Boston College
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The Rejection of Saul in First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35:

Synchrony, Diachrony, Theology

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by

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Abstract

The figure of Saul became the focus of exilic reflection on election, rejection, obedience, and repentance. The Saul rejection accounts became, more broadly, about the election and seeming rejection of Israel because of infidelity to the Horeb covenant. The accounts became part of a wider deuteronomistic attempt to persuade an exilic audience of the importance of obedience centered on the YHWH-Israel bond articulated in Deuteronomic law. The Saul rejection accounts were placed at strategic points late in the development of the text of 1 Samuel. Both accounts appeal for obedience to the commands and words of YHWH (13:13-14; 15:1). In the end, these commands and words share the same referent—the book of the law—the priority of the final editors (DtrN).

Following an introduction describing context, model, and method (Chapter One), this work focuses on the positive contribution—and shortcomings—of some synchronic approaches, identifying the need for an appropriate biblical poetics (Chapter Two). The value of a careful synchronic reading is complemented by a diachronic reading contributing to an understanding of the text's development and final shaping (Chapter Three). Four stages are identified, ranging from 1) older, positive, Saul stories, to 2) prophetic tradition, to 3) a Deuteronomistic History expressive of preexilic hope informed by Davidic promise (Josianic), to 4) exilic, deuteronomistic thought, grappling with the crisis of exile while attempting to understand and articulate a response. The response of this final redactor (DtrN) consists of a call to renewed obedience to the book of the law expressive of the YHWH-Israel bond.

These diachronic stages are also identifiable in the rejection of Saul passages. Both passages (1 Sam 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35) are carefully studied, synchronically and diachronically,

resulting in several theological conclusions (Chapter Four). These conclusions are then compared and contrasted with a classic articulation of "Deuteronomistic Theology" (Noth and Von Rad), leading to even further refinement (Chapter Five). This is followed by a General Conclusion offering a final methodological, theological, and pastoral reflection.

Out of exilic reflection, DtrN prioritizes the Deuteronomic law: it is, after all, expressive of the incomparable YHWH-Israel relationship in covenant. There can be no compromise. Yet one of the great strengths of Deuteronomistic Theology, modified by the theological conclusions drawn here, is that the prophetic voice still speaks through the final deuteronomistic text. The embedded call to repentance (*šûḇ*) tempers the final urgent call to obedience with hope of return to and renewed acceptance by YHWH. Awareness of the diachronic stages allows the later reader to hear, not only the voice of the final DtrN redactor, but also earlier voices. The multi-voiced model, about which concerns are raised in Chapter Two, contributes in its own way to a greater appreciation of the rich theological depth of these texts (Chapters Four and Five). It is the synchronic-diachronic methodological combination adopted that permits the theological message to emerge more clearly in its fullness.

A debt is owed to the Deuteronomistic writers for the preservation, transmission, and adaptation of earlier strands. This dynamic of interacting traditions recalls the often overlooked vibrancy of Deuteronomistic Theology, suggesting a renewed appreciation. The Deuteronomistic writers formulated their own vision through interaction with received traditions. On the one hand, Deuteronomistic Theology is robust and uncompromisingly challenging: "Obey the words of YHWH!" (1 Sam 15:1). On the other hand, it is realistic, reconceptualizing, and compassionate: people will fail, but there is a way back. I suggest that the Deuteronomistic theologians offer a biblical foundation for the pastoral model of accompaniment.

Abbreviations

BHS   *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Edited by Rudolf Kittel, Karl Elliger, and Wilhelm Rudolph. Editio quarta emendata. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990.

Joüon   *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: Part Three: Synthax*. Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka. Subsidia Biblica; 14/II. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996.

Köhler   *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, editio photomechanice iterata cui adjectum est Supplementum Lexicon Germanico-Hebraicum (-Aramaicum) et Correctiones Additamentaque I. A. Continens. Edited by Ludwig Köhler and Walter Baumgartner. Leiden: Brill, 1985.

LXX   *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*. Two volumes in one. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935, 1979.

MT   The Masoretic Text.

Vulg.   *Nova Vulgata: Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio*. Ed. typica altera. Edited by Eduardus Schick. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986, 1998.

