthermore, he abstracts opaque characters from their traditional roles in traditional genres. This present study makes intertextuality, the genre of the text, a fundamental perspective for understanding the narrative.

[63] Ibid. 139-140.

Part I:

Battle Narrative
in the Bible
and in the Ancient Near East

Chapter II:
Genre, Pattern, Motif and the Tradition

In the last chapter, the boundaries of the narrative were established by identifying the basic tensions and resolution of the story. In this chapter, I want to identify and define the pieces of traditional narrative in order to lay a framework for the comparative analysis of battle literature from the ancient Near East and the Bible. Through analysis and comparison, I shall establish the traditional motifs and patterns for the classic, royal, and biblical battle narratives in the next three chapters. In Part II, I shall use this material to show how 1 Sam 13 - 2 Sam 8 uses the traditional patterns to establish David as the ideal hero-king and how the text twists and breaks the patterns in order to create the tragedy of Saul.

A. The Tradition.

Storytellers do not create *ex nihilo.* As Paul Ricoeur observes, they stand within a tradition which they reshape and transform in order to create new works.[64] Their audience likewise depends upon the tradition to provide the context for understanding a new work. Because the tradition is a recurring phenomenon, it belongs neither to the storyteller nor to the audience, and its autonomy preserves the text from distortion. This autonomy also functions for later audiences because the a-historical and a-cultural dimension of "the 'form' secures the survival of meaning after the disappearance of its *Sitz im Leben*" and thereby "opens the message to fresh interpretation according to new contexts of discourse and life."[65] Ricoeur's remarks help to explain why people have continued to read the David-Saul Narrative, for instance, even though its *Sitz im Leben* remains a disputed question among scholars.[66] Part I of this thesis is concerned especially with the a-historical and a-cultural dimension of the form, the genre abstracted from specific story traditions.

While all narrative is related to a tradition, if only in reaction to it, some narratives are highly bound by the tradition. Milman Parry and A.B. Lord have demonstrated the marked dependence of oral, poetic narrative on the tradition both at the level of language and of narrative structure. Within an oral tradition, the story does not exist as a fixed text but as a possibility which the storyteller recreates with each performance.[67] Heda Jason, building on Lord and Propp, describes the tradition as a skeletal plot and "a

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[64]Cf. P. Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4 (1975) 29-148, esp. 63-75.

[65]Ibid. 71.

[66]For an evaluation of *Sitz im Leben*, cf. M.J. Buss, "The Idea of Sitz im Leben – History and Critique," *ZAW* 90 (1978) 158-170.

[67]A.B. Lord, *Singer of Tales* (Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature 24; Cambridge MA 1964).

literary canon (a set of rules of compositions and a lexicon of content units)." From the tradition the storyteller recreates the story in performance for the audience. This literary canon, however, is an unconscious possession of the performer.[68] The tradition thus is similar to our grasp of a spoken language learned as a child.

Jason contrasts oral literature with "high written literature" which does not use a fixed canon but "creates forms freely" and adds themes and motifs not found in the tradition. As such, this type of literature is "innovative and grows by struggling against the patterns and notions of its predecessors."[69]

Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg describe a similar situation in different terms. For them, the traditional story-teller is primarily committed to "re-creating" the tradition.

> Therefore, the story-teller's "primary allegiance is not to fact, not to truth, not to entertainment, but to the *mythos* itself—i.e. the story as preserved in the tradition…."[70]

According to Scholes and Kellogg, the introduction of written composition brings about the abandonment of this allegiance to the tradition in order to champion new allegiances: history, mimesis, art, or instruction.[71] Though the hero ultimately triumphs in traditional narrative, such is not always the case in life, and the mimesis of Greek tragedy recognizes this reality. Likewise Thucydides, the great Greek historian, traces the defeat of Athens in the Pelopenisian wars because of his allegiance to history.[72] As themes of war give way to themes of political satire and of love, new art forms emerge in ancient Greece. Finally, where political or religious forces dominate the scribal arts, as was the case generally in the ancient Near East, tradition gives ways to propaganda.

The movement from oral to written composition does not necessarily free a narrative from the canons of the tradition. Jason recognizes that much of popular literature is generated by the canons of a tradition and cites a number of modern examples: "the detective story, television plays, wild west movies"; like oral literature, they are highly dependent upon the audience which assiduously guards and demands the tradition.[73] As a result, the difference between oral and written composition cannot be equated with the difference between traditional and non-traditional narrative. And indeed it is not always easy to separate oral and written composition. Lord offers the criterion of

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[68]Heda Jason, *Ethnopoetry: Form, Content, and Function* (Forum Theologicae Linguisticae 11; Bonn 1977) 1,1. Cf. also by Jason, *Ethnopoetics: A Multilingual Terminology* (Israel Ethnological Society Studies 3; Jerusalem 1975).

[69]Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, 1.1

[70]Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 12.

[71]*Ibid.* 12-14, 29-31.

[72]F.M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoriucus* (Philadelphia 1971) 137-138.

[73]Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, 1.1.

formulaic language for isolating orally composed poetry, but for prose there seems to be no easy criterion.[74] The problem is especially complex in the ancient Near East where the art of writing existed side by side, seemingly, with a vibrant oral tradition.[75] Therefore, I shall seek to isolate the traditional motifs and patterns, whether in prose or poetry, whether the result of written or oral composition.

This project need not be carried out in utter blindness. When allegiances other than the tradition become prominent or dominant, this shift must be recorded, for the displacement of the tradition is of particular importance to historians. As Scholes and Kellogg argue, history plays a major role in the breakdown of the tradition in western literature. By understanding the traditional movement of a story, the historian can identify the replacement of traditional elements with unique events.[76] This judgment is seldom simple because the tradition is not mechanical, but flexible and creative. Also, where the historical facts fit the tradition as in a victorious battle, the traditional storyteller can retell the history in the motifs and patterns of the tradition. Therefore, the traditional cast of a story does not necessarily mean that the basic facts of the story are not true. In this thesis, I have set aside the issues of the history behind the text in order to pursue a grasp of the traditional narrative. This shall be my contribution to the study of Israel's history.

B. Generic Content.

Within biblical studies, of course, questions of genre fall under the aegis of form criticism, and Herman Gunkel continues to provide the point of departure. In his commentary on Genesis, Gunkel argues that the narrative units belong to the basic genres of folk literature.[77] However, unlike his classifications of the psalms which

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[74]R.C. Culley, "Oral Tradition and the Old Testament: Some Recent Discussion," *Semeia* 5 (1976)1-33, esp. 31. This lack of criteria has led to an exchange of articles between D.M. Gunn and J. Van Seters. Gunn is anxious to isolate linguistic elements which could be taken as marks of an oral composition while Van Seters argues that the same marks could just as well be literary conventions. Both, however, would agree that these elements are traditional. Cf. D.M. Gunn, *King David*, 47-49; J. Van Seters, "Problems in the Literary Analysis of the Court History of David" *JStOT* 1 (1976) 22-29; "Oral Patterns or Literary Conventions in Biblical Narrative," *Semeia* 5 (1976) 139-154. Like generic form and generic content or mode, the medium (written or oral) must be analyzed as another genus which affects work, and, in this respect, this genus is closer to the traditional genres of epos, drama, and lyric.

[75]Why, for instance do we have a written Old Babylonian version of the *Gilgamesh Epic*. and, among others, a Neo-Assyrian version which is not a translation of the Old Babylonian?

[76]Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 40-41.

[77]H. Gunkel (HKAT I/1; Gottingen 1901, [2]1902, [3]1910, [4]1917). The introduction of the second edition was translated by W.H. Carruth into English as *The Legends of Genesis* (Chicago 1901) and has been reissued with an introduction by W.F. Albright (NY 1964). A fine synopsis of Gunkel's work has been written by J.A. Wilcoxsen in his survey "Narrative," *Old Testament Form Criticism*, ed. by J.H. Hayes (San Antonio TX 1974) 57-98. A discussion of the positions taken by Gunkel and Jolles as products of German romanticism and idealism can be found in J.W. Rogerson's "Folklore," *Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Oxford 1978) 66-85.

distinguish genres primarily on the basis of generic patterns, the classifications for Genesis are based on differences of generic content: types of characters, actions, setting, and subject matter. Gunkel's approach yields four categories: myth, *Märchen*, *Sage*, and history. These four categories correspond respectively to the divine, the marvelous, the miraculous-historical, and the historical. Within this framework, motifs and plots patterns can migrate from one "genre" to another with the proper changes of character, space and time, etc.[78]

This type of approach continues to be found, for instance in Frank Moore Cross' *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*. Cross argues that motifs and patterns of Canaanite myth, i.e. stories about deities, are used in Hebrew literature to tell the stories of divine intervention in the human world of the Israelites. Cross describes this type of Hebrew literature as "epic." C. Conroy, while acknowledging Cross' insight, criticizes his use of "epic" as vague.[79]] Part of the problem for both Gunkel and Cross lies in their definition of genre basically in terms of generic content instead of generic form. Heda Jason provides a system to analyze this shift in generic content which she calls "mode."

Jason defines "mode" as the relationship between the world of the audience and that of the story.[80] Two key factors can be used to establish the mode of a story: the setting of space and time, and the type of power which resolves the tension. For narrative Jason proposes three basic modes: the numinous mode, the marvelous mode, and the realistic mode.

The numinous mode confines the story to the space and time beyond this world, and presents powers and beings, good and evil, "which are embedded in the living belief of the narrating society."[81]

The marvelous mode sets the story in "its own world, the fairy-tale land" which is inhabited by marvelous beings. Human beings may enter this land and resolve tensions with the help of marvelous powers. The marvelous is the mode of the imagination.[82]

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[78]H. Gunkel, *Das Märchen im Alten Testament* (Tubingen 1917).

[79]C. Conroy has surveyed the use of the term "epic" by biblical scholars. The term at times is opposed to "myth" and means a story of human characters as opposed to one recounting the exploits of divine characters. At other times, "epic" seems to connote a story on a grand scale, or a story in poetry as opposed to one told in prose. As a result, the use of "epic" is often so vague that it complicates rather than assists an analysis; "Hebrew Epic: Historical Notes and Critical Reflections," *Bib* 66 (1980) 1-30. The question of epic is not irrelevant to this thesis, but I have left the discussion to the end of the thesis because the problems which the word raises in so many minds would, I fear, obfuscate my argument.

[80]Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, Ch. 2.

[81]*Ibid.* 2.2.2.2. The analysis which I offer does not present the complexity which Jason's data demands. Instead I have reported only what is necessary for this study. Also I have replaced her "creative mode" with the term "mythic mode" which I find more descriptive.

[82]*Ibid.* 2.2.2.3.

The realistic mode limits characters and actions to this world. "The only power existing here is that of human physical strength and morality, of wisdom, cleverness, shrewdness, or its opposite, folly."[83]

To these must be added a fourth, mixed mode: the sacred mode in which numinous powers enter human space and time to resolve tensions.[84] Much of biblical narrative, in which the Lord plays a primary role, belongs to the sacred mode.

Generic patterns can be found in various modes, and this is particularly true for the battle narrative which is found in all four modes. In the *Enūma eliš*, the god Marduk triumphs over Tiamat the divine mother before creation; the story is an example of the mythic battle narrative in the numinous mode. Numerous examples of the dragon-slayer exist as examples of the heroic fairy tales of the marvelous mode.[85] For the sacred battle narrative, a clear example can be found in Exod 14-15 in which the Lord alone defeats Pharaoh. Finally, Achilles' triumph over Hector belongs essentially to the realistic mode although deities appear and play a role.

For this thesis, it is important to recognize that stories in different modes may follow the same generic patterns. Therefore, while the mode of a story will have an impact on the pattern, mode does not preclude the comparison of stories from different modes, and in the next chapter, I shall analyze battle narratives from the numinous, sacred, and realistic modes in order to identify the generic motifs and patterns which cross the lines of mode.

C. Generic Form: Motifs and Patterns.

In the last chapter, I discussed the tradition-bound image which evokes a stable intellectual content, and I called this traditional image "symbol" because it gathers meaning as it recurs in the natural, cultural, or private levels of life and narrative.[86] From the perspective of narrative, the tradition-bound image serves as a building block of narrative patterns and are called "motifs." Stith Thompson defines "motif" as "the smallest element in a tale having the power to persist in the tradition," and he divides these elements into three main groups: characters, actions, and details (attributes and objects).[87] These three types of traditional motifs are organized into traditional patterns which the storyteller uses to create episodes and plots.[88]

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[83] *Ibid.* 2.2.1.

[84] *Ibid.* 2.2.2.2.

[85] *Ibid.* 4.2.1.

[86] Cf. discussion on symbol above on p. 6f.

[87] S. Thompson, *The Folktale* (NY 1946) 415. Jason has a similar division which she calls narrative action, narrative roles and requisites; *Ethnopoetry*, Ch. 17.

[88] Cf. Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, Ch. 12. Jason states that "the structure of the plot is basically independent of both the texture (grammatical and prosodic features), and its dramatization." While noting that some

These traditional elements can be divided into the generic and the specific. Generic motifs and patterns are an abstraction from the specific content of a story tradition. Generically, David, Achilles, and Gilgamesh are all heroes who fight an enemy in single-combat. In a specific story tradition, such as the Exodus story, motifs and patterns have a specific content which reappears whenever the story is retold. Within story tradition of the Exodus, the Lord always fights Pharaoh at the Red Sea whenever the story is told. Within Old Testament scholarship, traditio-historical studies have explored specific story traditions while form criticism has dealt primarily with generic motifs and patterns. This thesis finds its roots within the form-criticism.

Some form-critical studies of the past have failed to allow for the flexibility and creativity of the generic patterns.[89] A mechanical approach must be avoided, for these patterns are not mathematical formulae which demand the inclusion of every traditional element in order to yield a correct answer. Dorothy Irvin has insisted on this point with great emphasis: The order of the motifs in a pattern may differ. The motifs may be repeated or left out. A pattern may be presented in an elaborate form and serve as the skeletal plot of a whole narrative; or the pattern may be reduced to serve as only an episode or even further to a mere mention in the story.[90] The reasons for reordering or omitting, for collapsing or expanding motifs and patterns can be viewed from the perspective of both audience and story-teller.

For the audience, a knowledge of the tradition provides the common understanding which allows them to follow the story and recognize the import of its form. On the other hand, there is no suspense for the traditional audience. They know that the hero will ultimately triumph. They know that Achilles will slay Hector even before Homer begins to sing. Therefore, the storyteller must "defamiliarize" the tradition in order to hold the attention of the audience.

The Russian Formalist Victor Sjklovsky coined the term "defamiliarization," for he saw perception as a fundamental goal of art; thus "the technique of art is to make objects

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would give these narrative structures an ontological status, she concludes only that they exist in reality and that the investigator's construct, though abstract, is filled with or realized by concrete content (p. 70).

[89]The form of the lament offers an easy example of the problem from Old Testament studies. Gunkel's form for the lament, which was codified by later scholars, inevitably proved unsatisfactory and produced lists divided into laments, probable laments, possible laments, etc. H.J. Kraus, who provides such lists, has gathered a number of Gunkel's forms under the heading of *Gebetslieder* (t^{e}pillâ) and has drawn up a list of traditional elements and a traditional order without insisting upon every element in every psalm or upon the exact order; *Psalmen* (BKAT XV/1; Neukirchen ^{5}1979) 50-51. Pss 13 and 22 begin with questions, a traditional element which usually comes much later in Kraus' pattern; the change creates a sense of immediacy but does not eliminate it from the genre.

[90]Dorothy Irvin, *Mytharion: The Comparison of Tales from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East* (AOAT 32; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 11.

'unfamiliar,' to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception."[91] In this way, a storyteller forces the audience to confront the material as if for the first time. At the level of language, a storyteller forces the perception by metaphor, archaic words, and difficult or harsh style.[92]

Within the story, elaboration and repetition and complication achieve similar effects.[93] Elaboration expands the time of confrontation so that the impact may be absorbed. Repetition creates the same by continual return. And complication retards the inevitable thereby increasing the tension of the story and the expectation of the audience. This may happen in two ways. Because the tradition is a set of possibilities and not a mathematical formula, the storyteller may twist motifs and patterns, may create new configurations, may displace an expected motif with the unexpected. Second, the storyteller may also break a pattern by denying its fulfillment in order to retard the action; thus the hero may fail in his first attempt to conquer the enemy. In a traditional narrative, however, the pattern is ultimately fulfilled. The failure of the story to fulfill the traditional expectation marks the shift of allegiance away from the tradition.

For the author, familiarity brings a mastery of both generic forms and specific story traditions. The mastery of technique bestows the powers of elaboration, repetition, and complication. To this technical mastery, some storytellers bring a creative power which allows them to transform the tradition, to explore the potential complexity of the tradition.[94] Homer, like others before and after him, tells the story of the Trojan war, but his achievement is more than technical mastery. As the opening line of the *Iliad* states, he tells the story of the anger of Achilles. The hero's anger is a tradition motif which characterizes his response to the enemy's aggression.[95] Homer moves beyond the traditional confines of the motif and brings the anger to such a pitch that the hero is almost consumed by his own rage. Unlike the traditional battle narrative which reaches its climax with the single-combat between hero and foe, the tension of the *Iliad* is not resolved by the death of Hector, for Achilles' anger is not spent. The resolution comes only with the return of the body to Priam, Hector's father and king, for in Priam Achilles recognizes his own father and finds again his compassion. Homer uses the battle narrative to tell a larger story of human emotions and relationships. The battle tradition serves as the frame and grammar which allows Homer to twist and reshape the tradition, much as Bach did with the Baroque tradition.

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[91]V. Shklovsky, "Art as Technique," (trans. and intro. by L. Lemon and M.J. Reis)(Lincoln NB 1965) 3-24, esp. 12

[92]*Ibid*. 19-22.

[93]L. Alonso Schökel, "Poésie Hebraïque," *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Supplement (Paris 1972) v. 8, col. 47-90, esp. 72-73.

[94]A.B. Lord, *Singer of Tales*, 100, 102. Cf. also Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 22-23.

[95]On the hero's anger, cf. p. 89.

A final force of change and creativity has already been discussed above: the shift of allegiance from the tradition to history, mimesis, art, and instruction.[96] When this occurs, traditional motifs and patterns are reshaped and even broken. Often at least the shadow of the tradition remains, for the pull to tell a traditional story remains strong.

D. Battle Narrative and Complex narratives.

Among the genres in the realistic mode, Jason lists only two: novella and epic. She defines novella simply as a story in which the tension is resolved by intellectual powers or by virtue.[97] Her definition of epic, however, is more complicated:

> 1. Epic tells the story of "a struggle against a family, tribal, or national enemy, real or fabulous";
>
> 2. while basically in a given mode it may include elements from other modes;
>
> 3. epic draws together many motifs and patterns and becomes "a kind of sum total of oral literature, its condensed manifestation."[98]

Scholes and Kellogg define "epic" similarly as "an amalgam of sacred myth, quasi-historical legend, and fictional folk tale which functions in a culture to preserve its most cherished religious, political, and ethical values, as well as preserving a traditional poetic 'grammar' in terms of which new experience will be apprehended.[99] In short, "epic" should be for a culture what Homer was for ancient Greece.

Indeed Homer is the unseen touchstone in much of the discussion surrounding epic, and Jason's definition for epic is met in the *Iliad*, one might even say, perfectly. Jason's definition is less well constructed to include the *Odyssey* in which the journey, rather than battle, serves as the predominate pattern; yet even more than the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* with its adventures into the world of the marvelous represents "the condensed manifestation of oral literature."

These two epics, however, are not a single story, but a complex of various and repeated patterns gathered together under the overarching pattern of the battle narrative in the *Iliad* and the journey in the *Odyssey*. Other stories of battle and journey lack the length and depth to be called a "condensed manifestation of oral literature." To give them the title of "epic" would only add confusion. Thus in addition to novella, I would add battle

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[96]Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 12-14, 29-31.

[97]Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, 3.1.

[98]*Ibid.* 3.4.1.

[99]Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 12, 28-29.

narrative and journey to the basic generic forms, and one could add other patterns.[100]

From these simple patterns, the storyteller creates the complex narratives. The *Gilgamesh Epic* is built out of the patterns of battle, journey, alienation and reconciliation, and more. The story of the Exodus can be analyzed basically as a journey which includes patterns of battle and theophany. Much of Genesis likewise is a complex of journeys. Josh 1-12 and the Book of Judges are created through the repetition of the battle pattern. From this perspective, one might argue that the complex stories of Genesis though the books of Kings meets the criterion for epic laid down both by Jason and by Scholes and Kellogg.

C. M. Bowra, however, excludes these Hebrew stories from the heroic tradition because they fail to exalt the human, subordinating it instead to the divine.[101] Though the divine is present in the *Iliad*, the story essentially recounts the human triumph of Achilles over Hector and over his own anger. For all of its numinous elements, the *Iliad* is set basically in the realistic mode. The Bible, on the other hand, is set firmly within the sacred mode, for the Lord, whether seen or unseen, is the primary character of the biblical stories. In that sense, I can agree with Bowra although I do not, as he does, see this as a weakness of the biblical tradition.[102]

Can the story of David and Saul be called an epic? The definition of epic is more

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[100]For a discussion of the journey pattern, cf. Chapter IX, p. 143. Further analysis would reveal other minor genres; cf. Irvin, *Mytharion*; C.M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (NY 1966) 48-50.

[101]C.M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (NY/London 1966) 14-15.

[102]C.M. Bowra, *The Greek Experience* (London 1957) ch. 3, p. 55.

complicated than my presentation.[103] Even so, on the basis of what has been said, I fear it would be too much to claim that the story of David and Saul is a "condensed manifestation of oral literature." Bowra's critique would also apply. Although less visible than Homer's deities, the Lord controls the story in a way that the Greek gods do not. Still the story of David and Saul is a complex narrative, a series of traditional patterns set within the frame of the war against the Philistines. It also shares much in common with the complex narratives of the heroic tradition, and this correlation is crucial as I shall demonstrate in Part II of this thesis.

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[103]Cf. Conroy, "Hebrew Epic," 1-30.

Chapter III:
The Pattern of the Classic Battle Narrative

The study of the battle narrative shall be divided into three sections: classic, royal, and biblical battle narratives. In this section I shall take up the classic battle narrative, whether mythic or realistic, in which a hero, commissioned typically by a helpless leader, fights an enemy champion in single-combat. In the next chapter, I shall take up the royal pattern in which a king who combines the roles of leader and hero defeats an enemy in a battle of armies. The last chapter of this part will survey the biblical tradition in order to compare and contrast its relation to the classic and royal patterns.

A. The Work of A. Skaftymov and H. Jason.

This study is heavily indebted to a model for "epic" derived by Heda Jason from the work of A. Skaftymov.[104] Recently Jason has used the model to analyze the story of David and Goliath along with J. Propp's model for the heroic fairy tale.[105] Propp's model has many advantages because it is more highly articulated than the eight episodes of Skaftymov's model; yet Jason places the biblical story in the category of "epic" because it lacks the marvelous elements of the heroic fairy tale: talking animals, magic weapons, etc.[106] As discussed above in Chapter II, I have abandoned Jason's use of "epic" in favor of "battle narrative"; some of the motifs have also been recast in more general terms. Still I have taken Skaftymov's model as the basis for my analysis,[107] and his episodes can

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[104] H. Jason, "Precursors of Propp: Formalist Theories in Early Russian Ethnopoetics," *Journal of Poetics and Theory of Literature* 3 (1977) 471-516.

[105] H. Jason, "David and Goliath: A Folk Epic"? *Bib* 60 (1979) 36-70. For J. Propp's work, cf. his *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin TX ^{2}1968).

[106] Jason says, in fact, that the story of David and Goliath "is a short, prose record of an ethnopoetic work (real or imitated) which was possibly composed in verse form"; "David and Goliath," 66. The conclusion points up the problem with her definition of "epic," already discussed in Chapter II, pp. 30ff. The biblical story is too short to fit Jason's definition of "epic" as a "condensed manifestation" of oral literature; also it is difficult to ascertain whether we are dealing with a transcription of an oral work or an imitation of an oral work. For my study of the battle narrative, a story need only fit the traditional pattern; it need not be a "condensed manifestation" of oral literature. As for the oral/written question, I have disregarded this; whether oral or written, the story is traditional; cf. Chapter II, p. 24.

[107] Recently Jason herself has proposed a more elaborate mode for "epic" in "ilja of Muron and Tzar Kalin: A Proposal for a Model for the Narrative Structure of an Epic Struggle," Slavica Hierosolymitana 5-6 (Jerusalem 1981) 47-55. The new model is based on the work of V.V. Ivanov and V.N. Toporov who "some time ago ... drew attention to the possibility of a description of the struggle against a dragon different from that described by Propp in his model for the heroic fairy tale"; Jason cites their work in Issledovanija v oblasti slavjanskih drevnostej [Studies in Slavic Antiquities] (Moscow 1974), esp. 141-142. On the basis of their outline, Jason constructs a new model with unit's from Propp's Morphology and A. I. Nikiforov's work in "On the Morphological Study of the Folktale," Linguistica Biblica 27/28 (1973) 25-35. To develop the model, Jason uses texts from various cultures: Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Indian, and Russian. Happily I find that Jason's new model is similar in many respects. The differences may be

be divided into three sections which correspond to the divisions of a story as envisioned by Aristotle.[108]

Beginning:

Episode 1. Description of the hero's initial weakness.

Episode 2: Enemy attack; description of the enemy's great power.

Episode 3: "Our" side (ruler and people) is frightened by enemy.

Middle:

Episode 4: Hero happens upon place of confrontation and is called to go out against the enemy.

End:

Episode 5: Hero goes out against enemy and defeats him.

Episode 6: The populace does not believe that the hero has vanquished the mighty enemy single-handedly.

Episode 7: Hero's folk recognizes the victory and carries it through

Episode 8: The ruler recognizes the hero and gives the hero his reward.[109]

This broad schema will serve as a framework for a thorough analysis of stories of single-combat in order to discover more specific motifs and patterns. For this I have drawn especially upon the following six stories:

1. Marduk and Tiamat in the *Enūma eliš* = *Ee* [110]

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attributed to our different focuses and to our different methodologies. Jason's study spans many cultures while mine is confined to the ancient Near East. Her model includes elements such as the "mission of seduction" which I have not met. Second, because of my narrower focus, my proposal offers greater concrete detail about the content of smaller patterns/ episodes; I am not prepared to say how this might relate to other folk literature. Finally the cast of our models differs because Jason's methodology and terminology is closely aligned with the formalist school while mine is not. I trust that the difference of language will not obscure the common concerns and the common conclusions.

It would seem that we are in a time of transition. Propp's work which was designed for the heroic fairy tale has been applied to other types of literature because of the lack of other models, e.g. Jason's "David and Goliath." In this chapter, I have continued to use Skaftymov's model as my basic reference point for two reasons. First, I began with this model, and much of my thinking has developed in relationship to that. Second, I find Skaftymov's model less directive and, therefore, more open to possibilities. Clearly we are not at a point where any one work may serve as a classic reference point.

[108] Cf. above pp. 15ff.

[109] Jason, "Precursors of Propp," 471-516.

[110] For a general bibliography on the *Enūma eliš*, see *ANET*[3], 60, 501. I shall be following the translation of E.A. Speiser and A.K. Grayson in *ANET*[3]. For the Akkadian text, I have used that in R. Labat's *Le poème babylonien de la création* (Paris 1935) with reference to the student text by W.G. Lambert and S.B. Parker in

2. Ningirsu/Ninurta and Anzu in the *Anzu Myth*[111]
3. Gilgamesh and Ḫuwawa/Ḫumbaba in the *Gilgamesh Epic = Gilg*.[112]
4. Baal and Yamm in a story with their names: *Baal and Yamm* in CTA 2[113]
5. Sinuhe and the Strong Man of Retenu in *Sinuhe*[114]
6. Achilles and Hector in the *Iliad* [115]

Enūma eliš, *The Babylonian Epic of Creation: The Cuneiform Text* (Oxford 1966).

[111] For the *Anzu Myth*, I shall follow the translation of Speiser and Grayson again in *ANET*^{3}, 111-112. 514-517. The antagonist, after whom the story takes its name, is called Zu in *ANET*^{3}, but B. Landsberger has argued for a reading of "Anzu" which is now generally accepted; cf. his remarks in *Wiener Zeitschrift fIr die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 57 (1960) 1ff. There are two main versions of the *Anzu Myth* in *ANET*^{3}: an Assyrian version (Assy.) featuring Ninurta as hero, and an Old Babylonian version (OB) with Ningirsu as hero. Although the two versions are close in many respects, there are differences which are of interest to anyone studying the ways in which a traditional story can vary. Regretfully, B. Hruška's new major work on this story suppresses variations in order to create a "synthesis." Admittedly the state of cuneiform literature is often such that we are forced to form a picture of the whole by resorting to fragments of different origin and even of different languages. Even so, the material for the *Anzu Myth* and other stories shows conclusively that we are not dealing with a codified literature which remains unchanged after being written down the first time, presumably, because the oral tradition continues. For students like myself, whose knowledge of cuneiform literature is not that of a master, it is a pity that Hruška should expend so much scholarship only to distort our understanding of the complexity of this tradition when it was in his power to bring into a single volume what can be found only in stray journal articles; cf. *Der Mythenadler Anzu in Literatur und Vorstellung des alten Mesopotamien* (Budapest 1975). For the OB version, cf. J. Nougayrol, "Ningirsu vainqueur de Zu," *RA* 46 (1952) 87-97. For the Assy. version, cf. E. Ebeling, "Eine Neue Tafel des akkadischen Zu-Mythos," *RA* 46 (1952) 24-41. Now also see W.W. Hallo and W. L. Moran, "The First Tablet of the SB Recension of the *Anzu Myth*," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 31(1979), 65-115.

[112] There are two major translations of the *Gilgamesh Epic* (*Gilg*.). The first is that of Speiser and Grayson in *ANET*^{3}, 79-83, 504-505; the second is a revision of A. Schott's translation by W. von Soden, *Das Gilgamesch - Epos* (Stuttgart 1958, 1982). In some ways, the story of Gilgamesh and Ḫuwawa is better analyzed as a royal battle narrative, specifically a war of redress; cf. above, p. 56. However my concern with the story is focused on the scene of call and commission between Gilgamesh and the elders of Uruk which is a typical feature of the classic tradition. This section is found in the Old Babylonian version in the "Yale Tablet"; cf. *ANET*^{3}, 78. Unfortunately, *ANET* and von Soden's *Epos* number the lines and even the tablets differently. Though cumbersome, I have listed both, *ANET* followed by *Epos*, e.g. OB III iii 7 = Assy. II 98. The relevant information about the cuneiform text can be found for my purposes in *ANET*^{3}, 72-73.

[113] The fight between *Baal and Yamm* is found in *CTA* 2 i, iv. I have relied on J.C.L. Gibson's *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh ^{2}1978).

[114] For a bibliography of *The Story of Sinuhe*, cf. *ANET*^{3}, 18; as is typical for this collection of Egyptian literature, the editors have not given the whole text; alas! For that, cf. A. Erman's *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* (London 1927). Also, W.K. Simpson's translation in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* (ed. W.K. Simpson) (New Haven ^{2}1973) 57-75; Simpson follows the "Ashmolean Ostracon" from the Ramasside period (at least in some places) rather than the older papyri of the XII and XIII dynasties.

[115] My considerations are confined mainly to the last books of the *Iliad* beginning with Apollo's call and commission of Hector in XV 237. For the text and translation of the *Iliad*, I have used that of A.T. Murray (Loeb Classical Library 170, 171; Cambridge MA 1924, 1971).

Like Skaftymov's model, the pattern presented in this chapter is a theoretical pattern which attempts to describe the genre; as such, it is not an end in itself but is valuable for several reasons. The pattern assists in the identification of stories belonging to this genre; it also helps the literary critic to identify the uniqueness of each story within the tradition, and finally the pattern can assist the historian with the identification of those changes which may be attributed to history.[116]

In addition to the six stories listed above, the model reflects the broader study of other stories. The story of David and Goliath (1 Sam 17:1 – 18:4) is the most complete example of the classic pattern in the Bible; however, an analysis of it has been left to its proper place in Part II. Other stories or episodes in the Bible are also related to the discussion in this chapter, especially the stories of Jephthah, Saul, Jehu and Judith (Judg 10-11; 1 Sam 11; 2 Kgs 9; Book of Judith); I shall touch on them in Chapter V which deals with the biblical battle narratives.

B. Characters.

The central character is, of course, the hero who defeats the enemy and rescues the helpless people and the helpless leader(s) of "our" side. The helpless leader, unable to meet the enemy threat himself, may first call and commission false heroes who either refuse the commission or are unable to carry it out. This failing, the helpless leader, perhaps with the help of counselors, calls and commissions the hero; the hero's parent may also play some role in this. Likewise the parent and/or the leader often help the hero prepare for battle. This last function may also be assumed by the hero's friend who may also assist in the battle along with the hero's army.[117] In the stories of human heroes, deities may assume the roles of divine leader, divine parent, and divine friend. The enemy side consists basically of the enemy leader, the enemy champion and the enemy army; the roles of leader and champion may be combined in a single character, e.g. the enemy king. The significance of the characters will be taken up as they enter the action, yet as pointed out in Chapter II, the particular shape of a given character has important ramifications for the shape of the narrative, especially in these long narratives.

C. The Beginning: Threat and Helplessness.

The story may open with a description of the hero as in the *Anzu Myth*;[118] in the other

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[116] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative* 40.

[117] By hero's friend, I mean anyone, human or divine, who helps the hero carry out his mission by serving as a messenger, supplying weapons, etc. Later I shall discuss a specific realization of this motif under the title of "heroic friend" and "heroic friendship," here more than just assistance is implied by the relationship, as in that between Achilles and Patroclus, and between Gilgamesh and Enkidu; cf. below pp. 134f.

[118] *Anzu Myth* Assy. I 1-14+.

stories, the battle narrative is part of a larger story with the hero long introduced. Marduk, the hero of the *Enūma eliš*, makes his appearance in a traditional birth episode at the end of the first story in which Ea slays Apsu.[119] The birth makes Marduk the youngest of the gods, and this fact serves in the story as the hero's impediment, i.e. the reason(s) which keep the hero from undertaking immediately the fight with the enemy. Because of Marduk's youth, the gods do not immediately think of him as the hero. In other stories, the hero's impediment may be as simple as his absence from the place of encounter or as complex as Achilles' anger. However developed, the motif serves first of all to increase the dramatic tension. Furthermore it may touch a significant theme in the narrative. The *Enūma eliš* is in part an apology for Marduk's place at the head of the pantheon even though he is the youngest of the gods while *The Iliad* is a study of anger.[120]

The story begins in earnest with the enemy's threat and a description of the enemy's great power. The threat may take the form of "attack" as in Skaftymov's model above, but in general the motif is handled in such a way that the threat, though imminent, is also held in abeyance so that "our" side may have time to react. The siege of a city or the encampment of the enemy provide a simple solution; likewise the appearance of a messenger with outrageous demands, a challenge to fight, or the timely discovery of the enemy's plan may serve the purpose.[121]

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[119] *Ee* I 79-104. The Samson tradition also begins with a birth episode (Judg 13). A further example can be found in the Hittite battle narrative *The Song of Ullikummis*, *ANET*^{3}, 121-125; however in this story the episode is transferred to the enemy champion. This displacement of the tradition is typical of this Hittite story; cf. n. 142 below for another example. As a result, it is difficult to use the story as a typical example; for this reason and also because of its fragmentary condition, I have not used it as a primary reference point. The *traditional birth episode* is not a unique feature of the battle narrative; it has been studied in depth by D. Irvin in *Mytharion*, Traditional Episode Tablet, Sheet 1. The episode includes eight motifs; only three are found in the *Enūma eliš*: the conception, the birth and the father's reaction; Irvin does not list it in her examples presumably because of this brevity.

[120] In the *Gilgamesh Epic*., the hero lacks a real understanding of death; compare *Gilg.* OB III iv 3-25, .v 8-19 = Assy. .II 138-160, .188-199, and .Tablets VIII-X. Sinuhe in a momentary act of cowardice fled from Egypt during the accession of Sesostris I (B 1-45); this act of cowardice colors the whole of the man's story. No reason is given for Ninurta's late appearance in the *Anzu Myth*; the gods seem to have overlooked the great warrior. Cf. below pp. 89f for a further discussion.

[121] In the *Iliad* Book XV, the Trojan threat takes the form of a direct attack. In *Ee* I 108 - II 3, Tiamat gives birth to a demonic army; this muster of the enemy army is discovered before the attack can be carried out. In *CTA* 2 i 11-19, 31-35, Yamm sends messengers with the outrageous demand that Baal be handed over as a slave. Typically this motif is followed by a provisional capitulation; here the helpless El agrees to the demand (i 36-38). Often these two motifs accompany the siege of a city. Examples of the siege are listed below; those marked with an asterisk (*) also contain the motifs of outrageous demand and provisional capitulation: the Sumerian narrative *Gilgamesh and Agga** in *ANET*^{3}, 44-47 and now in W. Römer's *Das sumerische Kurzepos* "*Bilgameš und Akka*" (AOAT 209/1; Neukirchen 1980); Josh 10:5; 1 Sam 11:1-3*; 1 Kgs 20:1-12*; 2 Kgs 6:24; 16:5; 18:13-37 (outrageous demands); Jdt 7:16-32 (provisional capitulation). The most famous siege is that of the Greeks against Troy, i.e. by "our" side against the enemy; the reversal here is perhaps one indication of the ambiguity of this war. In *Sinuhe* B 109, the

The enemy's power is always overwhelming whether in quantity, quality or both: the greater the power, the greater the fall; therefore, the greater the hero who achieves the victory. Finally the enemy must have a motive, even a bad motive, for taking such drastic actions. The more complex the motive, the greater its importance for ascertaining the central themes of a specific story. Traditionally the enemy represents the antithesis of order, the threat of chaos; but this theme may be explored in many ways. The theme is embodied in the enemy champion as the concrete expression of the foreboding chaos, as opposed to the hero who represents the summary expression of the ideals of "our" side.[122]

After the presentation of the enemy threat and prowess, the story is complicated with the reaction of helplessness by "our" side, both by the people and the leader(s). This helplessness provides the rationale for the middle section of the story in which a hero is sought and commissioned. The motif of helplessness may be expressed by the image of fear, but other imagery, such as weeping, drooping heads, retreat, or the like, may be used to convey the sense of powerlessness.[123] In the *Enūma eliš* and the *Anzu Myth*, silence is used as a major motif of helplessness in order to create a contrast with the enemy's power of speech derived from the possession of the Tablets of Destiny.[124] Here the motif of helplessness is shaped by larger thematic concerns, and this may be true for other motifs as well. While underlining the need for a hero, the motif of helplessness also has negative implications for the leadership of "our" side and may foreshadow a change of leadership with the hero becoming the leader.[125] Finally, both the motifs of the enemy's threat and the reaction of helplessness are not limited to a

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Strong Man of Retenu, "a champion without equal" delivers a challenge, here directly to the hero; cf. also 1 Sam 17:8-10. In the *Anzu Myth* Assy. I ii 1-22, the motif is cast in cultural terms; the mythic bird Anzu steals the Tablets of Destiny which control the order and fate of the "world," and then he flees to his mountain.

[122] The fight between Baal and Yamm for kingship takes fertility as its major theme which is expressed in the identity of the two gods: the god of the storm against the god of the sea. *Enūma eliš*, though similar, contrasts the emotional and erratic Tiamat with the rational and measured Marduk, thus a contrast between anarchy and law. In *Sinuhe* the Strong Man is motivated by greed and jealousy, the latter touching on the hero's alien origin; but enemy's motive is related tangentially to the major theme of the story. Mindless greed for power motivates the mythic bird in the *Anzu Myth* which is thematically less complex than the other stories, the most complex being the *Iliad*. Homer presents a war in which right and wrong are not divided into two opposing camps, and the enemy champion, Hector, far from being the symbol of evil, is in many ways the most sympathetic character in the story. To this extent, Homer moves beyond the tradition.

[123] In *CTA* 2 i 23-24, the gods lower their heads to their knees when they see the messengers of Yam. The *Iliad* includes a number of images to convey a sense of helplessness and to punctuate the mounting Trojan attack: fear in XV 279-305; a desperate prayer in XV 367-378; the continual retreat of the Greek forces; and finally the weeping of Patroclus XV 390-404, XVI 1-4. Cf. also the provisional capitulation in n. 121 just above.

[124] *Ee* II 4-6,49-52; *Anzu Myth* Assy. I ii 23-25; OB 2,1-5.

[125] Cf. below pp. 112ff for an analysis of 1 Sam 17.

single appearance in the story; on the contrary, they tend to reappear in order to renew and heighten the tension.[126]

To summarize, the opening section of the battle narrative may introduce the hero and give some reason for his inability to undertake the fight immediately. In any case, the opening section presents the major tension of the story, the enemy's threat which is magnified by its great power. The reaction of helplessness by "our" side further complicates the story since it appears that there is no way to meet the enemy threat.

D. The Middle: The Call and Commission of the Hero.

The central section of the story corresponds broadly to "Episode 4" of Skaftymov's model: Hero happens upon the place of confrontation and is called to go out against the enemy. While the summary points to the basic content of the section, it suggests a simplicity which would create a dull story. The traditional audience knows that the hero will arrive and resolve the threat; therefore, the storyteller must create obstacles to retard the story and thereby to increase both the tension and the interest.

Traditionally the storyteller complicates the story by means of two factors: the anonymity of the hero, and some impediment to the hero's entering the fray, the latter already discussed above. These two factors are capable of much variation depending upon the characterization of the hero and leader(s); still it is possible to establish some clear traditional patterns which admit traditional options. Broadly speaking, the middle section may be divided into four parts:

l. The general call for a hero;

2. The call and commission of false heroes;

3. The call and commission of the hero;

4. The preparation for battle.

In the stories of human heroes, a divine commission may be added, i.e. the commission of human hero by a deity.

1. General call.

If the hero is unknown or at least not apparent to the leader(s), the middle section may open with a general call followed by the offer of a reward. In the *Anzu Myth*, the motifs of threat and helplessness are followed by a council of the gods in which Anu asks:

general call: "[Wh]o will slay Anzu

reward: And make his name greatest [in] the settlements"?[127]

[126] The description of Tiamat giving birth to the demonic army is repeated word for word four times in *Ee* I 129-161; II 3-48; III 19-52, 77-110; a reaction of helplessness follows. Homer, rather than repeat the same description, builds the enemy attack so that it reaches higher pitches as the story progresses.

The general call designates no specific person but calls for volunteers or suggestions. The story of Jephthah provides a parallel; there the elders of Gilead ask:

general call: "Who is the man who will begin to fight against the Ammonities?

reward: He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead" (Judg 10:18).

The general call is a stock motif used to open a scene of commission for non-warriors as well. In 1 Kgs 22:19-20 the general call is found without the offer of a reward: "The Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead'"; so also in Isa 6:8. The hero's reward, of course, is a traditional motif and need not be tied to the general call. The two most common rewards are found in the *Anzu Myth* and Judg 10:18: a great name and leadership, or more specifically kingship.[128]

2. Call, commission, and failure of the false heroes.

The call and commission of the false heroes is constructed from the same patterns and motifs used for the hero, but they either refuse the commission or fail in the attempt.[129] Though good and worthy warriors in these narratives, the false heroes reveal by their failure the extraordinary qualities which the hero must possess. More pragmatically, their failure also removes any of the hero's potential rivals, an important point in the *Enūma eliš* where the hero emerges as the head of the pantheon. Finally the episode carries the fortunes of "our" side still lower and ends with a returning motif of helplessness.

3. The call and commission of the hero.

Episodes of call and commission are not confined to battle narratives and have been widely discussed by biblical scholars under the title of "call narrative."[130] With the

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[127] *Anzu Myth* Assy. II ii 27-30; OB 2,7-10.

[128] Cf. the opening section of Chapter XI for a full discussion on the rewards of kingship and a great name.

[129] In *Ee* II 53-87, Anshar calls first Ea and then Anu to deal with the threat of Tiamat. Ea is unsuccessful though the broken text makes it difficult to ascertain whether he refuses or is unable to complete the task. Anu accepts but is unable to approach Tiamat. In the *Anzu Myth* Assy. II ii 31-87, three false heroes are called and commissioned; but the false heroes object that the task is impossible, and the leader withdraws the commission; cf. also *Anzu Myth* OB 2,11-28. In the *Iliad*, Patroclus calls for the commission to drive the Trojans from the Greek camp, and Achilles grants the commission. Although Patroclus carries out this commission, he continues the battle and takes it to the walls of Troy against the command of Achilles; there the false hero dies.

[130] Old Testament scholarship has dealt with this genre primarily in terms of the prophetic call narrative; cf. especially the summary of positions in Gregorio de Olmo Lete's *La VocacóIn del Lider en el Antiguo Israel*: Morfologia de los Relatos Biblicos de Vocación (Bibliotheca Salmanticensis III Studia 2; Salamanca 1973) 373-375. Also see N. Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narrative," *ZAW* 77 (1965) 297-323; W.

exception of the warrior Gideon, the studies have concentrated upon material related to prophets in which an objection is raised to the call and commission by the Lord. The narrow focus of biblical scholarship has caused it to overlook the wider application of the form. Below I shall elaborate four patterns which are equally applicable to prophets, warrior-heroes, servants, messengers—in short, to anyone commissioned to carry out a specific task. Even so, I shall cast my terminology in the terms of the battle narrative, i.e. hero and leader.

In this study, the call refers to the element of request, and it may be initiated either by the leader or the hero; i.e. the leader may call the hero to receive the commission, or the hero may call for the commission from the leader. The commission, as N. Habel defines it, "is regularly couched in terms of a direct personal imperative which embraces the essential goal of the assigned task."[131] The central call and commission of the classic tradition takes place between the hero and the leader of "our" side, the latter usually being a helpless leader. This central scene may be attended by minor calls and commissions, especially between the hero and his parent. Finally, in the stories of human heroes, a divine leader (i.e. deity) may call and commission a hero; I shall refer to this as a divine call and commission. The type of leader especially has ramifications for the content of the commission which I shall take up shortly. The four patterns which I outline below are valid regardless of the leader and beyond the battle context.

1. The leader calls and commissions the hero,
   and the hero accepts.[132]
2. The hero calls for the commission,
   and the leader commissions him.[133]

Richter, *Die sogennanten vorprophetischen Berufungsberichte* (FRLANT 101; Göttingen 1970) 50; L. Schmidt, *Menschlicher Erfolg und Jahwes Initiative ... Gideon, Saul, und David* (WMANT 38; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1970) 49. Their patterns differ as a result of different points of departure, yet each is concerned with four main elements which I have cast in my own terminology: 1) the call and commission, 2) the objection, 3) the answer which may renew the commission and include assurances of divine presence and aid, 4) signs. The pattern is the same as that which I have designated as "pattern 'c'" below, and I would call it more specifically "a divine call and commission," i.e. by a deity to a human character. As a result these important biblical examples are a mixture of the call pattern with elements from the pattern of theophany as B.O. Long has observed; "Prophetic Call Traditions and Reports of Visions," *ZAW* 84 (1972) 494-500. The sign, a special feature of the biblical tradition, is a result of this mixture. However, the biblical signs in some instances can be correlated with the preparation for battle which includes the arming of the hero. Del Olmo Lete, recognizing this dimension, links the sign with investiture; *La Vocación*, 396-402. The signs are also an extension of another motif: the assurance of divine presence and aid; cf. p. 43.

[131] Habel, "Call Narrative," 318.

[132] *Anzu Myth* OB 2,29-79; Assy. II 1-34: the call and commission of Ningirsu/Ninurta to fight by his mother on behalf of the community. *Ee* II 96-101: the call and commission of Marduk to go to the leader Anshar by Ea the hero's father. The *Iliad*. XV 254-263 relates the divine call and commission of the disheartened Hector by Apollo to fight against the Greeks.

These two patterns are differentiated by the initiative taken in the call. Neither holds much dramatic tension; as a result, an objection or, less dramatically, a question may be raised by one and answered by the other. This further complication yields two derivative patterns:

3. The leader calls and commissions the hero;
   the hero raises an objection or question;
   the leader answers this;
   and the hero accepts.

4. The hero calls for the commission;
   the leader raises an objection or question;
   the hero answers this;
   and the leader commissions the hero.

The third pattern corresponds to what biblical scholars have termed the "call narrative."[134] A further example may be seen in the *Iliad* which contains both question and objection (XVIII 170-216). Iris commands Achilles to rouse himself and help recover the body of the dead Patroclus (call and commission). Achilles questions the source of this commission, and Iris answers that Hera has sent her. Achilles then objects that he cannot carry out the commission because he has promised his mother Thetis not to enter the battle until she has brought new armor. Iris answers the objection by telling the hero that he need only mount the battlement, and with that Achilles accepts and rouses himself. The pattern is also found in the commission of Jephthah (Judg 11:7-8) and of false heroes in the *Anzu Myth*; in the latter instance the leader withdraws the call after the false heroes object.[135]

In the fourth pattern, the hero's initiative is paramount, and the leader's circumspection affords the hero a second speech in which he can reveal with greater resolve his determination to fight. The leader's objection deserves special notice, for typically it touches the hero's impediment and therefore an important theme in the

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[133] A pattern little used in the classic narratives, but it is common for the king to call for a commission from the deity in the royal tradition; cf. Chapter IV, p.57. Still the pattern is found in *Il.* XVI 5-274: Patroclus calls on Achilles to send him against the Trojans, and the friend's request is granted without objection although Patroclus expected Achilles to object. Marduk's call for the commission from Anshar, and according to *ANET*^{3}, the leader grants the commission without previous intervention (*Ee* II 103-119), but Labat's reconstruction of II 111 in *Le poème* has Anshar speak; also Lambert and Parker's edition of the cuneiform text. Cf. also Isa 6:8-9 with general call.

[134] Cf. n. 130.

[135] *Anzu Myth* Assy. II ii 31-87; OB 2,11-28.

story. Such is the case in the *Gilgamesh Epic* where the elders of Uruk object that the hero's youthful heart has carried him away.[136]

In addition to the call and commission, other traditional motifs appear in the speeches of these scenes. The leader's call may be accompanied by an exhortation to duty.[137] Counsel, especially in the form of a battle plan, may be given to the hero.[138] If the leader is human, he may invoke a blessing and call for divine presence and aid; the simplest form of the blessing reads: "May the deity PN be with you."[139] In the case of divine commission, the content of the blessing becomes a statement, an assurance of divine presence and aid, as in the phrase, "I am with you."[140] To this is commonly linked some form of encouragement, expressed most often by the phrase, "Do not fear." This particular phrase has been studied especially by P.E. Dion who argues that the phrase is not necessarily part of an oracle or limited to divine characters.[141] In this I concur; still it is mainly a deity who can offer the assurance necessary to make the encouragement meaningful. The encouragement motif however is not limited to the phrase "Do not fear"; it may be expressed positively as in the scene where Apollo commissions the disheartened Hector to re-enter the battle (*Iliad* XV254-261); the whole speech is a fine example of the divine call and commission:

encouragement:	Take courage,
assurance:	a helper hath the son of Cronos sent ... to stand by thy side

[136] *Gilg.* OB III iv 37 - v 34 = Assy. II 172-214. The pattern also shapes the scene in which Enkidu objects to the hero's proposed fight against Ḫuwawa. In the *Iliad*, the pattern shapes the meeting between Achilles and his mother (XVI 5-274). In 1 Kgs 22:19-22 the grand pattern is condensed into four verses: general call (22:19-20a); false heroes (22:20b); call for commission (22:21); leader's question (22:22a); answer (22:22b); commission (22:22c). Cf. also 1 Sam 17:32-37. In *Baal and Yam*, the hero calls for the commission, but the leader ignores the call *(CTA* 2 i 24-28).

[137] The hero's parent in both the *Enūma eliš* and the *Anzu Myth* adds the exhortation to duty to their call and commission of the hero; *Ee* II 96-102; *Anzu Myth* OB 2,44-72; Assy. II 1-27.

[138] A battle plan is given in the *Anzu Myth* OB 2,44-72, Assy. II 1-27; cf. Josh 6:2-5; 8:1-2,3-8 (ambush). More general counsel is given to Gilgamesh by the elders of Uruk in *Gilg.* OB III vi 17-43 = Assy. II 244-271.

[139] *Gilg.* OB III v 32-34 = Assy. II 212-214; also OB III vi 21-43 = Assy. II 249-271. Cf. also 1 Sam 17:37b.

[140] The major example of the divine commission, delivered directly by a god, is found in *Iliad* XV 254-261; discussed below. The divine commission with these assurances is a typical feature of the royal battle narratives; cf. Chapter IV, p. 57. For the biblical tradition, cf. for example Josh 1:5,9; Judg 6:16; 2 Kgs 6:16. The motif of the blessing or the assurance is not confined to the battle narrative; cf. H.D. Preuss, "... ich werde mit dir sein," *ZAW* 80 (1968) 139-173.

[141] P.E. Dion, "The 'Fear Not' Formula and Holy War," *CBQ* 32 (1970) 565-570, esp. 566; also H.M. (=P.E.) Dion, "The Patriarchal Traditions and Literary Form of the 'Oracles of Salvation,'" *CBQ* 29 (1967) 198-206. Also M. Weippert, "'Heiliger Krieg' in Israel und Assyrien," *ZAW* 84 (1972) 460-493, esp. 472-473, n. 53; she cites J.G. Heintz, SVT 17 (1969) 121-125, and G. von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg* (ATANT 20; Zurich 1951) 7-8. In the classic narratives, cf. *Iliad* XV 254-261; *Anzu Myth* OB 3.65 (*RA* [1952] 94); Assy. II 110. *Gilg.* OB III vi 45-46 = Assy. II 273-274; here the human character Enkidu takes the role as the hero's protector and tells him, "Let your heart not fear."

	and succor them, even me, Phoebus Apollo.
call & commission:	But come now, bid thy many charioteers drive against the hollow ships their swift horses.
assurance:	and I will go before and make smooth all the way for the chariots, and will turn in flight the Achaean warriors.

The hero's initiative in these scenes is typically triggered by his reaction of righteous indignation when informed of the enemy's threat. This contrasts with the reaction of helpless by the others and is often characterized by anger. The righteous indignation may carry into his call for the commission or color his response to the leader's call.[142] Where the hero seizes the initiative, his call for the commission is more often an assertion that he will fight; still he cannot do this without the leader's official assent. In his call for the commission, the hero may also take over the encouragement motif and bid the helpless not to fear.[143]

4. Preparation for battle.

Once the hero has accepted or received the commission to fight the enemy, there follows the preparation for battle which consists of four main elements: weapons, armor, chariot, and army. The preparation is carried out by the hero, often with the assistance of others (leader, parent, friend).[144] he weapons and armor, perhaps made especially for the occasion, reflect the hero's greatness.[145] The army may be considered

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[142] *CTA* 2 i 38,43: Baal reacts with anger when El capitulates (helplessness) to the outrageous demand of Yamm (threat). The *Iliad*, of course, is constructed around the motif of righteous indignation, and specifically the image of anger which is the opening line of the *Iliad*. *Ullikummis* II-a: the storm god becomes angry when told of the enemy champion, but strangely weeps (helplessness) when he sees the foe. Cf. 1 Sam 11:6 for Saul's anger which is discussed in Chapter III, p. 44 and in Chapter V, p. 71 with other instances of anger in the Bible. *Sinuhe* B 113-127: the text does not refer to anger, but the hero's speech is characterized by his righteous indignation; also 1 Sam 17:26. In both cases the rhetorical question helps convey the hero's indignation. Cf. also Judg 10:16; then, perhaps, Exod 3:7.

[143] *Ee* II 106-115; *CTA* 2 i 24-28; 1 Sam 17:32.

[144] *Ee* IV 30,35-62: both hero and leaders take part in the preparation, and all four elements are included. *Anzu Myth* OB 2,75-79: the hero's mother hitches up the Seven-of-Battle after the call and commission; in the Assyrian version, the hero does this for himself (Assy. II 30-34). *Iliad* XVI 130-220,257-271: after Patroclus has received the commission from Achilles, the preparation of all four elements follow. XVIII 127-137: after Achilles answers his mother's objection, Thetis agrees to her son's going to battle but makes him promise not to enter the fight until she returns with new armor. XVIII 203-218: in the next scene Achilles is commissioned to mount the battlement in order to turn the Trojans back; Athena clothes the hero with the sun set in place of armor, and she adds her voice to his so that his shouting becomes a weapon and turns the Trojans back. XIX 357-424: Achilles' meeting with the Greek leaders ends with a preparation which contains all four major elements; in addition the gods strengthen the fasting hero with ambrosia and nectar while the Greek forces feed (XIX 338-356). *Sinuhe* B 127-128: the hero prepares his weapons after his meeting with the prince. Cf. 1 Sam 17:38-40.

[145] Cf. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 149-154.

as a collective hero with as its own call and commission.[146] The mounting of the chariot, drawn by named horses, leads to the transition from "our" camp to the place of encounter, designated as the journey, which may be elaborated where the distance is great.[147]

5. Variations on a single motif or pattern.

To summarize: The major motifs of the middle section are the call and commission, but they may be used in a variety of ways. The story may open with a general call for a hero which names no specific person. False heroes may then be called and commissioned only to fail. The hero's call and commission by the leader of "our" side may be preceded or followed by a similar scene with the hero's parent.[148] Where the hero is human, he typically calls for a divine commission from his deity.[149] Motifs from the opening section of the story may be included, not once but several times. The preparation for battle likewise may be divided into several scenes.[150] These motifs therefore are a series of interchangeable parts which may be joined together to form many configurations depending upon character, theme, and the storyteller's genius.

In the *Enūma eliš*, the initial reactions of helplessness give way to the call and commission of Ea and Anu. Their failure provokes a renewed reaction of helplessness which in this story is characterized especially by sitting still and silence (II 53-87). The Annuki join the triumvirate to form a new council in which Ea breaks the silence and names Marduk as the hero (II 88-95). The hero's father, then calls, exhorts, and commissions Marduk to present himself to the leader Anshar (II 96-102). In the scene with the leader, Marduk seizes the initiative; he encourages the leader not to be "muted" and calls for the commission which Anshar grants.[151] Marduk then demands a reward of kingship *before* the battle has even begun. The hero's initiative with regard to the reward demonstrates his total command of the situation but is not a part of the normal course of events; however cf. Judg 11:9-11. Anshar accepts this demand happily and convokes a larger council by means of a traditional messenger episode.[152] The

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[146] Cf. the call of the Myrmidons in *Iliad* XVI 200-209, 269-274; cf. also p. 60.

[147] *Gilg.* IV & V: the journey is broken into days and extended by dreams. For the journey motif and pattern, cf. also the opening of Chapter IX, pp. 57ff.

[148] *Ee* II 96-102: Ea and Marduk. *Anzu Myth* OB 2, 44-72; Assy. II 1-27: the hero's mother commissions the hero in the name of the community. *Iliad* XVIII 36-147: Achilles and Thetis. *Gilg.* Assy. III: Gilgamesh and his mother Ninsun.