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Chapter One

1 Preliminaries: Introduction, Context, Model, Method, Chapters

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 An Important Year for Biblical Studies (1943)

The year 1943 was important for biblical studies. Two publications bore significantly on

biblical interpretation in the academic and ecclesial communities. The 1943 document of Pius

XII (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*) gave new impetus to biblical studies in the ecclesial context,

mentioning both literary and historical criticism.[1] It was also in 1943 that Martin Noth first

published his *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, arguably the most influential work in Old

Testament studies in the twentieth century.[2] Its novelty lay, not so much in seeking redactional

layers, as in discovering the literary plan controlling the redaction.[3] Noth took account of the

overall literary plan (a synchronic consideration) as well as diachronic development. This

dissertation studies the rejection of Saul in the context of what Noth identified as the

Deuteronomistic History, using what Piux XII calls the "art of criticism."[4] Combining

synchronic and diachronic methodologies it seeks to discover the meaning and the theology of

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[1] Pius XII, Encyclical On Promoting Biblical Studies *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (September 30, 1943), especially §§16, 24, at The Holy See, http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu.html.

[2] Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien; die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, 2, Unveränderte Auflage (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1957). First published in German in 1943. The section on the "Deuteronomistic History" was translated into English as Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, 2nd ed., Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 15 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

[3] Thomas Römer and Albert de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography: History of Research and Related Issues," in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, English Language ed., Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 306, ed. Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 24-139, 47.

[4] Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, §§ 23-25.

Saul's rejection: what did it mean for the authors and tradents of 1 Samuel? What does it mean for contemporary readers? What does it say about life lived before God?

1.1.2   Topic

My interest in working in the area of the Deuteronomistic History was sparked by an inspiring seminar on the Book of Kings (Spring 2017) with Professor Andrew Davis. Impressed by a reading of the texts that took account of serious, critical scholarship while also remaining open to theological reflection, the seminar stirred a curiosity to delve more into what was going on in and behind the texts. Interesting as the repeating patterns and regnal formulae of 1 and 2 Kings were, it seemed even more interesting to return to the origins of the monarchy in Israel, i.e., to the Saul narrative in 1 Samuel. A Hebrew Reading Course with Professor Richard Clifford (Spring 2018) served only to increase my interest in approaching biblical texts critically—yet ever open to theological import.

First Samuel stands out as interesting on many counts. First, it belongs to the Deuteronomistic History and yet is viewed as the least deuteronomistic section of that history. It carries older traditions. Second, 1 Samuel appears to be the hinge and center of the Deuteronomistic History. It presents the transition from one major period to another. Looking back, 1 Samuel concludes the period of conquest and judges (Joshua and Judges). Looking forward, it ushers in the monarchy, the focus of which is the Davidic dynasty (2 Sam 2-2 Kgs 25). Third, scholars argue that 1 Samuel provides a key for reading much of the Deuteronomistic History, especially the subsequent books of 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, introducing major motifs such as the "word of YHWH" as the power behind history, and the relationship between prophet and king.

Though Saul becomes relatively insignificant compared to David, he receives much narrative attention. The exile of 587 BCE barely takes up one chapter, yet the story of Saul takes up twenty-five chapters, almost an entire book of the Deuteronomistic History (1 Sam 8-2 Sam 1). The story of Saul, then, is not simply a bridge between the judges and the Davidic monarchy. The expansive narrative devoted to Saul indicates his importance and raises the question: what meaning had the figure of Saul for those who preserved his memory or read about him? Most of Saul's story, certainly from 1 Samuel 13:7b on, is the story of his rejection. The specific question could be formulated in this way: why was Saul rejected and what meaning has this for the reader? I see ancient Saul traditions expanded as they become a focus for exilic reflection.

Saul's figure in 1 Samuel is complex. His disobedience leads to rejection, yet while Saul is rejected as king by YHWH, he is not demonized or presented as an enemy of God. Positive elements and accounts concerning Saul are preserved and not censored or expunged from the text, offering a more nuanced picture of the first King of Israel. On a positive note, Saul's military valor is never questioned (11:1-15; 14:47-52); Samuel profoundly regrets Saul's rejection (15:11, 35); and YHWH had indeed been with Saul (20:13). Questions emerge such as the culpability of Saul, the fairness of YHWH, the motivation of Samuel, the innocence of David, and the silence of YHWH toward Saul. Saul is constantly asking and seeking but not receiving a response or finding, while David is sought and given answers. The coexistence of different traditions enriches the theological message.[5] Listening to different voices in the text offers hope and direction when conditions indicate only demise and hopelessness.

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[5] Among the various strands are older stories; strains such as pro-monarchy and anti-monarchy, pro-Saul and anti Saul, pro-David, etc.; prophecy; and finally deuteronomism in earlier and later forms.

1.1.3   Contribution to Field of Study

The purpose of the dissertation is to draw out the significance and theology of Saul's rejection. Considerable attention is given to the synchronic and diachronic methods and how these have been applied by various authors to the Saul texts. My understanding is that it is with these two methods in dialogue that the fullest picture emerges. The combination of insights gained from both methods brings us closer to the meaning of the texts, resulting in greater theological gains. My main "contribution" to scholarship, therefore, could be summarized in two words: method and theology. The **method** involves the combination of the synchronic and diachronic (Chapters 2 and 3), along with my ideas of how this is best achieved (Chapter 4). While some studies have touched on the synchronic and diachronic in Saul texts, this has not been done frequently or in detail, nor has their theological significance been the primary aim. While some studies have looked briefly at 1 Samuel 24 and 26 in a synchronic-diachronic light,[6] few have examined 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in this way or sought to express the emergent **theology**.

Rather than using Deuteronomistic Theology as a rubric to guide the research, it was thought more objective and interesting to introduce the concept of Deuteronomistic Theology at the end, *after* I have drawn my own conclusions about the meaning and theology of Saul's rejection from a careful study of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. The theological conclusions emerging from my work are compared with a classic expression of Deuteronomomistic Theology (Chapter Five). This further refines my study and offers an opportunity to appreciate anew this particular theology.

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[6] Walter Dietrich, "Die zweifache Verschonung Sauls (1 Sam 24 und 26): Zur 'diachronen Synchronisierung' zweier Erzählungen"; and Antony F. Campbell, "1 Samuel 24 and 26." Both articles in *David und Saul im Widerstreit: Diachronie und Synchronie im Wettstreit; Beiträge zur Auslegung des ersten Samuelbuches*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis; 206, ed. Walter Dietrich (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2004), 232-253 and 226-231.

1.2 Context: The Deuteronomistic History

This first chapter deals with preliminaries including the context, model, method, and outline of chapters. The context taken for granted is that of the Deuteronomistic History. While establishing its coherence and unity is beyond the scope of this work, a description is offered relying on extant scholarship. Martin Noth, in his *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, proposed that "the books from Deuteronomy to Kings constitute a redactional unity elaborated during the Babylonian exile."[7] This Deuteronomistic History was a response to the exile, a theodicy attempting to make sense of the disaster.[8] The exilic deuteronomistic author produced the history as "a single literary work,"[9] following a literary plan. [10] and was both author and redactor. He incorporated older sources into his overarching work while also respecting the integrity of these sources, leaving some largely unchanged. Older traditions and deuteronomistic contributions were molded into a *Deuteronomistic* History.

The presence of older traditions or sources does not take away from its nature as an organized *history*,[11] a distinct textual corpus.[12] The history looks back to the Book of

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[7] Römer and de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography," 24. Noth's deuteronomist wrote "in the middle of the 6th century B.C. when the history of the Israelite people was at an end . . ." (Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 79).

[8] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 89. Noth does not use the term "theodicy." The guilt and retribution expressed at the Fall of Jerusalem "yielded a new and highly distinctive way of understanding the relationship between YHWH and Israel, that is, the theological coinage of a *covenant*, the formulation proper of which we owe to these [deuteronomistic] authors." See Ernest W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and the Judaean Diaspora*, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 97. That is not to say there was no covenant or law tradition long in advance of Deuteronomism. Rather, its sense and the implications of covenant were refined.

[9] Antony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 11. A summary of selected scholarship is offered (11-13).

[10] Römer and de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography," 47.