[149] *Iliad* XVI 221-256: Achilles pours out a libation for Patroclus, but the prayer is only partly answered by Zeus. *Gilg.* OB III v 35-48 =Assy. II 215-228: Gilgamesh prays to his god Shamash and inspects an omen. Cf. below pp. 57f.

[150] Cf. n. 144 above for the *Iliad* and the *Gilgamesh Epic*.

[151] Cf. comment on *Ee* II 111 in n. 133 above.

[152] The traditional messenger episode in the ancient Near East has been studied by D. Irvin, *Mytharion*, Traditional Episode Table, Sheet 2. The biblical material has been subjected to an exhaustive

messenger reports the enemy's threat which brings a further reaction of helplessness (III 1-128). The new council takes place within the context of a banquet, another traditional episode.[153] After the gods make Marduk king, they renew the commission and prepare him for battle with a gift of "matchless weapons" (III 129 - IV 34). The hero then prepares for battle himself: he constructs a bow and net, then gathers meteorological forces treated ambiguously as weapons and army; finally, "wrapped in an armor of terror," Marduk mounts his chariot, drawn by named winds, the gods remaining worried/helpless until the end (IV 35-62).

The *Enūma eliš* has a special twist in the hero's demand for the reward of kingship before the battle (cf. also Judg 11:9); still the movement of the whole is constructed from traditional motifs and pattern, and these could be pursued in greater detail. The same is true of the other stories; even the lengthy middle section of the *Iliad* (XVI-XIX) deals with a false hero, calls and commissions, preparation for battle, mixed with other traditional elements.[154]Whatever the obstacles or complications, the hero emerges in the end with a commission conformed by the whole society, represented by the leader. The hero's parent may be involved in this as the representative of the family, and where the hero is human, the deity may grant a divine commission to mark the assent of the religious realm.

E. The End: Victory, Plunder and Recognition

The last four episodes of Skaftymov's model deal with the climax and denouement of the story. The major tension of the story is resolved by the hero's victory over the enemy champion which allows "our" side to defeat and destroy the enemy army. The taking of plunder leads to the recognition of the hero which rounds out the story and brings it to a close.

1. Single-combat.

In "Episode 5" of Skaftymov's model, "the hero goes out against the enemy and

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examination by Ann M. Vater, "Narrative Patterns for the Story of Commissioned Communications in the Old Testament," *JBL* 99 (1980) 365-382. Basically the episode has three elements: 1) call and commission of a messenger in which the message is delivered verbatim; 2) journey; 3) the delivery of the message verbatim. Such is the case in *Ee* III 1-128. The pattern may now be reversed with a return message. Furthermore the pattern is open to much abbreviation; cf. especially Vater on this point. The messenger episode is a functional pattern which transfers information; in general, the pattern itself is much less important than the information conveyed and the larger context in which it is set.

[153] Cf. D. Irvin, *Mytharion*, Traditional Episode Table, Sheet 1. She lists five motifs, the last four being found in the *Enūma eliš*: 1) orders to prepare a feast (missing): 2) invitations (III 1-124): 3) the arrival of the guest (III 129-133); 4) eating and drinking (III 134-137); 5) problem (III 138--IV 34). In *Baal and Yamm* only motifs 4 and 5 appear: *CTA* 2 i 20-21, 22-38. Cf. also Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 179-183.

[154] E.g. the reconciliation of hero and leader, and the lament over a dead hero; cf. below respectively, Chapter VIII, pp. 125ff, and Chapter X, pp. 169f.

defeats him." Again it is possible to enumerate a number of constant elements for the scene of single-combat:

- meeting of the warriors;
- verbal exchange between the two warriors:[155]
    - enemy's false confidence;
    - enemy's insults;
    - hero's indictment of the foe and enemy.
- hero's initial failure;[156]
- enemy's failure;[157]
- hero's mortal blow with a missile;[158]
- enemy's fall to the ground;[159]
- hero's triumphal stance over the body;[160]
- mutilation of the corpse with a hand weapon.[161]

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[155] *Ee* IV 71-86; *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 36-47; *Iliad* XXII 249-272. 1 Sam 17:42-47.

[156] *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 70-145: Ninurta's attempt to hit Anzu with an arrow fails because the mythic bird is able to turn the arrow back with his powerful word; Ninurta sends a messenger to announce the failure to the leader who sends back a commission, essentially the same as the first, but with the addition of a new stratagem for the battle plan and of encouragement, "Do not fear him." *CTA* 2 iv 1-18: As the column begins, Baal is recoiling (seemingly) from an initial(?) failure in the fight with Yam. Kothar-and-Khasis offers encouragement to the hero and gives him a flying club which also fails to bring down the enemy champion in the first attempt. *Iliad* XXII 273-277: Achilles hurls his spear at Hector who avoids this initial attempt, but Athena, unseen by the Trojan hero, retrieves the spear for the hero. Here the initial failure allows Hector's false confidence to build the dramatic irony of the story. In each case, the initial failure is followed by a return to motifs from the middle section whether from the scene of call and commission or from the preparation for battle (gifts of weapons).

[157] *Iliad* XXII 289-293: Hector's spear hits Achilles' shield but does no damage. *Sinuhe* B 134-137: The Strong Man of Retenu discharges a whole arsenal of weapons at the hero who avoids them all. The emphasis laid upon the sheer number of the enemy's arms must not be overlooked in the interpretation.

[158] *Ee* IV 92-103: Marduk engages Tiamat in single-combat and when she opens her mouth to consume him, he drives in th Evil Wind to hold open her body and shoots her with an arrow. *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 59-60: The climax of this story is contained in very fragmentary accounts, but according to the battle plan given to the hero, he should shoot Anzu with an arrow. *CTA* 2 iv 18-23: Baal subdues Yamm with two flying clubs provided by Kothar-and-Khasis. *Iliad* XXII 312-329: Achilles hits Hector with the spear, retrieved by Athena and originally given to him by Peleus his father. *Sinuhe* B 138: The hero hits the Strong Man with a single arrow.

[159] *Ee* IV 104a; *CTA* 2 iv 25-26; *Iliad* XXII 330a; *Sinuhe* B 139.

[160] *Ee* IV 104b; *Iliad* XXII 330b-366; *Sinuhe* B 140-141.

[161] *Ee* IV 129-132, 136-137: Marduk crushes Tiamat's skull and tramples her legs, but the severing of the

The meeting of the warriors is a prosaic but necessary element; this may be filled out with the introduction of motifs from the earlier section such as the description of the enemy's great power.[162]

The verbal exchange, especially the hero's speech, is important for understanding the major themes of the narrative which are articulated in the hero's indictment of the enemy.[163] The enemy's speech with its insults raises the contempt of the audience and also manifests the moral emptiness of the enemy; the introduction of the enemy's false confidence, a motif also found elsewhere, adds dramatic irony to the story.[164] The hero's initial failure creates a new tension and retards the climax; furthermore it shows his dependence upon outside help, for this failure brings some kind of return to motifs of the middle section: new stratagems for battle or new weapons, and perhaps new assurances or encouragement.[165] The enemy's failure likewise retards the climax. Beyond this functional dimension, both motifs of failure may have thematic significance since both are options for the storyteller.

The hero's mortal blow to the enemy is accomplished by some sort of missile: spear,

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body is reserved for the first act of creation. In the *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 21 and 117, according to the battle plan, Ninurta is to "cut the throat of the evil Zu," and this takes place in two duplicate fragments of the final fight; cf. *ANET*[3], 517. The battle plan in the OB version is similar although this is not reflected in the translation of OB 2,69 in *ANET*[3], 112. In *CTA* 2 iv 27, *yqṯ bʿl wyšt.ym.ykly tpt.nhr* is translated by Gibson: "Baal dragged out Yamm and laid him down, he made an end of Judge Nahar." As Gibson notes, Driver and Cross translate *yšt* "he drank"; this leads me to suggest "he consumed" for *ykly*. This is an appropriate end for the sea god. In *Gilg.* Bauer Fragment, *ANET*[3], 504, rev. 4, Gilgamesh and Enkidu killed Ḫuwawa. *Iliad* XXII 371-404: The young men stab Hector's body as they view it, and Achilles drags the corpse around Troy; however, the hero does not carry out his threat to mutilate the body but gives the body back to Priam, Hector's father. The breaking of this motif in the *Iliad* becomes the climax of the story. In *Sinuhe* B 140, the hero finishes off the Strong Man with the foe's own ax.

[162] *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 36-38: The great power of the enemy is described. In the *Anzu Myth* OB 3,62-73, after the meeting of the warriors, someone appears and delivers a further speech of commission; though almost completely destroyed, the encouragement motif can be discerned: "Do [not] fear him." The hero then hears "the message of his father and plunges into battle; cf. *RA* 46 (1952) 95. *Gilg.* V iv, Hittite recension: as in the OB version of the *Anzu Myth*, Shamash appears to the hero after the foe has made his presence felt, and the divine leader delivers commands and encouragement ("Do not fear"). In *Iliad* XXII 214-225, Athena appears to Achilles and assures him that Hector will not escape now.

[163] *Ee* IV 75-86: Marduk accuses Tiamat of hating those whom she bore and challenges her to single-combat. Cf. 1 Sam 17:45; 2 Kgs 9:22. The text of *CTA* 2 i 45+ breaks off before the content of Baal's message to Yamm becomes clear. Verbal exchanges by messenger, rather than face to face, become the norm in the royal texts; cf. Chapter IV, p. 60. In the Bible, cf. Judg 11:12-28; 2 Kgs 14:8-11.

[164] Insults: *Ee* IV 71-74; 1 Sam 17:42-44; *Iliad* XXII 260-272. In the latter, the insults are all on the hero's side, a twist of the motif. For the enemy's false confidence, see *Anzu Myth* Assy. II 36-42: enemy brags about stealing the Tablets of Destiny and demands to know who has come to fight him. *Iliad* XXII 278-311: after Achilles has failed with his first shot, Hector, already deceived by Athena, believes falsely that he will be the victor. Cf. also 1 Sam 17:43-44.

[165] Cf. 1 Sam 14:16-19.

arrow, stone, flying club. The enemy's fall to the ground and the hero's triumphal stance over the body represent visually the outcome of the fight. Finally the mutilation of the corpse with a hand weapon provides a final symbolic gesture illustrating the complete destruction of the enemy champion.

2. Defeat of the enemy army.

According to Episode 6 in Skaftymov's model, the hero's victory is followed first by disbelief. While this may be common is some traditions, it is rare in the material at hand.[166] In Episode 7, "our" side recognizes the hero's victory and carries it through by defeating the enemy army. With this the opening motifs of the story are reversed: "our" side now poses the threat, and the enemy reacts with helplessness. The section can be outlined as follows:

The enemy's recognition of defeat:

enemy's reaction of helplessness;

enemy's flight.

The recognition of victory by "our" side:

a shout,[167]

pursuit of the enemy;

great or total destruction of the enemy.

In the six stories of single-combat which form the basis of analysis, this scene appears only in the *Enūma eliš*, and there with a twist. Instead of the hero's army carrying out the destruction, Marduk himself defeats Tiamat's army.[168] In the *Iliad*, the destruction of Troy is not recounted although it is implied in the death of Hector. The scene, however, is a stable feature of the royal and biblical battle narratives.[169]

3. Plunder.

Once the victory has been carried through, the plunder of the enemy takes place, for the spoils of war are also the trophies of victory. The hero typically receives a choice

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[166] In 1 Sam 14:16-18, Saul fails to recognize Jonathan's victory immediately.

[167] *Sinuhe* B 141; 1 Sam 17:52. Cf. also von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg*, 11; he cites war cries also in Judg 7;20 and similarly in Josh 6:5; 1 Sam 17:20; 2 Chr 20:21-22.

[168] *Ee* IV 106-120. Similarly in the *Battle of Kadesh*, Rameses II defeats the Hittite army single-handedly; cf. Chapter IV, n. 183. Samson also defeats the Philistine forces alone in Judg 15.

[169] Cf. Chapter IV, pp. 62f.

portion of the plunder, the weapons and armor of the slain being highly valued.[170]

4. Reward and recognition of the hero.

There follows the recognition of the hero by the leader and then by others.[171] Recognition may take the form of gesture, speeches, and this exaltation of the hero reaches its fullness in an imperishable renown and the great name. Kingship is the great reward for the hero, and it is typically attended by other motifs: royal insignia, dynasty (wife and progeny), kingdom, dwelling (temple or palace) in the capital (city or mountain) of the kingdom. These motifs can be correlated with those for hero who do not become kings but still receive rewards, especially a part of the plunder symbolic of the battle. A full treatment of recognition and reward is given at the beginning of Chapter XI. Finally, the human hero may give recognition to the part played by his deity in the victory, as in *Sinuhe*;[172] this is a more common motif of the royal battle narratives treated in the next chapter.

While the battle narrative may provide the frame for the whole story, as (seemingly) in the case of the *Anzu Myth*, the pattern may be repeated to form a larger story, or it may be joined with other motifs and patterns. In the *Enūma eliš,* the fight between Marduk and Tiamat is preceded by a theogony and by a smaller battle between Ea and Apsu; after the battle, the scene of recognition alternates with a cosmogony. The whole of the *Iliad* could be analyzed as a constant return of battle motifs and patterns. Still in both of these stories, the single-combat stands at the heart of the story. In the *Gilgamesh Epic* and *Sinuhe* , the battle narrative is subordinated to other motifs and patterns. The fight against Ḫuwawa belongs to Gilgamesh's youthful adventures before the reality of death weighs upon the hero; the battle is used ironically to underline the hero's immature understanding of death. This epic ends not with a battle but with a journey in search of immortal life. In *Sinuhe* , the battle marks the transition from alienation to reconciliation, and the battle plays an important role in this transition as a demonstration of the hero's courage, as opposed to his youthful cowardice which

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[170] *Ee* IV 121-122: Marduk takes the Tablet of Destiny from Kingu, Tiamat's consort. *Gilg.* V, *ANET*^{3}, 504: Gilgamesh and Enkidu take plunder from the cedar forest. *Iliad* XXII 367-368: Achilles takes the armor which Hector had taken from Patroclus. *Sinuhe* B 143-147: Sinuhe plunders the Strong Man's camp.

[171] *Ee* IV 133-134; V-VII: after the initial scene of recognition, the creation of the world and the establishment of Babylon alternate with more gifts and speeches ending with the proclamation of Marduk's fifty names. *CTA* 2 iv 32: someone proclaims "Baal is/shall be king." *Iliad* XXIII 35: Achilles is brought to Agamemnon, but the scene is still dominated by Patroclus' death; in a sense, the real scene of recognition comes in Book XXIV between Achilles and Priam, the enemy king. *Sinuhe* B 142-143: the hero is embraced by his prince, but the more important recognition comes from the pharaoh later in the story. *Anzu Myth* Assy. II ii 30; OB 2, 10: the hero is promised the reward of a great name, but the recognition scene is not extant. *Gilg.* OB III iv 25 =Assy. II 160: Gilgamesh undertakes the fight against Ḫuwawa in order to "establish [a name] which endures"; cf. Ch. XI.

[172] *Sinuhe* B 141-142: the hero gives praise to Montu; cf. in Chapters IV, p. 63 below.

brought about his exile.

The larger context must be considered in assessing the significance of these stories as well as the internal factors: mode, characterization, particular thematic concerns. All of these factors contribute to the unique shape of each story. In short, there is a reciprocal relationship between form and content. Often this relationship is traditional, but the tradition does not account for everything, especially where the storyteller is of Homer's caliber. Homer creates new horizons for the tradition, especially in his treatment of Hector. The *Enūma eliš* may be taken as a canonical statement of the tradition, for there the lines between good and evil, hero and enemy, are clearly drawn, for the battle narrative is a story of triumph, the triumph of the hero over the enemy, and therefore the triumph of good over evil.

Chapter IV:
The Royal Battle Narrative

As seen in the last chapter, characters and theme are responsible for modifications in the battle pattern. This chapter is devoted to a standard variation, the royal battle narrative, in which the roles of hero and leader are combined on both the human and divine levels. On the human level, the king is both hero and leader; as such, he need not turn to any other human character for a commission. The official approbation and command to undertake the fight comes from the king's god in the role of divine leader who also may play a part in the fight as divine hero. The fusion of the roles of hero and leader on both the human and divine levels identifies the king with the god, and the identification is not gratuitous, but rather the point of the story.

The combination of hero and leader into a single character has many implications for the other motifs within the pattern. Some of these have been isolated by M. Weippert in her study "'Heiliger Krieg' in Israel und Assyrien," though from a different perspective.[173] Weippert's study is directed against G. von Rad's thesis that the "Holy War" was an institution unique to Israel. To the contrary, Weippert shows that the literature of Israel and Assyria reflect the same practices and ideologies of war. Instead of practices and ideology, I shall be dealing with motifs and themes used in storytelling. Again we are faced with the differences of a historical and a literary approach. The two are not contradictory; rather they should complement one another.

Weippert confines her study to Assyria, but I wish to extend the boundaries both in terms of time and space. An exhaustive examination of this material is not possible because royal battles and victories fill ancient archives. Much of this material can be characterized as "royal battle reports," for little or no attention is paid to the development of narrative tension or to the retardation of the story. The enemy's threat is quickly succeeded by the announcement of the king's victory, and the bulk of the report is concerned most often with the extent of the destruction, the plunder taken, and the tribute offered by defeated or neighboring kings. As such, the battle report is a condensation of the larger patterns of the battle narrative and emphasizes the magnitude of the victory and the recognition paid to the king.[174] An exhaustive examination of these reports would provide other examples of the motifs, but for my purposes this would be superfluous.

In contrast to these reports, the royal battle narratives exploit the traditional possibilities for tension and retardation in order to tell a story and not merely to report

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[173] M. Weippert, "'Heiliger Krieg' in Israel und Assyrien: Kritische Anmerkung zu Gerhard von Rads Konzept des 'Heiligen Krieges im alten Israel,'" *ZAW* 84 (1972) 460-493. G. von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel* (ATANT 20; Zurich 1951).

[174] For the discussion of Richter's work on the *Schlachtbericht*, cf. Chapter V, p. 66. For Assyrian examples of the battle report, cf. the annalistic reports of Shalmaneser III in *ANET*^{3} , 276-280.

the king's greatness. My comments, therefore, shall be drawn primarily from the longer narratives found in the following texts:

1. *The King of Battle Epic* which is found in an Old Babylonian version and a Tel el-Amarna version.[175]
2. *Adad-narari Epic*: The triumph of King Adad-narari I over the Kassites.[176]
3. *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*: the battles of King Tukulti-Ninurta I against Kashtiliash.[177]
4. *Kurigalzu*: King Kurigalzu's fight with the King of Elam.[178]
5. *The Legend of Naram Sin*.[179]
6. *Assur-uballiṭ*: King Assur-uballiṭ's fight with the Kassites.[180]
7. *Shalmaneser in Ararat*: The campaign of King Shalmaneser III against Urartu.[181]

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[175] *King of Battle*: The Old Babylonian version was published by J. Nougayrol, "Un chef-d'oeuvre inédit de la littérature babylonienne," *RA* 45 (1951) 169-183; W. von Soden has commented on it in *Or* 26 (1957) 319-320. The version from Tel el-Amarna is found in Tablet 359: A.F. Rainey, *El Amarna Tablets 359-379* (AOAT 8; Neukirchen 2 1978). For the complete bibliography with other small fragments, cf. A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Texts from Cuneiform Sources 5; Locust Valley NY 1975) 57, n. 60; Grayson also lists an epic of Naram-Sin which has not been considered because of its fragmentary condition.

[176] *Adad-narari Epic*: E. Weidner, "Assyrische Epen über die Kassiten Kämpfe," *AfO* 20 (1963) 113-116. Grayson, *Chronicles*, 57, n. 65.

[177] *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*: For col. iii and iv, cf. R.C. Thompson, *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology* 20 (1933) 116-126; for col. v, cf. R.C. Thompson, *Archaeolgia* (or *Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity*) 79 (1929) 126-133. For bibliography and other texts, cf. W.G. Lambert, "Three Unpublished Fragments of the Tukulti Ninurta Epic," *AfO* 18 (1957-1958) 38-51. For the recent discussions dealing with the relation of this text to the Bible, cf. P. Machinist, "Literature as Politics: The Tukulti Ninurta Epic and the Bible," *CBQ* 36 (1976) 455-482, and P.C. Craigie, "The Song of Deborah and the Epic of Tukulti Ninurta," *JBL* 88 (1969) 253-265.

[178] *Kurigalzu*: A.K. Grayson, *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts* (Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies 3; Toronto 1975) Ch. 5.

[179] *Legend of Naram Sin*: The Akkadian text has been prepared by O.R. Gurney, "The Sultantepe Tablets: IV. The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin," *Anatolian Studies* 5 (1955) 93-113; 6 (1956) 163-164. For the Hittite version, cf. H.G. Guterbock's discussion in *ZA* 44 (1938) 49-67.

[180] *Ashur-uballiṭ*: The text is found in R.C. Thompson, *Archaeologia* 79 (1929) 126-130, and the commentary in Thompson, *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology* 20 (1933) 116-117; cf. n. 177 above on the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*.

[181] *Shalmaneser in Ararat*: W.G. Lambert, "The Sultantepe Tablets: VIII. Shalmaneser in Ararat," *Anatolian Studies* 11 (1961) 143-158.

8. *Esarhaddon*: King Esarhaddon's fight for the throne.[182]
9. Pharaoh Ramases II's "Literary Record" of the Battle of Kadesh.[183]
10. Pharaoh Merneptah's defeat of the Lybians in the Great Karnak Inscription.[184]
11. The Moabite Stone: King Mesha's victory over a "son" of Omri."[185]
12. The "Apology of Hattusilis."[186]

These texts vary in the literary quality; not all are of great length, yet all are something more than a battle report.

A. Characters.

Whereas the hero and helpless leader take the major roles in the classic pattern, the king and his god are central in the royal pattern. Their relationship is that of hero and leader, yet the king is also the human leader, and the god may take the role of divine hero; neither are helpless. Helpless characters make only an occasional appearance when the king for some reason or other is absent from the scene of the enemy threat. The other major character, the royal army, forms an extension of the king but has little personality otherwise. Counselors and religious personnel may play minor roles to carry out their functions. Characters on the enemy side generally include only the enemy king and army.

B. The Beginning.

1. Description of the king.

Since the royal battle narrative is recounted to exalt the king, a description of the king may open the story. The only impediment which might keep a king from immediately resolving the enemy threat is his absence from the scene;[187] otherwise the

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[182] *Esarhaddon*: R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Assarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien* (AfO Beiheft 9; Graz 1956) §27; English translation in *ANET*^{3} , 289-290; Weippert also discusses the text; "Heiliger Krieg," 466-468.

[183] *Battle of Kadesh*: A. Gardiner, *The Kadesh Inscription of Rameses II* (Oxford 1960). Gardiner refers to the text in question by the letter "P" which stands for "poetic text" although he notes that the text is not in verse.

[184] *Merneptah Inscription*: J.H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (Chicago 1906-1907) III, §572-592.

[185] *Moabite Stone*: *KAI*, 181; and J.C.L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford 1973) I, 71.

[186] "The Apology of Hattusilis": E.H. Sturtevant and G. Bechtel, *A Hittite Chrestomachy* (Philadelphia 1935). H.M. Wolf, *The 'Apology of Hattusilis' Compared with Other Political Self-Justifications of the Ancient Near East* (Diss.: Brandeis University 1967).

[187] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 1-24; *Legend of Naram Sin*, 1-30; *Esarhadddon*, I 1-9. Except in the *Legend of Naram Sin*, the king's absence from the scene of conflict is the only impediment to his dissolving the enemy's threat

king is presented as the complete hero.

2. Enemy's threat and power.

In the *Legend of Naram Sin* (lines 31-62), a monstrous enemy arrives to wreak great devastation. The threat, created both by the enemy's proximity and their terrible power, is found also in the *Battle of Kadesh* where the Hittite troops arrayed before the Egyptians are compared in numbers with grasshoppers and the sands of the sea (P 66). In general, however, the enemy's strength is attenuated in these royal stories. This shift may well reflect the actual historical facts behind these narratives, but it also reflects a movement away from elements which would denigrate the magnificence of the king who is typically presented as the most powerful figure in the story. Still something of the initial tension is lost in the exchange.

The enemy's threat may be divided into three different types of wars which account for variations in the opening of the story

a. wars against outside aggressors who usually attack some outpost of the kingdom;

b. wars against rebels within the kingdom;[188]

c. wars of redress, i.e. wars waged to redress past atrocities by the enemy before the king's accession.[189] The first two types are similar to the threat posed by the enemy in the classic pattern. The wars of redress begin with a history of the suffering and defeat endured in the past at the hands of the enemy. To these can be added a fourth type:

d. wars of conquest.[190] Here the king goes to war in order to expand the kingdom in the name of his god; as a result, the pattern begins with a scene of commission and preparation.

3. Reaction of helplessness.

In the classic battle narrative, the leader is the central character in the reaction of helplessness, but the motif is inappropriate for the kings because they are the battle heroes as well as the human leaders. Therefore, if the reaction of helplessness is

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immediately.

[188] Cf. *Esarhaddon*, in which the hero's brother kills the old king Sennacherib.

[189] *Moabite Stone*, 1-9; *Merneptah Inscription*, §577.

[190] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 469, 487-488, 492; cf. *Shalmaneser in Ararat*. Weippert points out that the wars of conquest are undertaken as the will of the god; there does not enter into the consideration any qualm of conscience about undertaking an offensive war.

introduced, the king must be excluded, e.g. by his absence from the scene of conflict.[191] Furthermore, since the narrative is told from the king's point of view, the reaction of helplessness, where it appears, is not developed with the vigor seen in the classic battle narratives; indeed it may only be implicit in the need to call for the king.

C. The Middle

1. Call and commission of the king by the helpless.

Since the king is hero by virtue of his kingship, the search for a hero becomes inappropriate, and this is largely true for the introduction of false heroes as well.[192] Where the helpless appear, a call for help is sent immediately to the king by a messenger, as in the case of a vassal besieged by an enemy.[193]

2. King's reaction of righteous indignation.

As seen in the previous chapter, the hero's stock response to the news of the enemy's threat is one of righteous indignation, and both Merneptah and Esarhaddon join the classic heroes by registering their anger at the report of the enemy's villainy.[194]

3. Divine call and commission of the king.

Kingship brings with it the duty to wage war. Technically speaking then, the king's primary call and commission come with his accession to the throne, and Merneptah's accession is incorporated into the battle narrative in this way.[195] In view of this, the call dimension of the narrative is attenuated; still a divine commission for each battle is a regular feature. The patterns for the call and commission conform almost exclusively to the first two patterns found in the classic narratives:

a. The divine leader (calls and) commissions the king; and the king

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[191] Cf. n. 193 below.

[192] The retreating Egyptian army in the *Battle of Kadesh*, (P 74-75) can be analyzed as a false hero whose failure brings the hero into the battle.

[193] *Merneptah Inscription* §579; also Josh 10:6. The *King of Battle Epic* (Tel el-Amarna edition), merchants call upon King Sargon to defeat the oppressive king, and they offer to pay for the campaign, a very businesslike reward.

[194] *Esarhaddon*, I 53-59; *Merneptah Inscription* §580.

[195] *Merneptah Inscription* §578. *Esarhaddon*, I 8-22: The hero is designated as heir to the throne by his father, the gods, and the people; this likewise functions as a primary call and commission which allows Esarhaddon to act like a king even though his enthronement comes after the battle. Note also "Hattusilis" IV 7; for most of this story, the hero is not a king in his own right and thus receives commissions to wage war from his brother the king; cf. I 66; II 20,35.

accepts.[196]

b. The king calls for the divine commission; and the divine leader grants the divine commission.[197] Normally any objection by either king or deity is excluded because the scene serves to underline the unanimity between the human and the divine.[198]

The king typically calls for the divine commission in one of four ways:

1) direct personal prayer,[199]

2) sacrificia consultoria[200]

3) sacrifices entreating the favor of the gods,[201]

4) a vow which promises something in return for victory.[202]

The divine commission, whether initiated by the god(s) or in answer to the king's call, is communicated in the following ways:

1) to the king himself

a) by direct address,[203]

b) by a dream;[204]

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[196] *Merneptah Inscription* §582; *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 25-30; "Hattusilis" IV 7-15; Moabite Stone, 14.

[197] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 125-130; *Legend of Naram Sin*, 72-83, 99-114+; *Esarhaddon*, I 60-62; *Ashur-uballiṭ*, ii 2-18.

[198] An exception is found in the *Legend of Naram Sin*. The king calls and gathers his seers to seek an oracle, but the gods refuse to grant the commission. Against their will, Naram-Sin goes out against the enemy and meets with defeat, followed by a reaction of helplessness (72-83, 84-87, 88-98). In the fourth year, the gods at the behest of Ea (seemingly) grant the king an oracle of commission (99-114+). The importance of seeking an oracle of commission is stressed again toward the end when the king is faced with deciding the fate of his prisoners. In the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, iv 41-45, the enemy king Kashtiliash complains that he is unable to obtain a divine commission by oracle or dream--an indication of rejection by the gods; cf. the discussion of 1 Sam 28:15 in Chapter X, pp. 163f. The *King of Battle Epic* and *Kurrigalzu* do not include a divine commission; for the former, cf. n. 193 above.

[199] *Esarhaddon*, I 59-60; *Battle of Kadesh*, P 90-125; *Ashur-uballiṭ*, ii 2-18. The first two kings receive a direct reply.

[200] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 470-472; also Chapter III, n. 149. *Sacrificia consultoria* are found in the *Legend of Naram Sin* and in the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic* (cf. n. 198 above), and *Esarhaddon*, I 61.

[201] *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, iii 19; *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 41; in the latter, sacrifices are offered even though the king has received a divine in a dream.

[202] There are no vows in this selection of royal narratives, but Weippert treats vows in "Heiliger Krieg," 476, n. 74; cf. also Num 21:23 and Judg 11:30.

[203] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 125-130; *Moabite Stone*, 14.

[204] *Merneptah Inscription* §532; *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 25-30

2) a spontaneous oracle to a third person, i.e. not cultic, e.g. dreams;[205]

3) in answer to *sacrificia consultoria,* as interpreted by the proper cultic personnel.[206]

These three orders represent a descending scale of dramatic intimacy in which direct personal contact is sacrificed more and more to the constrictions of ordinary experience. This movement can be seen also in the king's call; the sacrifices entreating favor and especially the vows do not envision either a direct or indirect response; likewise the king's prayer in some narratives receives no reply which is simply presumed to be affirmative.[207]

The divine commission may appear without further elaboration as in the *Moabite Stone* where the god Chemosh says to King Mesha: "Go, take Nebo from Israel" (line 14). The assurance of divine presence and aid is added to Amon's commission of Rameses II:

Straight on! Forward! I am with thee; I am thy father! My hand is with thee, for I am worth more to thee than hundreds of thousands, and I am the strong lord who loves valor.[208]

The commission to Esarhaddon is briefer but similar:

> Go (ahead), do not tarry! We will march with you and kill your enemies.[209]

The encouragement motif is found in the commission to Merneptah though there is no indication that the king is afraid; here also the command to take a sword (preparation for battle) is turned into a sign of divine call and commission:

> Then his majesty saw in a dream as if a statue of Ptah were standing before Pharaoh L.P.H. He was the height [. . .]. He spoke to him: "Take thou (it)," while he extended to him a sword, "and banish thou the fearful heart from thee."[210]

The encouragement motif, however, does not fit well with the vision of the king as the great and mighty warrior. To these motifs may be added the hand-formula, a formula in

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[205] Weippert has used the term "*spontane Orakel*"; "Heiliger Krieg" 471. He cites an example of a dream to a third person in the *Prism of Ashurbanipal* A, III 118-127; cf. also the dream to the prince's wife in "Hattusilis" IV 7-15; in IV 19-22, a dream is given to the nobles as well.

[206] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 470-471; cf. n. 200 above.

[207] *Ashur-uballiṭ*, ii 2-18.

[208] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 125-130.

[209] *Esarhaddon*, I 61-62; (*ANET*[3] , 289) reads: We will march at your side, kill your enemy," meaning the gods will kill the enemy (*ni-na-a-ra*). *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 25-30; the commission is obliterated except for the assurance of divine presence and aid, "May Ninurta go before you, may Girru follow at your rear."

[210] *Merneptah Inscription*, §582. For the motifs of assurance and encouragement in a different context, cf. "Hattusilis" I 37-38.

which the divine leader announces that the enemy has been given into the hand of the king.[211] From my perspective, the formula is an extension of the assurance of divine presence and aid; with its introduction into a narrative, all pretense of dramatic tension disappears.

Within the classic tradition, the divine commission of the hero represents the approbation of the ultimate dimension within the hero's society. While this is a factor in the royal tradition, the divine commission also establishes a primary theme of the story: the identification of the king and god in both person and action; for the god, particularly the head of the pantheon, is responsible for the protection and defense of the community, as is the king who is the human manifestation of the divine king.

4. Preparation for battle.

The elements of weapons, armor, and chariot are found for Rameses II in the *Battle of Kadesh*.[212] However, the muster of the army is the major motif of preparation in these narratives.[213] The army may also be called and commissioned; typically an exhortation is included.[214]

5. Journey.

Since the enemy is generally at some distance, the journey continually appears in these narratives, but the motif is not developed except in *Shalmaneser in Ararat* in which the journey serves as the frame for the battle narratives.

D. The Climax.

1. Verbal exchange between king and enemy by messengers.

The king and enemy may carry out a verbal exchange, similar to that found in the

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[211] 39 Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 472-473, n. 54. The biblical tradition is surveyed by von Rad in *Der Heilige Krieg*, 7-9; cf. also C. Westermann, *Grundformen prophetischer Rede* (Munich 4 1971) 87.

[212] Rameses, informed of his army's retreat, girds for battle and mounts his chariot drawn by "Victory of Thebes"; *Battle of Kadesh*, P 76-80. Note also the sword given to the pharaoh in *Merneptah Inscription* §582; cf. p. 60 above.

[213] Cf. *Ashur-uballiṭ*, ii 19-22 and especially *Iliad* XVI 155-220; also *Battle of Kadesh*, P 25-28. In Weippert's pattern of motifs The muster of the troops follows immediately after the report of the enemy threat; "Heiliger Krieg," 269; cf. *Merneptah Inscription* and *Shalmaneser in Ararat*. In *Ashur-uballiṭ* and *Esarhaddon*, the muster follows the divine commission as in the classic pattern. The army may also be called and commissioned; typically an exhortation is included.

[214] *King of Battle Epic* (OB edition) 1-9; *Ashur-uballiṭ*, ii 19-22; *Battle of Kadesh*, P 167-195, 250-277; *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 17-24.

classic tradition, but typically the exchange is carried out through messengers rather than face to face. The most interesting example is found in *Tukulti-Ninurta* where the exchange of messengers creates the main drama of the story.[215] The enemy king may display his false confidence in this exchange or elsewhere to add a bit of dramatic irony.[216]

2. Fight and the victory.

The fight scene of the royal pattern generally ends almost as soon as it begins, sometimes being reduced to a simple statement of victory. Unlike the narratives of single-combat which concentrate on the particular encounter of two warriors, the royal narratives recount the meeting of faceless armies whose diffuse and simultaneous actions do not lend themselves easily to the storyteller's art.[217] This poverty, however, seems due less to the lack of imagination, and more to the significance of a speedy victory.

First of all, G. Furlani has shown that every battle in Babylonia and Assyria was conceived in some sense as a trial in which the righteous party necessarily wins the battle.[218] From this perspective, a speedy victory represents a speedy verdict against the enemy and for the king.

Secondly, the speed underlines the divine aid promised the king. This promise may be fulfilled concretely in the story with the gods taking part in the battle as divine heroes who lead the king into battle, march at his side, and fight.[219] The storm and other meteorological images, where they accompany a battle, point to the divine hand in the action since they recall the victories of the storm or weather god.[220] The king himself may also be represented as a divine hero. Rameses II rushes into battle "like Montu ... like Seth," i.e. like a god (P 130, 155), and Tukulti-Ninurta I is described in vestiges of the story god as "the terrible storm" (iii 41).

Finally, the speed is a sign of the king's own magnificent power. Unlike the classic narratives in which great power is attributed to the enemy, the royal narratives exalt the king's power which may be so great that it pre-empts the fight and leads directly to

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[215] *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, iii 11-33, iv 2-26; in *Adad-narari Epic*, the verbal exchange is the only extant part of the story.

[216] *King of Battle Epic* (Tel el-Amarna edition); Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 478, n. 84.

[217] In the *Legend of Naram Sin*, three initial failures by the king extend the battle scene. The ambush would also seem to be a conventional way of drawing out a battle; cf. *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic* iii; Josh 8; Judg 9:34-45; 20:29-48.

[218] G. Furlani, "Le guerre quali guidizi di dio presso i Babilonesi e Assiri," *Miscellanea Giovanni Galbiati* (Fontes Ambrosiani 27; Milan 1951) III, 39-47, esp. 47.

[219] *Ashur-uballiṭ*, 25-32; *Esarhaddon*, I 72; "Hattusilis" II 24,37. Cf. also von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg*, 12.

[220] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 479; cf. *King of Battle Epic* (OB edition), 59-63. Both the heroes of *Baal and Yamm* and Ullikummis are storm gods; note also Marduk's army of meteorological forces.

the enemy's recognition of defeat.[221] 549

3. Final motifs of the battle.

As in the classic narrative, the victory brings about the enemy's recognition of defeat and leads to a reaction of helplessness: fear and flight. The royal army, already responsible for the victory, pursues and inflicts great total destruction upon the enemy. Even so, the enemy king does not necessarily die in the conflict, unlike his counterpart in the narratives of single-combat. The enemy king may escape,[222] or he may be captured and thereby become part of the scene of recognition.[223] These events rob the climax of its utter decisiveness but reflect a more realistic, or even historical, portrayal of the battle.

The tension between the demands of the tradition and a pull toward fidelity to historical fact is illustrated nicely in the battle of Merneptah against the Lybians. The storyteller states that "there was none that escaped among them" (the Lybians), yet he contradicts this by reporting that the Lybian king fled, "his heart fearing." The news of the escape is brought to the pharaoh along with information about the choice of a new Lybian king who had opposed the old (§583-586). The specific details of the escape and new appointment have the marks of unique historical fact, yet this is mixed blithely with the traditional statement that no one escaped. In the royal tradition, however, the storyteller's fidelity to the tradition and even to history more often gives way to a more basic loyalty, the storyteller's loyalty to the king and the king's glory.

4. Denouement.

Plunder figures prominently in the royal narrative, and there follows a scene of recognition which undergoes some alteration since a king cannot easily recognize himself as hero. Most logically, perhaps, the divine leader(s) should recognize the hero-king, as in the *Battle of Kadesh* on Rameses' return to Egypt.[224] A captured enemy king, accompanied by appropriate tribute, may be impressed for this duty,[225] or neighboring king may offer the conquering king tribute whether under duress or of their own

[221] *King of Battle Epic* (OB edition), 65-68; *Esarhaddon*, I 72-73; Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg" 477.

[222] *Merneptah Inscription* §583-584; *Esarhaddon* I 82-84; perhaps also the *Moabite Stone*, 19.

[223] *King of Battle Epic* (Tel el-Amarna edition); *Kurrigalzu*. Similarly in the *Battle of Kadesh*, (P 295-332), the Hittite king sues for peace, and Rameses graciously accedes; in the Hittite version (*ANET*3 , 319), the Egyptians are defeated. In each case, the historical reality is subordinated to a traditional ending of the battle narrative.

[224] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 339-345: the gods receive Rameses on his return. "Hattusilis" II 30: Ištar proclaims the hero's name after the battle in IV 47-48: "And my Lady Ištar gave me the kingship of the land of Hatti also, and I became a great king./ My Lady Ištar took (as a) prince and placed me on the throne."

[225] *King of Battle Epic* (Tel el-Amarna edition); *Kurrigalzu*, ii 16-19.

accord.[226] Finally, the army may also fulfill this function.[227]

The scene of recognition is of special importance for Esarhaddon. Though he has been appointed crown prince by his father, Esarhaddon has not yet become king when his rebel brothers assassinate their father. Esarhaddon pre-empts the fight with a brilliant show of power, interpreted in the imagery of divine heroes, and this causes the rebel army to defect and proclaim, "This is our king." The Assyrian people come next to kiss the feet of their king, and then, as hero of the battle, Esarhaddon takes possession of the royal city and the throne of his father. The scene of recognition ends with the gods registering their acknowledgment through portents, omens, and oracles.[228] This narrative preserves the traditional tie between the victorious hero and the reward of kingship in order to justify Esarhaddon's accession.

The king may also set up a monument to mark the victory. As Weinfeld points out, this is connected with the establishment of a "name forever."[229] In several instances below, the erection of a stela is connected with the king's recognition of the god(s) as divine hero, a motif which may be expressed by sacrifice, etc.[230] Weippert lists the return journey and the disbanding of the army as other concluding motifs.[231]

In summary: This all too short survey is by no means exhaustive, nor does it attempt to isolate the peculiarities of specific cultures. Rather I have tried to show that the royal pattern is a variation of the classic pattern which results from the combination of human hero and leader into a single character: the king. A list of the motifs is given in Appendix II. Again I want to state that this pattern is a theoretical model, a distillation of the tradition, as is the classic pattern. Both are descriptive rather than prescriptive. The intimate relationship between the two patterns is seen most clearly in the *Battle of Kadesh* where the lone king defeats a great army. The royal pattern, therefore, must not be divorced from the classic pattern. The royal storytellers, however, are less interested in the drama of the story than are their classic counterparts. Narrative tension and retardation give way to the exaltation of the king and his identification with the god. In short, the battle narrative has become a tool of propaganda.

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[226] *Shalmaneser in Ararat*, 55-57.

[227] *Battle of Kadesh*, P 235-250; *Kurrigalzu* ii 10-14.

[228] *Esarhaddon*, I 77 - II 10.

[229] M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford 1972) 193, n.4. Cf. Chapter XI, pp. 183ff.

[230] Shalmaneser III says in the "Monolith Inscriptions" (*ANET*^{3} , 277): "At that time, I paid homage to the greatness of (all) the great gods (and) extolled for posterity the heroic achievements of Ashur and Shamash by fashioning a (sculptured) stela with my self as king ... ." Cf. also Esarhaddon's "Sinjirli Stela" (*ANET*^{3} , 293). In "Hattusilis" IV 66, after Ištar has made Hattusilis king, he says: "For my part I have My Lady Ištar the house of Armadattas"; and he furthers her cult. For biblical references, see von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg*, 7.

[231] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg," 486; here Weippert also gives a schema for the royal battle narrative which focuses on the praxis of war in the ancient Near East; as such, it is more restrictive than my own proposal for the traditional pattern.

Chapter V:
Old Testament Battle Narratives

A. The Battle Report.

This section could easily be a book, a very substantial book, for much in the Bible tells of war. An exhaustive study would have to look beyond the battle narratives of the historical books. Beginnings and even great strides have been made already and can be divided into three main groups: studies of historical institutions, studies of specific traditional imagery, and studies of the battle report.

The study of historical institutions, especially the "holy war," received its great impetus from Gerhard von Rad's *Der Heilige Krieg*,[232] and it has been developed with keen perception especially by M. Weippert as seen already in Chapter IV. As I have pointed out there, the interests of the historians overlap with those of literary critics. Von Rad, for instance, speaks of the preparation for battle "before the Lord" as a cultic element.[233] Perhaps, but from a literary perspective, this element is part of a broader category: the preparation for battle which need not be qualified by the phrase "before the Lord."

Of more consequence, the famous biblical "ban" is, again from my perspective, part of the great or total destruction of the enemy which traditionally occurs after the victory in battle.[234] Historians would surely say that the ban is more, and I would agree. Still it functions within the story to bring about the great or total destruction of the enemy which is found throughout the tradition whether or not a ban is invoked. Any discussion of this institution must recognize this tradition; however, this is far beyond my limited concerns. Indeed I have sought to guide this study so that it avoids complex historical issues which would divert attention from the simple task at hand.

Although Weippert has shown that the practices and ideologies of war in Israel are not unique as von Rad had supposed but are part of the larger culture,[235] she also recognizes

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[232]Gerhard von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel* (Göttingen 1951) 5-14, esp. 14. The term "holy war" has been called into question by R. Smend who has proposed the term Jahwekrieg; cf. *Jahwekrieg und Stammebund* (Göttingen 1963). Also F. Stolz, *Jahwes und Israels Kriege: Kriegstheorien und Kriegerfahrung im Glauben des alten Israels* (ATANT 60; Zurich 1972); G.H. Jones, "'Holy War' of 'Yahweh War,'" *VT* 15 (1975) 642-658. These studies are concerned with the historical institutions of war and the historical perception of those institutions. I am concerned with how the stories of battle were told in view of the extent material. The historical problems and concerns, while important in themselves and at times useful, are outside the methodology of this study.

[233] Von Rad, Der Heilige Krieg, 9.

[234] Ibid. 13; cf. also M. Weippert's discussion in "Heiliger Krieg," 486-487; again he points out the broader links in the ancient Near East. Cf. also the discussion of the ban in Chapter VI, pp. 96ff.

[235] Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg"; cf. the discussion above at the beginning of Chapter IV, pp. 53f.

a difference between Israel and Assyria: the hero and king in Israel never attain the towering position accorded the Assyrian king.[236] In the Bible, the Lord himself before all others is Israel's hero, and no human character is allowed to overshadow this fundamental theme.[237] The simplicity of the theme belies the complexity used to present it.

The study of specific traditional imagery has been pursued especially by Frank Moore Cross and his former student P.D. Miller. Miller's book, *The Divine Warrior*, presents a vision of the Lord which I have stressed in this chapter, and the works of both Miller and Cross, focusing on the relationship between Hebrew and Canaanite literature, deal more closely with similarities of language and specific motifs.[238] To their work should be added that of P.D. Hanson who achieves a broader synthesis of the material.[239] All three deal mainly with the recognition and reward of the hero; as a result, I shall deal with them more specifically in Chapter IX where I take up this question.

The classic and royal patterns provide an important and useful background for understanding the complexity of biblical patterns. Therefore, just as Weippert has widened the historical perspectives of the problem, I propose to broaden the form-critical perspective, yet I shall concentrate on the differences because the biblical tradition does not repeat the classic and royal patterns by rote.

Previous form-critical studies have concentrated on the condensed form of the "battle report." W. Richter has dealt specifically with the traditional vocabulary connected with battle:

1. verbs of movement: *bwʾ, hlk, yṣʾ*
2. verbs of military activity: *ʾsp, ḥnh, nlḥm*

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[236] *Ibid.* 488.

[237] This point is made by M.C. Lind in the title of his book, *Yahweh is a Warrior: The Theology of Warfare* in Ancient Israel (Scottdale PA/Kitchner Ontario 1980), esp. pp. 169-171. Lind looks at the theological implications of this statement, especially the subordination of the human to the divine. In this, he supports Weippert's view that the depiction of Yahweh as the sole agent of holy war, along with the consequent minimizing of human fighting, was not a late theological reflection but part of the most ancient narratives.

[238]F.M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge MA 1973). P.D. Miller, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (HSM 5; Cambridge MA 1973). Miller is concerned primarily with individual motifs and their relationship to Ugaritic literature. His work has been criticized by Weippert, as one might expect, for its narrow Hebrew-Canaanite perspective; review in *Bib* 57 (1976) 126-132. D.F. Morgan also finds that "the lack of any serious form critical treatment is sorely missed"; cf. his review in *JBL* 95 (1976) 474-476. In my opinion, Miller's difficulty with the form stems from his exclusive use of poetry in which the elements of the plot, often attenuated or rearranged, are used to evoke rather than to recount the story.

[239] P.D. Hanson, "Zechariah 9," *JBL* 92 (1973) 37-59; also *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia 1975) 292-324.

3. verbs indicating the outcome of the battle depending upon the object: city: *lqḥ*, *lkd*; persons: *nkh, ngp*; also flight and pursuit: *nws, rdp*

4. a concluding statement indication of the extent of the victory: *min* + place name, *ʿad* + place name.[240]

Gunn has proposed a slightly different pattern which focuses on the content:

Element 1: simple statement that the battle is joined.

Element 2a: a brief mention of the outcome in terms of the flight/defeat of one side.

Element 2b: mention of casualties, usually described as large on the side of the defeated.

Element 2c: an account of the death of a person or persons of importance, usually on the defeated side.[241]

Elements of both schemes may be correlated with motifs seen in the last two chapters; however Richter justly calls the form a "battle report." As I argued at the beginning of Chapter IV, the battle report is a condensation of the larger patterns and thus is a poor foundation for a study of the broad traditional base of the biblical narratives which are shaped by the classic and royal patterns. Before taking this up, I find it necessary to introduce a major development in the biblical tradition.

B. The Death of an Important Person as Motif and Episode.

The last element of Gunn's scheme isolates one of the most constant elements of the biblical battle narratives: the death of an important person. Since Gunn presents this in very general terms, I would like to add some definition.

The prime candidate for death is the enemy king. Like the enemy champion in the stories of single-combat, the enemy king represents the corporate identity of the evil forces, and his death represents the destruction of this force. The death may only be reported,[242] but there is a tendency to turn this motif into a more substantial episode in the story.

Like the royal battle narratives, the biblical tradition recounts almost exclusively the stories of battles between armies which lack the concrete drama afforded by two men locked in single-combat. The elaboration of the death motif into a larger episode helps to regain some of the drama. In Josh 10:16-27, the five Amorite kings flee and hide in a

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[240] W. Richter, Traditionsgeschtliche Untersuchung zum Richterbuch (BBB 18; Bonn ^{2}1966) 262-266.

[241] Gunn, *The Story of King David*, (JStOTS 6; Sheffield 1978) 51-54; "Narrative Patterns and Oral Tradition in Judges and Samuel," *VT* 24 (1974) 286-317, esp. 287.

[242] For a simple mention of the enemy king's death, cf. Exod 17:13; Num 31:8; Josh 10:30,33,39,40,42; 11:10,12,17; Judg 4:24; 7:25 (heads cut off); 2 Sam 20:22 (head cut off)

cave which is discovered by Israel and sealed; after the pursuit and destruction of the enemy army, Joshua has the kings slain, hung on trees, and then sealed again in the cave.[243] The death of the king mirrors the destruction of the army and becomes the capstone of the victory. A similar pattern is found in Judg 4:15b-23. There Sisera flees; the enemy army is pursued and destroyed; then Sisera is killed by the woman Jael.[244] Here the death becomes a major scene, but it is created from motifs beyond the traditional confines of the battle pattern. The scene of Absolom's death (2 Sam 18:9-18) is also expanded to heighten the tension. In Judg 8:4-21, the death of the Midianite kings is complicated by a second episode in which Gideon slays the men of Succoth who refused him provisions. The content of these episodes is unpredictable, and the storyteller retains his license for variety, as in Judg 3:15-25 where the death episode precedes the battle. Still, death, particularly the death of the enemy king, is demanded by the tradition. Therefore, when Saul and Ahab do not kill the enemy kings, they are condemned by the prophets, Samuel himself killing Agag.[245]

This motif is not limited to enemy kings; others on the enemy side may become the focus of the storyteller's attention because of thematic concerns. In Num 31:13-20, all the Midianites taken captive, except the virgins, are put to death in order the fulfill the commission. In Judg 9:46-49, Abimelech burns the Tower of Shechem and the thousand people inside. In Judg 12:5-6, the Gileadities seize the fords (cf. Judg 3:28) and slay everyone who cannot pronounce "Shibboleth." In Judg 16;23-31, Samson pulls down the roof upon the Philistines and upon himself. In 1 Sam 5:1 –7:2, the capture of the ark brings death to the Philistine camp. In 2 Kgs 3:27, the king of Moab slays his son on the city wall.[246] However, in two instances, the motif is denied. Rahab, who hid the spies, goes free in Josh 6:22-23; and in 2 Kgs 6:20-23, the captured Syrians are fed and magnanimously set free. Again, the storyteller retains his license for variation. Characters on "our" side may also be involved. Logically death comes to the sinner. Achan is stoned to death in Josh 7:6-26 because he took plunder from what was dedicated to the Lord. The captain who rebukes Elisha is trampled to death at the gate

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[243] Josh 8:23-29; here the ambush provides a major part of the drama.

[244] Richter (*Richterbuch*, 44,47) would divide this material into different redactions because the story has a conclusive ending in Judg 4:16: "not a man was left." In *Merneptah Inscription* §584, 586, the enemy king escapes. Cf. also Josh 8:22-29. The tradition rules these narratives rather than strict narrative logic. The relative independence of motifs, and their ability to connect with more than one successive motif make it very difficult to say what must be original.

[245] 1 Sam 15:8-9,32-33; 1 Kgs 20:30b-43. Note how Sennacherib's assassination in Assyria is joined to the victory in 2 Kgs 19:37 in order to achieve an ending with a death episode.

[246] In Judg 9:46-49, Abimelech burns the Tower of Shechem and the thousand people inside. In Judg 12:5-6, the Gileadities seize the fords (cf. Judg 3:28) and slay everyone who cannot pronounce "Shibboleth." In Judg 16;23-31, Samson pulls down the roof upon the Philistines and upon himself. In 1 Sam 5:1 –7:2, the capture of the ark brings death to the Philistine camp. In 2 Kgs 3:27, the king of Moab slays his son on the city wall.

by the people rushing to plunder the enemy, just as Elisha has prophesied.[247] If the sinner should die, then the innocent should go free, as Jonathan does in 1 Sam 14:24-36. However, this traditional logic is broken in places. Saul spares the life of the men who rejected him as king in 1 Sam 11:12-13, and Jephthah sacrifices his virgin daughter to fulfill his vow in Judg 11:34-40.

Other death episodes come to mind: Abner's in 2 Sam 3:22-25, Uriah's in 2 Sam 11; Amasa's in 2 Sam 20:4-20. I am perhaps on the verge of casting my net too wide; still these episodes, which take place in the context of war, point to a recurring phenomenon: the storyteller finds his most interesting material in the conflict and death of individual characters. Though the death of the enemy king would seem to be the source of this tradition, the biblical storytellers push beyond this horizon and make the death of some important person a consistent and, therefore, traditional feature of biblical battle narratives.

C. The Classical Pattern in the Biblical Tradition.

The most complete example of the classic pattern is found in the story of David and Goliath (1 Sam 17:1-18:4), and I shall consider it in detail in Part II of the thesis. Beyond it, the Book of Judith offers the best example although the scene of single-combat and other motifs are adjusted to accommodate its heroine.[248] The story of Jehu's coup

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[247] In Judg 8:4-16, Gideon kills the men of Succoth who refused to provide his army with provisions. In Judg 9:50-57, Abimelech is killed by a woman with a millstone. In 1 Sam 31:1-13, Saul is slain by the Philistines, in 1 Kgs 22:29-36, the King of Israel (Ahab) is struck by a stray arrow as Micaiah has foretold. In 2 Kgs 9:27-28, 30-37, Jehu kills the fleeing Ahaziah, the king of Judah; then, after the announcement of his kingship (9:29), he kills the infamous Jezebel. Cf. also the death of Asahel at the hand of Abner in 2 Sam 2:18-23, and the beheading of Nicanor in 2 Macc 15:28-36.

[248] The Book of Judith may be outlined as follows:

1:1 –7:18. The ever increasing threat of the enemy ends with a siege; a traditional episode of good and bad counsel is included with the enemy leader accepting the bad counsel and rejecting the good (Jdt 5:1 – 7:16). Cf. n. 261 below.

7:19-32. Reaction of helplessness: the people wish to surrender, and the leaders agree if no help comes in seven days time (cf. 1 Sam 11:1-3).

8:1-8. Description of the heroine, Judith.

8:9-36. Heroine's meeting with the elders. Judith delivers a long didactic speech which the elders misunderstand. Judith then offers to go herself, and the elders commission and bless the heroine.

9:1-14. Judith then calls for a divine commission through prayer.

10:1-5. Judith prepares for battle, but instead of donning sword and armor, she makes herself beautiful and prepares provisions.

10:11-13:10a. Fight scene in which Judith outwits the enemy leader and cuts off his head.

13:10b-11. Return Journey.

13:12 –14:10. Recognition of the victory by "our" side.

against King Joram conforms in large measure to the classic pattern; the fight scene in particular is shaped by the motifs for the single-combat.[249] Although no other scenes of single-combat are found in the Bible, several stories give prominence to the commission of the hero by the helpless. Already there has been occasion to refer to the story of Jephthah.[250] Saul's triumph over Nahash in 1 Sam 11 is another. Within the larger context, Saul is already king; but in the story itself, this element is not dominant, as is clear from the general call for a hero, as opposed to a specific call to a king. Because of the relation of this story to the David-Saul narrative, I want to outline it in detail.

14:11 –15:3a. Recognition of defeat by the enemy army: fear, confusion, and flight.

15:3b-6. Pursuit and destruction of the enemy.

15:7,11a. Plunder

15:8-10,11b-13. Recognition of hero and reward: a share of the plunder, the vessels and canopy of Holofernes' bedchamber, is given to Judith.

16:1-17. Victory hymn sung by Judith.

16:18-20. Recognition of the Lord as divine hero.

16:21-25. Denouement.

[249] 2 Kgs 9 tells the story of Jehu's rise to the throne and can be divided as follows:

9:1-13. Divine call and commission: a prophet secretly anoints the hero as king, and the hero's army acknowledge him as king.

9:14-16. The preparation for war (chariot) and a report about the enemy king are presented alternatively to create the impression of simultaneous action which is discussed in n. 415 and at the beginning of Chapter X on p. 159. The journey follows.

9:17-20. The battle scene begins with an attempted verbal exchange by messengers: Joram sends two messengers to inquire if Jehu comes in peace, but no answer is returned.

9:21. The enemy leader then prepares for battle (chariot) and goes to meet the hero.

9:22. A verbal exchange takes place in which Joram inquires about the obvious, and the hero indicts the enemy leader.

9:23-26. Joram attempts to flee, but the hero pierces his heart with an arrow (missile), causing Joram to sink in his chariot (= fall to the ground). The body of the dead king is not mutilated but desecrated by casting it on the property of Naboth to fulfill a prophecy.

9:27-28. Death episode: the king of Judah is killed.

9:29. Jehu's kingship is affirmed by the introduction of a regnal formula.

9:30-37. Death episode: Jehu has Jezebel thrown from a window and thereby fulfills a prophecy. The victorious king then sits down to a banquet.

[250] Judg 10:17 –11:40. Jephthah, who had been forced to leave Gilead by his brothers, is sought by the elders of the town to fight the Ammonites; for this service, they offer and he demands leadership over Gilead. Cf. Chapter III, pp. 42 and also n. 163.