[11] Its scope is long term, reaching far back with Joshua and the judges, as well as Abimelek and Jotham, even before Israel's first official king. This strengthens the view that the work is an intentional history. The conviction of the Deuteronomists was that what happened in 587 had "been brewing for centuries and almost since the very beginnings" (Römer and de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography," 136). Its interest is "the history of

Deuteronomy and relates how unfaithfully the deuteronomic law was lived out in the subsequent history. The books are "identified as an original, unified work because they have many traits in common, especially their structure, writing style, and theological outlook."[13] They "were edited together sufficiently so that they work as a coherent set in a way not true for materials outside them."[14] The books of Samuel form a vital part of that "artful historiography."[15]

Noth's hypothesis gained wide acceptance, as well as criticism and emendations. It is not within the scope of this dissertation to evaluate in detail either Noth's hypothesis or the wide variety of responses and modifications suggested. Refinements will be met in the course of the

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Yhwh and of Israel" (Römer and de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography," 136). Gary Knoppers summarizes the view of Baruch Halpern that, "there is still much to be said for viewing the Deuteronomist's work as an example of ancient history writing." See Gary N. Knoppers, "Introduction," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study; 8, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J. Gordon McConville (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 1-18, 16. The Deuteronomistic History can be termed historiography. According to the famous definition of Johan Huizinga, "history is the intellectual form in which a civilization renders account to itself of its past." Huizinga's is a frequently used definition. See John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press: 1983), 1. See also Thomas Römer, *The So-called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical, and Literary Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 37. See also Andrew R. Davis, *Reconstructing the Temple: The Royal Rhetoric of Temple Renovation in the Ancient Near East and Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 5. Rachelle Gilmour argues strongly that it is historiography since "it is a representation of the past." See Rachelle Gilmour, *Representing the Past: A Literary Analysis of Narrative Historiography in the Book of Samuel*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum; 143 (Boston: Brill, 2011), 21. Gary Knoppers concludes that the deuteronomists wrote a history, i.e., "a meaningful and sequential account of the past." See Gary N. Knoppers, "Is there a Future for the Deuteronomistic History?", in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Thomas Römer (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 119-134, 130, 132. Kugel writes that the Deuteronomistic History is "a great historical anthology." That these records were collected, preserved and edited many times indicates how highly historiography was held. It was viewed as a "sacred task." See James L. Kugel, "Early Interpretation: The Common Background of Late Forms of Biblical Exegesis," in *Early Biblical Interpretation*, ed. James L. Kugel and Rowan A. Greer (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 9-106, 23.

[12] Gerhard Von Rad, "The Deuteronomic Theology of History in 1 and 2 Kings," in *From Genesis to Chronicles: Explorations in Old Testament Theology*, ed. K.C. Hanson (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 154-166, 154.

[13] Steven L. McKenzie, *King David: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 27.

[14] Barbara Green, *How Are the Mighty Fallen?: A Dialogical Study of King Saul in 1 Samuel*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 365 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 2.

[15] Greger Andersson, *Untamable Texts: Literary Studies and Narrative Theory in the Books of Samuel*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies; 514 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 160.

synchronic and diachronic considerations below (Chapters 2, 3, 4). Some key modifications of Noth's Deuteronomistic History are taken into account, especially F.M. Cross's two-tier view—a mainly positive and hopeful Josianic edition, Dtr[1] (later seventh century BCE), followed by additions expressive of exilic reflection, Dtr[2] (587-550 BCE).[16] As the substantial foundation of the Deuteronomistic History I opt for Cross's preexilic, Josiah-focused Dtr[1] rather than the exilic DtrH or DtrG proposed by the Göttingen School.[17] Like Alison Joseph, Andrew Davis, and others, I believe Cross's two-tier version (Dtr[1] and Dtr[2]) better explains much of the material and the coexisting different viewpoints. I do, however, modify Cross's view. The interests of the later, exilic redaction focused on obedience to the law is captured more precisely by the Göttingen School's DtrN than by Cross's more general Dtr[2]. Finally, when it comes to pre-Deuteronomistic sources, especially older prophetic traditions concerning Samuel, Saul, and David, I find Antony Campbell's view of extended and gradual prophetic development over a long period (the Prophetic Record) more convincing than the Smend School's later, exilic, deuteronomistic, prophetic redaction (DtrP). The intentional preservation, transmission, expansion, and shaping of this history implies purpose—a meaning and a message.

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[16] Frank Moore Cross, "The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," in *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274-289, 287-289.

[17] Three deuteronomistic layers proposed by the Smend/Göttingen School (R. Smend, T. Veijola, and W. Dietrich) are noteworthy. Walter Dietrich and especially Timo Veijola did "ground-breaking identification of editorial revisions" distinguishing three layers in the Davidic traditions: 1) the basic ("*Grund*") history editor (DtrH/DtrG), 2) the prophetic editor (DtrP), and 3) the nomistic editor (DtrN). Veijola "developed the contributions of DtrP and DtrN within 1-2 Samuel, again maintaining an exilic date for the Deuteronomistic History." See Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 37, 2. Timo Veijola did much of this diachronic work in: *Das Königtum in der Beurteilung der deuteronomistischen Historiographie: eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, AASF B 198 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1977). For Veijola, the negative view of the monarchy comes from the later DtrN while the original history writer, DtrG, shows the monarchy in a positive light, whether this is the monarchy itself or the person of Saul (Veijola, *Das Königtum,* 52). The prophetic deuteronomist (DtrP) added a prophetically interested redactional layer to the extant Deuteronomistic History (DtrG). Beyond DtrP, the nomistic deuteronomist (DtrN) added a layer emphasizing obedience, especially to the law. Veijola's attention to 1 Samuel is valuable in explaining various concerns that coexist in the final form of the text, especially different emphases between DtrG and DtrN.

1.3   Model: A Theological History

The Deuteronomistic History is a meaningful history. It is a theological history. For Noth it offers a "clearly defined and strongly emphasized theological interpretation of history."[18] Greer makes the point that unlike the modern historical-critical method, biblical historians were not so much interested in reconstructing exactly what had happened as in *interpreting* and expressing the *meaning* of what happened—how "history itself held a sacred message, the unfolding of God's will" and how that meaning gives direction to life.[19] This view of historiography captures well the approach of the so-called Deuteronomistic "historians." The story of Saul holds such a meaning (Chapter Four). While historical traditions are important, meaning is the primary concern.[20] Nothing in the Deuteronomistic History "seems to be for itself; it is for the present and the future."[21] Polzin continues that "the full potential of this man,

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[18] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 4.

[19] Rowan A. Greer, "The Christian Bible and Its Interpretation," in *Early Biblical Interpretation*, ed. James L. Kugel and Rowan A. Greer (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 107-203, 201-202.

[20] Narrative is not a lesser form of history. It is *interpreted* history, recorded to give meaning and direction. See Niels Peter Lemche, *The Old Testament between Theology and History: A Critical Survey*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), especially 101-211, 151. Rachelle Gilmour's *Representing the Past* contributes greatly to an understanding of biblical and deuteronomistic historiography. Historiography is "a representation of the past." Gilmour emphasizes that a historical rendering of the past carrying ideological elements does not make it less historiographical. The value of narrative in historiography is once again being appreciated within historical theory (Gilmour, *Representing*, 15). Narrative truth is not necessarily a lesser truth than that of conventional history (referring to Barstad, in Gilmour, *Representing*, 17). Because accounts like Samuel use the past for a purpose does not make them less than historiography (*Representing*, 29). Gilmour makes clear that there is a difference between interpreted events and invented events. "There is an important difference between interpreting events so that their meaning and significance support your ideology and inventing events for the same purpose" (13). Ideology does not take away from historiography since all historiography has ideology (13). Gilmour even makes the point that "an invented speech . . . may capture the meaning of the speaker more precisely" than the exact words or what really happened (16). In the same vein, Robert Alter observes that the writer augments dialogues, shapes the text, and brings literary skills to bear on the general contours of historical events, "not to fabricate history, but in order to understand it." See Robert Alter, *Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, A Translation with Commentary* (London: W.W. Norton, 2013), 231.

[21] Robert Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History*: *Part Two: 1 Samuel*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 150. The Deuteronomistic History makes "the reader's 'now' present, as it were, in the past." A concrete example is that repetition of *today* in Moses's speech (Deut 29:14-15). Polzin writes of the "profound contemporaneity" of the Deuteronomistic History (150).