The enemy's threat begins with a siege of Jabesh-gilead by Nahash the Ammonite (11:1a). The people attempt to sue for peace, but their helplessness is exposed by the outrageous demands[251] which the enemy king makes (11:1b-2). The people capitulate provisionally and send a messenger through Israel with a general call for a hero (11:3). When the news reaches Gibeah of Saul, the people there show their helplessness by weeping (11:3-4). When the absent hero returns from plowing, he is told of the threat and general call, and "the spirit of God came mightily upon Saul…and his anger was greatly kindled" (11:5-6). The spirit is a sign of divine commission;[252] and the anger is a typical image of the hero's righteous indignation.[253] Saul then prepares for battle in a dramatic call and commission to muster Israel (11:7-8). A message is sent to Jabesh-gilead to announce the imminent arrival of help and the people of Jabesh tell Nahash that they will capitulate on the morrow in order to raise the enemy's false confidence (11:9-19). Victory, flight, and destruction follow in quick succession (11:11) The people then want to kill the men who opposed Saul's kingship, but the magnanimous hero allows them to go free (death episode denied; 11:12-13). The hero is then recognized and receives his reward: Samuel accompanies Saul to Gilgal where the hero's kingship is "renewed," and the story ends with the sacrifices to the Lord and with a feast (11:14-15). One could pursue details,[254] but it is enough for my purposes to see that 1 Sam 11 is constructed of traditional motifs and patterns, if with an elaboration here and there.

D. The Royal Battle Pattern in the Biblical Tradition.

The royal battle pattern shapes the stories of King Abijah and King Asa (2 Chr 13 and 14:9-15); even so, there is a difference of tone which results from the deference paid to the Lord. The other battle narratives in the Books of Kings and Chronicles digress from the royal battle pattern because they tell not of fearless kings but of helpless kings, like the classic stories. Interestingly, some of the best examples of the royal pattern are found in Josh 1-12.[255]

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[251] Cf. n. 121 above.

[252] The coming of the Spirit as a sign of divine commission is found also in Judg 3:7-11; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14. T.D.N. Mettinger has suggested that the coming of the Spirit is an extrapolation of the motif of righteous indignation, particularly the image of anger; cf. *King and Messiah*, 237, 252-253. I agree and would only add that the reinterpretation of the motif goes beyond the hero's own reaction and identifies him with the Lord.

[253] Cf. n. 142.

[254] Cf. C. Grottanelli, "The Enemy King is a monster: A Biblical Equation," *SSR* [*Studi Storico-Religiosi*; University of Rome] 3 (1979) 5-36. Grottanelli discusses the serpentine qualities of Nahash, whose name means "snake" in Hebrew and relates them to roots in the battle stories of the mythic mode.

[255] A similar complex of stories reflecting the royal pattern is recounted for Judas Maccabeus in 1 Macc 1:1 –9:22 (compare with 2 Macc 8-15). Noteworthy in these stories are the following: 1) the commission of Judas by his father Mattathias (1 Macc 2:49-68); 2) the use of the rededication of the temple as an act re-establishing the social and religious order after the victory (1 Macc 4:36-61); and 3) defeat resulting

As stressed in Chapter IV, the combination of human hero and fearless leader into a single character (the king) shapes the movement of the royal pattern, and Joshua takes this role. The book opens with a divine call and commission (Josh 1:1-19) in which the Lord charges the hero-leader with an office and not merely with single battle commission. The Lord's speech contains motifs proper to the Bible (promise and observance of the law), but there also appear the traditional motifs connected with the divine commission: encouragement; assurance of divine presence and aid (Josh 1:5-7,9; cf. also Deut 31:7-8,14,23). A divine commission to Joshua with its attendant motifs reappears for each of the major battles with the exception of the first attempt against Ai which ends in failure because of Achan's sin.[256] The opening chapter ends with the call and commission of Israel by Joshua (Josh 1:10-18) who also directs the various battles with further commands according to the directions received from the Lord.[257] The whole of Josh 1-12 can be simply outlined as follows:

1:1-9	Divine call and commission of the hero-leader.
1:10-18	Call and commission of Israel by Joshua.
2:1-24	Spy episode[258]
3:1-4:24	Journey, modeled on the crossing of the Red Sea with its roots in the fight between the storm and the sea.

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from the breaking of the leader's command (1 Macc 5:18-19,55-62, compare with Patroclus' fate in Iliad XVI). Unlike Josh 1-12 which tells a story of conquest from the Lord's perspective, 1 Macc 1-9 recounts a war of redress from the hero's point of view. In this, Judas is exalted as the hero, and with him, his religious zeal which is equated with patriotism. Finally, 1 Macc 1-9 reflects a heightened realism which stems from a stronger allegiance to history than seen in Josh 1-12.

In 1 Macc 9-16, the story of Jonathan and Simon, the allegiance to history can be seen in the political machinations and in the hero's death by treachery; still traditional motifs continue to appear and to shape the story. For example, the battle with Demetrius (10:67-89) may be outlined as follows: enemy threat and challenge, hero's righteous indignation, muster, fight and victory, enemy's muster, second fight with a mimetic description of ambush, victory and great destruction, reward of the hero: honor, symbol of Alexander's favor, and land.

In 2 Macc 3, the threat of the enemy is cast realistically as an attempt to rob the temple funds; when the people beg the Lord for a hero, a heavenly horseman with "armor and weapons of gold" ends the threat and demonstrates yet again that the Lord is hero (3:39). The realism of the book reaches its height in the accounts of martyrdom (2 Macc 6-7), but the book ends with a great victory and the beheading of the enemy leader. Again a mix of realism and traditional motifs.

[256] Josh 6:2-5 (commission and battle plan); 8:1-2 (encouragement, commission, and hand-formula); 8:18 (commission and hand-formula); 10:8 (encouragement and hand-formula); 11:6 (encouragement, hand-formula, and commission).

[257] Josh 6:6-7,10,16-19; 8:4-8.

[258] Cf. also Num 13-14; 21:32; and below in Josh 7:2-3. C. Gordon cites the spies in the *Odyssey* IX 83-104 and X 102; "Homer and the Bible," *HUCA* 26 (1955) 43-108, esp. 86.

5:1-15	Enemy's reaction of helplessness (5:1) and other motifs from the biblical tradition.
6:1-7:1	Battle of Jericho.
7:2-3	Spy episode.
7:4-5	Initial failure against Ai.
7:6-26	Death episode: Achan is killed for taking plunder contrary to the ban.
8:1-35	Battle against Ai.
9:1-27	The deception of the Gibeonites (comic relief).
10:1-27	Joshua answers the call from the helpless Gibeonites and defeats the five Amorite kings.
10:28-43	Battle reports.
11:1-15	Battle against Jabin.
11:16-23	Battle reports.
12:1-24	List of Joshua's victories.[259]

On the basis of the observations in Chapters III & IV, one could isolate the many smaller motifs of the battle pattern, yet it is enough for my purposes to see that the Bible uses a chain of battle narratives to create a larger story.

Although the Joshua tradition conforms to the royal pattern, there is a difference in tone and emphasis. Joshua is not exalted like the kings of the ancient Near East but is continually subordinated in various ways to the Lord, the divine hero-leader. As divine hero, the Lord is manifest in the tumbling walls of Jericho and other miraculous events.[260] As divine leader, he is in charge of the action to an extent not seen in the royal narratives where the point of view is always that of the king. Finally, Joshua is one of the most two dimensional major characters in the Old Testament. He is the perfectly obedient vassal of the Lord, carrying out everything commanded him, like Moses "the servant of the Lord" (Josh 1:1 and often). The Joshua tradition exalts not Joshua but the Lord, Israel's true hero-leader.

The difference between the Joshua tradition and the royal tradition is subtle when compared with the parody of the royal form in 1 Kgs 22. This narrative is dominated by

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[259] The list of victories seems to be a traditional conclusion for a complex of battle stories; cf. the comments on 2 Sam 8 below in Chapter XI on the denouement, pp. 205ff.

[260] In Josh 10:11-14, the Lord takes the role of divine hero by throwing down hail, by holding the sun and moon still, and by fighting for Israel. Also Josh 10:42; 11:6. Beyond the Joshua tradition, two major examples of the Lord as divine hero are found in Exod 14-15 and in 1 Sam 7:3-14. Von Rad lists Deut 1:30; Josh 23:10; Judg 20:35; 1 Sam 23; *Der Heilige Krieg*, 9. I would add Judg 4:14, but this does not constitutes a complete list.

a council episode in which bad counselors traditionally offer bad counsel, and good counselors offer good counsel; a bad leader then chooses the bad counsel, or a good leader chooses the good.[261] In 1 Kgs 22, counsel is reinterpreted as prophecy: four hundred prophets give false prophecy, and the lone prophet Micaiah gives true prophecy. The bad king of Israel, identified as Ahab who is the whipping boy of the tradition, chooses the bad counsel (false prophecy), goes to war, and is killed by a stray arrow (death motif), just as Micaiah has foretold. The story is both traditional and untraditional at the same time. The death of the bad king is just what the tradition calls for, but the bad king should be on the enemy side and not starring in a comic role on "our" side.

The displacement of traditional roles is a characteristic mark of the biblical tradition. The oddity of Exod 14-15, for example, stems precisely from the juxtaposition of strange roles. A helpless, complaining people (Israel), led by a prophet-leader (Moses), watches as a divine hero-leader (King *YHWH*) single-handedly defeats a powerful human enemy (Egypt). Exod 14-15 is a divine royal battle narrative in the realistic mode, a strange mixture. According to the tradition of the ancient Near East, Moses should also play the role of human hero, but in the whole of Exodus and Numbers, Moses is confined to the roles of leader and prophet.[262] As a result, there is no ground for complete identification between the Lord and Moses as there is between deity and king in the ancient Near East. Like Joshua, Moses is always subordinate to the Lord.

The displacement of traditional roles brings great variety to the biblical battle narratives. Still the classic pattern provides the essential background, and, just as the variations in the royal pattern can be traced to the combination of hero and leader in the human king, so also much of the variation in the biblical tradition can be attributed to the alterations in traditional roles. The governing force in these changes is often thematic: the Lord, first of all and above all, is the hero-leader. In the Moses and Joshua tradition, this theme is carried in part by the Lord's direct intervention. Where the Lord

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[261] A.B. Lord has called "council ... one of the most common and useful themes [i.e. patterns] of all epic poetry"; *Singer of Tales*, 68, 71. Lord outlines an elaborate scheme beginning with the arrival of a letter. The essential elements, however, are those described in the text. Most of the examples in the Old Testament involve a bad leader/king choosing bad counsel over good: 2 Sam 16:15 –17:14; 1 Kgs 12:6-20; Jdt 5:5 –7:18. Similarly, the rebellious people choose the report of the terrified spies over the counsel of Caleb and Joshua in Num 13-14, and Amnon takes the bad advice of Jonadab in 2 Sam 13:1-6. As for good leaders who choose good counsel, cf. 1 Kgs 20:7-8 where only good counsel is presented, and Jdt 7:19 – 8:36 where Uzziah rejects the bad counsel of the frightened people (at least for the moment) and accepts the good counsel of Judith. In certain instances, counsel crosses the lines of war: Moses offers the pharaoh good counsel which is rejected (Exod 7-11). Rabshakeh advises Hezekiah to capitulates, but the good king rejects the bad counsel (2 Kgs 18:17-37).

[262] In Exod 17:9-10, Moses commissions Joshua to fight the battle; likewise in Num 31:1-54, Moses commissions Israel, but he does not go into battle himself. In smaller narratives, Israel is designated as the hero; cf. Num 21:1-3,21-31,33-35.

assumes a hidden role in the action, the theme is carried by the modification or displacement of traditional roles. As a result, I want to survey the remainder of the biblical tradition from the viewpoint of character.

E. Biblical Heroes: Strong and Weak.

The ideal of the traditional hero evokes a picture of the strong warrior at the height of his physical prowess, yet a closer examination of the ideal reveals a perfection of the intellectual and moral dimensions as well—all reflected in the hero's masculine beauty.[263] On the other side, the hero's impediment is a traditional feature. This impediment may only be the hero's absence from the scene of battle, or it may be only apparent. In the *Enūma eliš*, Marduk is overlooked during the initial moments by the helpless leaders because he is the youngest of the gods; otherwise he is perfect in every respect. However, in the *Iliad*, Achilles' anger is a moral impediment of character which not only prevents his entry into the battle but also threatens the Greeks with defeat and even threatens his own standing as a hero. Similarly, Gilgamesh enters the story as an abusive and juvenile king though perfect in strength and form; the friendship with Enkidu curbs the moral defect of the hero's personality, and the friend's death exposes the hero's lack of understanding concerning the reality of death.[264] In both stories, the climax is reached with a perfecting of the hero's character. Achilles bridles his anger and returns the body of Hector to Priam (*Iliad* XXIV). Gilgamesh attempts to win immortality for himself but must accept death as the fate of his humanity. In these two pieces of sophisticated literature, the battle within the hero becomes more important than the battle without.

The biblical tradition too can be analyzed in terms of the physical, intellectual and moral dimensions of the hero, but with a recurring twist. Samson is certainly the Bible's most famous strong man who, in the best of the heroic tradition, defeats the Philistines single-handedly,[265] but there are moral and intellectual defects in his character. Samson's desire for Philistine women muddles whatever better judgment he may have, and not once but twice (Judg 14:10-20; 16:4-22). In the second, Delilah's wiles leave the hero blind and captive, yet in this state of weakness, Samson, after calling on the Lord, outwits his captors by pulling down the pillars of the roof; "so the dead whom he slew were more than those whom he had slain during his life" (Judg 16:30). Though physical strength is celebrated in this story, it is ultimately subordinated to motifs of weakness and the weapon of weakness, deception.[266] This is the traditional twist within the biblical battle narratives, for the subordination of the hero's strength points beyond

[263] Cf. Chapter VII, p. 107 where the description of David is analyzed.

[264] Compare *Gilg.* OB III iv 3-25, v 10-11 = Assy. II 138-160, 190-191; Tablet VIII; and OB X ii 1-13.

[265] Judg 13-16; the Samson tradition forms a unified whole, beginning with a traditional birth episode and ending with the hero's death. Judg 15, like *CTA* 2 i, tells of the leader's capitulation to the enemy's outrageous demand that the hero be handed over.

[266] S. Thompson, *Motif-Index*, L 300, "Triumph of Weak."

human powers to the power of God.

Judg 4-5 achieves this twist by a division of the hero's roles into a strong warrior hero and a weak hero. Deborah, a fearless leader-prophet, calls and commissions the strong warrior Barak to undertake a war of redress against the oppression of Hazor.[267] The warrior hero does not exactly object, yet he makes his acceptance conditional on Deborah's accompanying him. Already the hero's condition begins the subordination of the strong to the weak, and Deborah makes this emphatic by prophesying that "the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman."[268] Although Barak (with the Lord) triumphs in the battle, the enemy commander Sisera escapes only to be slain in the death episode by the woman

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[267] For the discussion of the war of redress, cf. Chapter IV, p. 56. The four types of wars discussed there can be used to analyze the different ways in which the biblical narratives begin.

[268] The whole of Judg 4-5 is constructed of traditional motifs with the typical biblical adjustment:

4:1-3. A Dtr description of the enemy's past aggression and Israel's helplessness; concerning the Dtr pattern, cf. p. 79 below.

4:4-5. Description of the prophetess-leader, Deborah, instead of the hero.

4:6-9. The divine call and commission of Barak, the warrior-hero, by the prophetess-leader. The hero does not reject the commission but sets a condition for his acceptance: the presence of Deborah at the battle. By setting this condition, Barak acknowledges the pre-eminence of the Lord as hero. Deborah agrees to the condition yet adds a prophecy of the outcome which foretells Jael's triumph which undercuts still further Barak's position as hero.

4:10. Preparation for battle: muster of the troops.

4:11. Description of the weak heroine's background.

4:12-13. The enemy's renewed threat and its great power.

4:14a. The prophetess-leader gives the hero a second divine call and commission with the addition of the hand-formula assurance of divine presence and aid.

4:14b. Journey.

4:15a. Fight in which Barak subordinated to the Lord as hero.

4:15b. Recognition of defeat by the enemy leader, Sisera, who flees.

4:16. Pursuit and destruction of the enemy so that "not a man was left."

4:17-22. Death episode in which Jael kills the enemy commander.

4:23. Summary.

4:24. Notice of the enemy king's death.

5:1-31a. Victory hymn sung by Deborah.

D.F. Murray has studied this story from a literary point of view but reaches no successful conclusion with regard to the question of genre; "Narrative Structure and Technique in the Deborah Barak Story (Judges 4:4-22)," *VTS* 30 (1979) 155-189, esp. 185-186.

Jael who resorts to deception for her triumph.

The widow Judith likewise belongs among the weak heroes who overcome the strong through deception. Hushai also can be added to the list. Too old to be but a burden in war, he is commissioned by David to return to Jerusalem and "defeat... the counsel of Ahitophel" (2 Sam 15:32-37). In a wonderful twist of the traditional episode of council, the bad counselor Ahitophel offers good counsel, and the good counselor Hushai offers bad counsel. Absolom, a bad leader, chooses in traditional fashion the bad counsel which leads to his defeat.[269] The woman who drops the millstone on Abimelech also has a place among this group (Judg 10:53); and also the boy David who slays the giant Goliath (1 Sam 17).

As in the case of Samson and Barak, the real strength of the warrior heroes is often subordinated to motifs of weakness and deception. The left-handed Ehud, for example, kills Eglon the Moabite king by pretending to bring a secret message and presenting instead a sword (Judg 3:15-30). The deception becomes all the more daring because it is carried out alone in the midst of the enemy's royal city. Thus the weakness of the warrior hero stems from an inequality of numbers rather than a lack of physical strength. This type of inequality is not unique to the Bible, for traditionally the enemy appears as a seemingly invincible power, especially in the classic pattern.[270] Thus the hero's triumph over this power illustrates the power of good over evil. Within the Bible, this general theme is given a precise nuance which is made explicit in the story of Gideon.

The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with out are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, "My own hand has delivered me" (Judg 7:2).

Jonathan expresses a similar sentiment, "Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few" (1 Sam 14:6; cf. also Jdt 9:11 and 1 Macc 3:18-19). Yet where there are few, the Lord's role as divine hero is incontrovertible.

The motif of weakness, however expressed and whether accompanied by deception or not, is bound up with the theme of the Lord as hero not only in the biblical battle narratives but throughout the Bible. The barren women, the Israelites slaves against their Egyptian masters, the lone Elijah against the four hundred prophets of Baal in 1Kgs18—all reveal the action of the Lord. It is a subject deserving its own specific study.[271]

F. Leaders and Prophets.

In the classic pattern, the leader of "our" side is typically helpless and must commission

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[269] 2 Sam 15:32 –17:14; cf. n. 261 above for the discussion of the traditional episode of council.

[270] Cf. Chapter III, pp. 36f.

[271] Cf. the writer's article "Deception as Motif and Theme in 2 Sam 9-20; 1 Kgs 1-2," *Bib* 60 (1979) 301-326.

a hero to defeat the enemy. In the royal pattern, the human leader is king; therefore, not helpless but fearless. The biblical tradition is again more complex. A new central character is introduced, the prophet who has two functions: 1) to issue the divine call and commission to the hero, and 2) to prophecy the outcome of the conflict. In the cases of Moses, Deborah, and Samuel, the roles of the prophet is combined with that of the fearless leader, a logical combination for the exercise of call and commission.[272]

In Kings and Chronicles, a further displacement of roles takes place. Unlike their counterparts of the ancient Near East, the biblical royal tradition features helpless kings in order to subordinate the traditionally powerful hero leaders to motifs of weakness, again to reveal the Lord as hero. The prophet is sought or appears on the scene much like the heroes of the classic pattern.[273] In 2 Kgs 3, for example, the king of Israel with the kings of Judah and Edom goes up in grand, royal style to put down the rebellion of Mesha the king of Moab. However, they soon find themselves in the wilderness without water and fear that the Lord is giving them "into the hand of Moab." These helpless kings then apply to the prophet Elisha in much the same way that the helpless leaders of the classic pattern call on a hero. However, these biblical kings ask Elisha to inquire whether they have a divine commission. Elisha, after some hard words of the king of Israel, prophecies a miraculous flooding of the desert (sign of the divine hero) and adds that Moab will be given into their hands (hand-formula). The miraculous flood deceives the Moabites and gives them false confidence. The fight soon gives way to the enemy's flight and destruction, and the story ends with a death episode in which the king of Moab sacrifices his own son, a horrific twist of the tradition.

Though the kings of Judah are treated more kindly than the kings of Israel, the biblical king is traditionally a helpless figure before the enemy. The situation is resolved in one of two ways or a combination of both. First a prophet may give the helpless king a divine commission so that the king is able to assume the role of hero. Or the prophet may prophesy that the Lord will assume the role of hero either through miraculous intervention or, more realistically, through convenient happenstance.[274] In the example above from 2 Kgs 3, both the divinely commissioned kings and miraculous intervention combine to produce the victory.

The prophecy of the outcome is a traditional feature of the biblical tradition. Deborah

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[272] Cf. Num 31; Judg 4; 1 Sam 7:3-14.

[273] In 1 Kgs 20, the prophet appears on the scene from nowhere. In 2 Chr 20:13-17, the man who receives the Spirit prophesies instead of becoming the warrior-hero. In 2 Kgs 22, prophets are called before the kings, and in 2 Kgs 03:11-19, kings go and seek a prophet, a scene which may be compared to Judg 11. The prophet is also sought in 2 Kgs 6:31 –7:2, but the motivation has been changed.

[274] Other battle narratives with helpless kings: 1 Kgs 20:1-21,22-43; 2 Kgs 6:24 –7:20; 18:13 –19:36 (// 2 Chr 32:1-33; Isa 36-37); 2 Chr 20. In two other stories, human heroes (foreign kings) are called: 1 Kgs 15:17-22 (// 2 Chr 16:1-10 with negative comment); 2 Kgs 16:5-9.

foretells that Sisera will die by the hand of a woman, and in 2 Kgs 3, Elisha prophecies the miraculous flood in the desert.[275] Like so many other peculiarities of the biblical tradition, the prophecy underlines the divine dimension of the action lest anyone miss the point and attribute the action to happenstance or good luck or purely human endeavor.

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Two major developments of motifs have been noted: the death of an important person and the prophecy of the outcome. Two minor episodes of the whole tradition have also been noted as well: the spy episode and the council episode. Other bits and pieces are noted, such as the victory hymn which appears as a final element in several stories.[276] Several more will be brought to light in the next part of the thesis, primarily heroic friendship, the alienation and reconciliation of hero and leader, and the false death of the hero. While I have sought here to be complete in a general way, this study is only a sketch and not a finished painting.

One other traditional pattern deserves some notice. The traditional battle narrative assumes the “our” side is in the right and will win while the enemy, being wicked, will be defeated. The battle is, therefore, an expression of moral order, and, as seen in Chapter IV, the fight is conceived as a trial by ordeal in which defeat becomes both the proof and judgment of sin.[277] The link between defeat and sin cannot be taken as an absolute in every instance. The hero’s initial failure and even that of the false hero in the classic tradition may result from lack of stratagem or the lack of power. Still defeat and sin are traditional partners.

“Our” defeat, though largely ignored in the ancient Near East, becomes a factor in the Bible and is traditionally tied to sin, as in Num 14. In the *Legend of Naram-Sin*, the king is defeated three consecutive years because he has refused to abide by the oracles. By repenting, the king emerges victorious. Similarly, in Josh 7-8, Israel is defeated initially because of Achan’s sin; yet, once this has been expunged, the Israelites march to victory. This pattern may be broadly outlined as follows: sin, defeat, repentance (and purification), victory. The Chronicler moves his story with emphasis on this moral pattern though without the traditional outcome in 2 Chr 12 where Shishak takes Jerusalem despite the great repentance (allegiance to history). The Dtr redactor has his own formulation of the pattern which is used to frame the battles in the Book of Judges; a succinct statement of the formulation can be found in Judg 3:7-11. The relation of sin and defeat also arises in the David-Saul narrative where we shall take up the question

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[275] Prophecies of the outcome are found in the following texts: Exod 14:1-4,13; Josh 6:5; Judg 4:9; 7:13-14; 1 Sam 17:46-47; 28:19; 1 Kgs 22:17; 2 Kgs 3:16-19; 9:6-10; 19:6-7, 32-34; 2 Chr 20:15-17. This motif is related to the more general hand-formula; for that cf. von Rad’s list in *Der Heilige Krieg*, 7-9. Compare also *Iliad* XXII 216-223.

[276] Exod 15; Josh 10:12-13; Judg 5; Jdt 16:1-17. Cf. the fuller discussion in Chapter XI, p. 184 on the victory hymn.

[277] Cf. Chapter IV, p. 61 for battle as judicial trial; Judg 10:17 –11:40, especially 11:27, is a clear example.

again.

Because of the continual reinterpretation of traditional roles in the biblical narratives, I have not produced a biblical pattern. These stories can be analyzed by using the classic and royal patterns and making the necessary adaptation for the reinterpretation of characters. Unless one could stop and discuss the reasons for the particular shape of each story, the study would prove excessively dry. In Part II, I shall apply the results of this study to the David-Saul narrative, and there I shall have ample opportunity to demonstrate both the tenacity and flexibility of the tradition as well as its breakdown. In Appendix III, I list the traditional battle narratives found in the historical books of the Bible to indicate the breadth of the biblical tradition. I have not included every story containing traditional motifs, but only those in the historical books which conform in large measure to the whole pattern. The list is, therefore, indicative and not definitive.

Part II:

The David and Saul Narrative: 1 Sam 13 – 2 Sam 8

Introduction

In the first part of this thesis, I sought to illumine the generic patterns of the battle narrative, and in this second part, I shall seek to demonstrate how these and other patterns provide the building blocks of the David-Saul Narrative. Bound to these formal elements are larger issues, especially the code of covenant.

The studies of covenant have focused primarily on documentary forms and ritual action in which relationships sealed by an oath were established. I shall argue that the relationships, defined in ancient Near Eastern treaties, the deuteronomic covenant, and elsewhere, reflect a general code which governs human relationships, especially in battle literature. This position is not entirely new. Weinfeld has demonstrated the continuity between the language of covenant in the ancient Near East and that of the Greco-Roman world,[278] and insights of this kind are being integrated by scholars such as K. McCarter.[279] I shall push these insights further and argue that covenant serves as the fundamental background for relationships in the battle narrative. As such, covenant becomes the source for much of the characterization and motivation in the story, and the plot of the story, especially this story, turns on the keeping and the breaking of covenant.

[278] M. Weinfeld, "Covenant Terminology in the ancient Near East and Its Influence on the West," 93 (1973) 190-199.

[279] McCarter, *I Samuel*, Note 19:4, p. 322.

Chapter VI:
The Rejection of Saul: 1 Sam 13-15

In Chapter I, I argued that the story in 1 Sam 13 - 2 Sam 8 turns on the rise and resolution of two tensions: the "kingdom forever" and the Philistine threat. David's story in this complex is the traditional story of the battle hero who receives kingship as his reward, yet running counterpoint to this is the story of Saul's destruction. The same traditional motifs are broken to create the tragedy. In the juxtaposition of fulfillment and destruction lies the complexity or, better, mystery of the story; for David's triumph is ever tinged with the sadness of Saul's tragedy. The simple struggle of Israel against the Philistines, good against evil, is shunted to the background in order to focus on the darker realism of another man's failure. Saul, like Hector, becomes a witness against the easy affirmations of the tradition. But, whereas Hector testifies that the enemy can be good and, therefore, that the destruction of the enemy can be tragic,[280] Saul testifies that the forces of chaos and destruction may lie not only beyond but also within, that the struggle may take place within our ranks and not just against others.

The first section of the David-Saul narrative opens with three different pictures of Saul. The first presents the king in 1 Sam 13:1-14:45 as a comic figure, either too quick or too slow in his actions. If Saul's ineptitude did not bode so badly for the future, one could laugh with an easy mind during this comedy. The last picture in 1 Sam 15 reveals a more subtle conflict of character and emotions—the stuff of realism rather than comedy. Between these two masses lies a small bridge (1 Sam 14:46-51) which presents a positive picture of Saul both as warrior and king. Yet even this positive assessment is not without its ironic undercurrent: in 14:48 the Amalekites are condemned as plunderers, but Saul himself is rejected in 1 Sam 15 because of Israel's plundering of the Amalekites.

Biblical scholarship typically treats this juxtaposition of different pictures as a confluence of traditions, admittedly a reasonable position for explaining the origins. However, the audience is not asked to recognize one story as northern or Benjamenite or anti-monarchical; the audience is not asked to choose one picture as the "correct" picture; all are told by the "storyteller" about the same character. This juxtaposition creates the initial complexity of Saul's character. The three pictures of Saul jump from one to the other with an abruptness offensive to modern sensitivities toward characterization. Yet, according to Scholes and Kellogg, this juxtaposition also violates the canons of "primitive stories" where characters are "invariably 'flat,' 'static,' and 'quite opaque.'"[281] The juxtaposition of these pictures in 1 Sam 13-15 along with what follows in 1 Sam 16-31 takes Saul out of this category. No one motive accounts for the whole, nor is the problem solved by dividing the whole into isolated pieces because our

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[280] Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 319.

[281] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 164.

vision of Saul is continuously shaped by the whole. There is no "correct" picture of this king, only pictures which create mimesis and psychological complexity.

A. The Piety of Safety: 1 Sam 13:1-14:46.

The opening story conforms to the traditional pattern of the battle narrative:

1 Sam 13	alternating threat and helplessness
14:1-13	call and commission: the hero calls his friend the armor-bearer, but Jonathan does *not* seek a commission from Saul. Instead Jonathan turns the verbal exchange with the enemy into divine oracle which produces the divine commission.
14:14	Hero's victorious fight.
14:15a	Recognition of defeat by the enemy: fear in the Philistine camp.
14:15b	Earthquake (sign of divine hero) followed by the fear of God (recognition of divine hero).
14:16-19	Recognition of hero's victory by "our" side is delayed by Saul.
14:20-31	Pursuit and curtailed destruction of the enemy: the people, forced to fast by Saul, lack the strength to make the victory great.
14:32-35	Plunder: the famished army plunders the enemy cattle and eat without observing the purity laws which Saul must rectify.
14:36-37	Saul proposes to plunder the Philistines by night but is denied a divine commission.
14:38-44	Death episode: Saul discovers that Jonathan has broken the fast and is prepared to kill his son.
14:45	Recognition of the hero by the people who refuse to allow Saul to kill Jonathan.
14:46	Concluding formula.

The narrative is shaped by the traditional pattern, but the twists in the tradition are significant. Saul has the role of a helpless king, but he wants to play the role of the strong hero-leader. However, he cannot even play the role of the helpless king who should commission and recognize the victorious hero.

The tension of the narrative is provoked by Jonathan's early victory over the Philistines at Gibeah, but Saul has this victory announced as his own. An audience who knows the tradition of Saul will see here the seeds of jealousy which mature in 1 Sam 18:8. This interpretation is borne out by the climactic organization of the text in 13:3-4:

A Jonathan defeated the garrison of Philistines,

B and the Philistines heard.

C And Saul blew the trumpet throughout the land saying,

B' "Let the Hebrews hear,"

B" and all Israel heard it said

A' that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines.

The first two appearances of "hear" (*šmʿ*) without an object lead one to expect Jonathan's name, but the third appearance of *šmʿ* brings the name of Saul. But the renewed enmity of the Philistines robs "Saul's" victory of its sweetness.

The subversion of Saul's position is a recurring feature in this narrative. Even the geography tells against the king. Gibeah, which is initially identified with Jonathan, becomes the geographical referent for Israel, but Michmash, initially identified with Saul, becomes Philistine territory.[282] 3 A minor point, but it reveals the pervasiveness of the movement against Saul.

There follows in 13:5 a paradigmatic statement of the enemy's threat and great power.

> And the Philistines muster to fight with Israel, thirty thousand horsemen, and troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude; they came up and encamped in Michmash to the east of Beth-even.

This brings the traditional reaction of helplessness by "our" side: some scurry to hide in every imaginable hole, the enumeration of places being used here to good effect (13:6). Others desert and flee across the Jordan. Saul remains at Gilgal, "and all the people followed him trembling" (*ḥrd*, 13:7).

The context of the next scene has been prepared long before in 1 Sam 10:8 where Samuel commands Saul to wait at Gilgal for seven days until the prophet comes to offer sacrifice. Saul waits the seven days appointed by the prophet, but, when Samuel fails to appear, the king takes things into his own hands and offers the sacrifice himself. Immediately afterwards, Samuel arrives and declares that the Lord would have granted Saul a "kingdom forever" (*ʿad ʿôlām*) if he had not "acted foolishly."[283]

Recently, D.M. Gunn has assumed the role of Saul's defense lawyer and reopened the case against the king. Gunn dismisses those who see Saul breaking some cultic law,[284] and I concur. Gunn also rejects the argument that Saul somehow did not fulfill Samuel's command to wait seven days, for, according to the narrator's own statement as well as

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[282] J.M. Miller has argues, convincingly I find, that Gibeah and Geba are the same geographical location, the "-ah" ending being a locative accusative; cf. "Geba/ Gibeah," *VT* 25 (1975) 145-166, esp. 155, 165.

[283] Cf. Chapter IX, p. 154 on the significance of *nbl*.

[284] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 15; i.e. Saul sins by offering sacrifices himself which is contrary to the practice found in 2 Chr 20:16-21.

Saul's (13:8,11), the king waited the specified time.[285] Likewise, I agree. In view of this, Gunn asserts that there are no serious grounds for Samuel's actions against the monarch, yet Gunn tries to make some sense out of Samuel's action by playing with the possibility of a misunderstanding between the prophet and the king (on or after the seventh day). While Gunn is willing to entertain such a possibility, he maintains that "on Saul's understanding no sin has been committed."[286] Gunn shows himself a tireless advocate for the king, and, in summing up the defense, he argues that the story of Saul is a tragedy of fate rather than a tragedy of flaw. The king is continually entangled in a snare of misunderstanding for which he bears no real responsibility; thus Saul is continually rejected for little or no reason.[287]

Gunn's arguments make interesting and provocative reading; all the more so because he takes the text very seriously. However, I do not agree with his conclusions because of the links with the battle tradition. The "kingdom" is a traditional reward given to the victorious hero, as in 1 Sam 11:14, and the "kingdom *ʿad ʿôlām*" is the perfect reward.[288] Saul is denied the traditional reward because he is neither a hero nor a strong and fearless leader, a point made more than once in 1 Sam 13-14. Indeed, Saul obeys the command to wait seven days, but he does not wait until Samuel comes. Note the king's reason for proceeding without delay (and without the prophet):

> When I saw
>
> > that the people were scattering from me,
> > and that you did not come,
> > and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash,
>
> I said, "Now the Philistines will come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of the Lord."
>
> So I contained my emotions[289] and offered the burnt offering (13:11b-12).

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[285] Ibid. 35-36. McCarter *(ad loc.)* has offered the most recent argument that Saul did not keep the appointment. The strength of Gunn's argument lies not so much in the affirmation of Saul (who may lie), but in the affirmation of the storyteller because traditional storyteller do not have a separate identity from the author as we find in modern literature where the reader must consider the narrator's point of view in the story. If the traditional storyteller contradicts some clear indication in the text, then one must resort to some kind of redactional theory (oral or written). Cf. my discussion on this in section B of Chapter I, pp. 9ff.

[286] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 40.

[287] Ibid. 115-131.

[288] Cf. Chapter XI, p. 202.

[289] The hitpael form of *ʾpq* is used elsewhere only in Gen 43:31; 45:1; Isa 42:14; 63:15; 64:11; XE "0119 Esther: 5:10. In each case, the verb describes the holding back of some intense emotion. This would fit with an interpretation of Saul as a helpless king who attempts to repress the emotions of helplessness but actually acts in a way that manifests what he would suppress.

Saul's actions are correct; traditionally sacrifices are offered before a battle to obtain a divine commission.[290] However, his is the action of a helpless leader, a piety of safety which seeks refuge in the letter of the law, but it lacks the trust of a true hero. Compare Saul's statement with that of Jonathan to his armor-bearer in the next chapter:

> Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving few (14:6).

As Alonso Schökel says, this statement stands squarely within the heroic tradition of the Bible.[291] Saul's reaction, on the other hand, is a human reaction, fear in the face of hostile threat and power, but this is not the traditional reaction of a hero. Saul has carried out the command, but he has missed the point of the command. In that sense, he has failed to "guard" the command.[292] Saul is no hero, and, as a result, he is denied the hero's reward.

The helplessness of Israel is underlined again in 13:15 where Saul's troops are numbered at six hundred, as opposed to the three thousand in 13:2. After the geography of the situation is set forth in a stock formula,[293] the enemy's threat and power are described once again, this time in terms of raiding parties which go out in three directions to plunder Israel (13:17). As expected, a statement of Israel's helplessness follows: no one in Israel, except Saul and Jonathan, has spear or sword because the Philistines have allowed Israel no smiths (13:19-23). The realism of the description is heightened by a digression on the sharpening of farm implements, yet, according to Greßmann, the unarmed army, headed by an armed leader is a traditional motif.[294] The last verse of the chapter returns to Philistine logistics and sets the scene for what will come.

In summary, 1 Sam 13 is basically a movement back and forth between threat and helplessness. The leader's reaction of helplessness, a sign of his inability to rule, is brought to its logical conclusion: Saul is denied the hero's reward of kingship which is

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[290] Cf. Chapter IV, pp. 58f for a discussion of the call for a divine commission.

[291] Alonso Schökel, *Samuel, ad loc*. Cf. Chapter V, pp. 77f for another discussion of this text.

[292] The two *lō' šmr* clauses with their emphasis on what has been commanded *(ṣwh)* would seem to emphasize that Saul has transgressed some specific thing which had been commanded him, especially since *miṣwat YHWH* is in the singular according to the Masoretic vowel points. First, the plural form could be created by changing the vowel point; second, even the singular form is used for the sum of the Lord's commandments; cf. Exod 24:12; Deut 7:11; 8:1; 11:8,22, etc. Therefore, these two *lōʾ šmr* clauses may be interpreted as Saul's transgression of the Lord's law in general rather than the transgression of a specific commandment. Still, cf. 1 Kgs 13:21 where a prophet breaks a specific commandment of the Lord and is condemned. If this is meant in the text, then I would attribute it to a redactional hand.

[293] 1 Sam 13:5; this stock formula typically locates the encampment of the enemy in an adversary position against "our" side whose position is often described as well; cf. Judg 6:33; 7:1; 10:17; 1 Sam 4:1; 13:16; 17:1-2; 28:4; 29:1.

[294] Greßmann, *Geschichtsschreibung*, 52; cf. Judg 5:8b.

qualified here by *ʿad ʿôlām* – "forever." The denial thus touches the future of the kingdom after Saul; the denial to Saul himself will come only in 1 Sam 15.

The story now turns to the call and commission of the hero. Jonathan calls his armor-bearer to join in a battle against the Philistines, but in 14:1 the storyteller says that the hero does not announce this adventure to his father-leader, a point made again in 14:3. This runs counter to the tradition, for Saul, not only as leader but also as the hero's parent, should commission the hero.[295] The denial of this function to the king further undercuts Saul's position and also stresses the value of spontaneous, bold action which will be contrasted with timid conformity.

The storyteller then digresses to place Saul in Gibeah under a pomegranate tree,[296] along with the remaining six hundred troops and the priest Ahijah. Digressing further, the storyteller recounts Ahijah's genealogy which, as Jobling notes, conjures up the rejection of the priestly house of Eli, the defeat of Israel in 1 Sam 4, and the loss of the ark.[297] These digressions identify Saul with rejection and defeat. In addition, it should be noted that Ahijah is "bearing the ephod" *(nōśēʾ ʾēpôd)*, the ephod being either a garment worn by the priest or the official instrument for obtaining oracles. With Hertzberg, Stoebe, and McCarter, I favor the latter meaning for two reasons. First of all, Saul's ephod-bearer is a parallel to Jonathan's armor-bearer (*nōśēʾ kēlayw*), and these two assistants are manifestations of a more basic opposition which develops in the chapter: official, institutional approval versus bold chrism. Secondly, the ephod is used in the David-Saul narrative in general as the official instrument for obtaining oracles of divine commission for battle.[298] This likewise fits into the present context of call and commission.

After more geography (14:4-5), the action returns to Jonathan with the common technique of repeating the line preceding the digression. Jonathan calls his armor-bearer to risk a fight with the Philistine on the basis of trust in the Lord (14:6, quoted above). The scene is similar to that in which Gilgamesh calls his heroic friend to join a fight against Ḫuwawa.[299] However, unlike Enkidu who strenuously objects to the venture, the armor-bearer replies with a statement of perfect loyalty and union:

> Do everything in your heart. Bend yourself to it.

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[295] Cf. Chapter III, n. 148 for the commission by a parent.

[296] This traditional scene of sitting under a tree (Judg 4:5; 1 Sam 14:2; 22:6) is typical of literature from the ancient Near East as McCarter shows in his references to *CTA* 17 v 48; *CTA* 19, 19-25; 1 Kgs 13:14.

[297] D. Jobling, "Saul's Fall and Jonathan's Rise: Tradition and Redaction in 1 Sam 14:1-46," *JBL* 95 (1976) 367-376, esp. 368.

[298] Oracles of divine commission for battle are sought through cultic means in 1 Sam 23:1-5; 28:6; 30:7-8; 2 Sam 5;19,23; elsewhere in Judg 20:18,23,27. The call for an oracle is not limited to commission for battle; cf. 1 Sam 22:10,13,15; 23:9-12; 2 Sam 2:1.

[299] *Gilg*. OB III iii-iv =Assy. II 90-162.

Behold I am with you even as your heart.[300]

Jonathan then outlines the battle plan which turns the verbal exchange with the enemy into a call for an oracle of divine commission: if the enemy offers to come to them, then they will stand their ground, but, if the enemy bid them come up, then they will know that the Lord has given the enemy into their hands (hand-formula; 14:8-10). The hero thus eschews not only his father's commission but also the official means for obtaining oracles through the priest and the ephod.

The appearance of the two heroes draws from the Philistines a traditional response: insults and a challenge to "come up" and to fight. Jonathan takes this as the oracle of divine commission and proceeds with the armor-bearer to defeat the larger Philistine force (14:11-13). The victory sends fear through the enemy camp, the traditional expression of the enemy's recognition of defeat (14:14-15a). The divine dimension of the battle is then indicated by an earthquake which provokes a recognition of the divine hero, "a fear of *Elōhîm*."[301]

Traditionally, "our" side should now recognize the victory and carry it through with the pursuit and destruction of the enemy. The recognition is signaled by the verb "to see" (*rʾh*) in 14:16; however, the news of the tumult in the Philistine camp does not lead immediately to pursuit. Instead, Saul has the troops numbered to "see" (*rʾh*) who is missing. Even after Jonathan and his armor-bearer are found to be missing (and, therefore, responsible for the tumult), Saul continues to delay and has the priest bring either the ark (MT) or the ephod (LXX^{B}).[302] While the reading of "ephod" creates a

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[300] The translation of this verse (14:7) has provoked much discussion which is summarized by Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 259. For the first part of the armor-bearer's statement, I have followed Stoebe who has attempted to make some sense of the Hebrew although scholars generally follow the LXX which is admittedly more intelligible. As for the second part, I find no reason to appeal to the Greek, especially in view of the parallel statement in 1 Sam 13:14 where Samuel tells Saul, "The Lord has sought out a man to Himself as His heart (is to himself)." Compare *kilbābô* to *kilbābᵉkā.*

The armor-bearer thus describes his relationship to Jonathan in terms similar to those which define the relationship of the one chosen to the Lord. Already Chapter I (pp. 3ff), I suggested that the armor-bearer in this passage prefigures David; the relationship between 13:14 and 14:7 serves as another link. The terminology, however, is drawn from a larger context. The armor-bearer's statement recapitulates the covenant relationship between lord and servant, chief and follower. For this, cf. the discussion throughout Chapter VIII. On the relationship of "heart" to covenant and especially to David, cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 77.

[301] The *ḥerdat ʾᵉlōhîm* is more than a "great panic" (RSV). The lack of the definite article before *ʾᵉlōhîm* has created the problem for translators. However one decides to solve this problem of translation, it should reflect the reaction of the enemy to a divine hero, who is responsible for the earthquake. Cf. Chapter IV, p. 61; also *rûaḥ ʾᵉlōhîm* in 1 Sam 16:16,23.

[302] The "ephod" is preferred by Driver, Budde, Smith, de Vaux, McCarter, and Alonso Schökel; for the last, see the commentary in *Samuel* (Los Libros Sagrado; Madrid 1973) 14:18. Budde notes that Hermann and Lods consider 14:18b a gloss--a logical assessment if one accepts "ephod." Stoebe and Hertzberg observe that "ark" is the *lectio difficilior* since one would not expect to find the ark in the narrative in view of 2 Sam 6. P.R. Davies has pushed this position to the extreme and argued that every occurrence of

tighter story, the implications of both are similar. The time for seeking oracles of divine commission is past, for the Lord has already given the Philistines into Jonathan's hand. Likewise a paladium is unnecessary because the Lord has preceded Saul into battle (earthquake). In short, Saul need not delay for ephod or ark, and before the priest can carry out the command, the tumult in the Philistine camp reaches such proportions that even Saul realizes the significance and has the priests cease. Then with a shout,[303] Saul and the people pursue and destroy (14:16-23).

During the pursuit and destruction of the enemy, a new complication is introduced which will lead to the death episode. Saul imposes a fast upon everyone, but the hero Jonathan, hearing of the fast only after he has broken it, condemns the fast:[304]

> My father has troubled the land. See (rʾh) how my eyes have become bright (*ʾrw ʿyny*) because I tasted (*ṭʿm*) a little (*mʿṭ*) of this honey. How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found; for now the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great" (14:29-30).

The storyteller's sensitivity to language can be seen in the chiastic play on words (*rʾh* x ʾôr and *ṭʿm* x *mʿṭ*); more important, however, is the link between *ʾôr* and ʾ: "to be bright" and *ārûr* (*ʾrr*) "to be cursed." R.C. Dentan points out that brightness of the eyes is a "sign of physical and emotional well-being,"[305] and at a deeper symbolic level, S. Aalen equates "to see light" with "to live."[306] Therefore, though Jonathan breaks the fast and

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"ephod" as a means for obtaining an oracle in 1 & 2 Sam is a deviation from the original which would have read "ark"; "Ark or Ephod in 1 Sam 14:18"? *JTS* 26 (1975) 82-87. As noted in the text, I find "ephod" gives a tighter reading to the whole, but I find the question intractable.

[303] Cf. Chapter III, n. 167.

[304] The question of a fast also appears in 1 Sam 28:20 and in the *Iliad* XIX 145-237. In 28:20, the fast likewise produces negative results. In the *Iliad*, Homer uses the motif in a similar way, except that the roles are reversed: the *hero* Achilles proposes the fast, and the *leader* Odysseus objects that the men will be unable to endure the battle if they fast. Achilles remains adamant to the end and refuses to eat although he allows the others to partake before battle. Homer thus turns the fast into a statement about Achilles' determination which has now reached unreasonable proportions. Still the gods secretly fill the hero with nectar and ambrosia in order to sustain the hero in the battle. After a brief description of the Greek army gathering for battle, Homer returns to the description of the hero: "and in their midst goodly Achilles arrayed himself for battle. There was a gnashing of his teeth, and his two *eyes blazed* as if it had been a flame of fire." Cf. n. 306 below.

[305] R.C. Dentan, "Eye," *IDB*; Ps 38:10; Job 17:7. Also T. Gaster notes that honey was a traditional folk remedy for diseases of the eyes in Egypt and later among the Greeks; *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (NY 1969) 454-455.

[306] S. Aalen, "*ʾôr*," *TDOT*, I 147-167; cf. Job 33:28. In the *Iliad*, darkness overcoming the eyes is a formulaic expression for death; cf. IV 461, 503, 526, and often. For the connection of bright eyes and life, cf. XIII 7. Achilles is described with "blazing eyes" just before battle and immediately after he has been given the nectar (Greek roots: "death over-coming") and ambrosia (Greek roots: "not mortal").

comes theoretically under the curse, he is marked by the sign of life and not of death: he sees light.

After the pursuit has been rounded out with the stock conclusion,[307] the plunder begins (14:31-35). The people rush upon the herds of the Philistines and eat them "with the blood."[308] When Saul is told that the people "are sinning against the Lord," the king moves quickly to rectify the situation by building an altar. There are now two transgressions committed by eating, and both stem from Saul's curse.

In 14:36, the king makes his one initiative in the story by proposing that Israel "go down after the Philistines by night and despoil them until the morning "light" (*ȭr*) The people respond without commitment, "Do everything good in your "eyes." Before Saul rushes off, the priest reminds him to seek an oracle of divine commission. Hertzberg favors Budde's suggestion that Saul must have initiated the action, but I find irony here. Having the darkness to cover him (in contrast to Jonathan's eyes of light), the helpless king forgets his piety of safety for the moment and trusts in the night.

Whereas the king was too slow to act after Jonathan's victory, he finds now that he is too quick (as in 13:8-15), for no oracle of divine commission is given. Assuming that some sinner is hidden among his forces, Saul summons the heads of the people and commands, "Know and see (*rʾh*) in what this sin is today," and to this he adds an oath, swearing to kill the sinner even if it be his own son Jonathan. No one answers the king! Saul then proposes to divide Israel with the people on one side and with himself and Jonathan on the other. The people answer, "What is good in your *eyes*, do." But clearly, Saul is a blind man in contrast to the bright-eyed Jonathan who is taken by the lot.

Saul calls on the prince to reveal what he has done, and Jonathan replies:

> "Indeed, I tasted with the tip of the staff that was in my hand a little honey; here I am, I shall die" (14:43).

Smith, following Josephus, finds that the words "express a heroic willingness to meet (death)."[309] This interpretation, I find, does not mesh with Jonathan's earlier condemnation of the fast (14:29-30). Hertzberg too notes the emphasis placed on the minuteness of the transgression, as opposed to the magnitude of the punishment.[310]

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[307] 1 Sam 14:31a; for the stock description of the extent of the victory, cf. Richter, *Richterbuch,* 263.

[308] 1 Sam 14:32; Hertzberg and Stoebe have sought to mitigate the sin of eating the animals "with" the blood by arguing that the phrase *ʾkl ʿal haddām* means only that the people failed to slaughter the animals in a place where the blood could be disposed of properly. McCarter points out that a similar expression appears in Exod 12:8 and argues that eating "with the blood" was a grave transgression. I concur.

[309] Jobling has expressed a similar position in "Saul's Fall and David's Rise," 370.

[310] In addition to Hertzberg's observations mentioned in the text *(I & II Samuel*, 117), Caspari would make Jonathan's answer a question**Error! Bookmark not defined.** – an unsatisfactory solution I find, but one which recognizes the problem. The translation in Alonso Schökel and McCarter with their use of exclamation points would seem to allow for an interpretation such as I have given, but neither comments.

Such imbalance is the raw material of irony, and a good storyteller could easily turn the Jonathan's expression of heroic willingness into an ironic, even sarcastic rejection of Saul's judgment with the tone of the voice. This interpretation also provides a rationale for Saul's strong rebuke of his son: "God do so to me and more also; indeed you shall die, Jonathan" (14:44).

Saul's interpretation of the oracle, which dominates the point of view, must not be taken seriously. Clearly he was refused the divine commission because he himself did not deserve it (as will happen again in 1 Sam 28). His misunderstanding has brought him now to the point of tragedy, but the people step in at this point and call an end to the nonsense because they recognize that Jonathan is the hero of the victory (14:45). This recognition is traditionally given to the hero by the helpless leader, but Saul, who was unable to pass the blind test of a hero (13:8-15), is unable to carry out the basic functions of the helpless leader. He is, in short, a blind and foolish king, a character who belongs primarily to the genre of comedy. However, there is little laughter here because Saul is in danger of becoming a Lear, a comic character in a tragic story.

This story deals with the fundamental problem of security in an uncertain world. Saul attempts to defend himself against the uncertainties of the future through the rituals of religion—through sacrifice, fast, and cultic oracle. This preoccupation with security immobilizes the king for both present and future action. Even when it becomes obvious what is to be done now, Saul is afraid to act without divine certainty. He cannot recognize what he should recognize, see what he should see. His is a piety of safety and not the piety of a hero. And because he is no hero, he is denied the "kingdom forever" just as he is denied the divine commission for the night raid.

Jonathan, on the other hand, portrays the true piety of the hero. He seeks security by trusting in the Lord who alone can guarantee the future. Thus Jonathan may be bold, and being bold, he is marked with the bright eyes of life. Ironically, neither will Jonathan receive the "kingdom forever" because it has been denied to his father. However, the story is more complicated than this. Saul himself is ready to deny the hero a "kingdom forever" by killing his son! Although tragedy is averted in this chapter, Saul will eventually bring death to his son, for the king's death will also become the prince's death. However, there is much to tell before this happens.

B. The Rejection of Saul as King: 1 Sam 15.

In 1 Sam 15, as in 1 Sam 11, Saul assumes the role of hero and wins a great victory over the Amalekites, but he is rejected as king by the Lord because he fails to carry out the command of the commission to "utterly destroy" (*ḥrm*) the enemy. Gunn, again as Saul's ardent defender, criticizes with justice those commentators who characterize the king as an unfeeling sinner,[311] and I can agree. Unlike 1 Sam 13-14 which moves with

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[311] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 42.

the grand gesture of comedy, though not always funny, this chapter mixes conflicting emotions and statements to produce a more realistic and subtle drama. Gunn pushes further, however, and argues that there is “no failure” on the king’s part “for which he can be held seriously culpable.”[312]

According to Gunn, Saul does not interpret the commanded *ḥerem* to mean that the enemy should be destroyed in the enemy’s country (Samuel’s interpretation); rather Saul in good faith brings back the enemy king and the best of the spoil in order to sacrifice them in Israel and thereby to fulfill the command. On his return, Saul finds that he has misunderstood the command and is rejected because of this misunderstanding.[313] Though inventive and provocative, I find that the interpretation submerges some clear signals in the text to the contrary; even so, the chapter is not simple.

The story is shaped by the traditional battle pattern. Being a war of redress,[314] the story opens with the divine commission and can be outlined as follows:

15:1-3	The prophet Samuel gives to Saul the hero-leader a divine commission to defeat and “utterly destroy” the Amalekites and their possessions.
15:4	Preparation for battle: muster of the army.
15:5	Journey.
15:6	Untraditional element: Warned because of their *ḥesed*, the Kenites depart.
15:7	The fight ends with the king’s victory.
15:8a	The enemy king is captured.
15:8b	The enemy is totally destroyed.
15:9	The enemy king is spared and killed.
	Plunder: “the best” of the animals are spared and not destroyed.
15:10-11	The recognition by the king’s deity is turned into a rejection of Saul as king.
15:12	The king sets up a monument to mark his victory.
15:13-31	The prophet informs the king that he has been rejected and not recognized by the Lord.
15:32-33	Death episode: the enemy king is killed by the prophet.
15:35-35	Conclusion: king and prophet separate.

While the breaks in the traditional pattern are clear enough, an analysis of this story

[312] Ibid. 56.

[313] Ibid. 46-48.

[314] Cf. Chapter IV, p. 56; other examples of the war of redress in the Bible are found in Judg 4; 6-8.

demands close attention to the background of the story, especially to its links with covenant which are visible already in Samuel's opening speech of divine commission (15:1-3).

Significantly, the divine commission contains no encouragement motif or assurance of divine presence and aid. Instead, the elements of the speech bear a marked resemblance to the covenantal formulary which D.J. McCarthy outlines as follows:[315]

1. historical prologue (also called parenesis) which "is usually much less concerned with recounting history as such than with justifying demands and persuading to their acceptance" (p. 12);
2. stipulations (also called demands) which define the obligations of the relationship, especially those which are demanded of the subordinate party (pp. 19-20); the form of the stipulations may vary; in the Hittite treaties, precatives, imperatives, indicatives and conditions (especially) are used to define these obligations.
3. blessings and curses which defines the consequences of keeping or breaking the stipulations.

As J. Muilenburg pointed out in an early essay on this form, the historical prologue and the stipulations are typically connected by "and therefore" (*wʿth*).[316] Lest any fall into mindless formalism, McCarthy issues an admonition:

> The covenant formulary is not a frozen form. Exhortation [historical prologue], call for fidelity [stipulations], sanctions [blessings and curses] are all expressed or implied somehow or other, but not always in the same way. Structurally the ideal would seem to have each element, exhortation, demand, sanction, clear and separate, but this is not always achieved.[317]

Using this information as a reference point, 15:1-3 may be outlined as follows:

1. *Historical Prologue*: And Samuel said to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel (15:1a).
2. *Stipulation*: Now therefore (*wʿth*) listen to the voice of the words of the Lord (15:1b).

   Messenger Formula:[318]Thus says the Lord of Host (15:2a):

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[315] McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*², 11-12, Cf. also J. Muilenburg, "The Form and Structure of the Covenental Formulations," *VT* 9 (1959) 347-365. Also K. Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in the Old Testament, Jewish and Early Christian Writing* (Oxford 1971).

[316] Muilenburg, "Covenental Formulations," 154.

[317] McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*², 273. Cf. also Muilenburg, "Covenental Formulations," 355, n. 2.

[318] Cf. C. Westermann, *Grundformen prophetischen Rede* (Munich ⁴1971) 71. This is a ubiquitous formula

1. *History*: I will punish what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way, when they came up out of Egypt (15:2b).
2. *Command*: Now [therefore] (*ʿth*), go smite Amalek, and utterly destroy (*hḥrym*) all that they have; do not spare (*ḥml*) them, but kill (*hmyt*) both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass'" (15:3).

The speech does not spell out the consequences of keeping or breaking the stipulations in terms of blessing or curses. Given McCarthy's admonition above, one may reasonably argue that the sanctions are implicit. Still the missing element is instructive. Samuel's speech is not a covenant formulary in the sense associated with Exod 19:3b-8, Josh 24, or 1 Sam 12 in which an enduring relationship is defined by broad stipulations. Rather Samuel delivers the divine commission to Saul as a specification of more general stipulations (15:1) which derive from the king's relationship to the Lord. Covenant, therefore, is the context of this chapter which is a narrative and not a legal document. As a narrative, 1 Sam 15 presumes what the covenant formulary is careful to define.

The covenantal context for the whole chapter is indicated, not only by the formal similarities found in 15:1-3, but also by vocabulary. The phrase "listen to the voice of the words of the Lord" is similar to the phrase "listen to the voice of the Lord" found in other covenant formularies: Exod 19:5; Josh 24:24,27; 1 Sam 12:14,15.[319] Furthermore, the same phrase with *bᵉqôl* is found also in 1 Sam 15:19,20,22a,24 (cf. 15:14,22b). Clearly obedience is a major theme in the chapter; yet one must also recognize that the theme is bound up with the stipulations of the covenant which form the larger context.