Saul, and the fate of the nation that promoted him is known from the beginning as a foregone conclusion." The history, Polzin summarizes, "is shaped for the benefit of the Deuteronomist's present and future audiences." [22] Saul's story speaks powerfully to exilic times: looking back, there were problems with kingship from the very beginning. The failure of Saul becomes a focus for reflection on the failure of the nation, as well as a response to that failure. The history is shaped by exilic suffering and characterized by reflection and a distinctive humility that seeks to remain open to YHWH's will and action.[23] Beyond the deuteronomists' "somber awareness" of things collapsing before and during the exile as Alter notes, the stories (including those of Saul) embodied "the people's memories, their vision of God and history and national purpose. All these, preserved in their Hebrew texts, they would one day bring back from exile as the potent instrument of an unprecedented national revival."[24]

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[22] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 151.

[23] Polzin and others view Israel's history as having distinctive aspects from other ancient Near East literature (Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 151). Israel's historical self-understanding exhibits traits born out of reflection on suffering, especially the 587 exile. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes the commonalities between Israel and surrounding nations. See Garrett Galvin, *David's Successors: Kingship in the Old Testament* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016), 6, 10. Yet there are also indications of distinctiveness on the part of Israel. Dietrich holds that the distinctiveness of Israel's historiography is a result of its real history—its "actually experienced" and "consciously contemplated" history; a "pensive and humble" history; a "history of suffering"; a "history of the people." Israel's history was not that of Egypt or Assyria or Babylon, otherwise it would not have developed this pensive and humble view of its own history. See Walter Dietrich, "Martin Noth and the Future of the Deuteronomistic History," in *The History of Israel's Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 182, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 168. Ancient Near East histories are, in contrast, full of "self-aggrandizement" (Dietrich, "Martin Noth," 168, note 2). "The history presented in the Deuteronomistic History is more a *history of suffering* than of triumph. And it is—both are interconnected—the *history of the people*—not 'history from above'" (Dietrich, "Martin Noth," 168). Noth expresses something similar when he observes that the history is not *official* but rather cautionary and critical (Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 99). Dietrich suggests there are two reasons for the difference in Israel: "the experience of actual history and faith in the God who was experienced in that history" (Dietrich, "Martin Noth," 168). The humility is expressed in the realization of the need for repentance. See Wolff's assessment of the Deuteronomistic History in Hans Walter Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomistic Historical Work," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study; 8, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J.G. McConville (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 62-78.

[24] Alter, *Ancient Israel,* xviii. Lemche, too, saw the exile as provoking deep reflection. Lemche's dating, later than necessary in my view, sees exile and Diaspora as the decisive perspectives for the history of Israel as related in the Old Testament (e.g., 1 Kgs 8 and Deut 30). Lemche saw the historiographer of Genesis-2 Kings

These considerations place us in a position to articulate the approach or model adopted in this dissertation.[25] The model adopted here views the scriptural text not merely as an imaginative work of literature nor as an historical work in the strictly modern sense, but as narrative, as historiography. It is "*interpreted* history" that seeks to convey the "*meaning* of history,"[26] to explain the past or trace a path to future restoration. It seeks not only to describe the past but provide the "foundations for faith and life."[27] It is primarily a religious work that seeks to impart a religious message or theology. Even more, a covenantal vision underlies these interests. Alter asserts the Old Testament "uses manifestly literary means to serve chiefly religious—it might be more accurate to call them—covenantal ends."[28] The Deuteronomistic History is accepted here as a purposeful and meaningful history expressive of how the relationship between YHWH and Israel was interpreted over an extended time. That history was colored by the exile of 587, with an eye to how present and future life might be lived and built anew in the light of the deuteronomic covenant. It is a *theological* history and its overriding concerns are theological.[29]

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emerging from the Jewish Diaspora to provide answers in Persian or Hellenistic times: "The Jewish Diaspora constitutes the context of the historiographer and his public, not only the exile in Mesopotamia but the dispersal of Judaism in the Persian and Hellenistic world" (Lemche, *Between Theology and History*, 211).

[25] This dissertation accepts the definition of approach/model and method found in The Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (April 15, 1993), "Introduction," § B, footnote 1 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 33. A model or "approach" is "an enquiry proceeding from a particular point of view." A "method" is "a group of scientific procedures employed in order to explain texts."