This covenant dimension reappears in 15:6 after Saul has mustered his troops and made his journey. The king warns the Kenites to flee; he does this because they "did *ḥesed* (steadfast love/loyalty) with all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt" (15:6). The term *ḥesed* is broader than covenant, but the phrase "do *ḥesed*" (*ʿśh ḥesed*) is bound up particularly with relationships defined by oath/covenant.[320] F.C. Fensham, as

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which may precede any type of message. However, McCarthy notes that the treaties and covenants typically open with the "presentation of the speaker"; cf. *Treaty and Covenant*², 1. The opening in 15:1a also carries out this function by introducing Samuel who anointed Saul as well as recounting the relationship between Saul and the Lord.

[319] The phrase *šmʿ bᵉqôl YHWH* is found throughout the Dtc and Dtr literature, but, as Weinfeld points out, it was already a cliché in the JE tradition; *Deuteronomy*, 337, no. 18a. The covenant vocabulary in this chapter is similar to deuteronomic phraseology, but it does not correspond exactly, nor is it drawn from a source older than the deuteronomic literature. I am inclined to regard the text as pre-deuteronomic; as for whether Dtr had a hand in the creation of the final text, cf. Weinfeld assessment referred to in n. 340 below.

[320] Gen 24:12,14,27 (the Lord and Abraham); Gen 47:29 (Joseph's oath to Jacob); Josh 2:12,14 (the spies' oath to Rahab); 1 Sam 20:14 (the covenant between Jonathan and David, followed in the next verse by *krt ḥesed*. As these examples show, the terminology is not just religious or even political (i.e. the terminology is not drawn from the covenant relation between the Lord and another, nor from treaties between kings). Both the religious and the political terminology is drawn from a more basic context of human

a result, has asked whether a treaty existed between Israel and the Kenites.[321] Whatever the answer to this historical question,[322] the Kenites are introduced into this story as an example of loyalty, as opposed to the Amalekites who refused "to do *ḥesed* " and now will pay the consequences for their actions.[323] Both the Kenites and the Amalekites, therefore, are more than realistic details; they have traditional connotations which are wedded to the covenant motifs and themes.

The story then moves along the traditional path of the battle narrative: Saul is victorious in the fight; the enemy king is captured, and the enemy army is destroyed. The tradition leads us to expect the death of the enemy king at this point in the victory as the capstone of the victory.[324] Instead we are told in 15:9:

> Saul and the people spared (*ḥml*) Agag and the best of the sheep and of the fatlings, and the lambs and all that was good, and were not willing (*ʾbh*) to utterly destroy (*ḥrm*) them; all that was despised and rejected (*mʾs*) they utterly destroyed (*ḥrm*).

Gunn admits that the *ḥerem* has not been carried out yet still he wants to argue that Saul intends to complete the commission by sacrifice and thereby fulfill the commanded *ḥerem*. This argument is based on an interpretation of *ḥerem* with "a meaning something like 'to devote to a god by destruction'—clearly . . . something akin to the notion of 'sacrifice' (*zbḥ*)[325] The position is problematic, and I must disagree.

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relationship. This has been widely recognized; cf. N. Glueck, *Ḥesed in the Bible* (Cincinnati 1967); also Katherine D. Sakenfeld, *The Meaning of Ḥesed in the Hebrew Bible* (HSM 17; Missoula MO 1978), esp. 77 for this passage. This relationship is also dealt with in depth in throughout Chapter VIII. While we commonly call these terms "treaty/covenant terminology," we must remember that the imagery (and thus the terminology to some extent) has been taken from its original context of personal, human relationships for use in treaty documents and in the covenant with the Lord.

[321] F.C. Fensham, "Did a Treaty between the Israelites and the Kenites Exist"? *BASOR* 175 (1964) 51-54.

[322] McCarthy notes that "one can explain all these facts by means of a common assumption that the Kenites were in fact Hebrew or at least very closely related to them and that the Hebrews recognized this; *Old Testament Covenant* (Richmond 1972) 80, n. 80.

[323] The Amalekites are a traditional enemy for Israel whom Joshua, Gideon, and David also fight; Exod 17:7-13; Judg 6:33; 7:12; 1 Sam 30. Cf. also Balaam's curse upon the Amalekites and his more hopeful prophecy concerning the Kenites in Num 24:20-22. The heroine Jael, it should be remembered, is also a Kenite (Judg 4:11,17).

[324] Josh 8:23-30: the killing of the enemy kings follows the taking of booty but precedes the building of an altar in recognition of the divine hero. Josh 10:16-27: the killing of the enemy kings follow the destruction of the enemy army. The same is true in Judg 4:15b-22,24 with a victory hymn following in Judg 5. In Judg 8:4-21, the killing of the enemy kings is preceded by the slaying of the perfidious men of Succoth and followed by the offer of kingship and reward to Gideon. In 2 Sam 18:9-16, Joab forces David to recognize the victorious army after the death of Absalom.

[325] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 46.

Unlike Yahwistic sacrifice, unclean animals and people die, but there are more cogent arguments.

Gunn bases his argument for a looser interpretation of *ḥerem* on the conflicting demands of the *ḥerem* in other stories of the Old Testament.[326] In view of this he argues that Saul and Samuel could have had a different understanding of what fulfilled the covenant. However, the shifting demands of the *ḥerem* within the biblical tradition[327] make it imperative that the audience take seriously the demands of the *ḥerem* established for this chapter in Samuel's speech to Saul (15:3), and these demands are spelled out with great clarity: "Utterly destroy (*ḥrm*) all that they have." The totality is emphasized by the elaborate polar statement: male/female, adults/children, infants/sucklings, human/animal, clean/unclean, big/little. This adamant insistence on totality sets the tone for this story which deals in absolutes—all or nothing, but not half, or even almost.

Furthermore, as Stoebe points out, *zebaḥ* is a communion sacrifice from the people derive the edible portion for themselves.[328] The proposal of a *zebaḥ*, therefore, violates the totality demanded by the Lord in his command of the *ḥerem*. The communion sacrifice, pious as it may sound, is but a pretext for plundering what was devoted only and totally to the Lord. This hidden motive of plunder is insinuated by the phrase "they were not willing" (*ʾbh*). The word "to be willing" may reflect a decision of the intellect or of the emotions, the latter being more common. Gunn, presumably, would argue for a decision of the intellect, a rational decision to save part for sacrifice. However, the return of the theme of totality is telling:

> Saul and the people spared Agag and the best ... and all that was good, and were not willing (*ʾbh*) to destroy them; all that was despised and rejected they utterly destroyed (*ḥrm*,15:9).

A rational decision?

The Lord then informs his prophet that he has repented of making Saul king, "for he turned from me and he did not carry out my command" (15:10).The phrase "to turn from after" has connotations of covenant which I shall discuss below. Although *hāqîm dābār* commonly means to carry out a command, its juxtaposition will the first phrase and the overall context suggests a covenant overtone, for *hāqîm bᵉrît* is a technical

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[326] Ibid. 45-46; Gunn cites N.K. Gottwald's summary of scholarship in "Holy War," IDB Supplement, 942-944, esp. 942.

[327] Weinfeld points out that in the documents of the peoples surrounding the Israelites, the *ḥerem* "is characterized by a vow taken before battle was engaged" as in Num 21:1-3; *Deuteronomy*, 167. The emphasis on the designation before battle is seen elsewhere: Josh 6:17; 8:2; 11:6. In these three cases what is to be destroyed and what is to be excepted is carefully defined before the battle. While this would seem to be a pattern, Num 31 is an exception.

[328] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 293; he cites R. de Vaux, *Institutions de l'Ancien Testament* (Paris 1960) vol. II, part V, ch. X.2. Cf. also H.J. Kraus, *Worship in Israel* (Oxford 1966) 118.

phrase for establishing a covenant, and *dābār* is a metonym for *b*^{e}*rît* "covenant."[329]

The issue now seems very clear cut, but the story introduces a complication. When Saul meets Samuel, the king contradicts the Lord and uses the phrase *hāqîm dābār*:

> I have carried out the command of the Lord (*hqym dbr YHWH*).

Does Saul blatantly lie, or does he believe that he is telling the truth? Gunn argues the latter and claims that the king is rejected only because he has misunderstood the command and does not realize that sacrifice is an unacceptable substitute; and, on the basis of this misunderstanding, the king is rejected.[330] I would agree that Saul does not lie blatantly, but there is a third possibility: self-deception.

Between the Lord's denial and Saul's affirmation that the command was carried out *hqym dbr*), the narrator informs us in 15:12 that "Saul ... set up a monument to himself." The similarity between the root meanings of *hqym* and *hnsb* indicates the importance of this third factor. The setting up of a monument is, of course, a traditional motif,[331] but the words "to himself" suggest the problem. As in 13:4, we find Saul again concerned with self-adulation which, in turn, suggests insecurity.

When Samuel meets the king, he reintroduces the theme of obedience. To the king's affirmation that the Lord's word has been set up, the prophet replies:

> What then is the bleating (*qôl*) of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing (*qôl*) of oxen which I hear (*šm*ʿ; 15:14).

The play on the words of the commission, "to hear/obey the voice of the Lord," is both clear and ironic. The king replies openly that "the people spared the best . . . to sacrifice to the Lord your God ... " (15:15). On the basis of this, Gunn argues that 15:9 ("Saul and the people spared ...") should be interpreted to mean that Saul spared Agag while the

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[329] For *hqym bryt* see M. Weinfeld, "Covenant Terminology in the Ancient Near East and its Influence on the West," *JAOS* 93 (1973) 190-199, esp. 197. For *dābār* used in the sense of "stipulation," cf. W.L. Moran's review of K. Baltzer's *Das Bundesformular* in *Bib* 43 (1962) 100-106; also D.J. McCarthy, "*B*^{e}*rît* and Covenant in the Deteronomistic History," VTS 23 (1972) 65-85, esp. 74-75, n. 3. McCarthy points out the parallels to *awātum* and *memiyas* in Akkadian and Hittite treaties; cf. also Exod 19:6; 24:3,8. For *dābār* as a synonym for *bryt*, cf. M. Weinfeld, "*b*^{e}*rîth," TDOT*, II, 257; cf. 1 Sam 20:23.

[330] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 47.

[331] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 193, n. 4. He notes the connection of the erection of a monument with the establishment of a "name forever" in the Akkadian literature and points out the hendiadys of *yd* and *šm* (monument and name) in Isa 56:5; for *yd* alone, see 2 Sam 8:3 (reading *lhṣyb* with the parallel in 1 Chr 18:3) and 2 Sam 18:18. I would also add the erection of a stone (*ʿeben*), as in 1 Sam 7:17 to commemorate the Lord's victory over the Philistines; perhaps also the stones in Josh 4:9,20 to mark the victory over the waters. Weinfeld has also discussed the erection of monuments to commemorate a covenant in "The Loyalty Oath in the Ancient Near East," *UF* 8 (1976) 379-414, esp. 402. The stones in Josh 4 are interpreted as such in Deut 27:2,4; cf. also Josh 24:26.

people spared the best; as a result, Saul tells the truth to Samuel in 15:15.[332] The point is too fine. I will grant that there is a half-truth in Saul's reply: the people are basically responsible for sparing the animals, but who then is king?

To defend Saul, Gunn again adopts the tactic of casting other characters in the worst possible light. Here Gunn characterizes Samuel as sarcastic and mocking before the befuddled king.[333] The text, however, suggests a more complex characterization. When Samuel first hears of the Lord's rejection, he is angry and spends the whole night crying to the Lord. Later in the text, Samuel, at the king's insistence, returns to offer the sacrifice with Saul (15:31). And at the end of the story, the narrator reports that "Samuel grieved over Saul" (15:35). Still Samuel is a prophet of the Lord and must announce the hard judgment. Thus the text suggests that Samuel is caught between his emotions and his vocation. This tension is revealed in 15:17-19.

After cutting off the king, Samuel, in typical judicial style,[334] confronts Saul with a question which touches the central issue:

> Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? (15:17)

Because of his insecurity, Saul has allowed the people to have their own way (plunder) in direct contravention of the divine commission which Samuel recapitulates at this point. However, the prophet does not conclude with the Lord's bare statement of rejection. Instead, the prophet asks the terrible question "Why?":

> Why did you not listen to the voice of the Lord (*šmʿ bᵉqôl*)? (Why) did you swoop on the spoil, and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord (15:19)?

One could interpret these questions as part of the stock rhetoric of the judicial style. J. Harvey, however, notes that "why" (*lammâ*) is used rarely in the *rîb*, and in none of his examples is *lammâ* used with the negative "not" (*lōʾ*).[335] The negative suggests regret, and thus I am inclined to see the question as a revelation of Samuel's own emotions, a mixture of sadness and anger. The prophet would turn back the clock and start over, yet he realizes that the consequences must follow because the clock cannot be turned back.

The movement in 15:15-19 is repeated again in 15:20-23. Saul reasserts his obedience, but this time the prophet delivers the word of rejection. Gunn argues that Saul's reassertion in the face of Samuel's condemnation is reason to believe Saul's basic honesty,[336] and I have agreed that Saul does not lie maliciously. Still there is another

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[332] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 51.

[333] Ibid. 52.

[334] J. Harvey, *Le plaidoyer prophétique contre Israel après la rupture de l'alliance* (Bruges/Paris and Montreal 1967) 90.

[335] Ibid. 90. Harvey cites 1 Sam 2:29; Isa 1:11; 58:3; and he refers to Jer 44:7.

[336] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 48.

possibility. For Saul, compromise has become necessary to placate the people, and sacrifice becomes the ground of compromise: the Lord will receive the sacrifice, and the people will feast on the sacrifice, seemingly a most pious solution. Saul, therefore, does not tell a barefaced lie. He believes that he has a solution to his problem, but this self-deception is unacceptable to the Lord.

Samuel cuts off this pious compromise with religious rhetoric of his own: obedience is better than sacrifice.[337] The judgment brings the admission of guilt from the king:

> I have sinned (*ḥṭʾ*) for I have transgressed the commandment (*ʿbr py*) of the Lord and your words because I feared (*yrʾ*) the people and hearkened to their voice (*šmʿ beqôlām*; 15:24).

The verb "to sin" (*ḥṭʾ*) is not unknown in treaty literature, and "to transgress" (*ʿbr*) is a standard term for the breaking of a covenant.[338] However, the king's final reason is the key. "To fear," as I have pointed out, is an image of helplessness in the battle narrative: the reaction of a helpless leader before an enemy.[339] In covenant literature, "to fear" connotes the respect owed by a servant to his lord.[340] Both of these meaning collide in Saul's statement, for, by fearing the troops, Saul has shown himself a helpless leader in making the people his lord. Saul has obeyed their voice and not the Lord's. This is his sin: a sin of rebellion against his true Lord. As the Lord says in 15:10, "he has turned (*šûb*) from after me (i.e. from being my follower)."[341]

The consequences of breaking this relationship are spelled out in the curses, and, as Weinfeld says:

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[337] B.C. Birch makes 15:22-23 the central passage of the narrative; *The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy* (SBLDS 27; Missoula MO 1976) 100. Grønbæk, on the other hand, would delete the passage; *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 57-60. I have called the passage "religious rhetoric" because I do not see it as central to the story; still it has a function in the narrative; piety is answered with piety. However, if one lays too much emphasis on the condemnation of sacrifice, the coherence of the whole is unbalanced, for the problem in the chapter is one of obedience versus disobedience and not obedience versus sacrifice *per se*. The distinction is subtle. Sacrifice is used as a convenient way of almost carrying out the commanded *ḥerem*, but sacrifice is not offered with complete disregard to obedience (Saul hopes that it will be seen as obedience), nor is a surfeit of sacrifice offered in place of obedience; cf. Isa 1:10-20; Hos 6:6; Amos 5:21-22; Ps 50:7-15. The central question in this chapter may be stated simply: Who is king? Both *ḥerem* and sacrifice are secondary issues.

[338] For, "sin" – *ḥṭʾ;* cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*[2], 112, n. 18; 303. C. Lindenhagen also cites the use of *ḫaṭû* in EA 157:13; 253:17; 254:12; the writer in the last letter describes himself as an *arad kitti šarri* (254:10-11); *The Servant Motif,* (Uppsala 1950) 24.

[339] Cf. Chapter III, p. 38 for fear as an image of helplessness.

[340] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 83, n. 6; he cites examples as early as the Mari letters.

[341] Compare with the Dtc/Dtr use of *sûr*; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 339, no. 2; esp. 2b. The opposite expression is found in 1 Sam 12:14b: *hyh ʾḥr[y] YHWH* , "to be after/follower of the Lord"; cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*[2], 215-216.

> The curse formula common to the treaties and the oath in the Hittite, Aramaic, Greek, and Roman documents ... emphasize(s) cutting off the man, his seed, and his house, and all he has, should he break the covenant.[342]

Saul, however, attempts to restore the broken relationship in a poignant scene with "turning" as a central image.

After admitting his guilt, the king asks Samuel to return (*šub*) with him, but Samuel refuses to return (*šub*) and adds that the Lord has rejected (*mʾs*) the king because the king has rejected (*mʾs*) the word of the Lord. When Samuel turns away (*sbb*), Saul grabs the hem of the prophet's robe (*mʿyl*), and the hem tears. The grasping of another's hem is a traditional image in the ancient Near East for submission,[343] and the image is found in the treaty of Abba AN:

> If he lets go of the hem of Abba AN's robe and takes hold of another king's robe, he [shall forfe]it his cities and territories.[344]

In this vein, Samuel interprets the action:

> The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better (*ṭôb*) than you (15:28).

Just as "Saul and the people spared Agag and the best (*myṭb*) and all that was good (*ṭôb*) ... and all that was despised and rejected (*mʾs*) they utterly destroyed," so now the Lord rejects the rejecting king (*mʾs*) and chooses the one better (*ṭob*); 15:9,26,28). The relationship between the Lord and Saul as lord and servant, has run the traditional course, and Samuel affirms that the decision is definitive, for "the Glory of Israel will not lie or repent (*nnḥm*), for he is not a man that he should repent (*nnḥm*; 15:29). This sounds definitive, but the same verb appears in 15:10 where the Lord says, "I have repented (*nnḥm*) that I have made Saul king." How is it that this God, who does not repent, repents? One may seek for logic to explain away this contradiction, but I fear that the explanation may dissolve the mysterious freedom of the Lord.

In 15:30-31, Saul implores Samuel to turn back for a third time, and this time Samuel turns back after Saul (*šûb ʾḥr*) to worship the Lord. This sympathy for the rejected king,

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[342] Weinfeld, "Loyalty Oath," 397.

[343] R.A. Brauner says that the "grasping the hem of a garment in ancient literature simply signified 'supplication, importuning, submission to a superior'"; "'To Grasp the Hem' and 1 Sam 15:27," *JANES* 6 (1974) 35-38; he also notes that the Old Aramaic *ʾḥz bknp* carries the notion of making an alliance (p. 38, n. 11), and it is equivalent to *sissikta ṣabātu* in ARM II 71 rev. 13-15. See also the footnote below. According to Weinfeld, *qrʾ mmlkt mʿl*) is a Dtr phrase (1 Sam 15:28; 18:17); following Weiser, he considers 15:25-31a secondary and of Dtr origin; *Deuteronomy*, 15, n. 5; 355, no. 10; A. Weiser "1 Samuel 15" *ZAW* 54 (1936) 1-28, esp. 5-6 = *Samuel* (FRLANT 81; Göttingen 1962). I would ask what is gained by the deletion? There is also Dtr phraseology in 15:19 ("to do evil in the sight of the Lord"). I willing to grant stages of redaction, but I fail to see how the layers can be disengaged from the story without destroying the nuance of the whole.

[344] McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*², 307, line 50.

together with Samuel's grieving in 15:35 and 16:1, creates a sense of pathos which preserves Saul's standing as a man. He could easily have degenerated into a straw figure, an evil villain, or a simple fool. Samuel's sympathy saves Saul from that fate. Furthermore, the Lord has rejected Saul not as a man but as king (15:10,23,26,28). Saul's lot is sad, even pathetic, but it is not tragic. Unlike Agag whom the prophet slays in the final scene,[345] Saul is still alive, and, as I shall argue in the next chapter, the Lord sends to the rejected king a savior: David. The tragedy will come with Saul's rejection of his savior.

C. A Positive Assessment of Saul: 1 Sam 14:47-52.

Between the two large accounts of rejection appears a short list of Saul's battles, children, wife, commander (official), and genealogy. This third picture of the king with its laudatory tone evokes the memory of Saul the hero in 1 Sam 11 and thereby adds a further complexity to the characterization.

According to Stoebe, the history of Saul originally came to an end with this "presentation of his undertakings and heroic deeds."[346] Certainly 14:47-51, taken by itself, conveys a sense of closure, and I have argued that a similar summary for David in 2 Sam 8 brings closure to the David-Saul narrative. However, the positive tone of this list in its present position fails to summarize 1 Sam 13-14 in which Saul initiates little and saves nothing. Furthermore, 14:52 which tells of Saul strengthening his army, undercuts the sense of closure and leads the reader into the next episode. Also the emphasis placed on the Amalekites as plunderers in 14:48, whether calculated or fortuitous, provides a link with what follows. Whatever the original function of the list may have been, it no longer provides a real sense of closure.

In its present position, this list functions as a buffer and, in that sense, a transition between the two larger stories of 1 Sam 13-14 and 15. Lists of David's wives and family along with other pieces of information serve a similar function.[347] As Gerard Genette

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[345] The death of an important person, especially the enemy king, is a traditional feature of the biblical battle narrative (cf. Chapter V, pp. 67ff), and it forms the conclusion of 1 Sam 15. Significantly, it is the prophet and not the king who carries out the execution; yet, apart from the bit of dramatic irony ("Agag said, 'Surely the bitterness of death is past!'"), the scene is strangely anticlimactic. The sparing of the king is an indication of Saul's unfulfilled commission, but the narrative focuses completely on Saul's subservience to the people. C. Grottenelli links Agag with the withholding monsters (typically serpents) because the Amalekites sought to prevent Israel from entering the promised land. This type of monster, he argues, was destroyed by dismemberment, and thus "Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal" (15:35); "The Enemy King is a Monster," 25-27).

[346] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 277.

[347] Summaries of David's family appear in 1 Sam 25:43-44 and 2 Sam 2:2 (wives); 2 Sam 3:2-5 (sons); 5:13-16 (concubines, wives, and sons). Samuel's death is announced as an information insertion in 1 Sam 25:1 in addition to 28:3 where it prepares the meeting with the witch of Endor.

observes,

> Summary remained, up to the end of the nineteenth century, the most usual transition between two scenes, the 'background' against which scenes stand out, and thus the connective tissue par excellence of novelistic narrative, whose fundamental rhythm is defined by the alternation of summary and scene.[348]

Genette, of course, is speaking of a summary of events between two main actions. The list in 14:47-52 does not provide this type of smooth transition; still its non-narrative character, which diverts the audience's attention from the narrative flow for a moment, creates a sense of passing time between the two main stories. Anyone involved in the history of a text must keep this observation in mind.

* * *

In conclusion: Although I have disagreed with Professor Gunn on many points, his insistence on a literary approach to Saul remains instructive. The comic performance by Saul in 1 Sam 13-14 is pathetic, and, in 1 Sam 15, the king's pleading raises the compassion of Samuel. The positive summary of Saul's reign in 14:47-52 adds a counterbalance to the whole, and the juxtaposition of these three stories creates the initial complexity of Saul's character.

Aside from the juxtaposition, there is also a movement in this section. In the first, Saul is denied the reward of "the kingdom forever" because he is a helpless king with no right to the hero's reward. The denial of the future is followed by the denial of the present in 1 Sam 15 where Saul himself is rejected as king because he allows the people to reign over him and thereby breaks his relationship with the Lord. This brings the

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[348] G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse* 97. These insertions of information do not fit Genette's definition of the classic summary as, for example, the summaries of David's victories in 1 Sam 18:5,30; 19:8 and 2 Sam 3:1. At times the insertion seems only a primitive technique for creating the sense of passing time, but a closer examination can reveal suggestive juxtaposition as here in 1 Sam 14:47-52.

traditional consequence of rejection by the Lord of the covenant. The movement does not carry the story to resolution; rather it provides the framework for new tensions which are taken up in the following chapters.

Chapter VII:
David the Hero: 1 Sam 16-17

Just as 1 Sam 13-15 is composed of three pictures of Saul as king, so also 1 Sam 16-17 presents three pictures of David as hero. Again the narrative logic is not strictly coherent; still there is a progressive movement in the story. The first (16:1-13) introduces David as the hidden hero; the second (16:14-23) presents him as the personal hero of Saul; and in the third (17:1-18:4), David emerges as the national hero. In each instance, traditional images are employed in order to designate David as the traditional hero.

A. David the Hidden Hero: 1 Sam 16:1-13.

The opening story records a miraculous event: a man holds familiar conversation with his God. After Samuel, Nathan dreams; Elijah answers the question of his God, and Elisha receives the word of the Lord, but none of those scenes creates the sense of ordinary familiarity between God and a human being. This fact can hardly be ascribed just to a movement toward historical writing, for much in the Elijah-Elisha cycle tells of miraculous. Indeed Samuel's miraculous conversation lacks the drama of those events in the Books of Kings; it has rather a sense of common familiarity from every day life, as if between friends. In this sense, the narrative is most realistic.

The conversation begins with the Lord chiding Samuel, if gently: "How long will you grieve over Saul now that I have rejected him from being king over Israel"? The humanity, manifested by Samuel in 1 Sam 15, is developed here through the prophet's grief and fear and fallibility. The Lord is also portrayed in human terms, and also set apart from the human by that fine metaphor: "The Lord sees not as a man sees, but the Lord looks on the heart" (16:7). This story is, therefore, a subtle blend of mimetic characterization and divine action made real.

The opening verses (16:1-3) are shaped by the traditional pattern of call and commission.[349] The Lord calls and commissions the prophet to fill his horn with oil and to go to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for, as the Lord says, "I have seen (*rʾh*) among his sons a king for myself." Samuel objects that Saul will kill him, but the Lord answers the objection by having the prophet disguise the mission under the pretense of offering a sacrifice. Again, deception becomes the weapon of the weak against the strong.[350]

This deception serves as the basis for one dimension of dramatic irony in the story: only Samuel and the audience know the true purpose of his visit. A second dimension is created by avoiding the hero's name which the audience knows from the tradition, but

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[349] P.D. Miscall has noted that this first section is "better termed a 'call narrative'"; *Workings*, 50. Cf. Chapter III, p. 42f for the pattern of an objecting hero: the leader calls and commissions the hero; the hero raises an objection or question; the leader answers this, and the hero accepts.

[350] Cf. Chapter V, pp. 75f.

the prophet does not.[351] Through this use of dramatic irony, the storyteller baits the audience, and to this he adds repetition and retardation in order to turn an old commonplace into a lively discovery for the characters and thereby into a piece of entertainment for the audience. Because of the art, the election and anointing of David becomes memorable.

The animosity between the prophet and the king (15:34; 16:2) is evoked with Samuel's appearance in Bethlehem: the elders tremble with fear. Samuel assures the shaking elders that he has come in peace to sacrifice and bids them sanctify themselves for this camouflage. The narrative now moves more and more toward a fine focus on the hero. The elders are conveniently left behind in 16:4-5, and Jesse's sons (three named and seven altogether) are systematically relegated to the background until no one is left. Then an eighth must be called to fill the void.[352]

The key word in the narrative, as Alonso Schökel has observed, is the verb "to see" (*rʾh*) with its derivatives and related vocabulary.[353] In 16:1, the Lord tells Samuel that he has seen (*rʾh*) among the sons of Jesse a king for himself, and when the prophet sees (*rʾh*) the eldest Eliab, he falsely concludes from appearances that the eldest has been chosen, but the Lord says:

> Do not look (*nbṭ*) on his appearance (*mrʾh*) or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected (*mʾ*s) him; for the Lord sees (*rʾh*) not as man sees (*rʾh*); man sees the eyes (*rʾh ʿynim*); but the Lord sees (*rʾh*) the heart (16:7).

An imposing appearance typically distinguishes the traditional hero, however this be described.[354] Hertzberg and Alonso Schökel note that the emphasis on the stature recalls the picture of Saul in 1 Sam 9:2; 10:23; to this Hertzberg adds the use of *mʾs* ("to reject"; 15:23,26; 16:1).[355] I would also add the Lord's criterion of the heart which recalls

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[351] The name of the hero has been carefully avoided in the previous references lest the secret (which everyone knows) be divulged (1 Sam 13:14; 15:28).

[352] The numbers "three" and "seven" are traditional numbers of completion. Stoebe takes the "eighth" as a lucky number; *Kommentar*, 305; he cites A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orient* (Leipzig 4[SUB]1930) 822; and also A. Schimmel, "Zahlensymbolik," *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen 3[SUB]1962) VI 1861-1863. In Jeremias' third edition (p. 664; the fourth edition was not available), the "eighth" is considered the beginning of a new series, i.e. seven plus one. This would fit with my interpretation: the seven, i.e. everyone who can reasonably be considered as a candidate, are rejected; instead one must look beyond the presuppositions of human expectation; one must look to the heart and not to appearance for the start of a new series.

[353] The verb "to see" (*rʾh*) in 16:1,6,7; "appearance" (*marʾê*) in 16:7; "good appearance," i.e. "handsome" (*ṭob rŏʾî*) in 16:12; "eyes" in 16:7,12; and the verb "to look" (*nbṭ*) in 16:7.

[354] Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 99: "A hero's appearance reveals his essential superiority and difference from other men."

[355] Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 138. Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 91. McCarter, *I Samuel*, 277. Miscall, *Workings*, 52.

the prophetic statement of 1 Sam 13:14 where Saul is rejected in favor of a man after the Lord's own heart.[356] Thus the text suggests that Samuel mistakes Jesse's eldest for a new Saul whom the Lord rejects.

Once the Lord has made his point, the story proceeds with the thrice returning phrase: "The Lord has not chosen him/them." With no son left to choose, Samuel asks if there is not another, and Jesse replies that the youngest son is with the sheep. Unknowingly, the father has described the future hero and king. Often in traditional literature, the hero is the youngest son where other brothers are a factor,[357] and the shepherd is a pervasive image throughout the ancient Near East for the king.[358] When the boy appears, the storyteller, true to the traditional impulse, provides the youth with a hero's description in spite of the Lord's prescription to the contrary: "Now he was ruddy with beautiful eyes and good looks" (16:12). As Alonso Schökel notes, the emphasis lies not on physical prowess but upon beauty, and the aesthetic is used to mirror the quality of David's heart.[359]

The narrative finishes quickly under the direction of the Lord: "Arise, anoint him; for this is he" (16:12). The anointing brings the spirit of the Lord upon David whose name now appears.[360] As noted above, the coming of the Lord's spirit in Judges and 1 Sam 11 functions in a specific battle as a sign of divine commission to the charismatic hero.[361]

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[356] As Weinfeld points out in *Deuteronomy*, 77, the imagery of the heart is found in Assyrian literature where it is bound up with loyalty and love. In the Bible, this is true especially for David; cf. Chapter VI, p. 88.

[357] Jason, "David and Goliath," 41. S. Thompson, *The Folktale*, 125-130; *Motif-Index*, L 10. Marduk also is the last of the gods born in the *Enūma eliš*, I 79-82; IV 73-74. In *Esarhaddon*, I 8, the hero describes himself as "younger than my older brothers"; this awkward phrase would seem to be an attempt to express the traditional motif since Akkadian has no superlative form; cf. W. von Soden, *Grundriß der Akkadischen Grammatik* (AnOr 33/47; Rome 1969) sect. 68. Also Nestor was the youngest when he slew Ereuthalion "the tallest ... and strongest man" whom he ever killed (*Iliad* VII 150-156).

[358] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 305. He cites K.H. Bernhardt, *Das Problem der altorientalischen Königsideologie im Alten Testament*, VTS 8 (1961) 68, n.1, also p. 84. See also S. Mowinkel, "General Oriental and Specific Israelite Elements in the Israelite Conception of the Sacral Kingdom," *La Regalità Sacra/The Sacral Kingship*: Contributions to the Eighth International Congress for the History of Religions in Rome 1953 (Leiden 1959) 283-293, esp. 288. In the Old Testament, cf. esp. 1 Kgs 22:17; also 2 Sam 5:2 and 7:8 where shepherd and *nāgîd* are combined. As Weiser says, the story of David moves from his being shepherd in the fields to being shepherd of the people; "Legitimation," 347. The designation of David as shepherd is, therefore, an oblique designation of the boy as king. For examples in the ancient Near East, cf. *Ee* VI 108; VII 72; *Legend of Naram-Sin* 91-92; *Esarhaddon* I 4.

[359] Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 91. Bowra points out that physical beauty is part of the hero's traditional attributes; *Heroic Poetry*, 99. Miscall, on the other hand, finds that the phrase "serves no apparent function in the story of David although there are references to the theme in 16:12 and 17:42, Goliath's first impression of David"; *Workings*, 55. The statement points up the problem of a purely synchronic reading abstracted from the tradition of the narrative.

[360] Note the recurring consonantal sounds: "*š*" and "ḥ" for the oil and the spirit.

[361] Cf. Chapter V, p. 71.

In 1 Sam 16:13 for David, and also in 1 Sam 10:1-16 for Saul, the coming of the spirit follows the secret anointing as the confirmation of an enduring office. The transference of this motif to the kings links them with the tradition of the Judges. Even so, the episodes of anointing and possession by the spirit are soon followed by a battle narrative for Saul, Jehu, and, with some adjustment, Esarhaddon.[362] After the victories, the kingship of Saul, Jehu, and Esarhaddon are (re)confirmed. For David, however, the actual reward of kingship is long delayed. Still the secret anointing and the possession by the Lord's spirit articulate the basic presupposition of the whole story: David, chosen by the Lord, will be king. The audience knows this. The characters in the story must discern this hidden reality as the traditional signs of the hero appear. The characters then rise or fall according to how they deal with this fact; for within this story, the recognition of David as hero and future king becomes synonymous with the recognition of reality, the will of the Lord.

B. David the Personal Hero of Saul: 1 Sam 16:14-23

The scene shifts in 1 Sam 16:14-21 from Bethlehem to the court of Saul; still the two episodes are linked by the "spirit of the Lord" which has come upon David in 16:13 and now turns away (*sûr*) from Saul, the rejected king, in 16:14. In place of this spirit comes another: "an evil spirit from the Lord." Gunn lays the stress on the phrase "from the Lord" and interprets it as the returning "theme of Saul the victim ... poisoned by *YHWH* one might say."[363] Again the Lord becomes Gunn's villain. Greßmann, on the other hand, points out that psychological disturbance in the ancient Near East is attributed to "evil spirits" and that in Israel all spirits, good or evil, emanate from the Lord. For Greßmann, therefore, the phrase "from the Lord" accounts for nothing, and he interprets Saul's disturbance in 1 Sam 10:10-11 as melancholy, madness, or persecution complex . . . apparently a pathological consequence of the severe emotional shock which accompanied the prophetic ecstasy.[364]

Admittedly, this storyteller is concerned with realistic emotions and motives. However, Greßmann, in his search for literal realism, misses the symbolic dimension of the narrative which Gunn distorts.

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[362] Saul defeats Nahash in 1 Sam 11, and David defeats Goliath in 1 Sam 17. These victories take place after a public election of the hero (1 Sam 10:17-25 for Saul and 16:14-23 for David). This pattern is found also in 2 Kgs 9: The secret anointing of Jehu (without the coming of the spirit) is recognized publicly by his men and is followed by a victory over Joram which allows Jehu to take up his kingship. Pushing further afield, the story of Esarhaddon's fight for the throne begins with the public designation of the hero as heir to the throne by the king, the people and the gods; this designation is validated by Esarhaddon's victory over his rebel brothers which then allows him to enter the royal city and claim his kingship; *Esarhaddon*, I 8-22.

[363] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 78.

[364] Greßmann, Geschichtsschreibung, 73.

In my opinion, the interpretation of the "evil spirit" must navigate between Gunn's portrayal of the Lord as an evil manipulator and Greßmann's purely psychological interpretation. The reference point for the "evil spirit" lies in the same verse: "the spirit of the Lord" which has turned away because Saul has been rejected as king. The torment, inflicted by the "evil spirit from the Lord," reveals the vulnerability of the helpless king; and this causes Saul and his court to realize the king's need for help, his need for a personal hero beyond himself.

When Saul's servants confront the king with this need, he commissions them to seek out a musician to restore his peace. One of the servants then says:

> Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite
>
> who knows (how) to play (a stringed instrument),
>
> > a man of valor (*gibbôr ḥayil*),
> >
> > a man of war (*ʾîš milḥāmâ*),
> >
> > skillful of words (*nᵉbôn dābār*),
> >
> > a man of form/shape (*ʾîš tōʾar*),
> >
> > and the Lord is with him (*YHWH ʿimmô*)

This description of David has caused some consternation among biblical scholars because this description of a battle hero is inappropriate for a shepherd boy who only becomes Saul's armor-bearer.[365] This problem is solved best by attributing the description to the traditional impulse which causes the storyteller to abandon the narrative logic in order to describe the hero in all his glory, and the description is all the more effective because it is made through the mouth of another.

E.R. Curtius has argued that the ideal of the Homeric hero is a fusion of youthful prowess and thoughtful old age, a fusion of Achilles and Nestor who, respectively, manifest the virtues of courage and wisdom. According to Curtius, Homer brings together both virtues only in Odysseus; and the ideal persists through Virgil into the Middle Ages.[366] The ideal, however, is both older and broader than the Homeric formulation. During the fight with Tiamat, Marduk is called "the wisest of the gods" (*Ee*

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[365] Von Rad attempts to solve the problem by calling the list a *Kalokagathia*, an enumeration of the accomplishments expected of a young man from the class of "free landowners" during the Solomonic era; *Heilige Krieg*, 41. Although von Rad does not say so, his observation would seem to be influenced by ideals of education in Athens during the fifth century B.C. That ideal, it should be remembered, was an attempt to produce the ideal propounded by Homer who was the centerpiece of the education. J.T. Willis takes a different tack and argues that the description of David, like other elements in 1 Sam 16-18, anticipates the narrative to come. In general, I can agree that the author is laying foundations for what is to come, but I am not convinced that this is as complexly articulated as Willis argues; "The Function of Comprehensive Anticipatory Redactional Joints in 1 Sam 16-18," *ZAW* 85 (1973) 294-314.

[366] E.R. Curtius, "Chapter 9: Heroes and Rulers," *European Literature and the Later Middle Ages* (Bolingen Series 36; NY 1953) 167-182, esp. 170-173.

IV 94). Gilgamesh is presented in the opening lines of the his epic as a hero who achieves wisdom after a long and arduous search (*Gilg*. I i 1-5). Sinuhe describes the Pharaoh Sesostris I both as the consummate warrior and "a master of wisdom . . . skillful of counsel" (*nb s3t ... ỉkr sẖrw*; B 45-74). Likewise Sinuhe adds to the description of his own prowess the attribute of "skillful counsel" (*srẖw·ỉ ỉkr*; B 106). Physical and intellectual prowess, therefore, are a traditional pair in the description of the hero.[367]

David is placed among the strong warrior-heroes of the Bible with the phrases "man of valor" and "man of war."[368] His intellectual prowess is designated by the phrase *n^ebôn dābār*. *Nābôn*, with one exception, appears elsewhere with some form of *ḥkm*, "to be wise/skilled";[369] the ubiquitous *dābār* also has a place in wisdom literature.[370] I have translated the phrase awkwardly as "skilled with words" so that it may be construed either as eloquence or good counsel.[371] To valor and wisdom is added beauty (*ʾîš tōʾar*) which is a traditional attribute of the hero manifesting his interior excellence.[372] The last epithet, "The Lord is with him," is again from the battle tradition, for it is the statement of the assurance of divine presence given by the deity in the divine commission.[373] In the David-Saul narrative, this phrase recurs as a reaffirmation of David as the chosen hero and king.[374]

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[367] Wisdom in the ancient Near East is bound up particularly with the king; cf. L. Kalugila, *The Wise King* (Con OT 15; Lund 1980). The same is true for physical prowess, and together both yield peace and good order as articulated in the *Code of Hammurabi*, epilogue, rev. xxiv, 24-38; trans. Theophile J. Meeks, *ANET*[3], 178. The ideal of the warrior-hero and the strong king (hero-leader) are closely linked, for the traditional reward of the hero is often kingship. Cf. Isa 11:1-9.

[368] For *ʾîš milḥāmâ*, cf. esp. Exod 15:3 (*YHWH*) and 1 Sam 17:33 (Goliath); for *gibbôr ḥayil*, cf. Judg 6:12 (Gideon) and Judg 11:1 (Jephthah).

[369] Twenty times with *ḥkm*; in Isa 10:13 with *byn*. See also A.S. Rose, "The 'Principle' of Divine Election: Wisdom in 1 Sam 16," *Rhetorical Criticism, Essay in Honor of J. Muilenburg* (ed. J.J. Jackson)(Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 1; Pittsburg 1974) 43-67, esp. 62-64. However, I do not find that he appreciates the traditional motif involved in the statement; rather he tends to look upon this designation as a literal statement of fact.

[370] J. Bergman, et al., "*dābār*" *TDOT*, III 84-125, esp. 108-109.

[371] Stoebe rejects "eloquence" and insists that the phrase means "one who knows a good word to say, who can give good counsel"; *Kommentar*, 308. Stoebe seems to have overreacted to von Rad's suggestion of eloquence; *Heilige Krieg*, 41. However, eloquence should not be construed as beautiful but mindless rhetoric, rather it should be seen as a traditional function of wisdom; so Curtius, *European Literature*, 172. On wisdom and counsel; cf. Kalugila, The *Wise King*, 77-78. Note also the description of Judith as a wise counselor in Jdt 8:28-29.

[372] Cf. Chapter VII, p. 107 above.

[373] Cf. Chapter III, p.43; also Josh 6:27.

[374] 1 Sam 17:34; 18:12,14,28; 20:13; 2 Sam 5:10; 7:3,9. See also Josh 6:27 and Jdt 13:11. Grønbæk points out that the name of the Messiah in Isa 7:14 is the same, "Emmanuel," "God is with us"; Grønbæk, *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 78-80.

David's musical talent can also be linked with the accomplishments of the hero: an embassy from Agamemnon finds the Achilles "delighting his soul with a clear toned lyre," singing "of the glorious deeds of warriors" (*Iliad.* IX 186-189). While this completes the picture of the hero as the ideal man, music in the Old Testament is also connected with benign possession by the spirit of God,[375] and this must be recognized to appreciate the function of music in this story.

In folk tales, magicians sometimes heal with musical instruments used as magical objects,[376] In like manner, David, possessed by the spirit of the Lord, is called to drive away "an evil spirit" with music. However, David is not described as a magician, but as a hero against the enemy "evil spirit," and this suggests the pattern of battle and victory within the personal context of the king, for David rescues the helpless king and restores his peace. As a reward, Saul "loves" David and makes him the royal armor-bearer. The political and covenant dimension of love has already been discussed in Chapter I.[377] And this love along with a place in the king's court is a traditional reward for the battle hero.[378] David's position as armor-bearer, lowly but intensely personal, marks the beginning of his rise.

The dramatic tension, established by the spirit of the Lord "turning away" (*sûr*) from Saul, is resolved in the final verse:

> When a spirit of God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and strummed with his hand; and Saul regained spirit and was well; and the evil spirit turned away (*sûr*) from him (16:23).

The use of *sûr* to open and to close the story creates a tight unity. However, the storyteller also creates the impression of an enduring affliction with the temporal clause "when(ever) a spirit of God was upon Saul . . . ." Despite the overtones of battle in the narrative, the attack upon the king is not resolved by a single victory. The storyteller insinuates thereby the realism of emotional disturbance, yet Saul's state at this point in the story is not extreme. The king can recognize his affliction and can take positive measures in order to deal with it, i.e. he relies on David as his personal hero. Eventually, however, the evil spirit will return, and Saul will drive David from his court. Saul then will seek the hero again, but not as in 16:16 where David is sought (*bqš*) to be Saul's personal hero; rather the king will seek to kill the hero.[379] This lies in the future; for the moment, the rejected king has found his hero.

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[375] See 1 Sam 10:5; 2 Kgs 3:15.

[376] S. Thompson, *Motif-Index*, D 1500, magician heals with a magic object; D 1210, musical instrument as magic object.

[377] On the political and affective dimensions of "love," cf. Chapter I, pp. 3f.

[378] In 1 Sam 18:1-4, David is taken (again) into the king's court and receives Jonathan's love. Sinuhe says that the prince of Retenu "loved me; he recognized my bravery. He placed me at the head of his offspring when he saw my arms so strong"; *Sinuhe* B 107-108.

[379] For *bqš* as a key word in 1 Sam 19-20, cf. Chapter VIII, n. 431.

C. David the National Hero: 1 Sam 17:1 –18:4.

The story of David and Goliath has given rise to a large literature which has tried to solve the problem of contradictions in the narrative by source and redaction criticism. Contrary to 1 Sam 16:14-23 where David becomes Saul's armor-bearer, 1 Sam 17 presents David still as a boy among the sheep (in spite of an attempt to link the two stories in 17:15). One group of scholars, led by Budde, considers the two stories in 16:14-23 and 17:1 –18:4 to be two different sources.[380] However, this solution does not resolve an apparent contradiction within 1 Sam 17. Although Saul commissions David in 17:32-40, the king does not know the name of the boy's father in 17:55-58. Thus another group of scholars have proposed another demarcation of sources based upon the textual tradition of LXX^{B} which lacks 17:12-31,41,48b,50,(51), and 18:1-5. With these verses deleted, the remainder forms a more "coherent" extension of 16:14-23, for 1 Sam 17 then tells the story of how David, Saul's armor-bearer, defeated the Philistine. According to this theory, this original story was later conflated with another about David the shepherd boy who triumphs over Goliath.[381] While this solution has been more popular of late, Driver pointed out early on that the deletion of these verses did not remove all contradictions, for 1 Sam 17 derives its force from portraying David as a shepherd boy who conquers as a shepherd boy.[382] As a result, Driver doubted that the text of LXX^{B} should be preferred.

Heda Jason, who has recently analyzed the story of David and Goliath from the perspective of ethnopoetics, shows that all of the material can be related to the models of Propp and Skaftymov, even the apparent contradiction of Saul's not knowing the identity of the hero's father.[383] Following in her footsteps, I shall demonstrate that this story conforms to the pattern elaborated in Chapter III for the classic battle narrative. However, as Jason has also shown, the version in LXX^{B} also conforms to the traditional model/pattern.[384] Traditional elements, missing in the text of LXX^{B} are supplied by

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[380] Concurring with Budde are Driver, Smith, and, as Stoebe says, "most of the older" critics; *Kommentar*, 312, n. 4 & 5.

[381] Cf. Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 312-314 for a survey of opinions. While LXX^{B} provides the basis for the argument, scholars have not been content with the division in the Greek text because the Greek text does not totally resolve the problem of Saul's not knowing David's parentage (1 Sam 17:55-58). As a result, McCarter (*I Samuel*, 295-298) and Grønbæk (*Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 80-100) offer even more complicated theories of redaction.

[382] Driver, *Notes*, 150. Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 95, 101. The shepherd motif appears also in 17:20,28,34,40.

[383] Jason, "David and Goliath," 36-70. On Saul's ignorance of David's parentage, cf. Chapter VII, p. 122 below.

[384] Jason, "David and Goliath," 66-67. Although she says that "the Septuagint version fits the folkloric patterns better than does the Hebrew version"; she maintains that it would have been impossible to analyze the entire (Hebrew) text as a complete literary unit: if the passages absent in LXX^{B} were "a mechanical addition, a 'patch' or a 'secondary' story inserted into the 'main' story." In my opinion, Jason shows that the elements of the Hebrew version are traditional whether the result of oral or written

what goes before and after:

	LXX^B	MT
appearance of the hero	16:14-23	
threat and helplessness	17:1-11	17:1-11
appearance of the hero		17:12-30
call and commission	17:32-37	17:31-37
preparation for battle	17:38-40	17:38-40
single-combat	17:42-48a,49	17:41-51
enemy's flight & destruction	17:(51),52-54	17:51b-54
recognition of the hero	17:55-58;	17:55-58;
	18:6-9	18:1-4.

The traditional content of the various elements makes such an exchange possible and coherent, yet it is precisely this flexibility which makes this type of source and redaction criticism precarious. As a result, one cannot simply use the narrative logic of LXX^B as an easy criterion.

For the historical critics, narrative logic has served as a major criterion, the theory being that the individual sources did not contradict themselves. While I am willing to allow narrative logic as one criterion in the differentiation of sources, I am unwilling to make this criterion an absolute. As I have shown in the previous section, 16:14-23 has its own unity of form which is marked by *sûr* in the first and last verses. Likewise, 17:1 –18:4 has its own unity of form, based on the battle narrative. Both narratives are important for the building of the whole story: 16:14-23 presents David as Saul's personal hero, and 17:1 –18:4 introduces David as the national hero. The contradiction of David's two entrances into the court of Saul is subordinated to the traditional unity of each narrative. In my opinion, the redactor of LXX^B placed greater importance on narrative logic, as we would today, and, as a result, deleted the necessary motifs from the text in order to mold 16:14-23 and 17:1 –18:4 into a harmonious whole. This opinion is substantiated by Stephen Pisano in his text-critical study which shows that, contrary to the tide of recent scholarship on the Books of Samuel, the recension of LXX^B does not necessarily represent the better textual tradition.[385]

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composition.

[385] Stephen Pisano concludes: "LXX has sought to lighten what is considered to be an overloaded redundant or contradictory text"; *Additions or Omissions in the Books of Samuel. The Significant Pluses and Minuses in the Massoretic, Septuagint, and Qumran Texts* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 57; Freiburg Schweiz / Göttingen 1984). Cf. also D. Barthelemy, "La qualité de Text Massorétique de Samuel," *The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel*, 1980 Proceedings of IOSCS (Ed. E. Tov)(Jerusalem 1980) 1-44.

1. The Beginning: 17:1-11.

The story begins with the stock encampment formula (17:1-3). The storyteller does not provide a specific motive for the hostilities between the Philistines and Israel, who are traditional enemies, and this lack of specific motive reflects the fundamental conflict of two cultures which permeates the whole narrative.

The enemy's threat and great strength are presented in the person of Goliath. He is big, gigantic, even monstrous. His height of six cubits and a span, about three meters or ten feet, is the only unrealistic element of the story.[386] This monstrous size helps to link Goliath with other enemies of the mythic mode, e.g. Ḫuwawa. Even so, Goliath is presented otherwise as a man and not as a mythic monster. Likewise, his weapons and armor, though massive, are also realistic.[387] The Philistine threat, made explicit in his challenge to the Israelite army, is full of irony and bravado and introduces the motif of the enemy's false confidence (17:8-10). Thus Goliath is pictured as the embodiment of Philistine culture: tremendous in size and strength, technically better prepared for war than Israel (cf. 1 Sam 13:19-22). This point is made by referring to Goliath as "the Philistine," and lest anyone miss the point, the gentilic occurs twenty-eight times in the course of the story.[388] Goliath thus symbolizes his warrior culture, just as David will symbolize his shepherd culture.

A classic statement of the reaction of helplessness follows in 17:11: "When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were filled with terror (*ḥtt*) and feared greatly." Jason interprets the king's fear as

> a symbol of the people's weakness; the weakness serves to accentuate the hero's greatness, which overpowers the might of the enemy despite all obstacles.[389]

Without denying this traditional function of the motif, I would point out that Saul himself was once a hero (1 Sam 11; 15), but now he has been reduced to a helpless king, a significant point within the larger context of the story.

2. The Middle: 17:12-40.

The middle section also is shaped by the traditional pattern and may be outlined as

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[386] LXX^{BL} gives Goliath's height as "four cubits and a span." McCarter, who gives preference in general to the Septuagint, favors this reading; I Samuel, 286. I, however, find the reduction another example of the tendency of the "redactors" of the LXX^{B} to rationalize the text. Jason also seems to follow LXX^{B}, but she adds that "a round number plus 'a little more' is a standard formula for expressing large amounts and sizes in the ethnopoetry of the Middle East; "David and Goliath," 47.

[387] Cf. K. Galling, "Goliat und seine Rustung," VTS 15 (1966) 150-169.

[388] 1 Sam 17:8,10,11,16,23,26^{2},32,33,36,37,40,41,42,43^{2},44, 45,48^{2},49,50^{2},51,54,55,57^{2}; also in the plural in 17:1,2,3,4,19, 21,23,46,51,52^{2},53.

[389] Jason, "David and Goliath," 46.

follows:

	17:12-15	Description of the hero and his brothers (false heroes).
A	17:16	Enemy's threat: Goliath's challenge is repeated without response for forty days ("our" helplessness).
B	17:17-18	Commission of the hero by his father to bring provisions to his brothers and inquire about their safety.
C	17:19	Description of the general situation of war.
X	17:20ab	Hero's journey: departure and arrival.
C'	17:20c-21	Description of the general situation of war at the hero's arrival.
B'	17:22	The father's commission is fulfilled.
A'	17:23-24	Enemy's threat and "our" helplessness: Goliath's challenge is met with flight and fear.
	17:25-30	A report of the general call and reward to the hero who reacts with righteous indignation.
	17:31-37a	The hero's call and the commission by an objecting leader with blessing.
	17:37b-40	Preparation for battle and departure.

The adjustments of the traditional pattern can be traced primarily to the hero's character. David is described in 17:12-15 as the youngest son of Jesse. As pointed out above (p. 107), the hero is typically the youngest son where brothers figure in the story. Here the motif also serves as an impediment to David's action, for there is no thought of his following the three older brothers to war; instead the boy is left to shepherd his flock.[390] David, therefore, is physically too immature to hold a place in the army, much less to fill the role as the premier hero of the story, yet the contrast between big and small, between Goliath and David, will establish the ground for the distinction between appearance and reality.

Jason has identified David's three brothers as false heroes who go off to war but are unable to carry out the hero's task.[391] As pointed out with regard to other classic battle narratives, the failure of the false heroes, whether by their refusal or defeat, is used to deepen the plight of "our" side and to emphasize that only the hero is capable of meeting the match. In this story, not only David's brothers but all Israel fall into this category, for no one from the Israelite side answers Goliath's challenge for forty days (17:16).

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[390] As is generally recognized, 17:15 is an attempt to harmonize 16:14-21 and 1 Sam 17, but it fails to neutralize the difference.

[391] Jason, "David and Goliath," 41; she also discusses the formulaic numbers in this story.

One of the impediments to the hero's action, his absence from the battlefield, is now removed through the commission by the hero's father.[392] Jesse commissions David to carry provisions to the brothers and inquire about their health. The content of the commission is menial, and this underlines again David's insignificance while bringing the hero to the scene of confrontation. The storyteller alternates events concerning David with motifs from the opening section which serve to create a sense of passing time and building tension. The whole vignette is nicely arranged in a concentric construction which has been noted in the outline above.

The larger framework of the story is shaped by the major motifs and their repetition:

> enemy's threat: 17:3-10,16,23;
>
> "our" helplessness: 17:11,16,24;
>
> the emergence of the hero:
>
> > description of the hero: 17:12-15;
> >
> > his journey: 17:17-22;
> >
> > report to him of the general call: 17:25-30.

The storyteller handles the general call in a novel way. Instead of the leader announcing the general call and reward in an assembly of "our" side,[393] a report of the king's call is overheard by the hero. The storyteller is able to insinuate thereby that the general call has gone unanswered for some time (i.e. for forty days, cf. 17:16).

David then inquires about the reward and adds the hero's traditional reaction of righteous indignation:[394]

> Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy (*ḥrp*) the armies of the living God (17:16)?

The word "defy" is a key word for the whole story. In 17:11 Goliath "defies" the ranks of Israel, and Israel understands the challenge in like manner, as a defiance of themselves (17:25). David, however, shifts the focus to "the armies of the living God" (17:26 and again in 17:37). He is the only one among the Israelites who understands the true significance of the challenge made by this "uncircumcised Philistine." Goliath has not defied a human Israel; rather, as David tells the giant just before the fight, it is "the

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[392] Cf. Chapter III, p. 36 for the hero's absence from the battlefield as an impediment to his action. For the commission of the hero by his parent, cf. Chapter III, n. 148.

[393] For the general call and reward, cf. Chapter III, p. 39.

[394] The hero's reaction of righteous indignation is the complement of the reaction of helplessness by "our" side. This is characterized often by anger whether overt or implicit. As here, *Sinuhe* uses rhetorical questions (B 113-127); perhaps also Marduk in *Ee* II 110, depending upon the reconstruction of the text. For the motif, cf. Chapter III, n. 162.

Lord of Host, the God of the ranks of Israel whom you have defied” (17:45). Appearance and reality increasingly becomes the theme of the story and are taken up immediately by David’s brother.

Eliab, the eldest of David’s brothers, belittles David as a shepherd boy and accuses him of having “come down to see a battle.” David cuts off his brother: “What have I done? Isn’t that the point now”?[395] Eliab is trapped by the apparent motives and possibilities of this world, but David sees beyond to the reality of the situation. After venting his righteous indignation at Eliab, the hero inquires a second time, and the people repeat the general call and reward for a third. The repetition, a common feature of traditional narrative, delays the inevitable and emphasizes once again that no one has answered the call.

In 17:31, the people inform Saul of David’s words, and the king calls the hero. In the meeting between leader and hero, David takes the initiative and calls for the commission from the objecting Saul.[396]

hero’s encouragement:	“Let no man’s heart fail because of him; call for commission your servant will go and fight with this Philistine” (17:32).
leader’s objection:	“You are not able to go against the Philistine to fight him; for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth” (17:33).
hero’s answer:	David boasts of his battles against the lion and the bear, concluding: “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will deliver me from the paw of this Philistine (17:34-37a).
leader’s commission:	And Saul said to David, “Go,

[395] The first part of David’s reply is clear: “What have I done”? The second part (*weʿattâ hălōʾ dābār hûʾ*) has given rise to two interpretations. Driver translates and comments, “‘Was is not a word’? i.e. I merely asked a question.” McCarter continues this tradition; *I Samuel*, 300. Smith (ad loc.) finds this translation unsatisfactory because “David did cherish the intention, for which he was rebuked by his brother”; thus Smith translates the phrase: “Is it not a matter of importance”? He adds that “probably the Hebrew will bear that interpretation.” Though the argument on the basis of intentionality is weak, Smith’s reading has won support. Stoebe (*Kommentar*, 324, v. 29a) surveys the scholarship and translates as I have, “Verhalt es sich denn nicht so”? Such a translation becomes an extension of the hero’s righteous indignation. Driver’s interpretation makes it appear that Eliab is correct: David’s interest in the question is that of a boy and not that of a hero, but such an interpretation offers no basis for the intelligibility of 17:31 where David’s words are reported by the people to Saul. Smith’s interpretation, however, provides that basis. Finally, Miscall, in his attempt to explore the ambiguity and contradiction of the text, offers one interpretation which places great weight on Eliab’s knowledge, and this understanding fits into the themes of appearance and perception which Miscall seeks to develop in order to propose a negative view of David’s character. Miscall also recognizes the positive, “pious” characterization of the hero; *Workings*, 54-57, 62-67.

[396] For the hero’s call and the commission by an objecting leader, cf. Chapter III, p. 42.

and blessing[397]	and the Lord be with you" (17:37b).
preparation for battle:[398]	
by the leader:	Saul gives David arms and armor, but David, unable to move, rejects them (17:38-39).
by the hero:	David takes his staff and five smooth stones for his sling
hero's journey	and moves toward the Philistine (17:40).

Again the departures from the traditional pattern (rejection of the traditional arms) can be traced to the hero's impediment: David's youth, emphasized here by Goliath's prowess. The hero must make a grand argument for his heroic prowess (17:34-37a), and the arming of the hero takes a significant turn in the rejection of the heroic weapons. David, representing Israel, goes out armed as a shepherd against Goliath who represents both the Philistines and the heroic ideal with his great arms and armor.[399]

Some disparity between hero and foe is not altogether unexpected. With the exception of Achilles, the heroes typically face foes who are presented with an air of invincibility, underlined often by false heroes or an initial failure by the hero.[400] This air of invincibility heightens tensions and redounds ultimately to the glory of the hero. Still the warrior-hero is traditionally at the height of his physical strength, but David is a boy.

The contrast between the very large and the very small belongs more properly to the world of the fairy tale where the youngest son conquers dragons and giants.[401] These youths are inevitably provided with marvelous protectors, magic swords, etc. David, however, has no marvelous helpers. As a result, Jason places the story within the realistic mode rather than in the marvelous mode of the heroic fairy tale.[402] David finds better company with the weak heroes of the Bible who rely on intelligence and on the Lord;[403] for the boy, trusting in the Lord, wisely rejects the cumbersome, if heroic, arms of Saul in favor of the sling of the shepherd which he can wield. Even so, there is no

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[397] For the blessing by a human leader, cf. Chapter III, p. 43.

[398] For the preparation for battle, cf. Chapter III, p. 44.

[399] As Jason points out in "David and Goliath," 49, Goliath rather than David is portrayed as the traditional hero with his magnificent arms and armor. As noted above, David as shepherd symbolizes both Israel and kingship.

[400] False heroes are discussed in Chapter III, p. 40, and the hero's initial failure in n. 156.

[401] Jason, *Ethnopoetry*, 4.2.1, "Heroic Fairy-tale." S. Thompson discusses "The Dragon Slayer" in *The Folktale*, 24-33, Type 300 in A. Aarne and S. Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale* (Folklore Fellows Communications 184; Helsinki 1962).

[402] Jason, "David and Goliath," 61-66.

[403] For the discussion of the weak heroes in the biblical tradition, see Chapter V, pp. 75ff.

deception, a traditional weapon of the weak heroes in the Bible. David meets Goliath face to face, and the storyteller links David specifically with the warrior-heroes in the boy's report of his victories over the lion and the bear, traditional images of heroic conquest.[404] Thus David becomes an ironic vision of the powerful warrior-hero.

The story derives its force in large part from the tension of three elements. First, the fairy tale motif of the boy giant-killer appeals to the audience's hope in the dream, in the ideal. Second, the bond with the realistic tradition of the warrior-hero affirms the possibility of that dream and ideal within this space and time. Finally, the link with the weak heroes of the Old Testament underlines the hand of God in the action which makes the dream a realistic ideal.

3. The Climax: 17:41-52.

The climax of this story, more than any other in the Old Testament, reveals the presence of the battle tradition of single-combat in the Old Testament. Even so the marks of the biblical tradition are present:

17:41	The meeting of warriors.
	The verbal exchange:
17:42-44	the foe's false confidence, his insults of the hero because of his youthful and handsome appearance.
17:45-47	hero's indictment of the enemy and prophecies the outcome.17:48 The foe charges the hero.
17:49a-c	hero's mortal blow with a missile: stone from his sling.
17:49d	enemy's fall to the ground.
17:50	summary.[405]
17:51a	hero's triumphal stance over the body.
17:51b	the hero mutilates the corpse of the foe with a hand weapon: decapitation.
17:51c	recognition of defeat by the enemy army: flight.
17:52	recognition of victory by "our" side: shout, pursuit and great destruction of the enemy

[404] The lion and the bear are linked in other Old Testament passages (sometimes with other wild animals); cf. Isa 11:6-7; Hos 13:7-8; Amos 5:19; Prov 28:15; Lam 3:10. The killing of a lion is associated with other heroes as a sign of heroic strength: Samson in Judg 14:5-6 kills a lion without his parents knowing; Hercules kills a lion on Mount Cithaeron at the age of eighteen, and the lion skin becomes that hero's iconographic image. As seen in the palace reliefs from Assyria, the kings of Assyria enjoyed lion hunting as a royal sport; cf. W.S. McCullough and F.S. Bodenheimer, "Lion," *IDB*, III 136-137.

[405] This summary provides the narrative space which allows the audience time to assimilate the victory. A restatement of a victory can also be found in *Ee* IV 123-128 and Exod 14:30.

As noted at the end of the last section, David is identified with the traditional warrior-heroes, and here he carries out the traditional action of those warriors in the scene of single-combat, much like Marduk, Sinuhe, and Achilles. The uniqueness of the biblical story is found in the ironic content of the story rather than in the displacement of traditional motifs.

When the warriors meet, "the Philistine looked and saw David, and he disdained him; for he was a youth, ruddy and comely in appearance" (17:42). As I have noted several times above, David's beauty marks him as the traditional hero, but the foe does not recognize this. Instead Goliath focuses on David's youth, the appearance of weakness, and this becomes the focus of Goliath's insults and false confidence.[406] David's indictment of Goliath counters these insults with a definition of apparent and real power:

> You come to me with sword and with spear and with javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Host, the God of the battle lines of Israel, whom you have defied (*ḥrp*; 17:45).

This statement sums up the major theme of the story which has been carefully prepared by the continual contrast of big and small, strong and weak, old and young, apparent and real. The hero's speech ends with the prophecy of the outcome, a traditional element of the biblical battle tradition, which affirms that the outcome is not happenstance.[407] Indeed, the whole speech is filled with Hebrew rhetorical devices which drive home the central theme: the Lord is hero in the actions of David who becomes hero with the Lord.

The identification of hero and deity is a special feature of the royal battle narratives, and the royal overtone is appropriate for David. Already in 1 Sam 16:13, the coming of the spirit of the Lord binds him to the divine, and this is restated in the phrase, "The Lord is with him."[408] This phrase, the assurance of divine presence, is linked especially with the divine commission of a hero. Significantly, there is no divine commission in 1 Sam 17. The hero does not need it because he already has it. Instead, David himself delivers the hand-formula to Goliath, proclaiming that both the Philistines foe and army will be delivered into his hand and into the hand of Israel (17:46,47). The foe's false confidence is, therefore, by the true and well placed confidence of the hero; again the theme of appearance and reality.

The fight itself moves very quickly. There is no initial failure by the hero which would

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[406] For insults and the enemy's false confidence, see Chapter III, p. 47 and n. 164. For the "dog formula," cf. A. Rainey, "Morphology and the prefix-Tenses of West Semiticized El 'Amarna Tablets," *UF* 7 (1975) 395-426, esp. 408.

[407] The prophecy of the outcome is discussed on Chapter V, p. 78.

[408] 1 Sam 16:18 records the assurance of divine presence. Within the larger context, Saul's blessing in 17:37 strikes a note of dramatic irony because David needs no blessing, "The Lord is with him" (16:18).

be inappropriate here. Furthermore, the foe is given no chance to hurl a spear or shoot an arrow; also inappropriate. Instead, when Goliath charges, David brings down the giant with the first stone from his sling.[409] Then, after taking the triumphal stand over the body, the boy cuts off the Philistine's head, using the foe's own sword.[410]

David's victory is eminently realistic. Although the boy rejects the conventions of warfare, his sling is nonetheless a realistic and deadly weapon. By abandoning these conventions, David introduces an unforeseen factor which allows him to meet conventional strategy with the unexpected. What seemed ridiculous in the eyes of Eliab, Saul and Goliath becomes in retrospect a most intelligent strategy. The realism and simplicity of the solution are significant. No deity appears in the action either to assist the hero or to strike a first blow, as happens respectively for Achilles and Gilgamesh. The intervention of the gods for those heroes, as A.B. Lord says, shows them to be human and not divine, dependent upon powers beyond themselves.[411] Here David's humanity is in no danger of being forgotten because it is blatantly manifest in his youth. Furthermore, David does not point to himself or to the intelligent shift in his strategy. Rather the shift from the conventional to the unconventional on the realistic level is symbolic of the more fundamental shift from the apparent to the real, from spear and sword to the Lord of Host. Yet the power of the Lord of Host is not manifested in the story except through the boy.

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[409] A. Deem has argued that the stone from the sling sank into Goliath's "greave" rather than into his forehead; with Goliath lame, David would have been able to kill the giant with a sword; cf. "'and the stone sank into his forehead': "A Note on 1 Sam 17:49," VT 28 (1978) 349-351. The lack of any resistance by Goliath would seem to tell against this; furthermore the foe is typically killed by this initial blow in the rest of the tradition with the exception of Homer who, as Fenik notes, typically tells of a warrior wounded by "a stone or spear" and then killed by a sword. Homer's departure from the tradition allows the warriors to engage in a final dialogue (cf. *Iliad* XVI 830-861; XXII 331-360). *Typical Scenes in the Iliad*, 64.

[410] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 331, v. 39b; 333, v. 50; 336, 339. Stoebe argues that David carried his own sword into battle and cuts off the foe's head with that sword and not with Goliath's. Stoebe's interpretation is based on LXX^B which omits 17:50 in which David triumphs without benefit of a sword; also, according to LXX^B, David is already Saul's armor-bearer and "logically" would have had a sword. Thus the pronouns in 17:39 may be construed to mean David's sword and not Saul's. As Stoebe notes, the majority are against his interpretation. Ehlrich noted long ago that death by one's own weapon is considered especially shameful (1 Sam 26:8; 2 Sam 23:21; also Judg 9:54); A.B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur Hebraischen Bibel* (Leipzig 1910) III. Furthermore, even if one follows LXX^B, it is not clear that David had a sword, for a great point is made of God's saving "not with spear and sword" in 17:45,47 which are found in LXX^B. Finally, in *Sinuhe* B 140, the foe is killed with "his ax"; there "his" must refer to the enemy because the story is told in the first person. Interestingly, the later version in the Ashmolean Ostracon (line 54) reads, "I felled him with my ax." In my opinion, the later scribe has missed the significance of the traditional motif and, therefore, has given us a more "logical" reading.

[411] A.B. Lord, "Tradition and the Oral Poet: Homer, Huso, and Avdo Medjedovic," *Atti del Convegno internazionale sul tema: Poesia epica e la sua formazione* (Academia Nazionale dei Licei: Problemi Attuali di scienza e di Cultura 139; Rome 1970)," 18-19. For Hector, see *Iliad* XVI 712-725, 785-793; for Gilgamesh see the Hittite version of the fight with Ḫuwawa; *ANET*^{3}, 83. Athena does not strike Hector for Achilles, but she deceives the Trojan hero and returns Achilles' spear which goes astray in the initial attempt (*Iliad* XXII 214-231, 271-278).

The human and the divine are united in this narrative, united so closely that a knife's edge cannot slide between the two. The boy makes no distinction between his action and the Lord's The two are one. As a result, the triumph becomes a celebration of divine power made real through human power.

This is not a new insight. Michelangelo understood the fundamental metaphor of this story when he turned the boy into a Goliath of a statue which reaches to capture the ideal form of a man. The sculptor radically inverted the central metaphor of the story in order to restate visually the stature which David achieves in this victory. Michelangelo's ideal form, admittedly a Platonic ideal, reflects in its own terms the human ideal which David becomes for much of the biblical tradition. This youth, innocent of adult fears and conventions, trusts wholly in the Lord of Hosts and triumphs over defiant humanity through the union of the human and the divine.

The weight of this interpretation is not too great for a story which is building on the tradition of the cosmic struggle seen in the *Enūma eliš*. Goliath, however, is no mythic force of chaos; rather he represents the tangible chaos of this world, and he is all the more menacing because his uncircumcised defiance is part of this world. David meets this chaos within the confines of this world, but the hero's view of reality does not exclude the Lord of Host; on the contrary, reality is precisely the union of the human and the divine within this world. For David, it is no longer necessary to re-enter the garden in order to recover the ideal.

4. The Denouement: 1 Sam 17:53 – 18:4.

After the destruction of the enemy army and the return journey, Israel plunders the Philistine camp:

And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put the armor in his tent (17:53-54).

The foe's armor is the battle hero's traditional share of the plunder.[412] Likewise, the bodies of the slain are trophies of war and are carried back to the hero's town or camp as a sign of victory.[413] The mention of Jerusalem introduces the theme of David's kingship which flows in part from his role as national hero. Yet Jerusalem and the recognition of David as king lies in the future.

The storyteller begins the king's recognition of the hero with a flashback: as David goes out to meet Goliath, Saul turns to Abner his commander and asks about the identity of the boy's father. Saul's ignorance of David's parentage underlines once again the boy's insignificance, and this produces the vivid scene in which the boy, "with the head of

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[412] For armor as the hero's share of plunder, see Chapter III, p. 49, n. 170.

[413] Cf. 1 Sam 31:9-10; see Hector's threat in the *Iliad* XVI 836; Achilles carries off the body of Hector but returns it to Priam as a sign of his humanity (*Iliad* XXII, XXIV.

the Philistine in his hand," appears before the king and announces, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." As Jason notes, the dragon-slayers of the heroic fairy tales traditionally bring back the head as a sign of their victory, and here David brings the head of Goliath with him to meet Saul in the scene of recognition.[414] The boy is not given the rewards promised in 17:25 (riches, princess, and free house); rather they are held in abeyance for the moment and are used to bind this story with 1 Sam 18. Instead Saul makes David a part of his court (18:2), a reward similar to the one received by David in 16:21-22.

The recognition of David by Saul (17:55-58; 18:2) alternates with the recognition by Jonathan (18:1,3-4). As B. Fenik in his analysis of the *Iliad* has pointed out, alternation is a traditional technique used to create a sense of simultaneous action.[415] The technique can be seen at work earlier in the middle section of this story (17:12-24) where scenes about David, Goliath, and the armies alternate in order to suggest simultaneous action taking place in Bethlehem and on the battlefield. In 17:55 –18:4, the alternation suggests the immediacy of Jonathan's reaction to the hero's victory.

From the prince, David receives love (18:1,3-4), just as he received Saul's love in 16:21. A full discussion of this I leave for the next chapter, yet I would point out here the significance of the robe which Jonathan gives to David as a primarily sign of their covenant. A number of scholars, noting the connection of robe (*mʿyl*) with royalty, interpret this divestiture as a symbolic gift of succession to the hero.[416] This

[414] 1 Sam 17:57; the severed head functions as a proof of victory also in Jdt 13:15-17. As for Saul's ignorance of David's parentage, Jason notes that it is typical for the hero in the heroic fairy tale to reach "the father of the king's daughter unrecognized"; "David and Goliath," 44-45. An example of this motif can be found in the Egyptian story of "The Doomed Prince," 6,5-10. There the question also concerns the identity of the hero's parent, and the motif is crucial for the plot. When the hero is identified as the son of an Egyptian charioteer, the father of the princess goes into a rage, refuses to hand over his daughter in marriage, and orders the hero killed. Eventually, all is set right because the father, on seeing the hero, recognizes that young man's worth although the hero's real identity as the son of the pharaoh is never revealed. Before arguing that the motif once had a more prominent role in the tradition of David and Goliath, it is wise to remember that every story does not always develop all the possibilities of a motif.

[415] The shifting back and forth between Saul and Jonathan is an unsophisticated technique for indicating simultaneous action. Fenik lists two typical ways of handling simultaneous action in the *Iliad*: 1) "the action that is interrupted is resumed at exactly the same point where it left off, without any time having elapsed; cf. V 319-330; XIII 39-136; XV 666-684"; 2) "the action continues to move forward as we proceed from one part of the scene to the other; cf. V 663-698; XIII 402-424;" *Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad: Studies in Narrative Technique of Homeric Battle Descriptions* (Hermes Einzelschriften 21; Wiesbaden 1968), 37-38. A good example of the first pattern may be found in 2 Sam 13:37-39. The action in 1 Sam 17:55 – 18:4 conforms basically to the second pattern with the exception of 17:55-56 which provides a flashback to the time before the fight scene with 17:57 picking up the action of 17:54. 37-38). Fenik also describes another technique in which the time required for one action to be completed is filled by something else that goes on simultaneously (ibid. 109).

[416] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 34, 39. McCarter indicates that this has been pointed out by earlier scholars and cites J. Morgenstern, "David and Jonathan," *JBL* 78 (1959) 322-325, esp. 322. The implications here for Jonathan, the heir apparent, are taken up in the next chapter.

interpretation fits with the tradition of the battle narrative in which the hero receives kingship as the reward for his victory. Still the robe is only a foreshadowing of the future. David is not yet king, and much lies between the portent and its fulfillment.

* * *

The three pictures in 1 Sam 16-17 build a picture of David as hero and future king from traditional motifs and patterns. The story of David and Goliath is in many respects the most traditional battle narrative in the Bible, yet I have sought to elucidate the uniqueness of that story in its vision of appearance and reality. Only the most banal story is just a traditional story. To discover a story's link with the tradition is only the first step, and for the battle narrative, this is not a big step because of the pervasiveness of the genre. People do not need to read such a discourse as I have produced in order to grasp what has been discussed above. If it were otherwise, this story would not be one of the most widely known stories in the biblical corpus. Still a precise understanding of the relation of 1 Sam 17 to the battle tradition helps to set the story's uniqueness into relief.

The story in 16:14-23 is likewise a traditional battle narrative, but one which has been moved from the public realm of national conflict to the private realm of inter-personal conflict. There David becomes Saul's personal hero, turning away "an evil spirit from the Lord." This narrative, both more complex and more mimetic, prepares the way for the major conflict of the whole which will end in tragedy. Yet the tragedy does not divert the whole from reaching the end already established in 16:1-13. David has been chosen by the Lord to succeed Saul as king, and for David the story will obtain the traditional reward: He will become king.

Chapter VIII:
Hero, Lord, and Friend: 1 Sam 18-20; 22

The momentum, generated by the story of David and Goliath, moves forward in 1 Sam 18 with a series of battle reports recounting David's continuing victories and mounting success (*škl*).[417] Initially Saul recognizes the hero's victory by appointing him to a new and more exalted position, but quickly Saul's jealousy and hostility raise a wall of alienation between king and hero.

A. Alienation and Reconciliation as a Traditional Pattern

The story of alienation between David and Saul is not a unique one; rather it is a traditional pattern as A.B. Lord has pointed out.

> The pattern of Bagdad, and of Marko and Musa, and of many, many other songs in oral traditions is a simple one. A hero is alienated from his overlord through treachery or misunderstanding and is withdrawn or withdraws. The overlord gets into trouble, in part at least, if not wholly, because of his alienating the hero. The hero is brought back, saves his overlord, and there is reconciliation.[418]

As the classic example, Lord cites the *Iliad*. Broadly speaking, Agamemnon, the leader of the Greeks, alienates the hero Achilles by taking from him Briseis who had been promised to Patroclus as a bride. Achilles withdraws the battle, and the Greek fortunes wane. With the death of Patroclus, the hero is reconciled with Agamemnon and wins the great victory over Hector whose death symbolizes the fall of Troy. This simplified summary may be outlined as follows:

A alienation of hero and leader,

B withdrawal of the hero from the battle,

C decline of "our" fortunes,

A' reconciliation of hero and leader,

B' return of the hero to the battle,

C' victory.

The story of Jephthah, though minuscule in comparison, contains the same pattern (Judg 11:1-11). The two key motifs are alienation and reconciliation; the other elements are gathered from the battle tradition.

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[417] Cf. 18:5,13b-14,27,30, and implied in 18:6a,19b; *škl* in 18:5,14,15,30; "the Lord is with him" in 18:12,28.

[418] A.B. Lord, "Tradition and the Oral Poet," 20; cf. also the medieval Spanish epic *Il mio Cid*. There the hero is driven off by his leader but returns and is reconciled after winning a great victory over the enemy.

The story of Bellerophon in the *Iliad* (VI 155-197) offers a variation in which the alienation between hero and leader is provoked by false accusation.[419] The leader then attempts to kill the hero by giving him a series of impossible tasks. When this fails, the leader mounts an army to ambush the hero, but when this also fails, the leader, realizing that Bellerophon is a true hero, effects their reconciliation and recognizes the hero with the traditional gifts: kingship and kingdom, princess and progeny.

Motifs of alienation and reconciliation also shape the Egyptian "Story of Sinuhe": The hero because of his fear or cowardice flees Egypt at the accession of Sesostris I. Although Sinuhe comes to enjoy great wealth and power in the Land of Retenu as the Prince's commander and son-in-law, the hero's happiness remains incomplete because of the alienation between Sesostris and himself. The story turns toward reconciliation with Sinuhe's victory over the Strong Man of Retenu. The pharaoh hears of this victory and invites the hero to return to Egypt where the two are reconciled. In the stories of Bellerophon and Sinuhe, therefore, the leader's recognition of the hero's victory leads to the reconciliation of hero and leader.

The *Odyssey* provides another variation in which the alienation between god and hero creates the basic tension of the story. Poseidon forces Odysseus to wander about the world for ten years because the hero had blinded the Cyclops who was under the god's protection. Under pressure from Zeus (Bk XVIII), Poseidon relents so that the hero may return, defeat the suitors, reunite with his family and take possession of his kingship and kingdom. Reconciliation is perhaps too strong a term for Poseidon's final stance; still the hero's return and victory depend upon the resolution of the god's wrath. The alienation of hero and deities also shapes Tablets VI and VIII of the *Gilgamesh Epic*.

In the Bible, the story of Jacob and Esau (Gen 25; 27; 32-33) and that of Joseph and his brother (Gen 37,39-50) recount the alienation and reconciliation of brothers. The twofold movement of alienation followed by reconciliation is a traditional pattern however it be incorporated into a story. Just as the hero's victory resolves the enemy threat, so also reconciliation resolves the tension created by alienation.

In the story of David and Saul, the pattern of alienation is introduced first between deity and king, between the Lord and Saul, in 1 Sam 13-15. I have argued above that this is tentatively reconciled by David who drives off the evil spirit and defeats Israel's enemy, the Philistines. In 1 Sam 18, this reconciliation breaks apart with the new alienation of king and hero. David's continuing victories causes Saul's hostility to grow rather than to abate. Although attempts are made to reconcile king and hero, the attempts will fail. The traditional pattern will not be fulfilled. History, it can be

[419] The queen falsely accuses the hero of attempting to seduce her. The motif is found also in the Egyptian "The Story of the Two Brothers," § iii; *ANET*[3] p.24. Also Joseph and Potphar's wife in Gen 39:7-20; the Greek story of Phaedra, Theseus, and Hippolytus told by Euripides among others. The story of Bellerophon, as Gunkel noted, also includes the motif of a hero bearing a letter calling for his death; *Das Märchen*, 132.

reasonably argued, lies at the base of this departure from the tradition.[420] The storyteller, however, presents us with more than the facts. The story grapples with the problem of failure. David, and also Jonathan, must deal with undeserved rejection, hostility, and infidelity. Saul must face his inability to bring about reconciliation. The storyteller treats this as tragedy and not comedy. Juxtaposed against these darker themes is the relationship of David and Jonathan. They subordinate the potential rivalry and alienation of hero and prince to their covenant which stands as a witness against alienation.

B. The Alienation of Saul and David: 1 Sam 18-19

From a literary standpoint, the David-Saul narrative reaches its high point in the mimetic characterization of Saul. This realism is achieved by twisting and breaking the traditional patterns. False resolutions, repetition of the irrational and the calculated mixed with understandable emotions create the subtle complexity of Saul's movement toward destruction. And several interior monologues presented in 1 Sam 18 insinuate the text's grasp of Saul's inner motivation.

1. The evil spirit returns: 1 Sam 18:6-16.

The roots of alienation have already been planted in Saul's bout with the evil spirit (16:14-23) and more obliquely in the rejection episodes (1 Sam 13-15) in which the insecurity of the king plays a central role. The break between king and hero begins with a logical fear. When David returns from battle, the women sing a victory hymn attributing to Saul the slaying of thousands, but to David ten thousands. Saul, sensitive to the slight of the unequal comparison, becomes "very angry" and asks in an interior monologue: "What more can he have but the kingdom"? The anger and the question suggest the complexity of character, the mix of jealously, fear, and more. The narrator creates a further sense of brooding with the addition of an iterative statement: "And Saul was eyeing David from that day on" (18:9). The image of the eye, which plays a key role in 1 Sam 14, also suggests interiority, and it contrasts with the positive use of the image in 18:5 where David's victories and Saul's recognition of the hero were "good in the eyes of all the people and also in the eyes of Saul's servants."

The subtlety of 18:6-9 is broken with the abrupt and violent return of "an evil spirit from God" in 18:10-12. In the earlier scene with the "evil spirit" (1 Sam 16:14-23), Saul was "tormented and terrified" (*bʿt*); now the evil spirit now causes the king to "rave" (*ytnbbʾ*) while David plays upon the lyre. The music, which turned away the evil spirit in 16:23, no longer soothes the king, for it is not the music which saves Saul, but the musician whom Saul now sees as a threat. With the spear, which becomes the symbol of

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[420] As pointed out in Chapter II, p. 24, Scholes and Kellogg have argued that the shift of the storyteller's allegiance from the tradition with its traditional ending to a fidelity to history brings about the breakdown of the tradition; *Nature of Narrative*, 40.

Saul's unstable and irrational grasp on power,[421] the king attempts to pin the hero against the wall, but David escapes twice. The narrator states the radical reversal of 16:14-23 in 18:12: "Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him but had turned away (*sûr*) from Saul. Fear is the traditional image of helplessness — a stock response for a helpless leader before a powerful enemy or the response of a defeated enemy before a victorious warrior.[422] Saul sees David as his enemy, but, in fact, shows himself to be the enemy, reacting with fear before the hero "because the Lord was with him" (cf. 16:18). David, who once saved the king from the evil spirit, is now perceived as the enemy.

Irrationally and ironically, Saul seeks to solve his problem by removing (*sûr*) the hero through the appointment of David as "a commander of a thousand" and thereby exalts the power which he already fears too powerful. The new commission, of course, leads to further success for the hero, "for the Lord was with (David)." New success brings new fear to the king,[423] but "all Israel and Judah love (*ʾhb*) David" (18:13-16). The political and affective dimensions of "love" have already been pointed out,[424] In this section, "love" is used as a recurring motif to underline the growing recognition of David as hero: Saul loved David in 16:21; Jonathan in 18:1,3; all Israel and Judah here in 18:16, and in the next section, the picture will be completed by the love of Michal.[425] This love provides the counterpoint to Saul's fear.

2. The hero marries the princess: 1 Sam 18:17-29.

In 18:17-29, Saul's daughters, Merab and Michal, are held out to the hero as rewards for victories over the Philistines, but in each case, the king's outward show of good will veils his secret motive to have David die "by the hand of the Philistines." Saul's secret motive is related in three interior monologues which provide the dramatic irony important for the tension of the narrative (18:17b,21a, 25b).[426] The other motifs are

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[421] *ḥănît* ("spear"): 1 Sam 18:10,11; 19:9,10^2; 20:33; 22:6; 26:7,8,11,12,16.

[422] On the motif of fear before the enemy, and that of the enemy's fear as recognition of defeat, cf. Chapter III, p. 49.

[423] *gûr*, translated by the RSV as "stand in awe," is used elsewhere to express fear before an enemy; cf. Num 22:3; Job 19:29; 41:17.

[424] Cf. the discussion of *ʾhb* in Chapter I, p.3.

[425] Michal's love is recorded in 18:20,28 of the MT, but the LXX attributes the love in 18:28 to Israel instead of to Michal; cf. Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 246, v. 28b for a discussion of the question; he accepts the MT.

[426] Hertzberg points out that if the verses relating to Saul's motives are removed from the text (18:17b,21a,25b), "the result is a complete self-contained narrative, in which Saul views David not only without mistrust but even with a degree of goodwill." Thus Hertzberg considers the verses in question to be redaction by a single hand; I & II Samuel, 159-160. Stoebe passes favorable judgment on this observation; Kommentar, 351, n. 33. I point this out as an example of the problem faced by source and

drawn from the traditional battle pattern:

Motifs	Merab	Michal
interior monologue		18:21a
commission and reward	18:17a	18:22
interior monologue	18:17b	
hero's objection[427]	18:18	18:23-24
leader answers objection	18:25a	
interior monologue		18:25b
hero's acceptance		18:26a
victory	(implied)	18:26b-27a
recognition and reward		
by the king	18:19 (denied)	18:27b,29
by others	18:20a	18:28.

In the first episode, Saul refuses to reward the hero and gives Merab to another instead. This breach of faith initiates a pattern of behavior which becomes typical for Saul. Still the hero's victory brings the proper recognition from another quarter: "Michal loved David" (18:20a); and this provides the impetus for the second episode and Saul's second plot. Significantly, Saul sends messengers to announce this second proposal. The king and hero no longer communicate face to face but from a distance through messengers, a further sign of the growing alienation between them.

David fulfills in double portion the difficult task set by the king: he brings two hundred instead of prescribed one hundred foreskins.[428] This time Saul is forced to hand over his daughter, but when Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal loved him, Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy continually (18:28-29).

The narrator constructs the realism by moving Saul from anger and fear to impulsive violence and then to secret violence. Now the fear hardens into continual enmity which

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redaction criticism of traditional material. By deleting 18:17b, 21a,25b, Hertzberg deletes the non-traditional elements of the battle narrative. The narrative remains viable because the traditional pattern is viable. However, this viability of the abridged text proves nothing about an original form lacking the menacing elements.

[427] David's objections (insignificance of his family, and poverty) are related to the unfulfilled rewards offered by Saul to the slayer of Goliath (riches, princess, and free house; 1 Sam 17:25). The objections, therefore, create a link, perhaps by coincidence of traditions, with the foregoing narrative.

[428] Jason discusses the motif of a hero carrying out an impossible task as a typical motif of the heroic fairy tale; Cf. "David and Goliath," 50.

will lead to open violence in the next chapter. All of the other characters recognize David as hero, and this recognition takes the form of love. The chapter ends with a summary of David's continuing success in which David receives again a traditional reward: "his name became very precious."[429]

3. David's helpers: 1 Sam 19.

In 1 Sam 19, Saul embarks on a path of open hostility marked by the verb "to kill."[430] Three characters assume the role of helpers and intervene for the hero: Jonathan, Michal, and Samuel. Their assistance forms a transition for David's victories to his journey alone with little human help (1 Sam 21-30).

In 19:1-7, Saul attempts to include Jonathan in a plot to kill the hero, but the prince confronts his father with the obligations of a lord toward his servant, and Saul "listens to the voice (*šmʿ bqôl*) of Jonathan" and swears that David shall not die. Although the reconciliation seems to dissolve the dramatic tension, new success by David (19:8) brings the return of "the evil spirit of the Lord." Again Saul seeks (*bqš*) to kill the hero with the spear, but David escapes (*mlṭ*; 19:9-10). The words "seek" and "escape" introduce a new pattern which will dominate the story through 27:4.[431]

Michal in 19:11-17 intervenes to protect the hero, not as mediator, but as an accomplice in a traditional and largely comic role. Having warned David to flee for his life, she helps him through a window to escape Saul's guards. With the household gods disguised as the hero, she tells Saul's messengers that the hero is sleeping. When her deception is discovered, Michal escapes herself by a further deceit: she tells Saul that David threatened to kill her.[432] The narrow escape, a traditional motif,[433] builds excitement and adds a sense that tragedy is never far away though somehow eluded.

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[429] For the name as a traditional reward of the hero, cf. Chapter XI, pp. 183ff.

[430] *hmyt* appears in 19:1,2,5,6,11^{2},15,17.

[431] Saul's pursuit is marked especially by *bqš*, "to seek," in 19:2,10; 20:1,16; 22:23; 23:10,14,15,25; 24:3,10; 25:26,29; 26:2,20; 27:1,4; also by *rdp*, "to pursue," in 23:25,28; 24:15; 25:29; 26:18,20; by *ḥpś*, "to search out," in 23:23. David's flight and escape are marked by *mlṭ*, "to escape," in 19:10,11,12,17,18; 20:29,; 22:1; (22:20); 23:13; 27:1^{3}; by *brḥ*, "to flee," in 19:12,18; 20:1; 21:11; 22:17,20; 23:6; 27:4; cf. also *nûs*, "to run," in 19:8,10; and *pṭr*, "to vanish," in 19:10.

[432] Cf. S. Thompson, *Motif-Index*, K 500, "escape from death or danger by deception"; K 525.l, "substituted object left in bed while intended victim escapes; Hertzberg notes the parallel in Josh 2:15 and 2 Cor 11:33 to the escape though the window. As for the *tᵉrāpîm* which is usually translated "household gods," H. Hoffner argues that the word is derived from the chthonic spirit *tapiš*; "*ôbh*," *TDOT*, 130-134, esp. 132. Without better information on their function in the culture, it is difficult to make a clear judgment about their function in the story. However, since the "household gods" belong to the realm of the religious, it is ironic (and even comic) that Saul's men should find these objects of religion in their attempt to waylay David for Saul who would kill the hero.

[433] For other examples of the narrow escape, cf. Exod 14; Josh 2; 1 Sam 23:26-29; 2 Sam 17:15-20.

The story of Samuel's protection in 19:18-24 turns on the similarity and dissimilarity of Saul and his men to the prophets. The word *nbʾ* (19:20[2],21,23,24) is used primarily in the Bible to designate the revelatory action of a prophet, which in the later period is connected mainly with the giving of a word. In the earlier period, however, *nbʾ* refers more specifically to the ecstasy in which the revelation and divine power are given and manifested.[434] This dimension can be seen in 1 Kgs 18:28-25 where the prophets of Baal scream, slash themselves, and yitnabbᵉʾû. These Canaanite prophets do not prophesy; rather they "rave" because they are beyond the realm of Yahwism and thus are thwarted in their attempt to be real prophets. The word nbʾ therefore, may connote either the ecstatic condition of a prophet or the raving of one who is not a prophet of the Lord.[435] In 19:18-24, both of these meanings are implied, the difference being signaled here by different verbal stems: the niphal for prophesying and the hitpael for raving.

David has fled to the protection of Samuel in the assembly of the prophets who are "prophesying" (*nnbʾ*). Saul sends three successive groups of messengers to take the hero, but, in each case, the messengers are unable to carry out their mission because the spirit of God comes upon them, and "they rave" (*ytnbbʾw*). Then Saul goes himself, his journey carefully drawn out for effect.

> And the spirit of God came upon him also, and as he went, he raved (*ytnbbʾ*) until he came to the camps of the prophets. And he too stripped off (*pšṭ*) his clothes (*beged*), and he too raved (*ytnbbʾ*) before Samuel, and collapsed (*npl*) naked (*ʿārôm*) all that day and all that night. Hence it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets" (19:23b-24)?

A number of important threads converge in this passage.

Saul's first ecstatic experience results from his meeting a group of prophets just after his anointing (1 Sam 10:5-6,10-13). There the coming of the spirit completes Saul's election as king, as also for David in 16:13. That ecstatic experience makes Saul "another man," empowered to be both the Lord's hero and leader for the people. The ambiguous question, "Is Saul among the prophets" (10:12), carries a positive connotation in that context, but in 19:24 where the question is raised a second time, its tone is sardonic because Saul's raving stifles his power to act against David.[436] Saul has waged a personal war, not just against David son of Jesse, but also against the anointed one who possesses and is protected by the spirit.[437] Saul has waged this war against the holy, denoted here by Samuel and by the precincts of the prophets which he has violently invaded, but Saul is helpless in this war. He is out of control as indicated by

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[434] In 1 Sam 10:6, Samuel predicts that the coming of the spirit upon Saul will make him another man.

[435] Cf. Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 62-63; Stoebe, Kommentar, 369.

[436] This phrase has given rise to much discussion; cf. McCarter, *I Samuel*, 183. I have tried to interpret the "saying" within the context of the story.

[437] 1 Sam 16:13; also *YHWH ʿimmô* in 16:18; 18:12,14; 2 Sam 7:9; and as a blessing in 1 Sam 17:37; 20:13.

his raving; on the other hand, he is also powerless as revealed in his nakedness which, like *nbʾ*, has a double connotation.

The word for "nakedness," *ʿārôm*, does not carry the immediate connotation of shame, as do *ʿêrōm* and especially *ʿerwâ*. Rather the examples of this term move between meanings of "vulnerability" and of "revelation." In describing the nakedness of the newborn, the poor, and the dead, *ʿārôm* suggests especially their vulnerability and, therefore, their powerless state.[438] In Gen 2:25, *ʿārôm* describes the naked but unashamed state of Adam and Eve before eating the fruit of the tree; their nakedness symbolizes the vulnerability before one another and thus the revelation which exists between these two perfect creatures who have nothing as yet to hide. In Isa 20:2-5, the text states that the prophet was commanded to go naked for three years as a revelation of the naked helplessness of Egypt and Ethiopia. The text uses *ʿārôm* to describe Isaiah's nakedness which is without shame and also revelatory; when the image is transferred to the Egyptians and the Ethiopians, the text employs *ʿerwâ* to connote their shame. Also the prophet Micah cries that he will "strip and go naked" *ʿārôm* as a prophetic sign (Mic 1:8).[439]

The references to these two prophets bear on our text which says Saul "too" strips off his clothes. The word "too" indicates that Saul becomes like the prophets at Naioth in Ramah, that is, they are also naked. Just as the verb *htnbbʾ* signifies for Saul and his men not prophecy (*nbʾ*) but raving, so *ʿārôm* signifies not prophetic revelation but rather the exposed vulnerability and powerlessness of the newborn, the poor, and the dead, emphasized here by the word *npl*: Saul "collapsed naked."

Saul's stripping off his clothes (*pšṭ beged*) recalls one final contrast. In 18:4, "Jonathan stripped himself of (his) robe" (*ytpšṭ mʿyl*). Jonathan's gift of the robe is, first of all, a sign of friendship sealed by the covenant between himself and David. The gift also signifies Jonathan's recognition of David as hero, and the robe, with its connotations of royalty,[440] foreshadows the prince's acknowledgment of the hero as the future king. Saul, however, sees David only as a threat. The king's paranoid attempt to protect his own kingship has led to a divestiture of power.[441] By attempting to kill the hero, the

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[438] Cf. Job 26:6 where Sheol is "naked/uncovered" and Abaddon has no covering. For the poor, cf. Job 22:6; 24:7,10; Isa 58:7. As a description of a person's state at birth and death, cf. Hos 2:5; Job 1:21; Eccl 5:14; in Amos 2:16, *ʿārôm* is used to describe the "mighty" rendered helpless.

[439] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 326; he cites Driver's suggestion that *ʿārôm* means not "naked" but something more modest. Driver, in turn cites Isa 20:2 and Mic 1:8 as evidence (ad loc.), but I see nothing in the text to suggest that it means anything other than what it must mean in Gen 2:25.

[440] For the discussion of *mʿyl*, cf. Chapter VII, p. 123.

[441] So Stoebe, following Ephrem the Deacon, *Kommentar*, 268, n. 17; Smith also cites Theodoret; for the stripping of clothing as a symbolic act of removing power, cf. esp. Num 20:26,28 and also Lev 6:4; 16:23; Ezek 26:16; 44:19; also Gen 37:23 where Joseph is stripped of his robe; the stripping of the dead after a victory is a final sign of triumph as in 1 Sam 31:8,9; 2 Sam 23:10; Iliad XVII 125; XXII 408; for *pšṭ* as a sign

king has violated the Holy which protects David, the anointed one. Saul's hostility has returned to reveal the path of self-destruction on which he has embarked.

C. Lord and Servant, Hero and Friend: 1 Sam 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:1 – 21:1; 22:6-23.

The king's animosity toward the hero is balanced by the prince's friendship. Jonathan, however, is caught between hero and king; though friend to David, he is also son and servant of Saul. In Jonathan, the complexity of the theme is revealed.

1. False reconciliation of leader and hero by the prince: 1 Sam 19:1-7.

Saul's alienation of David may be appreciated in general human terms; yet, as can be seen in Jonathan's speech to Saul in 1 Sam 19:4-6, Saul's actions violate the covenant relationship between lord and servant.

> Jonathan spoke well (*ṭôb*) of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let the king not sin (*ḥṭ*ʾ) against his servant (*ʿebed*), against David, because he has not sinned against you and because his deeds have been very good to you (*mʿśyw ṭôb lk mʾd*). He has put his life (*napšô*) in his palm. And he struck the Philistines, and the Lord wrought a great victory for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then would you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause? Saul listened to the voice (*šmʿ b*ᵉ*qôl*) of Jonathan, and Saul swore. "As the Lord lives, he shall not die (19:4-6).

The context of covenant is evoked by specific vocabulary. The description of David as "servant" (*ʿebed*) is a technical term for the subordinate party in a covenant relationship.[442] The phrase "good deeds" reflects another technical phrase, "to do good" (*ʿśh ṭôbâ*) which may also be translated "to be(come) friends" by creating or carrying out a covenant relationship.[443] The good which David has done is summed up in the

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of love, cf. SS 5:3.

[442] Cf. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant², 289. Ingrid Riesener, in her recent study of *ʿebed*, carefully and exhaustively distinguishes between the use of this term as "slave" and as "servant"; within the context of kingship, she gives three meanings for the word: 1) subject, 2) vassal, 3) one who stands in the service of the king as follower and official; *Der Stamm ʿbd im Alten Testament* (BZAW 149; Berlin 1979) 135-156. She argues that the broad conventional use of this term does not allow a close connection with covenant in every case unless a special covenantal context can be established. While the point is well taken, I would add that the broad conventional use of the term is derived from this covenant context where the presuppositions of the conventional usage are revealed.

[443] For *ṭôb*, see now P. Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant* (Analecta Biblica 88; Rome 1982) 42-47. Also M. Fox, "Ṭob as Covenant Terminology," *BASOR* 209 (1973) 41-42. Also: W.L. Moran, "A Note on the Treaty Terminology on the Sefire Stelas," *JNES* 22 (1963) 173-176, esp. 174. D.R. Hillers, "A Note on Some Treaty Terminology in the Old Testament," *BASOR* 176 (1964) 46-47; he cites 2 Sam 2:6 (*ʿśh ṭôbâ*). A. Malamat, "Organs of Statecraft in the Israelite Monarchy," *BA* 28 (1965) 34-65, esp. 63-64; he cites 2 Sam 7:27. M. Weinfeld, "*b*ᵉ*rîth*," TDOT, II, 253-279; he cites 1 Sam 25:30 (p. 259); he also lists the other key terminology. As McCarter says, "While we are not dealing here with treaties ... the same language applies *mutatis mutandis* to the formal relationship of king and subject"; I Samuel, 322.

sentence, "he put his life in his palm." The servant's willingness to die for the lord is the mark of obedience, loyalty, and service.[444] This tradition is summed up by Ittai the Gittite:

> As the LORD lives and as my lord (*ʾădōnî*) lives, wherever my lord (*ʾădōnî*) the king shall be, whether for life or for death, there shall your servant (*ʿebed*) be (2 Sam 15:21).

The duties are not all on the servant's side; the lord is also the guarantor of the servant's life,[445] and Saul would sin against the covenant relationship by killing David. Although the word "sin" (*ḥṭʾ*) has many contexts, it too has a place within the context of covenant vocabulary as discussed above with reference to 1 Sam 15.[446]

For the moment, Jonathan manages to recall Saul to his duty, and the king swears, as he ought, that David "shall not die." This is not a concession on Saul's part; it is his duty and should reflect the love between lord and servant to which is applied the metaphor of father and son.[447] Such was the relationship between Saul and David in 1 Sam 16:21-22 where the king loved (*ʾhb*) the hero and refused to let him return to his father Jesse (also 18:2); instead Saul assumes the role of David's father. Although Jonathan reconciles leader and servant, father and son, for the moment, alienation returns almost immediately and is never again fully resolved.

2. Heroic friendship: 1 Sam 18:1,3-4.

The storyteller balances the alienation between Saul and David with the ideal friendship between David and Jonathan. This relationship is created by surprisingly few strokes. This brevity suffices in large measure because these few but bold strokes evoke the tradition of heroic friendship, represented especially by Gilgamesh and Enkidu, and by Achilles and Patroclus.[448] The intensity of this bond is conveyed by the metaphor

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[444] This willingness becomes a stock formula following the servants name in Middle Babylonian letters: "I am ready to die for my lord." Cf. A.L. Oppenheim, *Letters from Mesopotamia* (Chicago 1967) 117-118: PBS 1/2 58; BE 17 47; BE 17 31.

[445] For the lord as guarantor of servant's life, cf. Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant*, 87-88.

[446] For "sin" as covenant terminology, cf. Chapter VI, n. 338.

[447] For the father/son relationship, cf. F.C. Fensham, "Father and Son as Terminology for Treaty and Covenant," Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright (ed. Hans Goedicke) (Baltimore/London 1971) 121-135. Also McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant^2, 289; Weinfeld, "Covenant of Grants," 194; Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant*, 98-99.

[448] W. Schmid and O. Stahlin, in their *Geschichte der griechischen Literature* (Handbuch der Altertums-wissenschaft 7.1.1; Munich 1929) 63, list the following as examples of Freundespaar, heroic friends: Achilles and Patroclus, Hercules and Iolaus, Theseus and Pirithous, Orestes and Pylades, Herzog Ernst and Werner von Kyburg, Tristan and Kurwenal, Don Carlos and Marquis Posa; in addition to friends, Schmid and Stahlin also cite pairs of fathers and sons, kings and vassals. This list of pairs reflects A. Orliks's "Law of Twins" in "Epische Gesetze der Volksdichtung," *Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum und*

applied to it: heroic friends are brothers. As such, the relationship is a variation of the bond between lord and servant (father and son) with the same demands of mutual loyalty and protection.[449] Ninsun, the mother of Gilgamesh, describes Enkidu to her son as "the stout comrade who rescues a friend."[450]

This theme is prominent in the *Iliad* as well. When Patroclus is killed by Hector, Achilles curses himself, "Straightway may I die, seeing I was not to bear aid to my comrade."[451] Though presented most dramatically in the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, the theme is also carried by other heroic pairs in the *Iliad* who prepare the way for the major drama and attest to the pervasiveness of this code.[452]

Significantly, Hector has no heroic friend. On the battlefield, the Trojan hero is linked continually with Polydamas, the bane of his life. Hector's primary relationships lie within the city—with his wife Andromache and with Priam, his father and king. When Deiphobus appears at Hector's side in the traditional role of heroic friend just before the battle with Achilles, the hero praises his friend as the "dearest of my brethren" because he has come to help while the others have taken refuge within the walls (XXII 233-237). The sentiment is touching, but deluded. Deiphobus is safe within the walls of Troy, and Pallas Athene has disguised herself as the heroic friend in order to lead Hector into an unequal battle with Achilles. A lone man against unequal odds does not survive on the battlefield, and the heroic friendship is precisely a pact against death although in Homer death is an ever present reality.

The heroic friendship between David and Jonathan opens in 1 Sam 18:1 with the sentence:

> The *nepeš* of Jonathan was knit to the *nepeš* of David, and Jonathan loved (*ʾhb*) him as his own *nepeš*.

The word *nepeš* means "life" or "self." "To love another as one's own self" expresses the bond between lord and servant, and it dates at least from the period of the Mari

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deutsche Literatur 51 (1909) 1-12. See also Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 65-68; in addition to Achilles and Patroclus, Bowra lists Roland and Oliver, Gilgamesh and Enkidu, the Uzbek Alpamys and Karadzhan, and the Armenian brothers Sanasar and Bagdasar. D.J. McCarthy has discussed the friendship between David and Jonathan as a heroic friendship, and he notes the "imitation" of heroic tradition "in the stories like Fennimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*"; cf. "*Bᵉrît* and Covenant in the Deuteronomistic History," VTS 23 (1972) 65-85, esp. 70-71. The tradition of hero and friend continues, if as a shadow, in literature of all kinds and may be found on television today in the adventure stories of cowboys, policemen, etc.

[449] On brothers, cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*², 189. Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant*, 99-101 et passim. Cf. also 2 Sam 1:26 and 1 Sam 25:20.

[450] *Gilg.* Assy. II vi 21.

[451] *Iliad* XVIII 98-99.

[452] Sarpedon and Glaucus, cf. esp. *Iliad* XII 387-399; XVI 461-501. Aias and Teucon, the Aiantes, VIII 266-273; they fight Sarpedon and Glaucus in XII 370-412.

letters.[453] Weinfeld has demonstrated that the Akkadian phrase "to love PN as yourself" (*râmu kī napšatkuna*) becomes a recurrent phrase in the political loyalty oaths and is equivalent to the willingness to die as discussed above.[454]

The relationship between the two men is formalized in 18:3 where "Jonathan and David cut a covenant (*yikrōt bᵉrît*) because of each loving the other as his own *nepeš*.[455] Jonathan's gift of clothes and weapons becomes the concrete signs of covenant.[456] While all of this is traditional, the friendship has a new complexity: Jonathan is the prince while David is the hero destined to become king. The inherent conflict of this relationship is neutralized from the very outset by Jonathan's recognition of David as hero, a recognition which never wavers and which presumes that David will become king according to the battle tradition.

As we have seen, Jonathan fulfills his duties of loyalty and service to David in 19:1-7 by preventing Saul from carrying out the plot to kill David. By this reconciliation, Jonathan has also managed to head off a potential conflict between his loyalty to Saul, king and father, and his loyalty to David, friend and hero. Yet the reconciliation in 19:1-7 is a false resolution which allows the storyteller to rebuild the tension in the remainder of 1 Sam 19 to a new and higher pitch. When Jonathan again enters the story in 1 Sam 20, the possibility of reconciliation between leader and hero is fast receding into the past.

3. The conflict of loyalties: 1 Sam 20.

Some of the features of 1 Sam 20 are most awkward. Despite this, the chapter contains other elements of great complexity and subtlety. The awkwardness is felt primarily in the use of spatial symbolism which supports the theme of transition. David returns to

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[453] CAD cites under *napištu*, J. Laessoe, *The Shemshara Tablets* (Copenhagen 1959) 81, SH 812:57-58, "whom his lord loves as his own life" (*u <sa-tu> be-el-su ki-ma na-piš-ti-su/ i-ra-mu-su*). Also ARM II 72:24 which CAD translates "Do you not know that I love (you like my own) life (*<ki>-ma na-piš-tam a-ra-am-mu at-ta u-ul ti-de-e*).

[454] Weinfeld, "Loyalty Oath," 383-385; cf. "Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon," *ANET*[3], 534, lines 266-268: "If you do not love ... Ashurbanipal ... your lord ... as your own lives ... ." Cf. also *Iliad* XVIII 81-82: "Patroclus, whom I honored above all my comrades even as my own self (κεφαλή = head)." As Weinfeld points out the tradition comes to rest in the *Šᵉmaʿ* (Deut 6:4-5); also in Lev 19:18 which is juxtaposed with the *Šᵉmaʿ* in Matt 22:36-39 and Luke 10:27.

[455] McCarthy, "*Bᵉrît* and Covenant," 68, n. 3; he argues that the double subject with a singular verb is "perfectly acceptable grammar" and refers the reader to Gen 9:23 and also to P. Jouon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* (Rome 1923) 150q. In view of that, perhaps the phrase, "because of his loving him as his own *nepeš*" should be translated to as a reference to both subjects: "because each loved the other as his own *nepeš*."

[456] McCarthy discusses the giving of gifts as a symbolic action for sealing a covenant in "Three Covenants in Genesis," *CBQ* 27 (1964) 179-189, esp. 182-183.

the royal court to confront Jonathan with Saul's enmity and to seek the prince's assistance. During this exchange, Jonathan, seemingly for no reason, moves the scene to a field outside the court. Already in 19:1-7, the field has functioned as the middle ground between life at Saul's court (inclusion) and life beyond the court (exclusion). In 1 Sam 20, the field again symbolizes the middle ground, but, unlike 19:1-7 where the field becomes the place of reconciliation, in 1 Sam 20 it becomes the place of transition, separation, and farewell: David departs, and Jonathan returns to the city (21:1). The field thus foreshadows David's future life in the wilderness.

The field is also bound up with the theme of danger, security, and necessary deception. The royal court is no longer safe for open communication between hero and prince; even in the field, a sign with arrows is deemed necessary by the friends lest their communications be discovered. The incident with the arrows helps to retard the final scene of farewell and also to underline the danger which the two friends cast aside in order to meet. Still the device is awkward, yet these awkward features, whatever their origin, have a function in the story, and I find no way to delete these sections without making the story poorer by half.[457]

The central character of the chapter is, of course, Jonathan who goes back and forth between court and field, between Saul and David. Jobling points out that David treats the prince as if he were a king while Saul treats the prince as if he were David. Jobling sees this as the culmination of an "identification-replacement pattern": David and Jonathan are identified by their love, and this provides the ground for shifting the right of inheritance from the prince to David.[458] According to Jobling, this pattern of identification-replacement, with Jonathan as the middle term, serves as the "deep structure" which resolves a central theological problem in the story: "monarchy is inherently dynastic, but Israel's monarchy is not traced from her first king."[459] This assessment is the typical view of biblical scholarship, reflected, for example, in Weiser's title: "Die Legitimation des Königs David." While I do not deny this concern, I would call it the literal sense, or, to use Jobling's imagery, the surface structure. I would also add that the emphasis given to this surface structure by biblical scholarship has tended to obscure deeper issues.

In 1 Sam 20, the story captures, especially in Jonathan, the conflict of loyalties in the

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[457] Most recently, McCarter has suggested that 20:11-17,23, 40-42 are secondary additions to the text by the final redactor who was interested in Jonathan's house; *I Samuel*, 344. That traditions may be involved in 1 Sam 20 in some way, I will grant, but the chapter, I find, is more mimetically complex and not less with the passages cited by McCarter in spite of the erratic movement.

[458] D. Jobling, "Jonathan: A Structural Study in 1 Samuel," 4-25. David assumes the role of hero which Jonathan has played in 1 Sam 14; this is confirmed by Jonathan and Saul alternately in 18:1-5. Furthermore, David must be saved from Saul by the intervention of a third party, i.e. by Jonathan in 19:1-7, just as Jonathan had to be saved from Saul by the people in 14:43-45. Finally, Jonathan abdicates his role of heir symbolically in 18:4 and verbally in 20:1-23 and 23:15b-18. These main points are developed by Jobling with many insights.

[459] Ibid. 17.

face of feared or manifest disloyalty with death lurking somewhere on the horizon. This basic human problem is underlined by the family imagery which carries the story beyond the confines of its literal and historical terms. Whatever the historical exigencies which gave rise to this situation, the storyteller has embarked on a much more fundamental journey.

David opens the chapter with the announcement of Saul's determination to kill him. Jonathan assures the hero that he will not die. Gunn attributes Jonathan's naiveté to a "simplistic view of good and evil."[460] I would state it somewhat differently. Jonathan trusts that he can deal with his father, trusts that alienation will be followed by reconciliation as in 19:7. In short, Jonathan trusts in the traditional pattern: alienation followed by reconciliation. Perhaps we would call the prince a romantic; David then would become a realist, but this is only part of 1 Sam 20.

As the story moves beyond the bounds of the tradition to a new world where reconciliation does not follow alienation, a crack appears for a moment even in the heroic friendship between hero and prince. After David has outlined a scheme for determining Saul's intention,[461] he says:

> Therefore, show loyalty (*ʿśh ḥesed*) with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord (*bryt YHWH*) with you, but if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father" (20:8)?

David appeals to Jonathan to carry out his duty by the covenant and to protect the life of the servant—all very traditional.[462] However, David then raises the possibility that Jonathan may not deal loyally with him, that the prince may lead him by deception into Saul's hands. This vision of unfaithfulness between friends is not traditional. In the *Gilgamesh Epic* and the *Iliad*, the heroic friendship is presumed to be sealed by unquestionable loyalty. Here, however, David questions the unquestionable, and the fear is realistic. If David threatens Saul, how much more should he threaten Jonathan, the seeming heir (cf. 20:31).

Jonathan, of course, swears that he will reveal his father's intentions to David; in fact, he swears twice: once at the court and once in the field (20:9,12-13). But then the same fear of death arises in Jonathan, and he seeks an assurance of protection both for

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[460] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 84.

[461] Again awkward. The need for such a scene after 1 Sam 19 seems unnecessary; the same can be said of Jonathan's naiveté, yet it is precisely Jonathan's naiveté which makes the action of the chapter possible. As Jobling has stressed, character is subordinated here to plot; "Jonathan," 18-21. However the plot and its theme must be taken in the broader sense discussed above.

[462] McCarthy, "*Bᵉrît* and Covenant," 70-71. David appeals to Jonathan as partner in a covenant to protect his life.

himself and for his house when David comes into his kingdom.[463] After calling on David to "act (with) the loyal love of the Lord" (*ʿśh ḥesed YHWH*),

> Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him that the love of his *nepeš* loved him.[464]

Jonathan's fear is not idle. Kings, newly risen to power, commonly wiped out opposing houses (2 Kgs 2; 9). Even so, the fear of death at the hand of the beloved is unsettling.

More comforting is the world of the *Gilgamesh Epic* and the *Iliad* where heroic friends are willing without question or hesitation to die for the other, yet fratricide is reckoned in the Bible as part of the fundamental sins of humanity. Cain, seeing that his brother's offering is more acceptable than his own, kills Abel (Gen 4). In the David-Saul narrative, the ground has been prepared for Jonathan to play the role of Cain to David's Abel. David's fear is that of a suspicious Abel, the fear that Jonathan may become a Cain. On the other hand, Jonathan fears that David, the one preferred, may exploit his upper hand and become a murderous Abel.[465] The commending of one's life into the hand of another brings risk because the trust brings vulnerability with Cain and Abel lurking in the background.

The world of oaths and covenants recognizes both the need for stable, loyal bonds and also the finitude of human ties. The blessings connected with these oaths foretell the fruits of loyalty, and the curses acknowledge the fear of human finitude. In 20:1-17, this human fear is given dramatic form, but the story of David and Jonathan is not that of Cain and Abel. Only for a moment do we see the vision of Cain, the finite horizon of human love; for both David and Jonathan point to the context which allows them to transcend their fears.

David speaks of the "covenant of the Lord" (*bryt YHWH*) which Jonathan has made him swear. Jonathan calls upon the hero to "act (with) the loyal love of the Lord" (*ʿśh ḥesed YHWH* ; 20:14), that is, to act as he has sworn by the Lord. On the one hand, the Lord is

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[463] 1 Sam 20:14-16 are admittedly difficult verses; cf. Stoebe, Kommentar, 375-376, 386-387. McCarter (I Samuel, 337) offers an inventive solution based on much adjustment of the text. Though I have no simple solution to offer, the basic elements of the text are clear enough.