[26] Lemche, *Between Theology and History*, 151.

[27] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 13. He refers in particular to the Pentateuchal traditions here.

[28] Robert Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type-Scene," *Prooftexts* 3, no. 2 (1983): 115-130, 116.

[29] The stories of 1 Samuel (and Saul's rejection) "are about the role of God in the events of Israel's past"; they offer "an interpretation of the events of Israel's experience. Often the interpretation is religious: this was how God was acting or not acting in our midst." See Antony F. Campbell, *1 Samuel*, Forms of the Old Testament Literature; v. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 27. Ernest Nicholson writes that "the Deuteronomistic writers were evidently concerned to provide patterns of God's dealings with his people in promise, fulfillment, and judgment, that is, paradigms intended for thinking about the present and hoping for the future. In such a way, they sought primarily to provide meaning in circumstances of drastic change . . ." (Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 177). Yairah Amit notes that the texts were developed, not to pass the time before movies and TV but "to educate the

First Samuel and the rejection of Saul occupy a key role within that Deuteronomistic History.[30]

Saul's fall is not an incomprehensible enigma as sometimes suggested (Chapter Two).

The Deuteronomistic writers, then, saw themselves as conveying the meaning of their past and providing direction for present and future life with YHWH. For them, God continued with his people and they interpreted God's action through texts that continue to speak. An understanding of their purpose is essential to an adequate understanding of the text. The model adopted here—that these texts are meaningful theological texts—calls for a suitable method. The method needs to take account of the intentionality of the final redactors and of the final form

readers or listeners and to persuade them to cling to the covenant and obey God's precepts." See Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 3. The texts reflect on experience, often religious experience, and were religiously generated. The Deuteronomistic redactors, then, were not mere compilers. They were "creative authors who gave the final texts a meaningful form" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 15). Alter, as seen, also takes this view (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, xviii). Noth saw the history as theodicy. Wolff saw it as a call to repentance and return. Von Rad saw it as hopeful, even in the Davidic sense (Chapter Five). Polzin saw it as persuasive (Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 151). It had meaning for those who compiled it and their target audience. The deuteronomistic view of history was "governed by the conviction that God had acted in the history of Israel in a visible way . . ." in deeds and words (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 104). Veijola is summarizing Noth here. The word of God was the central power of the history, especially clear in prophecy and its sure fulfillment (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 110). Awareness of such intentionality on the part of the deuteronomistic editors is important for interpretation. They compiled a purposeful, theological history, seeing it as a "sacred task"— "the act of interpreting God's 'speech' in the events of the past" with lessons to be drawn from it (Kugel, "Early Interpretation," 23). Polzin observes part of the deuteronomistic talent is its "mastery of ways to explain and persuade as well as command, provoke thought as well as require obedience" (Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 151). It is a "theologically motivated" history (Alison L. Joseph, *Portrait of the Kings: The Davidic Prototype in Deuteronomistic Poetics* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015], 20). It is "a kind of theological historiography that submits to religious axioms." See Walter Dietrich, "The Layer Model of the Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Samuel," in *Is Samuel among the Deuteronomists?: Current Views on the Place of Samuel in a Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Cynthia Edenburg and Juha Pakkala (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 39-65, 59. The relevant texts are part of a *theological* history with a theological message. Soggin, too, notes the dominance of "theological" over "economic and political" concerns in the Deuteronomistic History. See J. Alberto Soggin, *Introduction to the Old Testament: From Its Origins to the Closing of the Alexandrian Canon*, Old Testament Library, rev. ed., trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 163. V. Philips Long extends this to the story of Saul. See V. Philips Long, *The Reign and Rejection of King Saul: a Case for Literary and Theological Coherence*, SBL Dissertation Series (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 241. The point here is that the overriding concerns are theological.