[464] 1 Sam 20:17. The LXX has Jonathan swear to David, but, as McCarthy points out, Jonathan "troubled by the danger which David's rise presents...wants reassurance in return from his help, and so it is fitting that he adjure David"; "*Bᵉrît* and Covenant," 71-72. The *kî* clause is usually taken as a causal clause, but it may also be understood as an object clause, i.e. what was sworn; cf. Gen 24:3-4 and L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden ²1958) under *šmʿ*. This would lend emphasis to the mutual dimension of the covenant, argued by McCarthy; and the ambiguity of the passage derives precisely from that mutuality.

[465] The relationship of this chapter to the story of Cain and Abel has been pointed out by Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 111. However, my use of this story has been suggested primarily by Elaine Levy-Valensi, *L'enigma dell' omosessualità* (Assisi, text dated 1972; original French title: *Le grand dessarroi aux racines de l'enigme homosexuelle*, Paris). A full discussion of her position can be found below in an excursus in Chapter X, pp. 174ff.

the guardian of the bond and, therefore, able to carry out the curse, but the Lord is also the guarantor who makes possible keeping of the oath. The finitude of human love is transcended by taking the Lord as the reference point, and this is captured in 20:23 and again with more emphasis in 20:42 where Jonathan makes his parting statement to David:

> Go in (the) peace which we have sworn, the two of us, in the name of the Lord, saying, "The Lord shall be between me and you, between my descendants and your descendants forever.

"Peace" (*šālôm*) is traditionally the fruit of covenant along with friendship (*ṭôbâ*), love and loyalty (*ḥesed*), and brotherhood (*ʾaḥ*).[466] By holding their covenant before them, David and Jonathan reassume their places with Gilgamesh and Enkidu, with Achilles and Patroclus; and they become witnesses against Cain. Saul, however, would play the role of Cain.

Saul's attempt to avoid destruction leads him along a path of self-destruction. The blind contradiction of Saul's actions, presented already in Saul's pursuit of David among the prophets, is presented again in 20:24-34. When Jonathan makes excuses for David's absence at the feast, the king is not fooled. Saul curses his son; [467] then with clear though deadly insight, he tells the prince:

> As long as the son of Jesse lives upon the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore, send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die (20:31).

Saul, linking David's destruction to his own self-preservation and to that of his son, would have Jonathan lead David into a trap just as David feared. Jonathan objects as he did in 19:1-7, but this time to no avail: "Saul cast his spear at him to smite him" (20:33). Saul's blind fear of destruction from without causes him to confuse what he would save (Jonathan) with what he would destroy (David). This contradiction, which creates a realistic psychology, suggest the destructive forces brewing in the king.

4. Rebellion and the report of rebellion: 1 Sam 22:6-23.

The destructive forces building within Saul finally erupts in 1 Sam 22:6-23 where Saul, unable to lay hands on the fleeing David, turns against the priests of Nob to vent his hostility. The outcome is prefigured by the spear in the king's hand, the recurring symbol of his irrational turn to violence (22:6; 18:10-11; 19:9-10; 20:33).

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[466] On "peace," see Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant*, 34-42. Also Weinfeld, "Covenant Terminology," 191, 197; McCarthy, "*Bᵉrît* and Covenant," 288-289.

[467] Note also the contradiction in 1 Sam 20:30 where Saul calls Jonathan "the son of a perverse, rebellious woman" and then accuses the prince of shaming "his mother's nakedness."

Saul begins by upbraiding "the servants serving him."[468] After asking if "the son of Jesse" will reward them in traditional fashion with land and appointments, he accuses them of "conspiring" against him: [469]

> No one discloses to me the covenant of my son with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me and discloses to me that my son has raised up my servant against me to lie in wait as on this day (22:6-8).

As Weinfeld shows in his study of the "loyalty oath," the second part of the stipulations in these documents deals with rebellion and the report of rebellion:

> "not to recognize another king or lord";
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> "not to hide rebels or instigators, but to report them to the king or overlord";
>
> "to seize instigators and punish them";
>
> "to avenge the king";
>
> "to be friend to friend and foe to foe."[470]

Saul's accusations deal specifically with these issues. He charges his son and the son of Jesse with instigating rebellion, and he accuses his servants of entering into the plot by concealing the covenant between the prince and the hero although Saul is perfectly aware of this relationship (20:30). He is searching only for an outlet to his hostility which is becoming more and more unfocused.

Doeg the Edomite turns the king's attention toward Ahimelech and accuses the priest of giving David provisions and oracles (22:9-10). Despite the Ahimelech's claim of ignorance, the anxious Saul interprets the action as treason and commands that the priest and all his house be slain. Although Saul's servants refuse, Doeg the Edomite falls upon the priestly house and slays all with the exception of Abiathar who escapes. Ironically, the destruction fulfills the prophecy against the house of Eli, again with the exception of Abiathar (1 Sam 3:14).[471] Also ironic: Saul, by commanding the destruction, destroys his own link to the Lord through the cult and unknowingly hands the ephod over to David. Thus Saul continues his self-destructive pattern.

Saul's story is an old and recurring story. Like Cain who could not abide his brother's preferment and killed him, Saul has embarked on a path of violence in order to end David's preferment. Here, however, the theme is explored, not in terms of brothers, but in terms of father and son. This suggests a link with the Oedipus myth which Freud

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[468] 1 Sam 22:6,7,9,19; the phrase *nṣb ʿl*, as Hertzberg notes, is a technical term for "to serve" as in 1 Kgs 17:1, etc. (*I & II Samuel*, 187). Compare with *ʿmd lpny* in 1 Sam 16:21,22; 2 Sam 1:9,10.

[469] In 1 Sam 18:5,13, Saul appoints David to positions of command, though in 18:13 Saul uses the traditional reward to remove the hero from his presence Weinfeld lists both "house" and "land" as the traditional reward for faithful service; cf. "Covenant of Grant," 189, and also Chapter XI, pp. 183ff.

[470] Weinfeld, "Loyalty Oath," 387-391.

[471] Most recently by McCarter, *I Samuel*, 366.

made such a centerpiece of the twentieth century imagination. Like Laius who feared death from the hand of his son Oedipus and sought to have him killed, Saul fears the death of his kingship from the hand of David, and seeks to kill his "son." However, the Oedipus myth is broken here by the sons.

Jonathan and David, though threatened by the father's enmity, do not bring about his death; instead they remain faithful to the unfaithful father and king. This is underlined by 21:1 where David departs and Jonathan returns to the city. The two friends do not allow their covenant to take precedence over their loyalty to Saul. Jonathan does not abandon his father in order to follow his friend. David does not ask his friend to be unfaithful to his father. Saul, though unfaithful, is acknowledged as having the primary claim which is not negated even by his own unfaithfulness, for the Lord is the guardian and guarantor of covenant between king and servants, father and sons. Faithfulness, even in the face of unfaithfulness, allows the prince and hero to dispel the pull of the Oedipus myth. In this, David and Jonathan share a common ground with Cordelia who remains faithful to her deranged father, King Lear. And Jonathan, like Cordelia, will come to a tragic end because of his faithfulness. David will be tested again in 1 Sam 24 and 26 where the temptation of patricide will rise again.

Chapter IX:
The Hero's Journey: 1 Sam 21-26

A. The Journey as a Traditional Pattern.

As pointed out in Chapter II, the journey along with the battle pattern serves one of the major traditional patterns. Scholes and Kellogg delineate three types of journeys in terms of movement: "the journey to a distant goal (e.g. the *Aeneid*), and the return journey (e.g. the *Odyssey*), and the quest (e.g. the *Argonautica*)."[472] The journey confronts the hero with situations beyond the normal fare of sedentary life (as if Penelope did not have her own problems). Like the battle narrative, the journey may become a complex narrative embracing the whole of traditional literature with episodes of hardship and hospitality, hostility and victory, and more. The journey may even take the hero into the fantastic world of the dream or into the unknown world of death. Thus the journey may travel the length of human experience in order to try the hero's physical prowess, his intellectual acumen, and his moral strength.

As a compendium of human experience, the great journeys are symbols of passage: from youth to maturity (Telemachus), ignorance to wisdom and realism (Gilgamesh), alienation to reconciliation (Sinuhe), chaos to order (Aeneas), temptation and trial to victory (Odysseus), bondage to promise (the Exodus), punishment to forgiveness (the Exile and Return of Judah). The complexity of these great journeys cannot be reduced simply to the themes outlined above. Still the traditional movement of all these journeys is an attempt to reverse the most fundamental human transition: the movement from life to death. Each story solves this basic human problem differently. For Gilgamesh, the triumph comes in the acceptance of mortality as his lot. For Sinuhe, the reconciliation with the pharaoh brings the return to Egypt where he can prepare a tomb for the voyage of death. Aeneas carries the *penates* from the defeated to The Eternal City, Rome. And, as Northrop Frye points out, the fundamental biblical journey begins with the expulsion from the Garden which brings death, and it ends with the entrance into the New Jerusalem where "death shall be no more" (Rev 21:4).[473]

B. David's Flight in the Wilderness: 1 Sam 21-23.

Just as Odysseus is forced by the wrath and alienation of Poseidon to wander the world, so David is forced to undertake a journey by the anger and alienation of Saul. Like the Homeric hero, David must live by his wits, must manage the narrow escape, and must avoid the dangers of temptation which could destroy the successful conclusion of his journey. Unlike the possibilities outlined by Scholes and Kellogg above, David does not

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[472] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 228. Examples of the journey from the ancient Near East may be found in the *Gilgamesh Epic*, Tablets IV-V, IX-XI, XII; also the journeys in the Sumerian stories of Lugalbanda; cf. C. Wilcke, *Das Lugalbanda Epos* (Wiesbaden 1969). Cf. also A.B. Lord, *Singer of Tales*, 162; also A.B. Lord, "Tradition and the Oral Poet," 13-30, esp. 24-28.

[473] Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 319-320.

know what the end of this journey will bring. David has neither a goal for his journey nor a home to which he can return. Rather he flees from Saul and with his wits must face an uncertain and menacing world. Even so, danger and chaos alternate with signs of divine election which indicate that the hero does not make the journey alone.1. The uncommitted helper: 1 Sam 21:2-10.

In 1 Sam 21:2-10, the ironic mix of danger and election reveal the hero's problem. When David arrives at Nob, the trembling Ahimelech suspiciously asks why David comes alone. The hero lies and tells the priest that Saul has sent him on a secret mission; David even pretends to seek provisions for an imaginary group of young men whom he will join at some undisclosed place.[474] Ahimelech does not pursue the truth, the strategy of a frightened man; and, as a frightened man, Ahimelech can be neither David's ally nor protector.

Taking the middle path of ignorance, the priest tells the hero that he possesses only the "sacred bread," "the bread of the face." Still he is willing to hand over this bread to David if the men have kept themselves ritually pure. After assuring the priest that his imaginary followers are pure, David receives the "bread of the face." Whatever the cultic function of this bread,[475], it belongs to the Holy. That David can take the consecrated food by deception and without punishment for his ordinary needs indicates the hero's relationship to the Holy. In this, David is like Jonathan who ate the honey contrary to the fast imposed under a curse by Saul (1 Sam 14:24-30). The apparent transgression shows both to be heroes chosen by the Lord.

David also receives the sword of Goliath from the priest. Traditionally, the hero is armed with a weapon of special prowess.[476] Goliath's sword fills the motif, for, as David says, "There is none like it" (21:11). Yet more is signified. David, now able to wield Goliath's sword, is no longer the boy hero, but the great warrior. Finally, the sword of the Philistine symbolizes the false role of the enemy which Saul forces the hero to play.

By offering the hero food and especially a weapon, Ahimelech plays the traditional role of the helper.[477] Unlike his counterparts, the priest offers his services in spite of himself.

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[474] The New Testament assumes that David actually had followers (Matt 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5); however, there is no reason to believe David's assertion because he is attempting to deceive the priest at this juncture.

[475] P.A.H. de Boer argues that *leḥem happānîm* refers to special cakes, stamped with the image of the deity. The loaves became the possession of the Lord when placed before him, and then they were given by the deity to his believers in a sacrificial meal so that they might eat the bread and thereby partake of divine favor, strength, and salvation; cf. "An Aspect of Sacrifice," VTS 23 (1972) 27-47, esp. 27-36.

[476] Cf. Chapter III, p. 44 on the hero's weapon.

[477] In Propp's analysis, this character is called the donor and typically provides the hero with a magical agent or helper; *Morphology*, 39. The function is similar to that of the hero's friend described in Chapter III, n. 117.

This twist of the motif captures David's predicament: an alien environment marked with signs of election.

3. Journey without a goal: 1 Sam 21:10-22:23

Without a home to which he may return, David flees to the Philistine court at Gath where Achish the king raises the menacing question: "Is this not David the king of the land" (21:11)? For the first time, we hear that the hero "was much afraid," but he extracts himself from the situation by deception, by feigning madness. The scene offers some comic relief; still it points up once again David's lack of a safe haven and the chaos of his world.

In 22:2, David is joined by "everyone who was in distress... in debt... embittered... and he became leader over them." "Worthless fellows" also gather around Jephthah after he is driven from Gilead (Judg 11:3); the same is true for Abimelech in Judg 9:4 though he hires his reckless band. In each case, the motif underlines the hero's alienation from the world of order and society, and the motif is commonly found in the genre of comedy where the plot begins with the hero being forced out of the society by decadent powers and ends with the hero returning to take possession of the society.[478] Abimelech, of course, does not belong to this traditional pattern, but as an evil force, he invades and dominates his society. David and Jephthah, however, are both alienated and exiled heroes who return to restore the society with a new order.

The danger which David creates by his very existence is now extended to his family who are forced to leave their home. His parents are committed to the safekeeping of the king of Moab until, as the hero says, "I know what the Lord will do for me" (22:3-4). With no home or secure place, David is unable to see where this journey will lead, and the instability is underlined by the appearance of the prophet Gad who tells the hero to leave his stronghold and flee to the land of Judah. Although the prophet is another sign of the hero's election, David cannot see that the end of the journey will bring him ultimately to Jerusalem.

Saul's massacre of the priests at Nob, which follows (22:6-19), has been discussed above as a climactic manifestation of the king's destructive and self-destructive force. Within the sequence of the whole, the massacre recalls again the chaos of David's world, yet it too results in another sign of David's destiny. Abiathar escapes the slaughter with the ephod, the instrument for divining oracles, and flees to David for refuge. Thus the central instrument of revelation is brought into the hero's camp.

3. The real enemy, the Philistines: 23:1-29

A traditional battle narrative against the Philistines at Keilah follows (23:1-5). After the enemy's threat has been announced to the hero, David uses the ephod to call for a divine commission. Although this is received, David's men object because of their fear

[478] Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 163.

(reaction of helplessness); so David calls for and receives a second commission. This double call for the divine commission underscores once again the uncertainty of David's world where divine commissions may be questioned. Still the victory, which is given in traditional fashion, presents David as hero.

The victory brings no lasting loyalty from the people of Keilah. When Saul hears that David "has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars," the king believes that "God has given him into my hands" (hand-formula). The traditional formula in the mouth of Saul underlines the man's self-deception. And, when David learns through the ephod that the people of Keilah will surrender him, he escapes and thereby forces Saul to give up the chase for the moment.

Thus the narrative moves continually between signs of danger and election: flight and victory, uncertainty and oracle, pursuit and escape. These polar signs, which carry the story forward, are underlined again in 23:14: "And Saul sought him every day, but the Lord did not give him into his hand" (denial of the hand-formula).

In 23:15 David's fear returns for a second time (cf. 21:13), and Jonathan again enters the story for a brief moment "to strengthen David's hand in God" and opens his speech with the motif of encouragement: "Do not fear."[479] Jonathan's intervention is prophetic because he speaks both of the future and for the Lord:

Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you; you shall be king over Israel (23:17).

The prince, however, is not fully a prophet, for he adds, "and I shall be next to you." This touch of dramatic irony creates a realism which resounds with pathos, for the traditional audience knows that Jonathan will not be next to David.

Last of all, the prince adds, "Saul my father knows this." Saul knows but will not reconcile himself with the reality, and in 23:19-29, the king takes up again his pursuit of the hero. This time Saul corners the hero, but a messenger arrives and announces that the Philistines are raiding the land. The news forces Saul to return in order to meet the threat, and it allows David to manage the narrow escape. The use of the Philistines as a *deus ex machina* drives home the fundamental inconsistency of Saul's position. The Philistines are the real enemy, as their attack on Keilah has already demonstrated. Saul, however, has pushed them into the background of the story in order to wage a private war against the hero who is caught between the forces of chaos both from within and from without.

4. Journey in the wilderness: 23:19-29.

David flees now into the Wilderness (*midbar*) of Ziph. The word *midbar* cannot be

[479] Cf. Chapter III, p. 43 for the encouragement motif which is used mainly by deities, but note its use by Enkidu.

separated from Israel's own journey in the desert from Egypt to the Land of Promise. As both C. Conroy and A. Cody have pointed out recently, the wilderness for Israel is a place of rebellion and revelation, of hardship and largesse, of temptation and trial, of failure and victory, of fear and hope.[480] It is striking that David's journey, like that of Israel's, follows the primary victory of the hero: David over Goliath in 1 Sam 17, and the Lord over Egypt in Exod 14-15. Furthermore, both journeys end with the establishment of a new, ideal order: Israel in the Promised Land, and David in Jerusalem. As far as I can ascertain, this parallelism with the Exodus pattern is not developed consciously as a dominant feature of the David-Saul narrative. Still the parallel is suggestive. As for Israel, the desert expanse becomes for David a test of moral strength in a chaotic world. Unlike Israel, David will emerge unscathed as the ideal hero.

C. David's Trials: 1 Sam 24-26.

Rolf Knierem sums up the movement of the whole narrative as a presentation of David who stands the test in every situation unlike Saul who fails (1 Sam 13-15).[481] Taking up Knierem's insight, P.D. Miscall argues that 1 Sam 24-26 forms a tripartite unity in which "David demonstrates his worthiness to be king."[482] R.P. Gordon also defends the unity of the three chapters and further traces the forward movement in David's characterization created by "an incremental repetition of the motif of bloodguilt and its avoidance."[483] The analysis of both Miscall and Gordon is a critique of a historical approach which tends to regard repetition as only the superfluous addition of a variant source or of bad redaction.[484] I shall follow Miscall and Gordon by examining the

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[480] C. Conroy, "The Old Testament and Monasticism," *Studia Missionalia* 28 (1979) 1-27; A. Cody, "What the Desert Meant in Ancient Israel," ibid., 29-42. Conroy is anxious to correct a tendency among some scholars to idealize the desert and create "a desert spirituality … unilaterally optimistic" (pp. 6-12). As Cody says, it is "wrong to claim a full blow spirituality of the desert." Rather there are "attitudes toward the desert which have their place in the spiritual ideals and religious longing of later times as well." The word "desert" (*midbār*) appears in 1 Sam 23:14[2],15,24,25[2]; 24:2; 25:1,4,14,21; 26:2,32.

[481] R. Knierem, "The Messianic Concept in First Samuel," *Jesus and the Historian, Written in Honor of Ernest Caldwell* (ed. F.T. Trotter)(Philadelphia 1968) 20-51. As examples of David standing the test, Knierem cites 1 Sam 19:4-5; 20:1,8; 24:4-22; 25:32-34; 26:8-25; 27:8-11; 29:4ff; 30:17ff; etc.

[482] P.D. Miscall, "Literary Unity in the Old Testament" *Semeia* 15 (1979) 27-44, and a response by R. Polzin, ibid. 45-50, cf. esp. 47. Miscall, noting his indebtedness to Knierem for the insight, argues that 1 Sam 24-26 has parallels to 1 Sam 13-15; in 1 Sam 13 and 15, Saul proves disobedient, and in 1 Sam 14, Saul pushes forward with his vows, especially to kill Jonathan. In 1 Sam 24 and 26, David does not transgress the law by killing Saul, and in 1 Sam 25, David prescinds from the vow to kill Nabal. I would only comment that 1 Sam 13-14 lacks the clear symmetry of 1 Sam 24-26.

[483] R.P. Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise: Narrative Analogy in 1 Samuel 24-26," *TB* 31 (1980) 37-64, esp. 53.

[484] The parallels between the stories in 1 Sam 24 and 26 have consumed much scholarly interest. K. Koch's form-critical analysis concludes that the two chapters are "two versions of the same source"; *Growth of the Biblical Tradition: The Form-Critical Method* (London 1969) 132-148, esp. 142. Grønbæk finds that the chapters were "originally independent traditions," the best assumption being that "these two traditions

significance of the similarities and differences found in these passages.

1. The temptation of regicide/patricide: 1 Sam 24.

In 1 Sam 24, "the roles of pursuer and pursued are reversed."[485] Saul, having renewed his pursuit, enters a cave to satisfy the needs of nature. Unknown to the king, David and his men are hiding in the back of the very same cave, a situation of burlesque comedy. David's men counsel the hero:

> Behold, the day of which the Lord spoke to you, "I am giving your enemies into your hand" (hand-formula), and you shall do to him according to what is good in your eyes (24:5).

David goes forth and secretly cuts off the hem of Saul's robe, but "afterward David's heart smote him because he cut off the hem of Saul's robe" (24:6).

The phrase "hem of the robe" (*knp mʿyl*) recalls 15:27, the only other place where the phrase appears. There Saul's tearing of the hem of Samuel's robe is interpreted symbolically by Saul: "The Lord has torn the Kingdom of Israel from you this day, and it will be given to a neighbor of yours." As Grønbæk argues, this earlier reference must guide the interpretation here.[486] Symbolically, then, David has taken by stealth the kingdom from Saul, yet the robe also signifies Saul's royal person which David attacks and thereby violates his covenant relationship to his lord. David recognizes in the hem the course on which he has embarked, and the recognition causes him to turn back both from regicide/patricide and from rebellion. He does not complete the symbolic act by killing Saul. Instead he forbids his men to attack the king (24:7-8a). He does not do unto Saul what Saul seeks to do unto him.[487]

As Alonso Schökel points out, the remainder of the episode has the judicial character of a *rîb* or lawsuit.[488] The elements can be correlated to J. Harvey's form for the prophetic *rîb*, and the context, as between the Lord and Israel, is that of covenant between a lord

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have influenced each other in the oral tradition"; *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 168-169.

[485] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 91.

[486] Grønbæk, Geschichte vom Aufstieg, 164-165. Also Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise," 55-57.

[487] Gunn would have a Freudian interpretation of the scene. He argues that *knp* ("hem") may be interpreted as a phallic symbol and that the scene is a symbolic castration of Saul. Indeed, since Freud, it is difficult not to see a phallic symbol behind every pillar and post. Strangely, Gunn does not interpret David's seizure of Saul's spear in 26:12 as phallic. Of course, David returns the spear; and in 24:11, the hero uses the severed hem as proof that he has not laid violent hands on the king. The problem of patricide/regicide, of which castration is a symbol, is indeed the subject of these two chapters, but it is important to remember that David does not kill Saul and thus breaks the pattern of the Oedipus myth.

[488] Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 126.

and his servant.[489] Thus David addresses Saul as "lord" (*ʾādôn*; 24:7,9,11) and "father" (*ʾab*; 24:12). The hero accuses the king of seeking to take his life (*nepeš*) without just cause, a violation of the covenant relation (cf. 19:4-5). David defends himself by saying:

> "No evil (*rʿ*) or rebellion[490] was in my hand; I have not sinned (*ḥṭʾ*) against you" (24:12).

As evidence, the hero produces the hem cut from Saul's robe to prove that he had the chance to kill the king.

As Harvey notes, the rîb may give way to a "réaction pénitentielle,"[491] and here Saul professes his repentance. The opening line is especially moving:

> "Is this your voice, my son (*bēn*) David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept.

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[489] J. Harvey has studied the *rîb* in *Le plaidoyer prophétique*, 85-118. I would readjust his pattern to yield the following major elements:

> 1) call of witnesses or the accused,
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> 2) rhetorical questions of accusation,
>
> 3) the defense of the innocent party (e.g. a statement of the Lord's faithfulness),
>
> 4) statement of the accusation against the guilty party (e.g. the unfaithfulness of Israel or someone more specific);
>
> 5) (call for) judgment against the guilty party;
>
> 6) (threatened) sentence or a demand for conversion.

1 Sam 24:10-16 may be divided as follows:

24:10	rhetorical question;
24:11-12c	defense of innocent party: David argues for his innocence;
24:12d	accusation against Saul;
24:13	call by David for judgment from the Lord;
24:14a	proverb to be used as basis for judgment;
24:14b	defense of innocent party: David again declares his innocence;
24:15	rhetorical questions (and answers);
24:15	call by David for judgment from the Lord: "May he try (*rîb*) my case (*rîb*) and judge me by your hand." David calls upon the king to act in his royal capacity as judge.

The elements of the pattern are repeated, but this does not obscure the form.

[490] Harvey notes the frequent use of *pšʿ* in the *rîb*; *Le plaidoyer prophétique*, 108. Cf. above the discussion of rebellion in Chapter VIII, p. 140.

[491] Ibid. 81; he lists a *réaction pénitentielle* in five of the seven examples in the historical books.

The political dimension of the word "son" (*bēn*) should not be overlooked, and the remainder of Saul's speech is marked by other technical vocabulary of covenant.

> You are righteous (*ṣādîq*), and I am not.[492] For you have repaid me good/friendship (*ṭôbâ*), whereas I have repaid you evil (*raʿ*). And you have declared this day you have dealt well/friendly (*ʿśh ṭôbâ*) with me in that you did not kill me when the Lord put me into your hands (hand-formula). For if a man finds his enemy, will he send him on his way (in) good/friendship (*ṭôbâ*)?[493] So may the Lord reward you with good/friendship (šlm *ṭôbâ*) for what you have done to me this day (24:18-20).

Righteousness is especially a royal virtue, and Harvey notes its occurrence in a number of prophetic lawsuits to describe the Lord's innocence.[494] McCarter argues that *raʾ* is used technically in opposition to *ṭôbâ*, a well attested a covenant term meaning "friendship," especially in the phrase "to do good" (ʿśh *ṭôbâ*).[495] Saul, therefore, admits that David has acted as he should in accordance with the demands of covenant. Saul also acknowledges that David will be king (24:21), and, like Jonathan, the king calls upon the hero to swear that he will not cut off the royal house or destroy the king's name. Such stipulations are typical of loyalty oaths,[496] yet, as I have pointed out with regard to the similar demand made by Jonathan, it also reveals something of a hidden fear, a fear of the future. David swears (24:23).

The episode has moved far beyond the burlesque humor of the opening scene. The humiliation which Saul suffers in those first moments is comic precisely because there is little sympathy for the man who has ordered the priests slain and has pursued David so obsessively. Saul's emotional repentance, his weeping and open confession, rehabilitates the man by creating an empathy for him. Had Saul died after killing the priest, his death would have been pure retribution, the comic death of the villain who gets only what he deserves, the audience applauding with glee. However, Saul's death will not be comic, and the storyteller has begun to diffuse that possibility and continues

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[492] For the translation, cf. Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, ad loc.

[493] McCarter's translation of 24:19a; *I Samuel*, 381. For the problem of the Hebrew and the discussion of various scholars, cf. Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 236, v. 20b. McCarter's translation represents the majority opinion.

[494] Harvey, *Le plaidoyer prophétique*, 109; he translates *ṣādîq* as "impeccable, inattaquable, conforme au droit."

[495] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 384. "The expression 'seek (*bqš/drš*) good/evil' belongs to the formal language of relationship." The phrase "to do evil in the eyes of the Lord" is a Dtr commonplace for disloyalty; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 339. As such, the phrase is a negation of *ʿśh ṭôbâ*; for the relationship of *ṭôb* to covenant, cf. Chapter VIII, n. 443.

[496] Weinfeld, "Loyalty Oath," 387-387. The examples which Weinfeld cites are pledges to guard the king's progeny. Here the rejected king as the guarantee for his progeny from the future king. Cf. 1 Sam 20:15.

in 1 Sam 25 by presenting the comic death of Nabal, a fate which the fool justly deserves.

2. A comedy: 1 Sam 25.

Nabal is able to divert the comic thrust bound up with Saul's actions because of the many similarities between Saul and Nabal. These similarities have been elucidated especially by Gordon: their status as lord, their refusal to acknowledge David for what he is, the repetition of vocabulary common to both stories, and the continual return of bloodguilt as a central theme.[497] Even so, Nabal is not a simplistic masquerade of Saul. The difference between the two is seen most clearly in their attitude toward the hero. At all times, Saul perceives David as a threat and a power to be dealt with. Nabal, on the other hand, regards David as a nuisance and refuses to take the hero seriously. Saul's fear will ultimately produce the tragedy; Nabal's foolishness will yield comedy.

In 1 Sam 25:2-42, David requests from the wealthy Nabal a share of his feast as compensation for services rendered to the rich man's shepherds. Nabal, being a miser as well as a fool, rejects the hero's request and heaps on disparagement. David then girds on his sword to repay the ingrate. Abigail, the fool's wise and beautiful wife, is informed of the event secretly by servants. Without telling her husband, she intercepts and persuades David that his action is rash, and thereby she saves him from incurring bloodguilt. Nabal, glutted with a feast in the meantime, is removed from the story by an act of God, and the story ends with the hero and heroine marrying.

The plot has much in common with comedy. As Scholes and Kellogg say in their comments based on F.M. Cornford's *Origins of Attic Comedy*:

> The "perfection" of comic form (in ancient Greece) consists in the combination of generalized characters typical of contemporary life with a flexible plot formula based on intrigue and leading to marriage.[498]

This pattern is not limited to ancient Greece. Frye gives a similar definition and adds that "the movement of comedy is usually a movement from one kind of society to another." At the beginning, the society is controlled by "obstructing characters" whom the audience recognize as "usurpers." By the end, "the device in the plot that brings the hero and heroine together causes a new society to crystallize around the hero."[499] In 1 Sam 25, the rich and foolish ingrate of a husband and lord is replaced by the hero. His marriage to the wise and beautiful Abigail symbolizes the new, emerging society which

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[497] Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise," 43-53.

[498] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 225-226; they draw on F.M. Cornford's *Origins of Attic Comedy* (Anchor 1961). Both Nabal and Abigail are types. Nabal's type is indicated by his name which means, first of all, "fool." Compare the wise ("good of insight") and beautiful Abigail with Judith (Jdt 8:7,29). Both of these women are types of the perfect wife. Judith is faithful by remaining a widow; Abigail by returning to Nabal. As such, both can be compared with Penelope of the *Odyssey*.

[499] Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 163.

will triumph in 2 Sam 5 when David, recognized as king over Israel, reaches Jerusalem.

Although 1 Sam 25 shares much in common with comedy, one important twist stands out. Frye notes that the opposition to the hero's desire is "usually parental" because marriage is the climax of comedy. When the opponent is not the father, a father surrogate serves as usurper, such as "a rival with less youth and more money" than the hero.[500] In this chapter, the opponent is Abigail's lawful husband, just as David's other opponent is the lawful (if rejected) king of the kingdom. David cannot pursue Abigail as the object of his desire any more than he can legitimately pursue the kingdom. As a result, the major tension of both stories is developed in terms of the servant's grievances against an unfaithful lord.

The story opens with David's request for a share of Nabal's feast, and the request, couched in the language of the covenant, ends with the plea:

> Pray, give whatever your hand finds to your servants (*ʿebed*) and to your son (*bēn*) David.[501]

David's claim is based upon service which has been rendered to Nabal's shepherds, but Nabal rejects the claim:

> "Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? Today there are many servants (*ʿebed*) breaking away from their lords" (*ʾādôn*; 25:10).

According to a strictly legal interpretation of covenant, Nabal is within his rights because David's claim is based on service performed rather than on a previous agreement. Yet the code of conduct or, at least, of hospitality seems to demand otherwise in view of David's violent reaction and, more importantly, the testimony of Nabal's own shepherds.

The shepherds present their testimony to Abigail rather than to Nabal, a detail which suggests his recalcitrant nature. The servants report to Abigail Nabal's refusal of David's claim and add:

> The men were very good (*ṭôb*) to us... they were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them pasturing the sheep" (25:15-16).

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[500] Ibid. 163-164.

[501] The word *šālôm* appears four times in 25:5-6 and is linked with covenant; cf. p. 140. The word *klm* (25:7,15) would seem to be a technical term indicating a disgraceful action in violation of a covenant relationship; cf. 1 Sam 20:34 where the word describes Saul's action. Likewise, the niphal form is used in 2 Sam 10:5 to describe what Hanun does to envoys who bring David's proposal "to deal loyally" (*ʿśh ḥesed*). Also in 2 Sam 19:14, retreat is described by *klm*. "To find favor in your eyes" (25:8; also 16:22; 20:3,29; 27:5, etc.) belongs to the language between lord and servant though with a more general context as well; cf. Ruth 2:2,10,13. The basic theme of the speech, protection, is central to covenant; cf. Chapter VIII, n. 445.

The word *ṭôb* and the theme of protection link the statement to the context of covenant.[502] Recognizing the breach, Abigail acts quickly to resolve the tension.

Before she can reach David, the storyteller shifts the focus to record the hero's intention. David returns to the theme of protection rendered for a third time (25:6-8,14-16, 21), and he accuses Nabal of "returning evil (*raʿâ*) instead of good (*ṭôbâ*)," i.e. enmity instead of friendship.[503] Then David swears that he will kill every male belonging to the house of Nabal. While David's complaint has some merit, H. McKeating points out that "David had no complaint that would legally justify killing Nabal."[504] As in 1 Sam 24, the storyteller places David on the verge of contracting bloodguilt. This time Abigail saves David by combining the deference of a servant and a vision of prophecy in order assuage the hero's anger and renew his trust in the Lord.

Abigail's speech is structured by the returning reference to herself which again focuses David's anger on her and thereby allows her to absorb that anger:

25:24a "Upon me alone, my lord, be the guilt ... .

25:25b I did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent ... .

25:27 And now let this present, which your maidservant (*šipḥâ*) has brought to my lord, be given to the young men who walk in the footsteps of my lord.

25:28 Pray, forgive the rebellion (*pešaʿ*) of your maidservant (*ʾāmâ*) ... .

25:31b And when the Lord has dealt well (*hyṭb*) with my lord, then remember your maidservant" (*ʾāmâ*).

This subtle argument, which is almost lost in the whole, is cast in the terminology of the covenant. Abigail characterizes herself as an *ʾāmâ* and *šipḥâ*, the feminine equivalent of *ʿebed.*[505] Therefore she addresses David as "lord" (*ʾādôn*) fourteen times, one indication of the ointment which she pours on his wounds.[506]

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[502] For *ṭôb*, cf. Chapter VIII, n. 443.

[503] McCarter argues that the phrase "to repay with evil instead of goodness" (*hsyb raʿâ taḥat ṭôbâ*) is part of the "formal terminology of relationship"; I Samuel, 398. Thus the phrase could be translated "return enmity instead of friendship." On the other hand, one could argue that the phrase is part of the wisdom tradition (Prov 17:13). McCarthy observes that covenant and wisdom influence each other, still he insists that we must be wary of transforming one into the other; *Old Testament Covenant*, 88-89. The chapter brings together themes of wisdom and covenant, and one could give prominence to the wisdom tradition. Still wisdom does not account for the other covenant terminology.

[504] H. McKeating, "The Development of the Law of Homicide in Ancient Israel," *VT* 25 (1975) 46-68, esp. 58.

[505] *šipḥâ* 1 Sam. 25:27, 41; 28:21,22; *ʾāmâ*: 1 Sam 17:4; 25:24^{2},25, 28, 31, 41; 2 Sam. 2:24; 6:20, 22; 8:1. Note that 2 Sam 6:20 is a reference to the wives of David's "servants." Cf. also 2 Sam 14:15,16; 20:17; 1 Kgs 1:13,17; 3:20. Already in the earlier section of 1 Sam 25 where David deals with Nabal, the hero acts as a lord/king in that he does not go to Nabal himself but sends servants with messages; cf. the discussion below on 1 Sam 1-4.

[506] This strategy is clearest in the use of the word "lord" (*ʾādôn*): 25:24,25^{2},26^{2},27^{2},28^{2},29,30,31^{3}. Jon D.

As in the first part of the story, we have a servant's plea to a lord, but now the roles are reversed: David is now the lord instead of the supplicant servant. The shift begins with Abigail's very first action: "She fell before David on her face and bowed to the ground" (25:23). In 1 Sam 20:41 and 24:9, David performed this same act of homage, first before Jonathan, and then before Saul; for it is "the homage given to a king."[507] While this action fits well with Abigail's strategy of extreme deference to soothe the angered hero, it also forms the first concrete manifestation of David's coming kingship which is a central theme of the speech.

Within the skeleton of her own plea, Abigail deals with the larger and more significant problem. She begins by dismissing her husband, just as Nabal dismisses David:

> Let not my lord take to heart this worthless man, Nabal, for as his name, so is he: Nabal is his name and *n^e^bālâ* (foolishness) is with him (25:25).

Although the root *nbl* is commonly translated by some form of "fool," W.M.W Roth argued twenty years ago that *nbl* referred to separation from the community,[508] and this has recently been supported by A. Philips' study of *n^e^bālâ* which he defines as a general expression for serious disorderly action resulting in the breaking up of an existing relationship whether between tribes, within the family, in a business relationship, in marriage, or with God.[509]

This connotation of the Hebrew is crucial for an appreciation of the use of *nbl* in the story because it underlines the theme of broken relationship stemming from Nabal's refusal to recognize the hero.[510]

Abigail then shifts the focus of the speech from Nabal to the larger perspective of the future:

Levenson has dealt particularly with this aspect of the speech; "1 Samuel 25 as Literature and as History," *CBQ* 40 (1978) 11-28, esp. 19. Other words related to covenant: The word *naʿar* is used as an equivalent of *ʿebed* as seen in the phrase "your young men (*naʿar*) who walk in the footsteps of my lord" (25:27); cf. also 25:9-11. Abigail calls her offense "rebellion" (*pšʿ*); cf. Chapter VIII, p. 140 on rebellion. Finally the word "remember" (*zkr*) has important connections with covenant; cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*[2], 289 for the phrase *zkr bryt*; also Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 76.

[507] Cf. 2 Sam 9:6,8; 14:4,22,33, etc. In the David-Saul narrative, this act of homage is made by Saul to Samuel in 1 Sam 28:14 and by the Amalekite to David in 2 Sam 1:2.

[508] W.M.W. Roth, "NBL," *VT* 10 (1960) 394-409.

[509] A. Philips, "Nebalah, a Term for Serious and Unruly Conduct," *VT* 25 (1975) 237-241, esp. 241.

[510] Though Roth's interpretation is older, his assessment of *nbl* in this context as an expression of "a breach of a sacred covenant" is more precise than Philips' interpretation of *n^e^bālâ* as a breach of custom. Still Philips points out that Nabal's refusal to acknowledge David as the fool's primary transgression. Roth, "*NBL*," 406; Philips, "*Nebalah*," 240. Note also the use of *nbl* in David's lament over Abner, "Should Abner die as a fool dies" (2 Sam 3:33). The connotation of breach of covenant likewise fits this context.

> Now therefore (*wʿth*), as the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, if (*ʾăšer*) the Lord were to restrain you from entering blood and your hand from gaining victory for yourself, then (*wʿth*) your enemies and all who seek evil (*bqš raʿ*) for my lord will become like Nabal.[511]

Though very circumspect, Abigail implies that the future depends upon his innocence so that "evil not be found" in him (25:26b,27d,31). She also implies it is unnecessary for David to seek his own vengeance. As the servant "fighting the battles of the Lord," the Lord, as lord (*ʾādôn*), will protect the life of his servant, "and the lives of (his) enemies (the Lord) shall sling out from the hollow of a sling" (25:29). For the hero, the Lord will "do good," (*ʿśh ṭôbâ*) being a technical term of covenant.[512] Moreover, the Lord will reward his servant, "will make (David) a sure house" (25:29) and *nāgîd* over Israel."[513] Like Jonathan in 1 Sam 23:16-18, Abigail prophesies the end of David's journey.

The theme of David's innocence, which runs through the wilderness section and beyond, has been viewed by many scholars as propagandistic theme which attempts to cover up some action against Saul and/or his house during David's rise to the throne and/or afterwards.[514] Without necessarily denying some historical force at work in the insistence on this theme may be at work, I would emphasize that the hero must be an ideal hero in order to bring about an ideal world. Like Marduk, David is moving toward the establishment of an ideal order, but, unlike Marduk, David is not a god whose perfection is beyond doubt. David's path to the ideal lies through the perilous world of experience. To the right and to the left of that path lie the temptations which could contaminate the ideal. In 1 Sam 24, David is saved in the end by his own conscience; here in 1 Sam 25, he is saved by Abigail.

Gunn notes that "in some respects Abigail's behavior is reminiscent of Jonathan's behavior."[515] I agree and would state the similarity in even stronger terms. In addition

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[511] Admittedly, 25:26 is a difficult verse. Literally, I would translate as follows:

> Now therefore (*wʿth*), my lord, as the Lord lives and you yourself live,
> if (*ʾăšer*) the Lord shall have restrained you(*mnʿk)*
> from going into blood and shall have saved your hand for you,
> then (*wʿth*) your enemies shall be like Nabal.

For the use of *ʾăšer* as a conjunction introducing a condition, see Jouon, *Grammaire*, 167j. For the perfect as a future perfect followed by the imperfect in a condition, cf. Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, §159n. For the co-ordinate use of *wʿth* with a conditional conjunction following the first, cf. 1 Sam 26:19-20.

[512] Weinfeld cites 25:30 specifically in his article "b^erith," *TDOT*, II, 259; cf. also above n. 443 on *ṭôbâ*.

[513] On *nāgîd*, cf. Chapter XI, n. 661.

[514] For the theme of blood guilt at political propaganda, cf. the last pages of Chapter X, pp. 179ff.

[515] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 156, n. 13 to chapter six; he lists her secret meeting with David, her designation of him as her "master" (*ʾādôn*) and "prince," and her interest in a future place with David. However, Gunn's interpretation of the whole section again attempts to create a sympathetic picture of Saul by putting the best possible face on the king's actions. To accomplish this, Gunn imputes the worst possible

to their prophetic role noted above, the similarity also touches their personal relationship with the hero. In 1 Sam 19:1-7, Jonathan intervenes to keep his father "from sinning against innocent blood" (*dm nqy*); here Abigail intervenes to prevent David from "entering blood" (25:26, 31) and "spilling blood without cause" (25:31). In 19:6, the storyteller reports that "Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan (š*m*ʿ *bqôl*), and in 1 Sam 25:35, David says to Abigail:

> "Go up in peace to your house; see, I have listened to your voice (*šm*ʿ *bqôl*), and I have granted your petition [literally, lifted up your face]."

Moreover, both Jonathan and Abigail are caught in a conflict of loyalties. Like Jonathan who returns to Saul (21:1), Abigail leaves David and returns to Nabal her husband, but her dilemma is soon resolved. Retribution from heaven comes quickly for Nabal the comic villain and eliminates him through a comic death. The hero is able then to marry the heroine and thereby bring the comedy to its traditional end. Jonathan, however, is aligned with the tragic figure, Saul, who renews his pursuit of the hero once again in 1 Sam 26.

3. The untrustworthy oaths of the king: 1 Sam 26.

Gordon has recently demonstrated the crucial role played by 1 Sam 26 in the development of the whole in contrast to the general assessment of the chapter as a doublet of 1 Sam 24, and, therefore, as redundant.[516] Admittedly, the plots of both 1 Sam 24 and 26 are similar: Saul again pursues the hero, and David again is given the opportunity to kill the king but instead takes a token from Saul (spear and water jar). After David has put distance between himself and the king, exchange of words follows, shaped again by the pattern of the *rîb*. Still there are differences between the chapters.

In 1 Sam 26, David does not catch the king in a cave; instead he and Abishai make a daring foray into Saul's camp while all were sleeping in a "deep sleep from the Lord."[517] When the two warriors reach Saul, Abishai announces the hand-formula and offers to

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motives to others (here David) or, in the case of Nabal, defends the indefensible. Gunn approaches the narrative as if it had the moral ambiguity of modern literature. As a result, he asks questions about David's motives and insinuates answers which run contrary to clear signs in the text and to the traditions which stand behind these signs. In contrast, Hertzberg (*ad loc*.), although he does not refer specifically to the relation between lord and servant, understands the basic thrust of the story in much the same way as I have.

[516] Gordon's argument is aimed at Jobling who argues that 1 Sam 26 is redundant and destroys the narrative coherence. Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise," 55, 57-59; Jobling, "Jonathan," 22. Jobling's position is an extension of the common position that 1 Sam 24 and 26 are variant accounts of the same event; cf. Koch, *Growth of Biblical Literature*, 143.

[517] While this divinely inspired sleep has parallels in the Bible (Gen 2:21; Isa 29:10; also Gen 15:12), a more interesting parallel is found in the *Iliad* (XXIV 445). Hermes causes the Greek camp to sleep so that Priam may retrieve the body of Hector from Achilles.

kill the king with the king's own spear. This time David does not hesitate. He rejects the proposal immediately, and, after taking the spear and water jar, the two withdraw. Although David has again been confronted by the temptation of bloodguilt, he no longer considers the possibility seriously.

With this insight, Gordon argues that the three episodes of 1 Sam 24-26 present "the development and modification of the motif" of bloodguilt: in 1 Sam 24, David cuts off the hem of Saul's robe and is struck with deep remorse; in 1 Sam 25, he vows to wipe out Nabal's house but is turned away by Abigail; and in 1 Sam 26, David immediately rejects the idea of blood. The hero, therefore, has not only passed through the trial and emerged unscathed; he has also rejected the possibility of bloodguilt and thereby solidified his stance as the ideal hero. In this sense, the storyteller has developed the character of David which is otherwise flat and opaque.[518]

After the foray into Saul's camp, David retreats to a position "afar off with a great space between them," and the spatial symbolism connotes the gulf between hero and king.[519] David's first speech is delivered not to the king, but to Abner. The form of the speech again reflects the pattern of the *rîb* / lawsuit,[520] and its contents develops the theme of protection. David accuses and condemns Abner because the servant failed to protect the life of his lord.[521] Recognizing the voice, Saul calls out, "Is this your voice my son, David"? And the hero replies, "It is my voice, my lord, O king" (26:17). Again the relationship of father and son, lord and servant, is brought to the fore. As in 1 Sam 24, David makes a *rîb*-like plea to the king, and Saul admits his sin (*ḥṭʾ*) and confesses his relationship to Nabal: "Behold, I have played the fool" (*htnbbl*; 26:21).

As Gordon justly points out, this chapter lacks the "full-blooded affirmation" by the king found in 1 Sam 24. This attenuation of Saul's response insinuates Saul's lack of moral strength to carry out this oath and thus prepares for David's flight to the Philistines in the following chapter.[522] Despite the affirmation in 1 Sam 24, Saul has begun again to pursue the hero. This is not the first time that the king has broken his promise. Saul refused to give the hero Merab who had been promised (18:19). Saul's oath to protect the life of David in 19:6 was soon abandoned, and the attack on the hero's life is renewed (19:10). The repetition of this pattern does not portray Saul as a man totally devoid of moral sense. His words in 26:21a reveal a man struggling for reconciliation: "I have sinned; return David my son." Yet these very words recall what Saul said to Samuel in 1 Sam 15:24-25:

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[518] Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise," 53-55.

[519] Ibid. 60.

[520] Rhetorical questions, 26:15a,b; accusation 26:15c; judgment, 26:16a; threatened sentence, 26:16b; proof, 26:16c. For the discussion of the form of the *rîb* / lawsuit, cf. n. 489 above.

[521] Covenant language: *ʾādôn* in 26:15^{2},16; *lōʾ šmr* in 26:15,16; also *lōʾ ṭôb haddābār hazzê ʾăšer ʿāśîtā* reflects *ʿśh ṭôba*.

[522] Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise," 59-60.

> I have sinned ... now take away my sin and return with me that I may worship the Lord.

The desire for reconciliation is there, but the man cannot sustain it. This theme is evoked also by the return of Saul's spear which conjures up the memory of Saul's sudden reversals, his abrupt turn toward violence (cf. 18:11; 19:10; 20:33; 22:6). Unlike David, Saul's character does not change in 1 Sam 24-26. The king's promise, though full of anguished desire, is continually broken. The repeated pattern creates the psychological realism which presents Saul as a struggling human being and thus worthy of our compassion in contrast to Nabal the stock villain of comedy. In this way, the storyteller has begun to prepare for Saul's death, a death which no one will cheer.

Chapter X:
Triumph and Tragedy: 1 Sam 27 - 2 Sam 4

The narrative in 1 Sam 27 - 2 Sam 2:7 alternates between the stories about David and those about Saul. The alternation creates a sense of simultaneous action[523] and, more importantly, an impression of irony as David triumphs while Saul dies. The motifs for both stories, though twisted at times, are drawn from the tradition of the battle narrative.

David	27:1-12	David becomes the servant of Achish but deceives his lord by claiming to raid Israel while in fact raiding the Israel's enemies.[524]
	28:1-2	stock opening for battle; call and commission of hero by enemy leader.
Saul	28:3-25	new information (28:3); stock opening for battle narrative (28:4); reaction of helplessness by Saul (28:5); call for a divine commission by dreams, Urim and prophets which are refused (28:6); call for a divine commission from Samuel which is also refused (28:7-25).
David	29:1-11	stock opening for battle; objection by the Philistine commanders to David's call and his dismissal by the enemy king.
	30:1-31	enemy's threat: the Amalekites attack David's city and carry off the wives, children, and plunder; the reaction of helplessness by David and his men (weeping); call for a divine commission and positive answer; journey; fight and destruction of the enemy; plunder and distribution.
Saul	31:1-13	Statement of defeat (31:1-2); death scene: Saul and his armor-bearer (31:3-7); stripping of the slain by the enemy and plunder (31:8); retrieval of the body and burial (31:11-13).
David	2 Sam 1	Recognition of the hero as king (1:1-10); avenging of the death of a friend (1:13-16); lament (1:11-12, 17-27).

[523] Cf. Chapter VII, n. 415 on simultaneous action.

[524] Kalluveettil minutely analyzes the covenant language of the passage and concludes that 27:12 "provides the unique example of OT secular covenants where the superior declares the vassal relationship"; *Declaration and Covenant*, 165-196, esp. 196. Against the common assumption that Achish is an unremitting fool, Kalluveettil sees in the king a shrewder personality who makes David a vassal conditionally until David proves himself. According to Kalluveettil, the forays against the towns of Judah "seem to have been devised by Achish." Once satisfied, Achish confirms David's vassalship in perpetuity (pp. 188-189). Certainly David further ingratiates himself with the king, but I find that Kalluveettil must suppose too much to reach his characterization of the king. Achish is essentially a foil for David and thus fails to grasp the ambiguity of David's reply: "Upon my word, you yourself will see what your servant will do." So also Kalluveettil (p. 172).

2:1-7 Hero becomes king 2:1-4a; recognition of those who buried Saul (2:4b-7).

Most of the motifs have been studied earlier in this thesis. The motifs relating to David's reaction to the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1) shall be considered below in "Section D" with David's response to the deaths of Abner and Meribaal (2 Sam 2-4).

A. David the Deceptive Hero: 1 Sam 27; 28:1-2; 29-30.

In 1 Sam 27, David brings an end to Saul's pursuit, for he says that Saul, despite his word, will rise up again in pursuit. From this perspective, the journey of flight has come to an end. David's world, however, still lacks stability and order. Thus the hero goes a second time to the land of the Philistines and becomes a "servant" of Achish, king of Gath. This chapter provides some much needed comic relief which features the gullible Achish. Although the hero destroys and plunders the traditional enemies of Israel, he pretends to wage war against his own people. The Philistine king is completely taken in by the ruse:

> And Achish trusted (*ʾmn*) David, thinking, "He has made himself utterly abhorred by his people Israel; therefore, he shall be my servant (*ʿebed*) forever" (27:12).

The comic theme is brought to rest with the Philistine enemy where it should rest. Despite the comedy of the chapter, the storyteller has placed David in a precarious position which underlines the chaos of his world. No safety can be found except with the enemy, and that safety depends upon utter duplicity.

In the opening scene 1 Sam 28, Achish calls and commissions David to assist him in the war against Israel. The hero accepts the commission though the answer is ambiguous: "Very well, you shall know what your servant can do" (28:2).

The gullible Achish reads the ambiguous statement as a pledge of loyalty and rewards the hero by making him the royal bodyguard. After a report of Saul's unsuccessful call for a divine commission (28:3-25), the battle is introduced again with the stock opening, and the other Philistine lords register their objection to David's commission. Though Achish objects to their objection, the other lords answer the objection by repeating the victory song heard already in 18:7 and 22:12. Reluctantly, Achish recalls David, and, after extolling the hero's honesty, he sends the hero away. Objecting, David asks what crime he has committed. Achish, gullible to the end, answers that the hero is "blameless ... as an angel of God"; still the Philistine king sends the hero away.

The storyteller brings David to the brink of danger, to the brink of fighting against Israel. David's true position, however, is indicated by the ambiguity of his response in 28:2 and by the question of his loyalty to the Philistine cause in 29:4. From these two clues, the storyteller would have us surmise that, had the hero been allowed to stay, he would have turned on the Philistines and won a great victory for Israel over the enemy (28:4-5). Thus the danger of David's situation is ultimately turned into the reason for his absence from the battlefield which is strengthened by the events of 1 Sam 30.

Returning to his city Ziklag, David finds that the Amalekites have destroyed the town and carried away the wives and children and cattle. The event causes a momentary reaction of helplessness (weeping), and David's men contemplate stoning their leader. But, after receiving a divine commission by means of the ephod, David and his men find the Amalekites, destroy the enemy, and retrieve their families along with all that was plundered. As Grønbæk has argued, 1 Sam 30 must be linked with 1 Sam 15 which tells of Saul's fight and victory over the Amalekites. But, whereas Saul's victory in 1 Sam 15 becomes the context for the rejection of the king, David's triumph in 1 Sam 30 opens the way for his accession to the throne.[525] Ironically, this triumph takes place as Saul dies.

B. Saul's Journey to the Seer: 1 Sam 28:3-25.

Saul's first section (28:3-25) is introduced by two points of information crucial for the story: a second report of Samuel's death and burial (28:3a; cf. 25:1) and a notice concerning Saul's expulsion of the mediums and wizards from the land. The enemy threat in 28:4 returns the story to the beginning of the battle pattern and is followed in traditional fashion by the reaction of helplessness: "When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly" (28:5). The motif identifies Saul as a weak leader and no hero. Thus it comes as no surprise when his call for a divine commission is not answered "either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets" (28:6).

A similar case of a divine commission refused is found in the story of *Tukulti Ninurta*. There the enemy king, Kashtiliash, is given no commission either through extispicy, oracles, or dreams.[526] The denial to Kashtiliash is rooted, according to the story, in the enemy king's own perfidy and is presented as a sign of his rejection. Being an enemy king, Kashtiliash can expect no better treatment from the tradition. Saul, on the other hand, is not an enemy king, but "our" rejected king. This twist of the tradition establishes the basis for the desperation and pathos which is developed in the remainder of the chapter.

1. Saul and Necromancy.

Saul now turns to extraordinary and forbidden means in Israel, to the mediums and wizards (*ʾbwt wyddʿny*[*m*]) whom Saul himself has turned out of the country. Even so, Saul has come to the point where he is willing to violate the taboo of necromancy[527] in

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[525] Grønbæk, *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 218-221.

[526] *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, iv 41-45.

[527] According to H.A. Hoffner, *ʾôb* in the Old Testament has three meanings, two of which are used in 1 Sam 28. The first meaning "the pit" used in necromancy (*bʿlt ʾôb*; 28:7,8), and the second "the spirit of the dead" and the third, "the necromancer" (28:3,9); cf. "*ʾôb*" *TDOT*, I 130-134, esp. 133. For a complete discussion of necromantic practice in the ancient Near East, see Hoffner's article, "Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew, *ʾôb*," *JBL* 86 (1967) 385-401. J. Lust has disagreed with Hoffner's etymology

order to gain knowledge of the future that will speak to his chaotic situation. This move reveals the internal chaos of the character. The disguise, which the king assumes for this journey, underlines the dimension of the forbidden. And the night serves as an appropriate covering for the king while adding to the sense of the mysterious and the forbidden (28:8a).

Saul commands the witch to bring up whoever he names. She objects and, unknowingly, reminds the disguised king that he has driven the mediums from the land. Again the dramatic irony emphasizes the forbidden. The witch then accuses Saul of laying a trap for her "life" (*nepeš*) in order to kill her. Saul swears that no guilt will befall her. This oath, made in the name of the Lord, mirrors the contradiction of Saul's situation.

The witch submits and at Saul's command brings up Samuel. Immediately on seeing the prophet, she "cries out in a loud voice" to the disguised king: "Why have you tricked me; you are Saul" (28:12). From the earliest times, the coherence of these lines has caused some consternation among biblical commentators because the woman sees Samuel but names Saul.[528] W.A.M. Beuken, in a recent analysis of the story, rejects those who would argue that the woman knew Saul's identity from the beginning; instead he attributes the recognition of Saul to the prophetic power of Samuel.[529] Beuken, I find, attempts to put too fine a point on his argument. The discontinuity of the event (seeing Samuel and recognizing Saul) and the lack of a clearly defined source of revelation and power creates a sense of the uncanny in order to move the audience beyond the world of ordinary logic and experience to the dark realm of death and revelation. This aura of the uncanny continues in the following verses where only the woman can see the ʾᵉlōhîm/god and must describe the spirit to the king: "An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped in a robe (*mʿyl*)." As Beuken and others note, the robe links the text with 1 Sam 15:27-28 where Saul tears the hem of Samuel's robe (*mʿyl*).[530] This recollection not only identifies the spirit, but also recalls Saul's rejection.

The intensity of the emotions felt in the narrative are implied for the most part rather

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and argues that the word is derived from, *ʾab* (father) and refers not to the pit or the necromancer but originally to the spirit; "On Wizards and Prophets," VTS 26 (1974) 133-142.

[528] W.A.M. Beuken, "I Samuel 28: The Prophet as 'Hammer of Witches,'" *JStOT* 6 (1978) 3-17. Beuken, in a recent article, notes that the actual conjuration of the dead spirit by the witch is missing between her question (28:11) and her seeing Samuel (28:12). Beuken interprets this to mean that Samuel seizes the initiative at this point and causes himself to come back from the dead (p. 8). This interpretation is contradicted, however, by Samuel's own words in 28:15 where the prophet says that he has been brought up. It would seem then that the narrator in his search for conciseness and impact has left out the act of conjuration. For early and medieval Jewish and Christian exegesis, cf. K.A.D. Smelik, "The Witch of Endor," *Vig Chr* 33 (1979) 160-179.

[529] Beuken, "I Samuel 28," 9.

[530] Ibid. 10.

than described. This common characteristic of both Hebraic and Hellenic literature has been pointed out both by Erich Auerbach and by Scholes and Kellogg who comment:

Much of the power of the David story is generated by the matter-of-factness of the narration of such violent and emotional events. Such opaqueness in characterization functions for the modern reader as a kind of understatement, producing an ironic tension between the cool narrative tone and the violence which the reader imagines within the minds of the characters.[531]

This understatement is found especially in the cool, even lethargic, tone of Samuel's opening words to Saul which are filled with ironic foreboding: "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up" (28:15a)?

The simplicity and directness of Saul's response evokes pathos:

> I am in great distress (*ṣar*); for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away (*sûr*) from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams; therefore I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do (28:15a).

The phrase "God has turned away" (*sûr*) recalls 16:14 where the "Spirit of the Lord turned away(*sûr*) from Saul." There the narrator provided the information; here Saul says it himself. There David with his music turned away the evil spirit (16:23), but Saul caused David to turn away (*hsyr*, 18:14). The situation is more complex than Saul articulates, but indeed the end has come, and the dead prophet confronts the king with the Lord's rejection (*sûr*).

As the basis for the rejection, Samuel cites Saul's failure to "carry out (the Lord's) fierce wrath against Amalek." Some would delete this reference from the Samuel's speech,[532] and indeed it would seem that better grounds could be found in the king's constant breach of his relationship as lord to David his servant. Still Amalek is symbolic. Saul's refusal to carry out the Lord's command stands as a primary illustration of the king's weakness: he feared the people and allowed them to command him.[533] In 1 Sam 16-26, Saul's fear blocks his acceptance of David as the hero. The hard edge of the Lord's decision has now caught the king who has made the outcome inevitable by rejecting the hero. Instead of a divine commission, Samuel brings the cold announcement of divine rejection with its twist on the assurance of divine presence and the hand-formula:

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[531] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 166. As a conscious literary device, this technique is called "litotes."

[532] Budde, *Die Bücher Samuelis*, 182; he would delete 28:17-19a and argues that 28:16 connects immediately with 28:19a. Similarly Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 220; Grønbæk, *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 196. N. Poulssen considers 28:17-19a as a Dtr interpolation; "Saul in Endor (1 Sam. 28)," *TvT* 20 (1980) 133-160.

[533] Cf. the discussion of 1 Sam 15:24 in Chapter VI, p. 100.

> Tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me; also the army of Israel the Lord will give into the hand of the Philistines (28:19).

The chilly, matter-of-fact tone stands in sharp contrast to the king's desire and fear, and he falls "all at once full length upon the ground" under his fear of Samuel's words. As Alonso Schökel notes, the reference to Saul's height recalls a happier time, the public designation of Saul as king in 1 Sam 10:23 who was "taller than any of the people from his shoulders upwards."[534] The fall is symbolic.

In addition to Saul's fear, the storyteller accounts for this collapse by reporting the king's fast. As we have seen in reference to 1 Sam 14, fasting in battle is a pious but unrealistic gesture, and its negative connotation reappears in this story.[535] The motif, however, opens the way for the reappearance of the witch. Seeing the terrified king upon the ground, she takes charge in a speech filled with the language of covenant:

> Behold your handmaid (*šipḥâ*) has listened to your voice (*šmʿ bqōl*), and I have placed my life (*nepeš*) in my hand, and I have listened to the words which you spoke to me. Therefore, you also, listen to the voice of your handmaid; let me set a morsel of bread before you; so that you may eat and have strength so that you may go on your way (28:21-22).

Stoebe has noted the parallel between the witch and David: Saul has sought out the witch in the opening scene (28:7) much as he sought David in 16:17.[536] The parallel, supported by other details,[537] illumines the exchange which Saul has made.

Like Abigail she also calls herself a "handmaid" (*šipḥâ*)[538] and brings an offer of food. Just as food establishes a relationship between David and Abigail,[539] so Saul by eating

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[534] Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, on 1 Sam 10:23.

[535] Cf. the discussion of fasting in Chapter VI, p. 90. Beuken notes that older scholars have understood the fast as a ritual preparation for the conjuration. Hoffner does not mention fasting as part of the ritual of necromancy in his exhaustive analysis, "Second Millenium Antecedents." Beuken himself would tie the fast perhaps to the journey to Endor during wartime; "in both cases, the fact that Saul has not eaten anything embodies the folly of his sinful journey to the medium"; "1 Samuel 28," 11. Stoebe, citing Caspari and Gutbrod, attributes the fast to Saul's fear which does not allow him to eat; *Kommentar*, 496. In view of 1 Sam 14, I find the connection with battle more traditional and, therefore, more reasonable.

[536] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 488.

[537] Similar to David who gives Saul peace by turning back the evil spirit, the witch attempts to bring Saul comfort. Also the phrase "to place one's life in one's hand" was used already Jonathan in the defense of David who "took his life in his hand and slew the Philistines" (19:5).

[538] For *šipḥâ*, cf. Chapter IX, p. 153.

[539] The relationship of meal and covenant lies behind the actions of 1 Sam 20 where David's presence is expected at the king's table. Likewise, in 1 Sam 25, Nabal's refusal to share food with the hero and Abigail's gifts of food reflect the breaking and keeping of covenant. Finally, David uses the meal to seal a covenant with Abner in 2 Sam 3:20. For the relationship beyond these texts, cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and*

with the witch would enter a relationship of host and guest with "someone who professionally cultivates death."[540] Saul seems to recognize this and initially rejects the offer, but the king's servants together with the witch prevail, and the king eats. As a traditional action, the meal with the witch carries negative and ironic overtones, but this is complicated by the strong mimetic quality of the passage. More irony. The care which the woman shows for the king is a human care, underlined in 28:24 by the detailed preparation which she makes for this meal. Her human concern creates a sense of pathos for Saul the man, and her attentive service is a counterbalance to the stinging words of the prophet. Again the narrator rescues Saul from the fate of a villain and creates the empathy of tragedy.

2. The tradition of catabasis and necromancy.

Saul's consultation with a dead prophet is a story referred to in Greek as a *nekyia*, i.e. "rite by which ghosts were called up and questioned about the future,"[541] and Homer gives us the most famous *nekyia* in Book XI of the *Odyssey*. There Odysseus, at the command of Circe, sails into the darkness of the night until he reaches the river Oceanus at the boundaries of the world and at the gate of the House of Hades. There Odysseus offers a sacrifice, and the blood of the sacrifice attracts the torpid spirits of the dead. From among them emerges Tiresias, the blind seer, who drinks the blood and prophesies. This speech touches four points: the perils of the journey home, the battle against the ruthless suitors, the appeasement of the alienated god Poseidon, and finally Odysseus' own death—the gentle death of an old man at sea (*Od.* XI 100-137). Samuel too speaks of battle, of an alienated deity, and of the inquirer's death, but in 1 Sam 28, Saul is offered no hope of victory or of reconciliation or of a happy death. Herein lies the difference between the hero's struggle and Saul's tragic fall; the motifs are broken.

While the Odyssean *nekyia* offers the closest parallel to 1 Sam 28, the motifs of the stories belong to a larger tradition. Recently, R.J. Clark has studied Book XI of the *Odyssey* in the context of the catabatic tradition, i.e. in relation to the extant stories of descent (catabasis, also katabasis) into the underworld from the time of the Sumerians through Virgil[542] Clark characterizes the Odyssean *nekyia* as a mixture of motifs drawn both from the pattern of the catabasis and from that of necromancy. The difference between the two may be stated simply; catabasis is a descent to the underworld by a living person in the flesh who returns to tell of it, and necromancy is the calling of the

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Covenant[2], 254.

[540] Beuken emphasizes that the meal would effect a union between the king and "someone who professionally cultivates death"; "1 Samuel 28," 13. In view of the other language of covenant, I find it reasonable to link the meal with covenant.

[541] Liddell & Scott, ad loc.

[542] R.J. Clark, *Catabasis : Virgil and the Wisdom Tradition* (Amsterdam 1979) 32.

dead from the underworld to this world for the purpose of consultation.[543]

Clark is anxious to draw this distinction between catabasis and necromancy in order to show that the *nekyia* is "much more than a Witch of Endor scene" which he categorizes as a simple necromancy.[544] Even so he recognizes that the *nekyia* is itself a mixture of catabasis and necromancy. The catabatic elements are represented by Odysseus' ocean journey through the night to the gates of Hades, by the vision of the geography of the underworld, and also by various remarks of the dead spirits which would place Odysseus within Hades rather than at its gate. The sacrifice, which draws the dead spirits out of Hades, constitutes the necromantic element.[545] While Clark's distinctions can be useful, his desires for clear categories also obscures the interrelationship between the *nekyia* and 1 Sam 28. From a purely literary perspective, necromancy may be seen as a more mimetic, if less dramatic, presentation of the catabatic motif in the sense that both confront the hero with the underworld and thus with death.[546]

True, Saul does not make a long, adventurous journey to the edge of the world; still the king makes a forbidden journey into the night. This journey takes the audience beyond the ordinary, common sense world of the day into the dark world of strange powers and death. The king uses his disguise as a means to enter this world unseen so that he may extricate himself without harm, but the disguise is discovered in this dark world

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[543] Ibid. 32-34. In addition, he also defined two other variants: visions of the underworld and journeys of the soul to the underworld.

[544] Ibid. 57-58.

[545] Ibid. 74.

[546] As Clark shows, the descent of deities into the underworld was linked to the change of seasons; as such, the catabasis of deities belongs to the cosmic pattern of fertility (Ibid. 15-22). As for the descent of human beings, Clark focuses on the search for wisdom, whether ancestral (*Gilg*. IX-XI) or prophetic (*Od*. XI, *Aeneid* VI; Clark, *Catabasis*, 22-36). I would shift the focus and emphasize the confrontation with death which can be interpreted as a dimension of the theme of fertility. In the *Odyssey*, the hero quickly receives his information from the prophet; the remainder of Book XI describes the land of Hades with its famous dead. In *Gilg*. IX-XI, the hero seeks not just wisdom in general but the knowledge which brings immortality. This knowledge eludes the hero because he is one-third human and thus a mortal. The journeys of Hercules to Hades display the hero's prowess in the accomplishment of an impossible task. Later this tradition serves in the Eleusian mysteries as a triumph over the certainty of death (ibid. 79-94). Though Saul does not descend to the underworld *per se*, his meeting with Samuel serves as a confrontation with death, but unlike the great Babylonian and Greek heroes, Saul's death is imminent.

Some scholars have sought to create an interpretation more acceptable to the modern mind by arguing that the appearance of Samuel is a creation of Saul's psyche. Such an interpretation would set the chapter into T. Todorov's genre of the fantastic which he defines as that type of literature in which the audience hesitates because the events may be either illusion or a part of reality unknown to them; *The Fantastic* (Ithaca NY 1975) 29. If the classification by genre depends upon the audience, and if the audience is modern, an argument could be made for the fantastic, but I find no reason to believe that it was originally so. Necromancy was a real if forbidden possibility within Israel. Furthermore, the story is presented directly and realistically. The audience is not asked to doubt but to believe.

here nothing is hidden and all is revealed in the face of death. True, Saul's journey lacks the grandeur of the journeys undertaken by Odysseus and Aeneas. Still Saul's journey through the night brings him to a confrontation with the underworld, a confrontation with death which for him is imminent.

C. The Tragedy of Saul and the False Death of the Hero: 1 Sam 31.

Death comes in 1 Sam 31 which begins with a report of the Philistine victory on Mount Gilboa and the death of Saul's three sons: Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchishua. Their deaths, especially that of Jonathan, sets the mood for the central action which consists of a death episode. The wounded Saul calls upon his armor-bearer to kill him lest the uncircumcised makes sport of him. The armor-bearer refuses, "for he feared greatly" (28:4). Saul then takes his own life, and the armor-bearer follows suit, killing himself also and dying with his lord.

As Stoebe notes, Saul's self-inflicted death stands beyond the realm of suicide proper, for the certain capture and torture and by the enemy, to say nothing of its shame, dictated its own set of moral demands.[547] Saul's self-inflicted death is a warrior's realization of death's certainty. In this sense, there is a ring of the heroic in Saul's dying. Stoebe also characterizes the armor-bearer's refusal to violate his lord and his own self-inflicted death as a testimony to Saul which adds to the heroic pathos.[548] The heroic tone is echoed in the men of Jabesh-Gilead who come and retrieve the body of the king and his sons, for the name of Jabesh-Gilead recalls a happier time, 1 Sam 11, where Saul took the role of the strong hero and defeated Nahash the Ammonite. Even so, this self-inflicted death is also a symbolic end to Saul's path of self-destruction. The mixture of the heroic and the self-destructive creates the tragedy emphasized by the traditional stripping of armor and the decapitation of king and sons.[549]

In some battle narratives, such as the *Enūma eliš* and the propagandistic royal narratives, death touches only the enemy as an indication of the clear lines between right and wrong. While that general principle pervades the tradition as a whole, many stories also recognizes the reality of death for everyone, and often its tragedy touches the hero in the death of his friend. Death within "our" camp creates mimesis, and it often has a function the character development of the hero. As A.B. Lord has observed, the hero attracts substitutes who die in his place: the false death of the hero.

As the prime example, Lord cites the case of Patroclus, the heroic friend of the *Iliad*, who dies dressed as Achilles.[550] From the *Gilgamesh Epic*, I would add the death of Enkidu

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[547] For the discussion on suicide in the face of capture by the enemy as a neutral moral action, cf. Chapter I, p. 4.

[548] Stoebe, *Kommentar*, 527.

[549] The stripping of the slain and the mutilation of the corpse by decapitation are traditional motifs, cf. Chapter III, n. 161.

[550] A.B. Lord, "Tradition and the Oral Poet," 22-23.

who dies in order to appease the anger of the gods which is directed at both hero and friend (*Gilg* VII-IX). In both the *Iliad* and the *Gilgamesh Epic*, the false death of the hero marks an important shift in the narrative. The alienated and withdrawn Achilles returns after the death of Patroclus to assume his place as hero in the story. Gilgamesh, confronted with the death of his friend, gives up the pursuit of heroic glory and turns to a heroic but futile pursuit of immortality. While the importance of the heroic friend must not be underestimated, the friend is nevertheless an obstacle to the hero's realization of an individual victory, especially where the hero is struggling primarily with himself. Friendship with its resources of counsel and support can bring the hero only part way in this struggle. Ultimately, the hero must stand alone because the story of battle is the story of life, and some battles in life can only be faced alone—with death holding primacy of place. Therefore the heroic friend must die. In David-Saul narrative, the deaths of three characters function in different ways as the false death of the hero: the deaths of Jonathan, of the armor-bearer, and of Saul.

In view of the examples cited above, the death of Jonathan, the heroic friend, best fulfills the motif. In one sense, however, Jonathan has been dead to the hero David since their separation in 1 Sam 21:1. Jonathan's death only confirms what is already a reality for David. More importantly, the prince's death functions as a dimension of Saul's death, as an image of the destruction which Saul brings, not only upon himself, but also upon all who are near him. Ironically, Jonathan becomes part of this destruction because of his faithfulness to his father. The prince's dream of being with David in the hero's kingdom (23:17; 20:14) goes unfulfilled in this realistic tale of conflicting loyalties where the ideal vision of the battle narrative is broken by human finitude and by the necessary choices which this realism demands. As such, the broken world of David and Jonathan stands closer to that of the *Iliad* than to idealistic realm of the *Enūma eliš*, for right and wrong are not divided neatly and clearly into opposing camps. By choosing Saul, Jonathan chooses faithfulness to his father and tragedy, and this choice is consonant with his faithfulness to David. Such is the heroic sadness of Jonathan, the prince and the friend.

Already in Chapter I, I have argued that the king's armor-bearer is a figure for David. In 16:21, Saul makes David his personal armor-bearer and thereby creates the link between the hero and this role.[551] Also like David in 1 Sam 24 and 26, the armor-bearer refuses to kill the king even though the violence could be justified. Therefore, the armor-bearer's death functions as a false death of the hero, but in a sense different than that outlined above. By placing the armor-bearer at the side of Saul in the moment of death, the narrator emphasizes once again the theme of David's faithfulness to the unfaithful king, even unto death.

Because the armor-bearer's death cannot be separated from Saul's death, it too is drawn into the motif of the false death, but again in a different sense. Unlike the deaths

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[551] Cf. above Chapter I, pp. 3f.

of Enkidu and Patroclus which spur the hero on to new or renewed efforts, Saul's death removes the obstacle blocking David's path to the kingship. But as I have emphasized, Saul is not treated as the traditional villain of either comedy or of the battle tradition. True, he has refused to play the traditional role of the weak king who defers to the hero, but the psychological complexity of the king creates an empathy for his tragic fall. Furthermore, David's own faithfulness to the unfaithful king, symbolized here by the armor-bearer's response, gives Saul's death, also the cause of Jonathan's death, its tragic proportion.

Thus the deaths of Saul and armor-bearer (the symbol of David's status as servant to another man) become the false death of the hero and clear the way for David to assume the new role to which he had been called: the role of king.

D. The Hero's Response to Death: 2 Sam 1-4.

Violent death brings in its wake a series of traditional responses from those who are bound to the dead person by family or covenant ties. The traditional mechanism can be seen at work several times in the *Iliad*,[552] and the duties demanded by others toward the dead carry the *Iliad* forward from Book XV to the conclusion. To the Homeric examples can be added Anat's response to the death of Baal (*CTA* 5 vi, 6 ii), the response of Daniel and Pughat to Aqhat's death (*CTA* 19), and David's response to Absolom's death (2 Sam 18:18-19:11). On the basis of this material, I have drawn up the following pattern of generic motifs:

1. messenger report of the death to an absent hero and/or family.[553]
2. reactions of grief: weeping, rending of garments, beating one's breast, etc.[554]
3. formal lament by the hero, family and/or others.[555]
4. retrieval of the body.[556]

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[552] Glaucus' response to Sarpedon's death (*Iliad* XVI 508-867), Achilles' response to Patroclus' death (XVII-XXIII), and Priam's response to Hector's death (XXIV).

[553] Messengers come to Achilles (XVIII 15-21), to Daniel and Pughat (*CTA* 19:75-93), and to David for both Amnon's and Absolom's death (2 Sam 13:30-33; 18:19-32). In *Baal and Mot*, messengers announce the death of the hero to El (*CTA* 5 vi 1-10; actually the false death of the hero, cf. *CTA* 6 iii-v). In *Aqhat*, the announcement is preceded by a drought resulting from the death of Aqhat; however, both Daniel and Pughat assume that Aqhat still lives (*CTA* 19:20-74). Dramatic irony is found also in 2 Sam 18:19-33 where a misleading or false report precedes the accurate report. In the *Iliad*, the report is preceded by Achilles' premonition of Patroclus' death as he watches the Achaeans flee before the Trojans (XVIII 1-14). Thus it is not uncommon for the report of the death to be prepared by dramatic irony or some foreboding which raises the tension.

[554] Cf. especially, *Iliad* XVIII 22-51; XXII 405-415; *CTA* 5 vi 11-31; *CTA* 6 i 1-10; *CTA* 19:93-96; 2 Sam 19:1a; also *Gilg*. VIII ii 15-23.

[555] Cf. the discussion below on the lament, n. 567.

[556] In the *Iliad*, a battle is fought to retrieve the bodies of Sarpedon and Patroclus (XVI 508-618; XVII;

5. burial of the dead, often with a time of mourning preceding or following.[557]

6. The avenging of the death by the hero/family.[558]

The motifs centering specifically on the rites of grief and burial (no. 2,3,5) reflect the general response to any death. The shadow of the motifs can be seen in the report of Samuel's death (1 Sam 25:1; 28:3), and their fullness is found in the response of Gilgamesh to Enkidu's death (*Gilg.* VIII). Where the motifs of retrieving the body and avenging the death involve battle, they are filled out with motifs drawn from the traditional battle pattern.

1. David's response to the deaths of Saul and Jonathan: 2 Sam 1:1 - 2:7.

The stories from 1 Sam 31:11 to 2 Sam 2:7 reveals the motifs and pattern postulated above, but it begins with fourth and fifth motifs:

1 Sam 31:11-13 4 & 5. The retrieval and burial of the bodies:

The men of Jabesh Gilead retrieve the bodies of Saul and his sons

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XVIII 148-242). Hector's body is retrieved not by battle but by the petition of his father (Bk XXIV). In *Baal and Mot*, Anat has the body retrieved by Shapash (*CTA* 6 i 11-16). In *Aqhat*, Daniel has Baal strike down eagles three times until he is able to recover the remains of Aqhat from the entrails of the last eagle (*CTA* 19:107-147).

[557] Sarpedon's body, recovered ultimately by Apollo, is washed, anointed and then born to the hero's native land by Sleep and Death (*Iliad* XVI 679-683). Achilles washes and anoints the body of Patroclus and then spends the night in lament. Achilles refuses to bury his friend until the death is avenged (i.e. the slaying of Hector in Bk XXII), but even then the inconsolable Achilles still refuses to bury his friend until the ghost of Patroclus appears and begs to be buried. The funeral is followed by games celebrated in memory of the friend (Bk XXIII). Gilgamesh, in a similar manner, refuses to bury Enkidu until a worm emerges from the friend's nose signifying the certain destruction of death (*Gilg*. Assy. X ii 5-9); the burial is recorded in *Gilg*. VIII iii which is poorly preserved. Anat buries Baal and then has great sacrifices offered (*CTA* 6 i 16-31). The burial of Aqhat is followed by seven years of mourning (*CTA* 19:170-189). Absolom is buried immediately without David's participation.

[558] B. Fenik notes that it is common for a man to avenge his slain "friend"/"brother"; *Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad*, 139, 162. In the examples which I have used, the wounded Glaucus, exhorted by the dying Sarpedon, re-enters the battle to avenge the death of his friend; however Apollo plays the central role in the death of Patroclus with Hector adding the final blow (XVI 508-867). The death of Patroclus then causes Achilles to return to the battle in order to avenge his friend's death by killing Hector (XVIII-XXII) No one is able to avenge the death of the Trojan hero, for his death in the *Iliad* represents the downfall of Troy. It should be noted that the duties of retrieving the bodies of the slain and the avenging of their deaths provides the impetus for the last nine books of the *Iliad*. Anat destroys Mot although he later returns (*CTA* 6 ii). In *Aqhat*, Pughat asks for and receives the commission from Daniel to avenge the death of her brother (19:190-202). Pughat prepares for battle as a hero but hides her intention with the garments of a woman (deception; *CTA* 19:203-208); the text breaks off before the motif is fulfilled. David does not take vengeance directly upon Joab for slaying Absolom, but the king removes Joab and replaces him as commander of the army with Amasa, a detail rich in psychological realism.

	from the Philistines; after burning the bodies, they bury the bones in Jabesh.
2 Sam 1:1-10.	1. Messenger report
	An Amalekite announces to David that he has killed the wounded Saul.
2 Sam 1:11-12	2. Actions of grief
	David and his followers lament and weep.
2 Sam 1:13-16	6. Avenging the death
	David commands one of his men to strike down the Amalekite for killing the anointed of the Lord.
2 Sam 1:17-27	3. Lament: David sings his lament for Saul and Jonathan.
2 Sam 2:1-4.	Hero's reward.
	David, as directed by an oracle, goes up to Hebron where the men of Judah make him king.
2 Sam 2:5-7	Reward for retrievers.
	David blesses the men of Jabesh and offers them a covenant.[559]

The theoretical pattern which I set forth above has been rearranged in this story, but not without reason.

First of all, the men of Jabesh bury Saul and his sons instead of David, for these servants of the king evoke the tradition of Saul, the great battle hero in 1 Sam 11. Without the recall of this tradition, Saul's death would lack this important overtone, and the heroic tone of David's lament would lack context. The mixing of the other motifs results primarily from the identification of messenger and slayer.

On his arrival, the Amalekite does obeisance to David, and in response to David's questions, the messenger announces that he has struck down Saul at the king's own request. The Amalekite is careful to insist that he "knew that (Saul) could not live after he had fallen" (1:10a). This news has not been brought gratuitously as the narrative insinuates, for the speech ends with the presentation of Saul's crown and armlet to David whom the Amalekite addresses as David "lord" (*ʾādôn*); 1:10b). David rejects this show of fealty because the inviolability of the "Lord's anointed" takes precedence even over Saul's just fear of falling into enemy hands, a theme seen already in the stance of David (1 Sam 24 and 26) and of the armor-bearer (1 Sam 31). As a result, David avenges the death of Saul by having the Amalekite killed.

For the audience, the dramatic irony is twofold. Not only is the Amalekite repaid with death instead of reward, he also lies about his role in the death of Saul. The story of

[559] Note the covenant terminology: *ʿśh ḥesed* (2:5); *ʿśh ḥesed wʾĕmet*, *ʿśh ṭôbâ* (2:6).

Saul's death, told by the narrator in 1 Sam 31, makes no mention of the Amalekite. This discrepancy should not be ascribed to different traditions, as recent scholars have recognized; rather the audience is led to conclude that the Amalekite lies.[560] The untrustworthy character of the Amalekite is connoted by his nationality, a traditional enemy of Israel. Grønbæk, furthermore, sees the appearance of the Amalekite as part of a larger pattern. Saul's rejection comes as a result of his campaign against the Amalekites (1 Sam 15), and David's rise to kingship is preceded by his victory over the same people (1 Sam 30). Thus the Amalekite's gift of Saul's crown and armlet to David symbolize the role of this enemy in the larger story as the fulcrum for the rise and fall of David and Saul.[561] Indeed the Amalekites have appeared much too often in this narrative to be a mere realistic detail.

Morgenstern has argued that David by having the Amalekite killed assumes the legal role of *gōʾēl*, that is, the next of kin who must avenge a death; the hero thereby asserts his kinship with Saul through Michal which subtly underlines his claim to the throne.[562] Without dismissing Morganstern's observation entirely, I would note that this duty is assumed in the *Iliad* by the heroic friends, Glaucus and Achilles.[563] David assumes this role of the heroic friend and servant as seen in his famous lament over Saul and Jonathan.

2. The hero's lament: 2 Sam 1:19-27.

As Gregory Nagy demonstrates in his study *The Best of the Achaeans*, lamentation plays an important role in the archaic Greek tradition because grief (πένθος) testifies to the greatness of a slain warrior and thus exalts the warrior's glory and fame (κλέος).[564] In the *Iliad*, Patroclus' death evokes from Achilles passionate, even violent, grief which, in turn, establishes the glory of the friend. The outpouring of Achilles' grief is rooted in his friendship (φίλοτης) with Patroclus who is "φίλος" ("beloved") to the hero than all of the other comrades (ἑταίροι).[565] Likewise David's lament confirms his undying loyalty and heroic love to both Saul and Jonathan and thereby assures the glory of both king and prince.

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[560] Such is the general position of scholars today in contrast to the source critical theories of earlier scholars; cf. Grønbæk, *Geschichte vom Aufstieg*, 216-218 where he reviews the literature.

[561] Ibid. 218-221.

[562] J. Morganstern, "David and Jonathan," *JBL* 78 (1959) 322-325, esp. 325. Cf. also the speculative article by J.D. Levenson and B. Halpern, "The Political Import of David's Marriages," *JBL* 99 (1980) 507-518.

[563] Cf. n. 552 above

[564] G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore/London 1979) Ch. 6, "Lamentation and the Hero," esp. 94-95, 98.

[565] Ibid. 106. As Nagy says, "the factor of personal involvement or non-involvement decides whether an epic situation calls for *penthos* or *kleos*.

The lament is divided by three "refrains" (1:19,25,27) into two sections (1:20-24,26).[566] The first section (1:20-24) opens with a call *not* to lament lest the daughters of the Philistines find joy in Israel's grief. This seems to run counter to the tradition in which, according to H.P. Muller, the hero traditionally calls upon others to lament.[567] By inverting the tradition, David suggests the depth of loss.

The curse against the place of death (Gilboa) is a feature found also in *Aqht*.[568] The apostrophe of the mountains continues the personal tone, and the image of height and mass evokes the grandeur of heroism, as in 1:19. While the curse conjures up the violence of drought and wasteland, the image of the rain and especially the dew suggest gentle and normal growth which has been obliterated. The juxtaposition of violence and gentleness continues in the next line:

> For there the shield of the mighty was defiled
> the shield of Saul not anointed with oil (1:21a).

The anointing of a shield would seem to be a mundane detail of military maintenance. The denial of the detail underlines death's destructive power which precludes all return to the small pieces of ordinary existence. On another level, the "anointing with oil" recalls the designation of a king (1:14,16), and the shield, the image of protection, becomes a symbol for Saul and his kingship which has been defiled.

David now turns to the indomitable courage of Saul and Jonathan (1:22), and then sings of the unity of father and son in death as in life (1:23a). This theme, reiterated by the parallel constructions, is drawn from the context of covenant and its attendant faithfulness as the word "beloved" (*nʾhb*) especially suggests; and the intensity of the

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[566] For a discussion of the reconstruction of these verses, cf. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 122-123, n. 4.

[567] H.P. Müller's study of the form of the lament relies so heavily upon Gilgamesh's lament over Enkidu (*Gilg.* VIII) as a guide for the form that I find it difficult to take the conclusion as a general theoretical pattern; still Müller provides much that is interesting; "Gilgameschs Trauergesang und die Gattung der Totenklage," *ZA* 68 (1978) 233-250, esp. 235-240. He presents six elements; the third speaks to the point at hand:

1. An opening address to the dead person using an attribute to define the relationship: brother/ sister/lord; cf. Jer 22:18; also 1 Kgs 13:20; *Gilg.* VIII i 3.
2. Remembrance of the lineage of the dead (*Gilg.* VIII i 3-6).
3. A call for others to mourn the dead emphasizing wondrous deeds completed by the hero (*Gilg.* VIII i 7-40.
4. The singer's personal lament over the dead (*Gilg.* VIII i 42 ii 3).
5. A description of the heroism of the dead in form of metaphor (*Gilg.* VIII ii 4-6,8-9; 2 Sam 1:23b)
6. A presentation of the conflict between past glory and present loss (*Gilg.* VIII ii 7,10-14)

[568] Daniel curses three towns connected with Aqhat's death in *CTA* 19:151-169. Gibson notes the parallel to 2 Sam 1:21; *Canaanite Myths and Legends*^{2}, 119, n. 1.

relation is emphasized by "dear" (*nʿm*). The panegyric ends with the images of the lion and the eagle, images of heroism (Exod 19:4; 1 Sam 17:34). The first section ends with a return to the daughters, this time those of Israel whom David calls to weep and to remember spoils of victory which Saul showered upon them. The reference again to women evokes the sensitivity which David seeks from the juxtaposition of terrible violence with fallen splendor.

The second section of the lament (1:26) records David's personal lament over Jonathan which begins with an address to the slain warrior as brother.[569]

> Distressed I am over you, my brother Jonathan;
>
> you were very dear (*nʿm*) to me.
>
> Wonderful was your love (*ʾhb*) to me
>
> more than the love (*ʾhb*) of women.

As I have argued at length, the word "brother" evokes the covenant. This overtone is picked up also in the words "dear" (*nʿm*) and "love" which define David's relation to Jonathan in the same words used to describe the relationship of Saul and Jonathan as "beloved and dear" (*ʾhb* and *nʿm*) in 1:23.

David's assertion that his love for Jonathan was "more wonderful than the love of women," among other things, has given rise to insinuations and to affirmations that the friendship between David and Jonathan was homosexual.[570]

* * *

Excursus

The text does not report any physical sexual relations between David and Jonathan, and therefore the question of homosexuality is a symbolic one. This, of course, would depend on how one defined homosexuality. Of the discussions which have come to my attention with regard to the question of homosexuality in this text, I have found that of Elaine Levy-Valensi the most interesting even though I disagree a major part of her analysis.

Using the Freudian model, she defines "homosexuality" symbolically as "the refusal of the other as other" because the other "is experienced as a narcissistic attack on 'my'

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[569] For the covenant overtone of "brother," cf. Chapter VIII, n. 448 and 449.

[570] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 93, cf. discussion below. Also, R. Patai says that it "could be" in *Sex and Family in the Bible and in the Middle East* (NY 1959) 172. M.H. Pope refers to insinuations in "Homosexuality" *IDB Supple*, 416. In general, biblical scholars have not taken this approach. Other literature is cited by Elaine Levy-Valensi in *L'enigma dell' omosessualità*, pp. 99, 121.

own existence and as a rival in power; as a result, the other must be annihilated in order to remove that threat."[571] "Homosexuality" is able to relate only to what is "like" and so much reject what is "other." She then attempts to identify stories which represent this pattern symbolically, and she identifies as "homosexual myths" the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1-16) and that of the angels whom Lot must protect at Sodom (Gen 19) because both stories are constructed upon this pattern of rejecting the other even though there is no explicit homosexual behavior reported in Gen 4:1-16.[572] In this vain, she also identifies racism and prejudice as symbolically "homosexual" actions because the other is identified only and other and is not seen as being "like."

The tendency of modern psychology to interpret human phenomenon primarily in terms of sexual metaphors is well known. Without denying the power of sexual symbols and metaphors, one might choose a more neutral basis for analysis, such as destructive and generative relationships. While these categories lack the shock of sexual metaphors, they are perhaps less susceptible to distortion, but I shall proceed with Levy-Valensi's defiinition of the argument.

Turning to the David-Saul narrative, Levy-Valensi calls Saul's (*sic*!) actions "homosexual" because the king sees David as a personal threat to himself and his power; thus the king attempts to annihilate the hero. The symbolic pattern which she uncovers is insightful, especially the comparison of Saul to Cain which I pursued in my analysis above.[573] (cf. above p.139f). As for the relationship between David and Jonathan, Levy-Valensi adamantly denies that this friendship reproduces the symbolic pattern of "homosexuality"; however, she does not judge the relationship to be a mature friendship of creative and life-giving love (i.e. symbolically "heterosexual"; as an example of true friendship between men she cites the relationship between Abraham and Lot in Gen 13.[574] Instead, she calls the relationship between David and Jonathan "homophilia" by which she means a relationship in which the two people identify with their own likeness in the other but are unable to distinguish the other as other.[575]

Levy-Valensi's interpretation is based, first of all, on 1 Sam 18:1-4: Jonathan loved David "as his own life's principle" (*k^{e}napšô*). She wants to contrast this with the love of neighbor "as yourself,"[576] but, as I have argued in Chapter VIII, the language is traditional and evokes the traditional relationship of covenant. Other elements of her exegesis are problematic as well; at times, one is unsure whether she is analyzing the Bible or the Zohar or her own mix of the two.

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[571] Levy-Valensi, *L'enigma*¸ 40, 150.

[572] Ibid. 82-84, 92-96, 150-151.

[573] Cf. Chapter VIII, p. 139.

[574] Levy-Valensi, *L'enigma*, 153-154.

[575] Ibid. 73, 118-120.

[576] Ibid. 124-125; cf. Lev 19:18

In 1 Sam 20, David and Jonathan reveal a fear of death at the hand of the other. According to Levy-Valensi's symbolic model for "homosexuality," this fear could be interpreted as "homosexual." In my interpretation which was influenced by her discussion, I analyzed this fear as part of the finite horizon of human love, and I stressed that David and Jonathan resolved this fear by setting their love within the context of the Lord's covenant. Levy-Valensi also says that the role of "homophilia" seems to have run its course by the end of this chapter. Still she wants to link the death of Jonathan with what she sees as his immature love for David.

Her argument results largely from an attempt to interpret the function of this relationship within the story in terms of Freud's category of latent homosexuality in his model of psychological development. Because Jonathan never moves beyond his total identification with David, she argues, he "passes the fine line of the instinct of death and *ipso facto* devotes himself to the same death as Saul."[577] As for David's part in the relationship, she sees the key in the line of the hero's lament about his love for Jonathan being "more wonderful than the love of women." She concludes,

> Only after the death of Jonathan can David have a glimmer of understanding of the ambiguous significance of the bond which united them.[578]

According to Levy-Valensi, David's relationship with Jonathan prepares him for a mature heterosexual relationship which comes in the relationship with Bathsheba (*sic*!) and results in the birth of Solomon (2 Sam 11-12). To achieve this interpretation, she must also characterize David's relationship with Abigail (1 Sam 25) as immature because it does not result in the birth of the heir.[579] Here the strain of her interpretation becomes apparent.

In reply, I would make three points: First, Jonathan does not die because of his relationship to David but because of his faithfulness to his father Saul. On this basis, I also reject Gunn's assessment: "Jonathan's intensive and exclusive devotion to David is strongly suggestive of a homosexuality which in turn would represent a denial of Saul's dynastic hopes."[580] This leads to my second point. Jonathan perceives David as other in that he recognizes David to be the one chosen to succeed Saul instead of himself. Saul's destruction flows from his refusal to accept this reality. And my final point, the David-Saul narrative is not modeled on Freud's model of psychological development as Levy-Valensi conceives it. The relationship between Abigail and David cannot be impugned because Solomon is not born of their union. Furthermore, the heroic friendship

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[577] Ibid. , 144.

[578] Ibid. 142-143

[579] Ibid. 96-97

[580] Gunn, Fate of King Saul, 93.

between David and Jonathan is presented as real friendship between men within the context of covenant. Unlike the heroic friendships between Achilles and Patroclus, and between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, David and Jonathan are separated before the death of the heroic friend because the prince's commitment to his father and king takes precedence over their friendship. This decision forces David into the traditional position where the hero must act alone without the support of the friend. One could pursue the psychological ramifications of this motif, but one need not turn to a Freudian model. While this text has received much attention in recent years, it is also true that the Scriptures do not always address our questions.

* * *

The expression of the love "more wonderful than the love of women" must be approached as a contrast between the loves of war and the loves experienced in the ordinary time of peace, here expressed as the contrast between the love of men and women. The intensity produced by the nearness of death in war heightens these relationships which make a primary demand on the other's loyalty.[581]

As A.B. Lord observes, women were excluded from war as part of "the heroic ethic"; thus "Meho refuses to stay a month with his betrothed, even one night, because this is dishonorable."[582] In Book XVIII of the *Iliad*, Achilles sends forth Patroclus to bring help to his fellow warriors, but the hero refuses to join the battle and makes the return of the woman Briseis his reason for refusal. While the complexity of Achilles' motivation cannot be reduced to simple terms, the hero's stated reason underlines the flaw of his position. The demands of loyalty to the warriors demands that he set aside personal grievances which can only be dealt with in peace; the threat of the moment demand that Achilles come to the aid of his friends. Because he does not, Patroclus will die.

A similar "ethic" has already been seen in 1 Sam 21:4-5 where David assures the priest euphemistically that his imaginary men are ritually pure according to his custom even for an ordinary (i.e. non-military) journey. The clearest example of this "heroic ethic" in the Old Testament is found in 2 Sam 11. When Bathsheba reveals to David that she is carrying his child, the king recalls her husband Uriah so that he will sleep with his wife and think that he is the father. Uriah, however, refuses to sleep in his own house with Bathsheba "while the servants of my lord (David) are camping in the open fields at war"

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[581] Though admittedly an *ad hominem* argument, I would like to point to a story on American veterans of the Vietnam war who gathered for "a twelve year-on reunion organized by CBS News, with Newsweek cooperation ... . It was a made-for-television event, but the artifice fell away in the rush of sentiment and the reawakening of that powerful bonding they had known in danger together – love stronger in its way (Donald M.) Stagnaro guessed, than most have felt even for their wives"; "Reunion," Newsweek 24 (Dec. 14, 1981) 97. The reported statement of Mr. Stagnaro is very similar to David's. While it would be interesting to know whether this modern version has been directly influenced by the biblical tradition, it is significant nonetheless that the image of a love more wondrous/stronger than that of women/wives continues to serve as a description for the bond felt by those who fight together.

[582] A.B. Lord, *Singer of Tales*, 106.

(2 Sam 11:11). David has not only committed adultery, he has betrayed his covenant relationship with his servants, and the king compounds his sin by repaying Uriah's faithfulness to the "heroic ethic" with murder.

The subordination of the loves of peace to the love of war can also be seen Abner's reaction to Ishbaal's accusation that the commander has entered into a liaison with Saul's concubine; the commander replies:

> I now show loyalty (*ḥesed)* to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not given you into the hand of David; and yet you charge me today with a fault concerning a woman (2 Sam 3:8).

Abner seek to dismiss the charge by appealing to the traditional subordination of women to men, peace to war, yet the liaison with the royal concubine suggests rebellion[583] and is not unlike David's violation of his covenant with Uriah.

While the traditional imagery is cast in terms of men and women, one must not reduce the symbols to unbending literal terms. After Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, assists the Israelite spies, she demands from them a covenant to protect her house from destruction (Josh 2). Perhaps the action of Jael in Judg 4 should also be interpreted similarly (cf. 1 Sam 15:6). Even the images of war and peace must not be limited to their literal sense, for Ruth says to Naomi essentially what Ittai the Gittite says to David:

> "May the Lord do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you."[584]

The love between David and Jonathan is cast in this traditional mold with its attendant language, but their relationship is set within a new, more realistic context. Unlike Achilles and Patroclus who face a common enemy in an opposing camp, David and Jonathan confront the threat of death within their own camp. Saul, to whom both are sworn as servants, brings the vision of death. Even so, the storyteller casts the story in the motifs of the tradition, and David's lament over Saul and Jonathan is a distillation of that tradition.

3. Recognition of the hero as king: 2 Sam 2:1-4.

David, guided by an oracle, goes to Hebron where the men of Judah anoint him king over the house of Judah. This passage formalizes what has happened already in 2 Sam 1 where David receives the obeisance (*hštḥwh* 1:2) of the Amalekite who offers him Saul's crown and armlet calls him lord (*ʾādôn*; 1:10). David also performs the traditional tasks

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[583] In 2 Sam 16:20-23 and 1 Kgs 2:13-25, the taking of the king's concubine(s) is tantamount to a claim on kingship.

[584] Ruth 1:16-18; cf. 2 Sam 15:21 quoted above on p. 134.

of a king: he receives embassies, passes judgment, and commands others to carry out his command.[585] No longer will David head his army on the battlefield, but his commander Joab. All of these actions create a change of role for David both in the story and in the perception of the audience. However, David's kingship over Judah is only semi-climactic. A new tension is introduced in 2 Sam 2:8-10: Abner makes Ishbaal, Saul's son, king over Israel, and thereby sets up a new obstacle to the fulfillment of Lord's promise to David in 1 Sam 16:1-13.

4. The death of Abner and Ishbosheth: 2 Sam 2:7-4:12.

In this section, the theme of blood guilt returns, and the story is constructed of motifs drawn from the battle narrative and especially from the hero's response to the death of a friend. A pattern, very similar to that in 2 Sam 1, is repeated in 2 Sam 4:

death	4:5-7. Two brothers murder Ishbaal by stealth.
messenger report	4:8. The slayers/messengers report the death to and slayer David and present him with the head of the dead king.
avenging of death	4:9-12a. David condemns the two brothers on the basis of the precedent set in 2 Sam 1 and has the men hung and mutilated in order to avenge the death.
burial	4:12b. Ishbosheth is buried with Abner.

The narrative lacks the grandeur of 2 Sam 1, but grandeur would have been inappropriate.

The basic pattern for responding to a death is found also in 2:12-3:39. The section opens with a battle narrative (2:12-32), dominated by a death episode (2:18-23) in which Abner, the enemy commander kills Asahel, the brother of Joab, David's commander. Although Joab's initial attempt fails (2:24-28), his brother's death is avenged (3:26-27). The story, however, is moving toward heightened mimesis and away from the traditional content of motif, for both Abner and Joab are presented as men who act with the best and the worst of motives.

To Abner's credit, he recognizes David as the chosen king in language which mirrors the statements of Jonathan and Abigail.[586] After meeting David's condition, the return of Michal, Abner enters into a covenant with the hero who sends the commander away "in peace."[587] Abner's motives are not pure. A breach has occurred between himself and Ishbaal, Saul's son and puppet king. Ishabaal has accused the commander of lying with

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[585] David's role as judge has been discussed by K.W. Whitelam as a manifestation of the ideal of the just king in *The Just King*, 100-105.

[586] 2 Sam 3:9-10,17-18,21; 1 Sam 23:16-18; 25:30.

[587] Covenant vocabulary: "lord" (*ʾādôn*) in 3:21; "cut a covenant" (*krt bryt*) in 3:21; "peace" *šālôm* in 3:21. For the relationship of meal and covenant, cf. n. 539 above.

Saul's concubine. In both 2 Sam 16:20-23 and 1 Kgs 2:13-25, relations with the king's concubine is understood as a rebellious attempt to seize royal power, and Abner's actions are open to a similar interpretation, for he has a clear sense that he is the power behind the throne. (3:12). Abner reacts angrily to Ishbaal's rebuke, and this colors his alliance with David.

By taking revenge upon his brother's slayer, Joab acts in a traditional manner, but he takes revenge by deception. Learning that David has sent Abner away "in peace," Joab accuses Abner of spying. Without David's knowledge, Joab recalls Abner, pretends to speak with him privately, but kills him. In this Joab disregards the covenant made by his king with another man, and the deed will haunt Joab (1 Kgs 2:5).

The contradictions in both Abner and Joab present a realistic characterization. The storyteller, however, again presents David as the ideal by mixing the traditional response to the death of a friend with the affirmation of the king's innocence:

3:28a David affirms his innocence.

3:28b-29 David does not avenge Abner's death by killing Joab; still the king curses Joab and his house forever.

3:30 Joab's motive is restated: the avenging of the death of his brother.

3:31 mourning ritual.

3:32 burial.

3:33-34 lament.

3:35 mourning ritual following the burial: David fasts.

3:36-39 The storyteller reaffirms David's innocence by telling of the people's belief in the king's innocence.

The storyteller is adamant about David's innocence of blood guilt, not only here but also in the case of Saul (1 Sam 24; 26; 31; 2 Sam 1) and in the case of Ishbaal (2 Sam 4). This emphasis on David's innocence has caused scholars, in general, to assert that the story is a piece of propaganda seeking to exonerate a guilty David. Such is the position of K.W. Whitelam who says,

> The conclusion to be drawn is that David was involved in this act, and its potentially damaging consequences were only alleviated by an outward demonstration of mourning as a skillful propaganda exercise.[588]

[588] K.W. Whitelam, *The Just King*, 109. One of the boldest judgments against David has been leveled by J.C. Vanderkam who concludes that "the zeal to exonerate David" gives "a historian... sufficient warrant for concluding that David both desired and planned the death of Abner and that he was successful in concealing his part in the murder"; still Vanderkam recognizes that this conclusion is "contrary to the present form of the narrative"; "David's Complicity in the Deaths of Abner and Eshbaal," *JBL* 99 (1980)

The argument is based upon an implicit *Sitz im Leben*: the narrative was written to justify David's accession to the throne. One could suggest an alternative *Sitz im Leben*: After the division of the kingdom, regicide becomes a feature of the political scene in the northern kingdom, but in the south with its ideal of the Davidic kingdom, regicide never becomes a factor except during the reign of the northerner Athaliah. What role does the theme of inviolability play in the history? Does this story relate to that history? This argument does not necessarily rule out the former *Sitz im Leben*, for as Martin Buss points out, a text may have more than one *Sitz im Leben*.[589]

This negative assessment of David, which is very popular at the moment, reflects a hermeneutics of suspicion; that is to say, we find it difficult to believe in an ideal hero and king. Thus we assume the worst and reduce the text to a propagandistic piece of self-serving royal rhetoric. If this is true, the text tells us nothing more than we believe, tells us that the perceived limits are indeed the final boundaries of hope. If this is true, one must ask how it can be the Word of God.

I find problematic these attempts to reduce the story just to a political document. From a literary perspective, the insistence on David's innocence presents him as the ideal hero who becomes the ideal king untainted by blood guilt according to Abigail's call in 1 Sam 25:26,31. Such idealism stands in sharp contrast to the realistic finitude of Saul and Abner and Joab. For this reason, David's idealism becomes difficult to believe. The presuppositions of Saul and Abner and Joab were and are the ordinary presuppositions, yet these are the presuppositions of death. It is precisely the realism of Saul and Abner

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533. A similar, though less vehement, conclusion is reached by N.P. Lemche, "David's Rise," *JStOT* 10 (1978) 2-25, esp. 17.

McCarter believes much of the material in the stories of David to be credible, but with such strong "circumstantial evidence," he finds that "it is difficult to believe... that (David) did not at least close his eyes to the political assassinations that in the end place him on the throne"; "The Apology of David," *JBL* 99 (1980) 489-504, esp. p. 502, n. 24. McCarter's article attempts to demonstrate that the story of David's Rise is primarily an apology constructed to answer seven possible accusations against David in his rise to the throne, the last two accusations being David's involvement in the deaths of Abner and Ishbaal (pp. 501-502). This conclusion is based on the insight of H.A. Hoffner, Jr.: "Propaganda and Political Justification in Hittite Historiography" in *Unity and Diversity: Essays in History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (ed. H. Goedicke and J.J.M. Roberts) (Baltimore/London 1975) 49-62.

H.M. Wolf explored the relationship of the Hittite material to 1 Sam 16:14 - 2 Sam 5 in a doctoral dissertation directed by Hoffner: "*The Apology of Hattusilis*" *Compared with Other Ancient Near Eastern Political Self-Justifications* (Diss.: Brandeis 1967). Wolf attempts to argue that both "The Apology of Hattusilis" and "David's Rise" manifest the same form which he calls "apology." I disagree with this form-critical conclusion. Both stories are shaped from motifs of the battle tradition. However, I would agree that apology is a major thematic concern of "Hattusilis," but this is also true of the *Enūma eliš* which justifies Marduk's position as head of the pantheon by virtue of his victory over Tiamat. Likewise the story of Baal and Yamm justifies Baal's "kingship forever," and the same may be said for the story of Esarhaddon's victory over his rebellious brothers; cf. *Esarhaddon*. Thus the apologetic tone of David's story reflects a common concern found in battle literature where the hero becomes king.

[589] M.J. Buss, "The idea of Sitz im Leben—History and Critique," *ZAW* 90 (1978) 158-170.

and Joab which makes David's idealism so important and so necessary. The ideal hero breaks the cycle of destruction and offers the hope of a new politics based on perfect faithfulness.

Chapter XI:
The Recognition of the Hero and His Reward: 2 Sam 5-8

The battle narrative typically ends with the hero returning to receive recognition and reward from his leader, the court, and others. The final chapters of the David-Saul narrative correspond to these motifs which have already been discussed broadly. In this final chapter, I want to define these motifs and their patterns more precisely in order to illuminate the way in which 2 Sam 5-8 builds upon and twists the tradition.

1. Recognition and the Hero's Renown

Victory brings renown, yet the goal is not the fleeting fame of the moment, but enduring renown. As Gregory Nagy argues, imperishable renown and glory (*kleos*) serves as a primary motivating force in the *Iliad*;[590] however, the pursuit of glory and immortality is inextricably bound up with death. Patroclus dies in the pursuit of glory (XVI 87-90), and Achilles knows in a revelation from his mother that if he fights, he will die young, but his "*kleos* shall be imperishable" (IX 410-416). When Odysseus meets the dead Achilles in Hades, he confirms the validity of the dead hero's choice:

> Thus not even in death have you lost your name, but ever shall you have
> fair *kleos* among all men, Achilles (*Od*. XXIV 93-94).

Noteworthy in Odysseus' statement is the parallel between *kleos* and the "name," for, in the ancient Near East, the theme of renown is often expressed by the motif of the name, especially as the greatest or an everlasting/enduring name.2[591] Significantly, the *Enūma eliš* ends with the fifty names of Marduk which describe his exalted power and responsibilities (VI 99 – VII 144). One of the earliest reference from Mesopotamia can be found in a hymn for Šulgi, a Sumerian king, who is called "hero, lord, mighty one of the foreign lands, the 'champion' of Sumer": "Like Anshar, may your name be placed in the 'mouths' of all the lands!"[592] The endurance of the tradition can be seen in 1 Macc 6:44 where Eleazar "gave up his life to save his people and to win for himself an everlasting name."

The analysis here supports Cross' argument against S. Herrmann who would trace the "making of a great name" (*ʿśh šm gdwl*) to an Egyptian source (*ỉrỉ rn* , etc.). As Cross says, "the notion of 'making a great name' is a common Hamito-Semitic concept, forming

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[590] G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore 1981) Ch. 5.

[591] When Ningirsu/Ninurta is called to defeat Anzu, he is promised that his "name will be greatest of all" (*Anzu Myth* OB 2,10; cf. Assy. II 27). Similarly, Gilgamesh sets out on his adventure against Ḫuwawa in order to win "an enduring name" (*Gilg.* OB III iii 25 = Assy. II 160). Likewise for David; he "had more success than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was highly esteemed" (1 Sam 18:30); cf. also 2 Sam 7:9,23,26; 8:13.

[592] J. Klein, "Šulgi X" in *Three Šulgi Hymns* (Ramat-Gan Israel 1981) 133, 138. Cf. also F.R. Kraus, "Altemesopotamische Lebensfuhl," *JNES* 19 (1960) 117-132, esp. 127-131.

parallel idioms in many daughter languages."[593] By winning this name, the hero is able to establish for himself a kind of immortality which is sometimes symbolized also by the raising of stele as a permanent monument.[594]

While the specific mention of the name is common, it is not necessary for the exaltation of the hero. Judith, after her triumph, sings a victory hymn in which she proclaims that her victory "will go down through all generations of our descendants" (Jdt 8:32). The victory hymn is found in several biblical stories to celebrate the battle, the hero, and, where appropriate, the hero's kingship. The longer hymns (Exod 15; Judg 5; Jdt 16:1-17) may be viewed as an elaboration of what P.D. Miller calls the victory cry.[595] Motifs drawn from the battle narrative are used to expand the hymn, but the presentation of the plot is subordinated to the expressions of exaltation and joy, a basic knowledge of the plot being assumed.[596] Again, every extant story of a victorious hero is a celebration of the hero's glory and fame, and so of his "name." Where the story remains extant, the hero's glorious name remains imperishable.

2. The Rewards of the Hero.

The presentation of rewards is basically a function of recognition; and, as pointed out in Chapter III, the rewards may be named as an enticement in the (general) call for a hero. In 1 Sam 17:25, the men of Israel reveal that the man who kills (Goliath), the king will enrich with great riches and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

These three rewards can be related to three basic categories: material goods, dynasty

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[593] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 248-249. S. Herrmann, "Die Königsnovelle in Ägypten und Israel," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universitat*, 3 (Leipzig 1953/54) Gesellschafts und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe, Part 1, p. 41. Even so, Cross wants to argue that "to make a great name" becomes a Dtr cliché; ibid. 253.

[594] M. Weinfeld cites the line, from a stela: "I inscribed my stela and established my name forever"; *Deuteronomy* 193, n. 4; KAH II 26:10. Weinfeld also points to the word pair of "name" and "stela" in Isa 56:5. Similarly in the *Enūma eliš*, Marduk turns the enemy gods into statues and says, "Let this be a token that this may never be forgotten" (V 71-76). The establishment of a name is also related to the founding of a house (= dynasty) whereby the hero's name is carried on through the generations as with Abraham in Gen 12:2. The winning of a name is also connected with building projects; the tower of Babylon is begun in order to "make a name" (Gen 11:4). Even so, battle is the typical arena in which glory is won. As Rameses II says to his army, "God is a name (won) through fighting thenceforward" (*Battle of Kadesh* P 287).

[595] Exod 15:21; Josh 10:12b-13; 1 Sam 18:7; 21:11; 29:5. Miller makes a distinction between the "battle song" and "victory cry"; *Divine Warrior*, 29-30, 94, 103-105, 112, 116. While the terminology helps to indicate the length of the piece, the two should be seen in relationship to each other.

[596] Miller's analysis of battle motifs in *The Divine Warrior* concentrates on these hymns; cf. my critique above in Chapter V, n. 238.

(wife and progeny), house and land.

The material goods may be as simple as some form of wealth such as Saul promises, for riches reflect the value of the victory and the hero. Often the goods are drawn from the plunder: Gideon, for instance, receives as a special share of the plunder, the gold earrings of the Midianite kings from which he makes an ephod (Judg 8:24-27). Judith receives the vessels and canopy from Holofernes' bedchamber which she devotes to the Lord (Jdt 16:19). Her share of the plunder, closely related to the theme of purity, is symbolic of her victory. Similarly in the *Iliad* , the arms and armor of the slain are taken as trophies of prowess,[597] and David likewise receives, with some irony, Goliath's armor (1 Sam 17:54).

The reward of the princess is seen easily in 1 Sam 18:17-29 where David wins finally Michal. In the story of Bellerophon, the princess whom the hero marries bears three sons who are the beginning of his dynasty. The establishment of a house becomes a central theme on two levels. On the literal level, the hero, usually when he is or becomes a king, builds a house for his dwelling: a temple, if a divine hero; a palace if a human hero. The dwelling, a symbol of stability and presence, is necessary for the exercise of power.[598] As a metonym, the house becomes an image of dynasty (wife and progeny), especially for the human hero who becomes king. Both dwelling and dynasty are related to the theme of fertility which is discussed below.

The establishment of a dynasty is not limited to a battle hero or to a king; rather it forms one of the two main categories of reward given to loyal servants in the royal grants of the ancient Near East, the other being the gift of land.[599] The "free house" (i.e. tax exempt status), promised by Saul to the victor, can be related to the motif of land. Both the rewards of a house and land are found in the Egyptian story of *Sinuhe* where the hero says of the Prince of Retenu:

> He placed me in front of his children, and he married me to his eldest daughter. He allowed me to pick from his country the choicest part of what he owned on his border with another country (B 78-80).

Sinuhe praises the fertility of this land where his "offspring became strong men."

In addition to house and land, Sinuhe is appointed "an officer of (the prince's) troops" and wrought great victories.

> It went well with me in his favor, for he loved me and he recognized my bravery. He placed me at the head of his offspring when he saw my arms

[597] For the taking of armor as plunder, cf. Chapter III, n. 170.

[598] Compare: Marduk commands that a house be built for him (*Ee* V 122-124). Baal complains that he cannot rule without a house and finally receives one (*CTA* 3-4). Exod 15:17 speaks of the Lord's sanctuary; cf. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 142.

[599] M. Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East," *JOAS* 90 (1970) 184-203.

grow so strong (B 107-109)

As in 1 Sam 16:21 and 18:1,20,28, love becomes a manifestation of recognition, and appointment to an office of leadership forms a fourth category of reward. When David is received by Saul after the victory over Goliath, the hero does not receive the promised rewards of wealth, princess and free house; rather Saul takes the boy into his court as a son, and, after further victories, the king "sets him over the men of war" (1 Sam 18:5,13).

The basic rewards of the hero, therefore, can be divided into five main categories:

1. material goods acknowledging or symbolizing the hero's victory, especially plunder,
2. dwelling,
3. dynasty (wife and progeny),
4. land,
5. appointment.

3. The Reward of Kingship and its Attendant Motifs.

Kingship is a typical reward for the hero, for by his triumph over the enemy, he has demonstrated his ability to carry out the main functions of kingship: the establishment of order and peace. This material was examined some years ago by S. Mowinkel and others interested in myth and ritual.[600] More recently, Frank Moore Cross and his students have taken an interest in these motifs.[601] I shall attempt to systematize the material in the texts.

The motif of kingship involves a series of attendant motifs which may be divided into two categories: The first are images defining kingship and can be related to the rewards of the hero. The second group of motifs form the pattern by which kingship is bestowed and acknowledged.

a. The motifs defining kingship.

In his analysis of *Baal and Yamm* , Cross outlines the following "mythic pattern":

1. the combat of the divine warrior and his victory over the sea: Baal defeats Yamm (*CTA* 2 iv);

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[600] Cf. the references given below in n. 638; for a survey, cf. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 79-90.

[601] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, Ch. 5. Also P.D. Miller, *The Divine Warrior*; P.D. Hanson, "Zechariah 9"*JBL* 92 (1973) 37-59; also *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia 1975) 292-324. Much of the material is surveyed by Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth*, 208-211.

2. the building of a sanctuary on the "mount of possession" won in the battle (*CTA* 4), and
3. the god's manifestation of "eternal" kingship (*CTA* 2 iv 10-11,32-33).[602]

Cross finds the same pattern in Exod 15. A divine hero (the Lord) defeats a realistic enemy (the Egyptians) by miraculously wielding a realistic weapon (the Red Sea). The last two elements of Cross' pattern are found in 15:17 which he translates:

> You brought them, you planted them
>
> In the mount of your possession,
>
> The dais of your throne
>
> Which you made, Yahweh,
>
> The sanctuary, Yahweh
>
> Which your hands created.
>
> Yahweh will reign
>
> Forever and ever.[603]

As discussed in Chapter II, Cross has identified a similar pattern in the mythic and sacred modes. I would add one further qualification: Unlike the story of *Baal and Yamm* in which the hero becomes king, Exod 15 reflects a royal battle pattern in which the hero (the Lord) is already king. With the victory, the hero is able to bring the people to his dwelling. With this alteration, Cross' insights stand.

The most replete example of these motifs is found in the *Enūma eliš* . In the first tablet, Ea slays the primordial but malevolent father, Apsu. From this foe, Ea takes the insignia of kingship (crown and fearsome halo), makes Apsu (the sweet waters) his kingdom, and there establishes cult huts and his dwelling. Ea and his wife then bring forth a son, Marduk who will be the hero of the story (*Ee* I 1-104). Thus this opening story contains the motifs of insignia, kingdom, dwelling, and dynasty. To these motifs must be added the mountain or city.

In his analysis of *Baal and Yamm* and Exod 15, Cross links the hero's dwelling with a mountain.[604] In other stories, the mountain is replaced by the city, as in the second and main story of the *Enūma eliš*. After Marduk's victory over Tiamat, the hero plunders for himself the Tablet of Destinies as the insignia of kingship and the symbol of his victory. In addition, the other gods bring various gifts in recognition of Marduk as king.[605] Then

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[602] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 142.

[603] Ibid. 141-142.

[604] Ibid. 141-142; *CTA* 4; Exod 15:17. Cf. also Miller, *Divine Warrior*, 116-117. For the motif of the mountain, cf. also R.J. CLifford, *The Cosmic Mountain* (HSM; Cambridge MA 1972).

[605] Marduk takes the Tablets in *Ee* IV 121-122 and gives them to Anu in V 69-70; gifts are presented in IV 134, V 80-82, and VI 82-84.

the hero creates from the corpse of Tiamat the universe (his kingdom) and orders the building of the city Babylon where, as Marduk says:

> I will build a house, it will be my luxurious abode.
> I will found therein its temple,
> I will appoint cellas, I will establish my sovereignty[606]

The motif of the city designates an intermediate space in the continuum between kingdom and house, and, like the mountain, the city serves as the locus for the hero's dwelling. Unlike other heroes, Marduk neither marries nor brings forth progeny because his own kingship is to last "to the end of days" (VI 109). Also for Baal and the Lord, kingship is everlasting.[607]

These motifs can also be found in the last book of the *Odyssey*. The hero's return initiates a fight with the suitors plaguing the faithful Penelope. The victory over these enemies allows Odysseus to take possession of his house and his land, of his kingship and kingdom (the island of Ithaca), and to rejoin his wife and son (dynasty). Another and one of the most complete examples of reward and recognition completes the story of Bellerophon, already discussed above.[608]

The motifs, though adjusted for each hero and mode, are nonetheless constant and can be correlated with the motifs of the hero's reward:

Rewards of Victory	Rewards of Kingship	
appointment	kingship	
symbols of victory	symbols of kingship	
wife and progeny	dynasty:	wife and progeny
dwelling	dwelling:	temple/palace mountain/city
land	kingdom	

b. The pattern of recognition

The motifs which define kingship fit into a larger pattern for the recognition of the hero/king. Cross derives a "mythic pattern" from Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry, which

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[606] *Ee* V 122-123.

[607] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 141-142; cf. *CTA* 2 iv 10-11,32-33; Exod 15:18.

[608] "When the king [of Lycia] knew that he was the valiant offspring of a god, he kept him there, and offered him his own daughter (*marriage*) and gave to him half of all his kingly honor (*kingship*); moreover the Lycians meted out for him a demesne pre-eminent above all, a fair tract of orchard and plough-land (*land*) to possess it. And the lady bore to wise-hearted Bellerophon three children" (*progeny*; *Iliad* VI 191-196).

speaks more completely to the interrelationship of these and other motifs, especially the demise and restoration of fertility.[609] These motifs have also been studied by both P.D. Miller and P.D. Hanson, the latter providing the more synthetic analysis.[610] Drawing on their work, I propose the following:

1. Return journey to the royal or divine dwelling which may be ritualized as a procession with attendant motifs of rejoicing: music, victory hymn or shout, dance, banquet.
2. (Re)establishment of the hero as king: enthronement, crowning, investiture.
3. Recognition of the hero as king
    - by others:
        - subjects, loyal or newly conquered
        - foreign kings
        - deities
    - by means of
        - acclamation or loyalty oaths
        - traditional rewards (including tribute).
4. Recognition of others by the hero by means of traditional rewards:
    - deities, especially the divine hero
    - loyal subjects.
5. Restoration of order, fertility, and peace.

While the scene of recognition may begin on the battlefield with appropriate modification, I shall take as a departure point the return journey, or its ritual counterpart the procession.[611] The victory shout or hymn along with music and dance

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[609] Cross' pattern contains only four points, but each envelops several motifs: 1. The Divine Warrior goes forth to battle against chaos (Yamm, Leviathan, Mot). 2. Nature convulses (writhes) and languishes when the Warrior manifests his wrath. 3. The warrior-god returns to take up kingship among the gods, and is enthroned on his mountain. 4. The Divine Warrior utters his voice from his temple, and Nature again responds. The heavens fertilize the earth, animals writhe in giving birth, and men and mountains whirl in dancing and festive glee. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 162-163.

[610] P.D. Miller, *The Divine Warrior*. P.D. Hanson, "Zechariah 9" JBL 92 (1973) 37-59; also The Dawn of Apocalyptic (Philadelphia 1975) 292-324. Hanson's pattern includes the following motifs: threat, theophany of the divine warrior [= preparation for battle], combat and victory, salvation of oppressed [= release of captives, besieged city, etc.], victory shout, procession to the sanctuary (building of a temple), bringing of gifts, manifestation of reign, banquet, shalom (return to fertility or new creation); *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 301-308.

[611] As examples of the victory procession, Miller cites Ps 24; *CTA* 4 vii 7-14; Ps 68; Josh 3-5 in *Divine Warrior*, 29-30, 34, 112, 116-117. Hanson cites *Ee* V 67-89 and a number of examples in the Bible, especially in the

may be used during the procession to celebrate the hero's victory and kingship, for joy is the characteristic emotion of this final section.

The procession ends at the temple for a divine hero or at the palace for a human hero. There the hero is (re)established as king by means of actions and words. The traditional actions include the bestowal of symbols of kingship (crown, staff, or other insignia) and especially the enthronement of the hero.[612] A verbal decree of kingship plays a less significant role in these stories but is found in the *Enūma eliš*;[613] it may be carried out either by the hero's people or his god.[614] The verbal element typically appears in homage offered by others in recognition of the victor and king.

Loyal and newly conquered subjects along with the former leader and foreign kings may offer simple gestures of homage (bowing and prostration). To this, they may add goods, house, and land; conquered or subject kings typically bring tribute.[615] On the verbal level, homage is expressed by the acclamation, "PN reigns" or "May PN live." Mettinger argues that the Hebrew royal acclamation (*mālak* PN or *y*[e]*hî hammelek*) was originally an elliptic oath.[616] In the ancient Near East, the homage may include loyalty oaths or, in the case of foreign kings, treaties.[617] The human hero may also be

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psalms; *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 302, 305-308. I would add the following examples: *Battle of Kadesh*, P 330-339; *Merneptah Inscription* §587; *Esarhaddon*, I 87-II 1; 1 Sam 11:14-15.

[612] Enthronement: *Ee* IV 1-2; *Esarhaddon*, II 2; "Hattusilis" IV 4; 1 Kgs 1:33-34; crowning: 2 Sam 12:29-30; cf. 2 Kgs 11:12; investiture: *Ee* IV 29. Gideon refuses the proffered kingship in Judg 8:22-23. Marduk and Jephthah receive kingship/ leadership before the battle (*Ee* IV 1-29; Judg 11:11); still, according to *ANET*[3], 502, Marduk is properly enthroned after the victory (V 90-106; text mutilated). See also 1 Sam 11:15 and n. 25 below.

[613] *Ee* IV 3-18; cf. also 2 Kgs 11:12.

[614] In the story of "Šulgi the Avenger of Sumer," the hero prepares for his return journey by decorating boats (ll. 354-361) and sails into Nippur amid joyous celebration, marked by a hymn (ll. 362-374). After entering the Duranki with spoils, (ll. 375-381) he receives an oracle from Enlil whereby the latter blesses him and invests him with the powers of en-ship = kingship (ll. 382-397). See J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 50-123, "Šulgi D." In "Hattusilis" IV 47-48, Ištar makes the hero a "great king" and enthrones him.

[615] Hattusilis receives homage and gifts from his subjects (IV 49-54) and then from other kings (IV 55). Rameses receives the homage of all the foreign countries on his return journey (*Battle of Kadesh* P 330-339). Shalmanezer receives tribute from cities which he has not conquered (55-57). See also *Kurigalzu* iii 16.

[616] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 131-137. In *Esarhaddon* I 77-79, the enemy troops acclaim the hero king when he appears on the battle scene.

[617] Loyalty oaths are found in *Ee* V 107-116 and VI 95-98; in the latter case, the gods "pronounced among themselves a curse, swearing by water and oil to place life in jeopardy"; for covenants by oil and water, cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*[2], 119, 287. For the phrase "to place life in jeopardy," cf. W. von Soden, *Or* 21 (1952) 79. An Egyptian example is found in the description of the Battle of Megiddo; *ANET*[2], 238, no. 24-25. D. Lorton cites this example from the reign of Thutmosis III (Urk IV 1235,14 1236,1) along with another from the reign of Amenophis II (Urk IV 1303,19 1304,2); *Juridical Terminology of International*

acknowledged by his deities, e.g. through omens or the like.[618]

In turn, the king/hero may recognize the deity as divine hero, typically through sacrifice or by building a temple.[619] The king may reward loyal servants; again, goods, house, and appointment form the basic categories of reward.[620]

As both Cross and Hanson argue, the establishment of kingship reestablishes the fertility and abundance land and people, and this fertility is a sign of order, justice, and peace.[621] While the return of fertility is a major theme of *Baal and Yamm* and of *Baal and Mot* ,[622] the creation of the universe by Marduk is perhaps the most dramatic example (*Ee* IV 135 - V 66). The theme of order over chaos dominates the *Enūma eliš* in which Marduk's capture of the Tablets of Destinies assures a reign of reason and justice (IV 3-26; *passim*). For human kings, the motifs of dynasty (wife and progeny) is intimately linked with the restoration of fertility and the stability of peace. Finally, in some narratives, the abundance issuing from order and peace, as well as the joy of the occasion, may be summed up in the celebration of a banquet.[623]

Thus, the denouement of the battle narrative creates the picture of an ideal society ruled by an ideal king, and the notion of perpetuity becomes an integral part of this picture.

To summarize: The exaltation of the hero, through renown, glory, and honor becomes the major, immaterial reward of the story for two reasons. On the societal level, the exaltation of the hero is an exaltation of the central values of a society.[624] On the personal level, renown gives preeminence to a deity and assures the human hero of a type of immortality. This recognition may culminate with the hero taking or receiving kingship since the holder of this office is the primary guarantor of order and peace which the hero has established by his victory. These two great motifs come together in the Philippians hymn where the servant, who dies not a false but a real death, is enthroned at the right hand of God and receives the "name above every other name" (=

Relations in Egyptian Texts through Dynasty XVIII (Baltimore 1974) 132. In the *Odyssey* (XXIV 481-486, 546), the people of Ithaca swear an oath: "Odysseus shall be king all the days of his life." In Judg 11:10, the Gileadites swear to obey Jephthah.

[618] *Battle of Kadesh* P 340-345; *Esarhaddon* II 3-7; "Hattusilis" IV 47-48.

[619] For examples of the recognition of the deity, cf. Chapter III, n. 172; Chapter IV, n. 230; biblical examples are found in Josh 8:30-35; Judg 8:27; Jdt 16.

[620] Marduk appoints officials in *Ee* V 69-70,83-84; VI 39-46. The sharing of the spoils is part of this; cf. especially 1 Sam 30:24-31.

[621] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 162. Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 302, 305-308, 313, 316, 322.

[622] Cf. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*[2], 6, 18. Also *Od*. XXIV 486.

[623] Banquets are found in *Ee* VI 70-71; *CTA* 4 vi 36-59; 2 Kgs 9:34; a premature banquet is held by Adonijah in 1 Kgs 1:9,41. Cf. also Irvin, *Mytharion*, Sheet 1; her position is discussed in Chapter III, n. 153.

[624] Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 28-29.

renown), and is acclaimed "Jesus Christ is Lord."[625]

B. The Establishment of David's Kingship: 2 Sam 5.

The motifs attending kingship in 2 Sam 5 can be easily correlated with the generic motifs outlined above:

kingship	5:1-3. The elders anoint David as king over Israel and seal the relationship with a covenant.
regnal formula	5:4-5.[626]
mountain/city	5:6-10. Conquest of Jerusalem on Mount Zion.
dwelling	5:11-12. The foreign king Hiram recognizes David's kingship by sending craftsmen with gifts of materials so that David can build for himself a palace.
dynasty	5:13-16. A list of David's wives, concubines, and progeny.
battle narratives	5:17-21,22-25. Two short battle narratives recounting David's final victories over the Philistine enemy.

A number of scholars have viewed this chapter as the end of the so-called "Rise of David," for it resolves a major tension in the story which began with the rejection of Saul and the secret anointing of David (1 Sam 13-16).[627] All of the motifs, except for the battle narratives, belong to the scene of reward and recognition. The covenant can be correlated with the loyalty oath,[628] and Mettinger believes it "highly probably" that anointing is a ritual sign of a covenant between the people and the king.[629]

Though short, David's capture of the stronghold of Mount Zion creates tension through

[625] Phil 2:9-10. While "Lord" *kurios* is usually related to *YHWH* in Hebrew, it is well to remember that it can also translate, *ʾādôn* which is found in the battle narrative as the counterpart to "servant," a term which appears earlier in the hymn. Cf. also J.H. Hayes, "The Resurrection as Enthronement and the Earliest Church Christology," *Int* 22 (1968) 333-345. so W. Brueggemann, "From Dust to Kingship," *ZAW* 85 (1972) 1-18. Also Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth*, passim.

[626] The regnal formula is used in 2 Kgs 9:29 after Jehu's victory to mark the establishment of his public kingship, Here in 5:4-5, the formula completes the establishment of David's kingship and also serves as a non-narrative insertion to separate the event of David's kingship from his conquest of the mountain city (5:6-10). The non-narrative insertion is discussed in Chapter VI, pp. 102f.

[627] Cf. Chapter I, pp. 10ff.

[628] Cf. the discussion above on the loyalty oath, Chapter VIII, p. 136.

[629] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 227. At a later period, the anointing would have signified the covenant between the Lord and the King. For a discussion of "obligatory covenant," cf. ibid. 301-304. On the mutuality of the covenant, cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*², 16-18. With McCarthy, I would emphasize the dimension of mutuality.

the triple repetition of "you/he shall not come in here." This phrase belongs to the motif of the enemy's false confidence which is heightened by the arrogant imagery of the blind and the lame. Although it is difficult to ascertain any historical significance for the blind and the lame,[630] symbolically they represent the impotent who are excluded from David's reign. The story moves immediately from David's call for victory to the announcement: "And David dwelt in the stronghold and called it the city of David" (5:9a).

While the capture of a mountain/city is traditional, David's mountain/city is won from the Jebusites and not from the Philistines who are the main enemy of the story. The introduction of the Jebusites reflects a shift in allegiance from the tradition to history, for we know from other sources as well that Jerusalem was an ancient Jebusite settlement.[631] Still, as Carlson observes, David's capture of the mountain/ city for his dwelling along with the thematic appearance of *yšb* ("to dwell/settle"), brings to an end the motif of David's wandering which began with his escape from Saul's court in 1 Sam 19:12 and 21:1.[632] The uncertainty of that journey, which David felt in 1 Sam 22:3, has come to an end.

To the motifs of kingship and kingdom, mountain and city, are added the recognition of a foreign king and a dwelling: Hiram sends cedar along with carpenters and masons to build a palace for David. Finally, the beginnings of David's dynasty is recorded with a list of concubines, wives, and children (5:13-16).[633] These opening verses, therefore, establish and exalt David as king through the traditional motifs, and, as the narrator says in 5:10a, "David became greater and greater."

As noted in Chapter IV, the royal battle narratives emphasized the identification of deity and king, and throughout this story, David has been identified with the assurance of divine presence: "The Lord was with him."[634] Still the story also subordinates the hero to the Lord, as is typical of biblical battle narratives, by revealing David's own thoughts:

> And David perceived (*ydʿ*) that the Lord had established him king over

[630] Carlson suggests the blind and the lame "may be an allusion to a group of Jebusite cultic officials"; *David, the Chosen King*, 57, n. 2. Whatever the case be, Carlson rightly notes that the exclusion of the blind and the lame also excludes Mephibosheth/Meribaal, the lame son of Jonathan (2 Sam 4:4). This insinuation is but one of the moves in these chapters to cut off the hope of a successor from Saul's house.

[631] For a discussion of the shift from tradition to history, see Scholes and Kellogg, *Nature of Narrative*, 40. The traditional impulse can be seen even in modern scholarship. Carlson, citing J. de Groot, says that "the Jebusites had probably been allied with the Philistines in the war against David"; Carlson, *David, the Chosen King*, 56, n. 2; J. de Groot, *II Samuel* (Groningen 1935) 81-82; also his "Zwei Fragen aus der Geschichte des alten Jerusalem," *BZAW* 66 (1936) 191-197, esp. 191-193.

[632] Carlson, *David, the Chosen King*, 55. The verb *yšb* is used forty-two times in 1 Sam 13 - 2 Sam 7.

[633] This list also serves as a non-narrative insertion; cf. Chapter VI, p. 102.

[634] The phrase, "The Lord is with him/you," appears in 1 Sam 16:18; (17:37); 18:12,14,28; 20:13; 2 Sam 5:10; 7:3,9.

> Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel (5:12).

This is one of the rare statements of a character's interior understanding, yet, by revealing David's interiority, the narrator creates a sense of genuine humility which neutralizes the potential tension between the king's exaltation and his subordination to the Lord.

The double defeat of the Philistines in 5:17-25 plays a double role in the story. The repeated victory recognizes the tenacity and strength of this enemy. The double defeat also sets a seal of finality on the struggle which has plagued Saul and then David from the beginning of the story in 1 Sam 13. As such, it fulfills the prophecies of Jonathan, Abigail, and Abner.[635]

C. The Hero Recognizes his God: 2 Sam 6.

Until recently, scholars have generally accepted L. Rost's thesis that 2 Sam 6 formed an "Ark Narrative" together with 1 Sam 4-6 which recounts the loss of the ark to the Philistines.[636] Carlson rejects the thesis and links 2 Sam 6 with the preceding battle narratives on the basis of *verbi associandi*.[637] To this argument, Veijola adds the link established by *ʿôd* in 6:1 which has often been rejected as an insertion.[638] Unlike the historical critic who must choose between one or the other, the literary critic must recognize the links of 2 Sam 6 both to the preceding chapter and to 1 Sam 4-6.

The two battle narratives in 5:17-21,22-25 present a traditional story with due deference given to the role played by the Lord through divine oracles. The first, however, is more complete. In addition to the recognition of the Lord as divine hero in David's victory shout (5:20), the Philistines abandon their idols which David and his

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[635] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 42.

[636] Rost, *Thronnachfolge Davids*, 119-120. Campbell, who defends Rost's position, surveys at length the many positions on this question; *The Ark Narrative*, 12-54.

[637] Among the elements linking 2 Sam 6 with the preceding chapter, Carlson cites the *verbi associandi*, especially *paraṣ* ("burst/break forth"; 5:20; 6:8),the "leitmotif" of the "city of David" (5:7,9; 6:10,12,16), the contrast between Michal's childlessness (6:23) and the progeny of David's concubines and wives (5:12-16); *David, the Chosen King*, 58. Carlson concludes that the traditio-historical character of 1 Sam 4-6 and 2 Sam 6 are different, rejects as "completely anachronistic" Rost's idea that the Ark complex is a *hieros logos*; ibid. 61, n. 5. Campbell replies that Carlson's methodology makes such a position necessary; *The Ark Narrative*, 45.

[638] T. Veijola, *Die Ewigie Dynastie*, 101. For a judgment of *ʿôd* as an insertion, cf. Smith, *Samuel*, 293; Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 275. Mettinger, on the basis of Carlson and Veijola, also argues that "2 Sam 5:17-25 and 6:1-23 were transmitted together"; *King and Messiah*, 42. Mettinger argues that 2 Sam 5:17 –6:23 deviates from the Dtr tradition (*contra* Veijola). P.D. Miller and J.J.M. Roberts also reject Rost's thesis; *The Hand of the Lord. A Reassessment of the "Ark Narrative" of I Samuel* (Baltimore/London 1977) 23-25.

men carry away. This detail may be compared to the capture and even death of the enemy leader.[639] Within a larger context of the tradition, the capture of the Philistine idols avenges that loss of the ark in 1 Sam 4-6 and prepares for its return in 2 Sam 6. The second battle narrative ends abruptly with the destruction of the Philistines without a scene of recognition. From this perspective, 2 Sam 6 follows as the recognition of the divine hero. To be specific, the throne of the divine hero, i.e. the ark, is carried in procession (return journey) and set up in the mountain city of the king.[640]

Older scholars, such as Mowinkel, obliquely support this position because they see in 2 Sam 6 the motifs used for the establishment of a king; thus they describe the chapter from their perspective as a reflection of "Enthronement/Zion/New Year Festival."[641]

The chapter may be divided into traditional motifs with non-traditional insertions as follows:

muster	6:1. David again gathers his troops.[642]
journey	6:2. Journey to retrieve the Ark.[643]
procession	6:3-5. Procession to Jerusalem with rejoicing to music and song.
retardation	6:6-11. Procession is halted by Uzzah's death and David's fear until the blessing (fertility) returns.
blessing	6:11. David leaves the ark for three months in the house of Obed-edom, "and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and his whole house."
procession	6:12-15. Procession (begun anew): sacrifices, dancing by David, shouting and the blowing of the horn.

[639] Campbell notes that "the practice of carrying off the statues or emblems of the gods of captured cities or countries was common enough." He cites neo-Babylonian parallels (*ANET*[2] 301ff), the Moabite Stone (*ANET*[2] 320-321; 1.17-18); 2 Chr 25:14; Hos 10:5-6; Isa 10:10-11; 46:1-2; Jer 48:7; 49:3. A.F. Campbell, *The Ark Narrative* (SBLDS 16; Missoula MO 1975) 187.

[640] As Carlson says, "the ark is closely connected with the Lord's conquest of the powers of chaos and with his enthronement; here the central motifs are judgment, righteousness, the turning aside of fate, and the recreation of peace and prosperity"; he also sees a parallel with the *Enūma eliš* and Marduk; *David, the Chosen King*, 68-69.

[641] S. Mowinkel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Oxford 1962) 174-175; *He That Cometh*, 26, 72, 82ff. Other references are cited by Carlson in *David, the Chosen King*, 66 n. 5.

[642] Campbell, like many others since Budde, sees 6:1 as better suited to the introduction of a military expedition; *The Ark Narrative*, 169. As a result, 6:1 is typically seen as a redaction or gloss. I am inclined to see this swelling of the troops as an attempt to magnify the recognition. Turning to another point, Carlson sees the 30,000 as one of deprecatory contrast to Saul's 3,000 men; *David, the Chosen King*, 64; he also notes the parallel to Keret's army of 3,000,000 in *CTA* 14:89 (p. 67).

[643] Cross sees a discrepancy between 2 Sam 6 and Ps 132, for the latter "implies that the Shrine of the Ark, and even its location, has fallen more or less from memory"; *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 96-97. He concludes that Ps 132 is wholly independent of the Dtr history. Perhaps, but such a motif would not be appropriate for a narrator who wanted to relate 2 Sam 6 to the preceding battle narratives.

Michal episode	6:16. Michal sees David dancing before the ark.
enthronement	6:17a: Ark is set in its place in the tent (dwelling).
banquet	6:17b-19. The sacrifice becomes a banquet and blessing for the people, followed by a blessing invoked by the king.
Michal episode	6:20-23. Michal spurns David and is denied the blessing of fertility.

The motifs of reward and recognition account for everything in 2 Sam 6 except the death of Uzzah and the Michal episode. The death of Uzzah retards the action. The Michal episode breaks the traditional expectation that everyone will join wholeheartedly in the celebration. Although scholars have customarily separated the Michal episode from the other material,[644] I see a common thread in the motifs of reverence and irreverence, humility and pride, fruitfulness and barrenness, blessing and rejection.[645]

Because Uzzah touches the ark when the oxen stumble, the anger of the Lord burns and strikes down the man so that he dies attempting to protect the ark. The incident graphically illustrates the holiness of the ark and the penalty for transgressing this holiness even for the best of motives.[646] The punishment provokes David's anger which then is overwhelmed by his fear and awe. David's anger reflects a human revulsion at the indiscriminate power of God's holiness, yet the king rightly subordinates his anger to fear which, in the Old Testament, is both awe before God's holiness and the attitude of a vassal to his Lord.[647] As a result, David halts the procession at the "house" of a foreigner, Obed-edom the Gittite.

During the three months in which the ark remains with the foreigner, "the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his house" (6:11). The movement here reflects the pattern of enthronement followed by fertility and abundance, and the blessing is connected specifically to the motif of the house.[648] David receives this news of blessing as an

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[644] Gunn, *The Story of King David*, 73; Rost, Thronnachfolge Studien, 150, 212-215; *et al.* Gunn would add 2 Sam 6:5,14 to 6:16b,20-23 and argues that this story of rejoicing and Michal's enmity originally followed the establishment of David as king since the establishment of Saul's kingship in 1 Sam 11:15 is followed by a scene of rejoicing. As the analysis earlier in this chapter shows, such scenes of rejoicing are traditionally a part of a king's accession. Therefore, theoretically, this material from 2 Sam 6 could follow 5:1-3. However, the traditional possibility cannot be used as an argument for necessity.

[645] Campbell argues that "2 Sam 6:16,20-23 is not a conclusion to the narrative of 2 Sam 6, but functions as an epilogue, which accords well with the tenor of the "Ark Narrative," and need not be a later addition; *The Ark Narrative*, 168.

[646] Campbell cites an interesting Egyptian parallel in the "Instruction of Ani" recounting the holiness and danger of a cult object carried in procession; *The Ark Narrative*, 190; *ANET*[2] 420-421.

[647] Cf. Campbell, *The Ark Narrative*, 250.

[648] The word *brk* ("to bless") appears in 6:11,12,18,20; *byt* ("house") appears in 6:3,4,5,11[2],12[2],15, 19,21.

assurance and again initiates the journey of the ark. After completing the procession and sacrifices, David blesses the people "in the name of the Lord of Host" and then distributes food (banquet). Again we have the pattern of enthronement followed by blessing. When the people have gone to their houses, David returns "to bless his house" (6:20a), but the blessing will not come to Michal.

The story of Michal was ripe for the traditional comic ending. After she had helped David to make his escape in 1 Sam 19:12, Saul gave her as a bride to Paltiel (1 Sam 25:44). David, however, had demanded her return in 2 Sam 3:13 as terms for making a covenant with Abner. Michal's return appears to complete the comic plot in which lovers, separated by hostile forces, are reunited.[649] However, David and Michal do not "live happily ever after."

When Michal is returned to the hero, the narrator says nothing of the emotions felt by either David or Michal but reports instead that Paltiel went with Michal "his wife" to Bahurim, weeping as he went until Abner turns him back with a sharp command. Ward sees Paltiel as an image of Ishbaal's weakness since both are caught in a situation over which they have no control.[650] While I agree, I also see Paltiel as a mimetic image unto himself of the dispossessed husband weeping because of his tragedy. As such he becomes the first indication that the reunion of lovers will not end with traditional happiness and fruitfulness but with strife and barrenness.

When Michal reappears in 6:16, she is at a window[651] watching David dance "before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart." When David returns after the feast "to bless his house," Michal accuses him of revealing himself before the "handmaids" (*ʾāmâ*), the female complement of "servant" (*ʿebed*), and therefore, the word should be interpreted, therefore, as "women of the court" and not "handmaids" as if they were insignificant.[652] Both Kirkpatrick and Schulz identify the force motivating Michal as pride: a false sense of rank in contrast to David defends this abasement before the Lord.[653] However, her resentment is turned to women of similar rank.

The final line of the chapter reads: "And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death" (6:23). The coolness of the statement stands in sharp contrast to the emotions which are not revealed. She desires David but is unable to make the relationship a fruitful union. Thus Michal becomes the last, tragic sign of Saul's rejected

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[649] For a discussion on the plot of comedy and its relation to marriage, cf. Chapter IX, p. 151.

[650] R.L. Ward, *The Story of David's Rise*: A Traditio-Historical Study of I Samuel XVI 14 II Samuel V (Diss.: Vanderbilt University 1967) 159.

[651] Campbell notes the motif of a woman watching from a window is found also in Judg 5:28 and 2 Kgs 9:30; *The Ark Narrative*, 138.

[652] Cf. Chapter IX, p. 153.

[653] A.F. Kirkpatrick, The Second Book of Samuel (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge 1880) 95-96. A. Schulz, *Die Bücher Samuel* (HAT 8/2; Munster 1920) 73. The opaqueness of the text is such that I am inclined to suggest jealousy as a second factor.

dynasty, yet the text does not link her rejection mechanically with her status as the daughter of Saul. Because she despises David's dance before the ark, she is denied the blessing of fertility which comes to the house of the foreigner Obed-edom and will come through her to the house of David. As such, Michal forms an antithetical parallel to Uzzah. He died because he seized the ark in an act of reverence when the oxen stumbled. Michal dies figuratively in her barrenness because she despises David's reverence and joy before ark of the Lord of Host. Still one wonders what else is not told. Why has her courage and resourcefulness early in her marriage come to this. Her tragedy like her fathers is sad and not comic.

D. The Kingdom *ʿad ʿôlām*: 2 Sam 7.

Tryggve N.D. Mettinger observes that the importance of 2 Sam 7 can be measured by the vast scholarship on the subject.[654] The extent of the scholarship also indicates the difficulty of the chapter and the lack of scholarly consensus surrounding the traditio-historical questions: the chapter's relationship to other Davidic and royal texts, and the extent of the Dtr redaction, if any.[655] Primarily, scholars have focused upon the inconsistencies which provide the clues for these methodologies. The methodology of this thesis is not capable of resolving those questions. I shall attempt instead to elucidate the coherence of the chapter and its links to the battle tradition.

1. The Genre.

The chapter is shaped by a play on the word "house," and its basic movement may be described very simply: When David proposes to build a proper house for the Lord like his own, Nathan the prophet commissions the king in traditional language: [656]

> Go (*hlk*), do (*ʿśh*) all that is in your heart;
> for the Lord is with you (*YHWH ʿmk*; 7:3).

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[654] Mettinger summarizes much of the scholarship; *King and Messiah*, 48-50. See also Cross' discussion in *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 241-264. For one of the most complete, recent bibliographies, cf. the excerpt of the dissertation by Alice Laffey, *A Study of the Function of 2 Sam 7 in the Deuteronomistic History* (Rome 1981).

[655] For the traditio-historical questions, cf. Mettinger and Cross in the note above. Cross especially deals with the relationship of the chapter to other royal texts. As for positions on the Dtr redaction, the three authors cited in n. 64 represent the three basic positions: Cross holds that the chapter is "a unity imposed on his sources by the mind and view of the Deuteronomistic historian"; *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 252-254. Mettinger isolates the Dtr redaction in 2 Sam 7:10-11a, 22b-26; *King and Messiah*, 51-52. Laffey argues that "the chapter is definitely a key passage in the [Dtr] History, and it is definitely not from Dtr";"2 Sam 7 in the Dtr History, 19; unfortunately, this excerpt from the thesis does not include her research.

[656] Cf. Chapter III, pp. 43f for the traditional elements of the commission.

This affirmation of the king's project is followed immediately by an oracle in which the Lord countermands the commission and then promises to "make" David both a "great name" and a "house" (= dynasty) established forever (7:4-16). When Nathan reports this to the king (7:17), David responds with the prayer of a servant to his lord in which he both exalts the Lord and calls for the confirmation of the oracle (7:18-29).

The building of a house, as I have argued above,[657] is a traditional role for the battle hero. Thus this chapter has a traditional links to the earlier battle narrative. However, construction, especially the building of a temple, is a traditional task for kings. Independent reports of such projects can be found in the literature of the ancient Near East because the temple served not only the needs and glory of their divine inhabitants, but also brought renown to their royal builders who sought to share in the enduring existence of the gods. This task, however, was not undertaken without the permission of the deity who often initiates the project, for, like the royal battle narratives, these stories demonstrate the unity of king and god.

Several scholars have attempted to link the building project in 2 Sam 7 specifically with the so-called Königsnovelle , an Egyptian genre. According to Herrmann, the genre is bound up with a building project and the theology of kingship, especially its legitimation. The formal elements of the genre consist of four scenes:

1. Scene of council: The king appears and presents a building plan to counselors who approve the plan and praise the pharaoh's wisdom.
2. Oracle: A god then appears in a dream to commission the pharaoh to carry out the plan because of his divine election.
3. Revelation of the oracle: The pharaoh then reveals the contents of the dream to his counselors.
4. Response: Finally, the king offers sacrifices or a prayer.[658]

Herrmann's application of this schema to 2 Sam 7 has been criticized, and Mettinger isolates two main objections. First, the oracle comes through a third party (Nathan), and secondly, the king's plans are not carried through.[659]

I do not find these objections material because a prophet is just another vehicle of revelation, and the incompletion of the kings plans underlines the fundamental twist of the tradition in this particular text. Even so, I also object to Herrmann's assessment because he fails to recognize that the Egyptian genre belongs to a broader tradition. The antiquity of the tradition is attested by two Sumerian texts in which the kings Gudea and Šulgi are told in dreams to build temples and receive for their labor among

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[657] Cf. Chapter XI, p. 185.

[658] S. Herrmann, "Die Konigsnovelle," 33. See also M. Görg, *Gott-König-Reden in Israel und Ägypten* (BWANT 105; Stuttgart 1975).

[659] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 49.

other things the rewards of a "great name" and enduring kingship.[660] Furthermore, in the story connected to the establishment of Bethel, Jacob has a dream in which he is promised land and progeny; when he awakes, he sets up a stone monument, saying:

> "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen 28:10-19).

The pattern here is similar to that in 2 Sam 7 except that David is forbidden to build a house; still he receives the rewards of the temple builders. The twist underlines the main theme of the chapter: the precedence of divine will over human plans, and the measureless possibility of divine gift in contrast to the limits of human vision and expectation. As a result, the king is subordinated to the Lord, and the chapter stands in contrast to the royal tradition where the minds of king and deity are one.

2. The Lord's Oracle.

The Lord's oracle opens with this theme of subordination (7:4-7). The condescending style, marked by rhetorical questions and argument based on historical precedent, underlines David's presumption. Furthermore, the Lord's control of the situation is revealed in the description of David's rise to his position as leader:

> I took you from following the sheep, that you should be prince (*nāgîd*) over my people Israel;[661] and I have been with you (*hyh* ʿ*mk*) wherever you went (*hlk*) and have cut off all your enemies from before you (7:8b-9a).

The vocabulary of divine presence in all David's actions (*hyh* ʿ*mk*; *hlk*) has already appeared in Nathan's presumptuous commission. Although the Lord reaffirms his presence, it is he and not David who will take the initiative:

> I will make (ʿ*śh*) you a great name like the names of the great ones of the

[660] For the quotes from the Gudea cylinders, cf. A.S. Kapelrud, "Temple Building, a Task for Gods and Kings," *Or* 32 (1963) 56-62; reprinted in *God and His Friends in the Old Testament* (Universitetsforlaget 1979) 184-190, esp. 186. Gudea receives a dream which, when interpreted, commands him to build a temple; for this he receives a great name, is received among the gods, and has the throne of his destiny established. For Šulgi, cf. Jacob Klein, *The Royal Hymns of Shulgi* (Philadelphia 1981). After a paean to Enlil, "the poet reveals a 'secret plan' thought up by this god and announced in the form of a Delphian oracle: 'A "righteous man" will rebuild the Ekur (thereby acquiring) a lasting "name"; the son of that "righteous man" will long hold the scepter (and) their throne will not be overthrown'" (p. 9). Cf. also T. Jacobson, "Early Political Development in Mesopotamia," *ZA* 52 (1957) 91-140, esp. p. 126, n. 80.

[661] Mettinger discusses the term *nāgîd* in depth and argues that the usage here indicates divine designation of a king. As such it reflects a theology of an earlier usage found in 1 Kgs 1:35 in which the term referred to the crown prince; *King and Messiah*, 151-184. Weiser sees this passage as a condensation of the story of David's rise and, therefore, as a key passage binding this chapter to the preceding story; "Die Legitimation des Aufstiegs Davids," 335, 347-348. See Chapter VII, n. 358 for the shepherd as a traditional image for a ruler, especially a king, in the ancient Near East.

earth (7:9b).

Although the reward of the name is traditional both for the battle hero and the temple builder with the double connotation of renown and dynasty, David neither wins the name for himself (2 Sam 8:13) nor receives it from the people (1 Sam 18:30). Instead the Lord grants the name and thereby asserts his role as king with David as his servant (7:5,8). The promise is followed by an assurance of stability and peace (7:10-11a). Some would judge this a Dtr insertion.[662] Even so, stability and peace are traditionally fruits of victory and kingship.

The verb "to make" (*ʿśh*) recurs again and marks the second key point of the oracle (7:11b; cf. 7:3,9): "The Lord declares to you, 'The Lord will make (*ʿśh*) you a house.'" Scholars have viewed the change from first person style of the oracle to the third person as a sign of a redactional seam.[663] Rhetorically, the change emphasizes this central line of the chapter through the word play and twist of the tradition: David's plan to build a house of cedar for the Lord to inhabit (7:2,5,6,7) is supplanted by the Lord's making David a house (= dynasty).

This twist of the tradition, however, is not applied to Solomon who will come from this divinely established house and build the temple. For this, Solomon will receive the traditional rewards of a temple builder: the Lord will establish the throne of his kingdom forever and institute a relationship of father to Solomon as son, a relationship which will not be abrogated even by the unfaithfulness of later generations (7:12-15a).[664]

Although Solomon is commissioned to become a traditional temple builder, the Lord makes a change in David's original plan. Solomon will build the temple not for the Lord's dwelling (7:2,5), but for the Lord's name (7:12-13a). Thus the temple will not be a place to contain the Lord's presence, but a place manifesting the Lord's glory (= name).[665] Although the theology of the name is typically connected with later Dtr

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[662] Cf. Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 52.

[663] Mettinger, for instance, sees 7:11b as an addition of the dynastic redaction along with the change of pronouns in 7:16 so that they refer to David instead of to Solomon; as a result, David, and not Solomon, becomes the foundation stone for the dynasty. Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 59.

[664] While some have seen this as a reference to adoption by the god and, therefore, to the divinization of the king, Weinfeld rejects this mythological construction and identifies it as a "forensic metaphor" taken from the familial into the political sphere of royal grants in which loyal servants were granted house and land as a reward for their service; as a rule in the second millenium, the grant of land and house (= dynasty) "could be legitimized only by adoption"; "Covenant of Grant," 191-192. Mettinger reviews the scholarship on the divinization of the king and agrees with Weinfeld on its metaphorical interpretation; *King and Messiah*, 260, 266.

[665] For the distinction between Wohntempel and Erscheinungstempel, see Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 61. As he says, "the theology of the divine *šem*, that is of considerable importance in Dt and Dtr writing, may well have more ancient roots than is generally supposed"; among other things, he notes that the use of the Akkadian *šakānu šamšu*, "to place one's name" is used "as an expression for taking possession of something"; cf. the Amarna letters EA 287,60-63 and 288,50-7; ibid. 56, and n. 25. Weinfeld quotes EA 287

themes,[666] one must not overlook the broader tradition of the name within the battle literature (e.g. 7:23).

In 7:15b, the perpetuity of this relationship is restated negatively: the Lord promises that he will not "turn away (his) steadfast love" (*sûr ḥesed*) from this dynasty as he did from Saul.[667] This statement resolves the tension begun in 1 Sam 13:13-14 where Saul is denied the "kingdom forever" (*mmlkh ʿd ʿôlām*).[668] The statement also creates a bulwark of stability for the Davidic dynasty which is restated in 7:16, again with reference to David.

> And sure shall be your house (*nʾmn bytk*)
>
> and your kingdom forever (*mmlktk ʿad ʿôlām*)
>
> before you[669]
>
> your throne shall be established forever.

The "kingdom forever" is a reward received by both Baal and Marduk for their victory.[670] More importantly, Exod 15:18 affirms that the Lord who has conquered the Egyptians "reigns over Israel forever." Only a deity, unfettered by death, might expect such a reward, yet human beings are given a share in this divine prerogative.

Weinfeld has isolated examples in Hittite royal grant in which kings guaranteed land and to servants in perpetuity though such grants were "a special privilege and apparently given for extraordinary loyal service."[671] Weinfeld argues that these grants were an "unconditional promise" because they could not be rescinded if someone of a

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60-61 as an example of the antiquity of the convention: "The King has established his name in the country of Jerusalem forever"; however, he argues that its connection "with the abstract notion of God" is a product of the deuteronomic school; *Deuteronomy*, 193-195 and 193 n. 3. The shift in notion of the temple from a dwelling to a place of manifestation, whether it be old (Mettinger) or deuteronomic (Weinfeld), provides a nice solution to the problem posed by the refusal to David and the commission to Solomon.

[666] Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 56.

[667] According to Weinfeld, the phrase "turn away steadfast love" is "similar to that of the Hittite grant: *vechasdi loʾ mimmennu*"; "*bᵉrîth*," *TDOT*, II 272.

[668] McCarthy, "II Samuel 7," 133.

[669] Typically, translations read with the LXX and the Syriac "before me," but this solution often disregards the other pronominal differences in the LXX which reads "his throne," "his house," and "his kingdom." Cf. n. 663 above.

[670] *CTA* 2 iv 10 which reads: *tqḥ.mlk.ʿlmk*. In *Ee* VI 105-106, the text says, "May he shepherd the blackheaded ones, his creatures, / To the end of days..."

[671] Weinfeld, "Covenant of Grant," 189-190,193.

later generation was punished for disloyalty as foreseen in 7:14b.[672]

Weinfeld calls these royal grants “covenants of grant” and defines them as promissory rather than obligatory as were the treaties. McCarthy rejects this distinction and sees them as part of “a continuum in which one leads over into the other.”[673] I would agree because the grants are a formal manifestation of the blessing promised by the covenant relationship between lords and their fighting men in the battle narratives. The guarantee of perpetuity to David’s reward sets the relationship into an ideal realm beyond the decay of death and time. The guarantee is appropriate because David has been presented throughout the preceding chapters as the ideal hero who does not succumb to the temptation to repay Saul’s enmity with enmity. Thus the chapter fulfills Abigail’s prophecy:

> The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord; and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live (1 Sam 25:28).[674]

Abigail’s prophecy does not foresee the misfortune that will befall David when he meets Bathsheba, but that is a different story, a realistic story about a very human king. This story is an ideal story about an ideal hero who shares with his God the ideal reward.

3. David’s Prayer.

After Nathan has reported the vision (7:17), the last section opens, as does the first, with the verb “to sit/dwell” (*yšb*). David, who thought to make the Lord “dwell,” comes himself and dwells (*yšb*) before the Lord. As Alonso Schökel observes, the prayer which the king offers can be divided into three sections:[675]

> a. an account of God’s greatness and grace (7:18-24);
>
> b. a petition for God to carry out his word (7:25-27);
>
> c. a call for God to bless the house of his servant (7:28-29).

Without pressing the point, I want to point out that the threefold movement is similar to that found in the covenant formulary: a history of the past relationship, the stipulations, and the blessings and curses.[676] The vocabulary of covenant pervades the sections, and David defines himself as a servant before his lord.[677]

The king opens the prayer with rhetorical questions and negated comparisons to

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[672] Ibid. 193.

[673] McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*2[SUB] , 88.

[674] McCarthy, “II Samuel 7,” 133, n. 11.

[675] Alonso Schökel, *Samuel*, 187.

[676] For a discussion of the covenant formulary, cf. Chapter VI, p. 94.

[677] *ʿebed*; 2 Sam 7:19,20,21,25,26, 27^{2},28,29; *ʾādônay*; 7:18,19^{2},20,22, 28,29.

contrast his own lowliness with the Lord's greatness (*gdl* in 7:9^2,21,22,23,26). Turning then to Israel's great fortune in having such a God, the king recounts the Lord's victory in which the Lord, as divine hero, establishes for himself a name (*śym šm*). David concludes with a statement of the covenant relationship between the Lord and Israel:

> You appointed Israel (to be) your people forever, and you, O Lord, became their God (*lhm ʾlhym*; 7:24).

This final statement, similar to 7:14a, defines a covenantal relationship between the Lord and the king as father and son, again *ʿad ʿôlām*.[678] The movement from history to a statement defining the relationship is comparable to that in the covenant formulary. Furthermore, this first section becomes the historical context for the establishment of David's relationship to the Lord.

Just as Israel becomes the Lord's people and he their God, so David asks that the Lord establish the promised relationship with him and his house (7:25-26). The statement is neither a stipulation nor the definition of a relationship such as we find in the covenant formulary, but a plea that the Lord carry out the promise of the oracle. David seeks to assure the fulfillment by linking the perpetuity of his house with the titles of divine warrior and divine kingship:

> And your name will be great forever, saying:
> The Lord of Host (is) God over Israel,[679]
> and the house of your servant David
> is sure (*nkwn*) before you (7:26).

The unity of king and God is underlined by the phrase "before you" which recalls the recurring theme of divine presence: the Lord to David (7:3,9) and David before the Lord (7:18). In this sense, the house of David has been built by the Lord as his own dwelling.

Blessings and curses round out the covenant formulary, and in the last section of his prayer, David calls for the Lord's blessing upon his house. The covenant context, introduced by *wʿth*, is again apparent in the vocabulary, especially the phrases: "Your word is true (*ʾĕmet*), and you have decreed this goodness (*ṭôbâ*) for your servant."[680] A focus on speech pervades the chapter, as it does the *Enūma eliš*.[681] Marduk's word is

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[678] Weinfeld notes the correlation of 7:14 with the "priestly covenant with Abraham, 'to be unto you a God' (*lhywt lk lʾlhym*; Gen 17:7,8) and ...' with Israel' (Lev 26:12; Exod 6:7; compare Deut 29:12)." In both the formula is taken from the legal terminology used in connection with marriage and adoption; *Deuteronomy*, 80-81. However, Weinfeld does not cite 2 Sam 7:24.

[679] The preposition *ʿal* is used in 2 Sam 5-8 to designate the rule of a king; it follows some form of *mlk* in 5:2,3,5^2,12,17; 8:15 and follows *nāgîd* in 5:3; 6:21 and 7:8.

[680] For *ṭôbâ* as a term for covenant in 1 Sam 25:30; 2 Sam 2:6 and 7:28, cf. Weinfeld, "*bᵉrith*," *TDOT*, II, 259. For *ʾĕmet*, cf. ibid. 258, and Weinfeld, "Covenant Terminology," 192.

[681] Cf. for example *Ee* IV 4-10.

bound up with the establishment of order and thus justice. As Weinfeld observes, enthronement in the Old Babylonian period is closely connected with the establishment of justice, as also in 2 Sam 8:15.[682] In 2 Sam 7, the Lord's word establishes for the human king an enduring dynasty, and this kingdom forever which becomes the context for the establishment of justice and the source of blessing.

E. The Denouement: 2 Sam 8.

The blessings which come to David's house are manifested in 2 Sam 8 which forms the denouement. The chapter is mainly a series of battle reports which assert the fact that "David made a name." It opens with a fourfold repetition of the phrase: "And David defeated PN" (8:1,2,3,5). A different element is added to complete the battle reports: taking of land (8:1), the capture of the enemy (8:2,4), plunder (8:4), and the setting up of garrisons (8:5). The final results of the victories are underlined twice by motifs of homage: "and (they became) servants to David and brought tribute" (8:2c, 6b). The opening section (8:1-6) is brought to a close in 8:6c by the summary statement: "and the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went." The second section lists the wealth acquired from tribute either freely given or taken by force; it ends in 8:12 with an expanded list of enemies. The final section opens with the climactic announcement that David has made a name for himself with Edom forming the capstone of his victories (8:13).

This record of victory would seem to be one traditional conclusion to a battle narrative, for a similar list is found at the end of Joshua's conquests (Josh 12) and of the "King of Battle Epic." The chapter culminates with the repetition of *kōl* = "all/every" in 8:14b-15:

> The Lord gave victory to David wherever (*kōl*) he went.
> So David reigned over all (*kōl*) Israel;
> And David became the establisher[683] of justice and equity
> for all (*kōl*) his people.

Victory, kingship, and the establishment of justice: these elements mark the basic movement of the battle narrative in which the hero becomes king. A list of officials is added to amplify David's reign and to serve as a non-narrative insertion before the new story which begins in 2 Sam 9. However, the basic tensions of this story have been resolved: David has defeated the Philistines, and he has been granted the kingdom forever. The narrator has presented an ideal hero who becomes the ideal king and receives the ideal rewards of a kingdom and a house established forever which he rules with justice and equity. Despite David's human fallibility in the story which follows, the David-Saul narrative reflects a vision of David as the ideal hero and king which becomes

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[682] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 153-154.

[683] The translation is taken from Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 385. He cites Driver (*Notes on 1 Sam* 18:8) who says that *wyhy* with the participle "expresses at once origination and continuance."

a touchstone not only for the biblical tradition but also for Western literature.[684]

[684] In *Deuteronomy*, 75, Weinfeld notes that David's loyalty is referred to in 1 Kgs 3:6; 8:25; 9:5; 11:4,6; 14:8, etc. R.J. Frontain and J. Wojcik, *The David Myth in Western Literature* (West Lafayette IN 1980).

Appendix 1:
The Classic Pattern

Motifs and Patterns of the Classic Pattern

Characters

"our" side

- leaders
    - helpless leader(s)
        - strong leader(s)
        - parent
        - divine leader (deity)
    - leader's court
        - helpless people
        - counselors
        - religious officials
        - messengers
    - heroes
        - false heroes
        - the hero
    - hero's helpers
        - hero's army
        - hero's friend
- enemy side
    - enemy leader
    - enemy people
    - enemy champion
    - enemy army

The Beginning

- Description of the Hero
    - hero's impediment

- enemy's threat and great power
    - muster of enemy army, challenge, attack, siege
        - outrageous demands
- reaction of helplessness by "our" side
    - fear, weeping, retreat, provisional capitulation

The Middle

- council
- general call
    - offer of a reward
- call, commission, and failure of false hero
- call and commission of the hero by
        - parent
        - leader
        - deity
    - leader initiated pattern
        - leader calls and commissions the hero
            - hero raises an objection or question
            - leader answers
        - hero accepts
    - hero initiated pattern
        - hero calls for commission
            - leader raises an objection or question
            - hero answers
        - leader commissions hero

Motifs connected with the call and commission

- hero's reaction of righteous indignation (anger)
- exhortation to duty
- blessing of human hero by human leader
- assurance of divine presence and aid from deity

- encouragement
- counsel, especially battle plan

preparation for battle by leaders and/or the hero

- hero's weapons, armor, and chariot
- call and commission of hero's army

journey

The Climax

single-combat between the Hero and the Enemy Champion

- meeting of warriors
- verbal exchange
    - enemy's false confidence
    - insults
    - hero's indictment of the enemy
- hero's initial failure
- enemy's failure
- hero's mortal blow to the enemy with a missile
- enemy's fall to the ground
- hero's triumphal stance
- mutilation of the enemy with a hand weapon
    - (decapitation)

recognition of defeat by enemy army

- enemy's reaction of helplessness
- flight

recognition of victory by "our" side

- pursuit
- destruction of the enemy army

plunder of the Enemy

- hero's prize share

return Journey

- music, victory hymn or shout, dance, banquet

recognition of the hero by the leader and others

- by means of acclamation or loyalty oaths
- by means of reward
    - a great name
    - appointment/kingship
    - symbols of victory/symbols of kingship
    - wife and progeny/dynasty
    - dwelling
    - city (mountain)
    - land/kingdom

Recognition of deity and loyal servants by human hero

- Restoration of order, fertility, and peace

Appendix 2: The Royal Battle Narrative

Characters

- king as human hero and leader
- deity as divine hero and leader
- king's army
- divine army or meteorological elements
- enemy king
- enemy king's army
- other characters found in the classic pattern

The Beginning

- description of the king: in general, his only possible
    - impediment is his absence from the initial place of the enemy's threat
- enemy's threat: aggression from outside the kingdom
    - rebellion, or past atrocities
- reaction of helplessness by others than the king

The Middle

- call and commission of the king by the helpless
- king's reaction of righteous indignation
- divine call and commission of the king
    - initiated either by the king or by the deity
    - call by the king
        - direct personal prayer
        - *sacrificial consultoria*
        - sacrifices entreating divine favor
        - king's vow
    - deity's oracle of (call and) commission
        - to the king by direct address or dream
        - spontaneously to a third person
        - through cultic means

- preparation for battle by the king
    - call and commission of the army
- journey

The Climax

- verbal exchange between king and enemy by messengers
    - enemy king's false confidence
- fight and victory
    - divine warriors precede the king and his army
    - ambush
    - king's great power causes the enemy to flee before
        - the fight begins
- recognition of defeat and reaction of helplessness
    - fear and flight
- pursuit and great/total destruction of the enemy army
- fate of the enemy king: death, escape, capture
- recognition of the hero-king: by divine leaders
    - by the enemy king, by other kings, by the army
- king's reward: tribute

Appendix 3:
Battle Narratives in the Historical Books of the Bible

1. Exod 14-15. The defeat of the Egyptians at the Read Sea.
2. Exod 17:8-16. Israel over Amalek.
3. Num 13-14 (// Deut 1:19-46). The spying out of Canaan and the defeat of Israel.
4. Num 21:1-3. Israel over Arad.
5. Num 21:21-31 (//Deut 2:16-37; Judg 11:16-23). Israel over Sihon.
6. Num 21:33-35 (//Deut 3:1-11). Israel over Og.
7. Num 31:1-54. Israel over Midian.
8. Josh 6. The conquest of Jericho.
9. Josh 7-8. The initial defeat and conquest of Ai.
10. Josh 10. Joshua over the five Amorite kings.
11. Josh 11. Joshua over Jabin, king of Hazor.
12. Judg 3:7-11. Othniel over Cushan-rishathaim, a Dtr narrative.
13. Judg 3:15-30. Ehud over Eglon and the Moabites.
14. Judg 4-5. Deborah, Barak, and Jael over Sisera.
15. Judg 6-8. Gideon over the Midianites.
16. Judg 9. The story of Abimelech, the bad king.
17. Judg 10-11. Jephthah over the Ammonites.
18. Judg 12:1-6. Jephthah over Ephraim.
19. Judg 15. Samson over the Philistines.
20. Judg 19-20. Israel over Benjamin.
21. Judg 21:1-12. Israel over Jabesh-gilead.
22. 1 Sam 7:3-14. The Lord over the Philistines.
23. 1 Sam 11. Saul over Nahash the Ammonite.
24. 1 Sam 13-14. Jonathan over the Philistines.
25. 1 Sam 15. Saul over the Amalekites.
26. 1 Sam 17:1--18:4. David over Goliath.
27. 1 Sam 18:13-29. David over the Philistines for the hand of the princess.
28. 1 Sam 23:1-5. David over the Philistines at Keilah.
29. 1 Sam 28-29,31 (//1 Chr 10:1-14). The Philistines defeat Saul.

30. 1 Sam 30. David over the Amalekites.
31. 2 Sam 2:12-32. The indecisive battle between Joab and Abner.
32. 2 Sam 5:6-10 (//1 Chr 11:4-9). David takes Jerusalem.
33. 2 Sam 5:17-21,22-25 (//1 Chr 14:8-12,13-17). David over the Philistines.
34. 2 Sam 10 (//1 Chr 19:1-19). David defeats the Ammonites and Syrians.
35. 2 Sam 11-12. David's campaign against Rabbah.
36. 2 Sam 15-19. The rebellion of Absolom.
37. 2 Sam 20. The rebellion of Sheba.
38. 2 Chr 13. Abijah over Jeroboam.
39. 2 Chr 14:9-15. Asa over Zerah the Ethiopian.
40. 1 Kgs 20:1-21,22-43. Ahab over Ben-hadad.
41. 1Kgs 22 (//2 Chr 18:1-34). The kings of Israel and Judah against the Syrians.
42. 2 Kgs 3. The kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom over Moab.
43. 2 Chr 20. Jehoshaphat watches the enemies ambush themselves as prophesied.
44. 2 Kgs 6:8-23. Elisha strikes the Syrians blind.
45. 2 Kgs 6:24-7:20. Benhadad is turned away from Samaria by the sound of a great army.
46. 2 Kgs 9. Jehu, anointed king, overthrows Joram.
47. 2 Kgs 14:8-14 (//2 Chr 25:17-24). Jehoash defeats Amaziah.
48. 2 Kgs 16:5-9. The king of Assyria defeats Rezin at the call of Ahaz.
49. 2 Kgs 18:13--19:37 (//2 Chr 32:1-33; Isa 36-37). The angel of the Lord destroys the army of Sennacherib.
50. Jdt 1-16. Judith over Holofernes.
51. 1 Macc 1-7 (//2 Macc 8-15). The victories of Judas Maccabeus.
52. 2 Macc 3:1-40. The Lord, at the call of the people, defeats Heliodorus.

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