[30] Within the Deuteronomistic History 1 Samuel and the fall of Saul occupy an important place. First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 point beyond themselves to the wider history that precedes and follows them. The presence of Samuel in both passages connects especially with what precedes, in terms of 1 Samuel and Samuel's early life, but also with the Book of Judges since Samuel is last of the judges and Judges 17-21 cries out for the monarchy as life in Israel disintegrates. The continued unfolding of the history is glimpsed in 1 Samuel 13:14 and 15:28 referencing David and his line and pointing forward to the wider history, up to the fall of Judah in 2 Kings 25.

of the text, seeking its synchronic message. The method also needs to broach questions of

history, context, motives, concerns, experiences, and developments diachronically *behind* that

final text, including the incorporation of older traditions, later editorial work, and the shaping of

the final form. Such considerations provide important insights into the intentionality,

significance, and theology of the text. The method adopted here and outlined below attempts to

take these various dimensions into account. It consists in the combination of synchronic and

diachronic methodologies to plumb the meaning of the texts and arrive at an adequate and

responsible theology of the rejection of Saul and its implications for the reader.

1.4   Method: Synchronic and Diachronic Interplay

For an adequate description of a text's meaning and theology a study of the text in its

final form *and* its developmental history are necessary. Scholarly commentary strongly suggests

the value of such a combined methodological approach.[31] The method adopted here will make

use both of a literary/synchronic approach (e.g., Alter, Berlin, Edelman, Fokkelman, Gunn,

Miscall, Phillips Long, Polzin, etc.) and a historical/diachronic approach (e.g., Campbell,

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[31] "To identify what *intent* we can draw out from the text" we need to use both the historical critical method and the newer literary approaches (Joseph, *Portrait*, 19, emphasis added). Each method "needs and can help the other" (Knoppers and McConville, *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 276, editorial comment). The two approaches are "not incompatible alternatives but rather . . . two sets of methods, formed to match different questions in the study of the biblical texts" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 14). They interrelate and mutually enrich each other and the overall interpretation (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 18-20, 18). Here Philips Long, presenting R.W.L. Moberly's work as an example, argues for the value of a combination of the literary and historical approaches (e.g., R.W.L. Moberly, *Old Testament Theology: Reading the Hebrew Bible as Christian Scripture* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013]). Building on the insights of Moberly, Luis Alonso Schökel, and others, Philips Long proposes "a synthetic exegetical approach based on a more complex theoretical model and open to fresh intuitions on both the diachronic and synchronic levels of inquiry" (*Reign and Rejection*, 18). Charles Conroy also writes of "a responsible integration of the two areas of scholarly endeavour." See Charles Conroy, "A Literary Analysis of 1 Kings 1:41-53, with Methodological Reflections," in *Congress Volume: Salamanca, 1983*, Vetus Testamentum Supplements; 36, ed. J.A. Emerton (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 54-66, 55. Rachelle Gilmour writes of biblical scholarship having "moved beyond the debate of synchronic versus diachronic methodology," proposing their simultaneous use to enrich the understanding of the Bible's message. See Rachelle Gilmour, "Reading Jeremiah 19:1-13: Integrating Diachronic and Synchronic Methodologies," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* no. 17 (2017), Article 5, 1-27, 1, https://doi.org/10.5508/jhs.2017.v17.a5.

McCarter, McKenzie, Van Seters, Römer, Dietrich, Veijola, etc.). The methodology adopted in response to the model assumed is that of interplay between synchronic and diachronic methodologies with a view to the theological import.

Methodologically, however, a careful synchronic reading should generally precede diachronic considerations.[32] Occasionally this process is bypassed or skimmed over with an understandable impatience to propose diachronic hypotheses.[33] Even with the best hypotheses, "The long process by which these [underlying] traditions have been shaped is not recoverable" and so it is advisable to begin with "the whole rather than the parts."[34] By a synchronic study is meant a careful reading of the final form of the text. It is an attempt to make sense of the text as it stands. Such a study takes account of important text critical matters as well as context and

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[32] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 19: "A literary examination of the text should methodologically precede any attempt to uncover the text's pre-history." Moberly proposes that "a rigorous examination of the final text, treated in its own right as a literary and theological composition" should methodologically precede diachronic considerations. See R.W.L. Moberly, *At the Mountain of God: Story and Theology in Exodus 32-34*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series, 22 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 23. We begin with the text in front of us, the "being" of the text, rather than a study of its "becoming" (Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 70, trans. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press], 1989, 10). The proper way of proceeding is from the text itself to historical considerations. Phyllis Trible, reviewing Polzin's *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, notes that Polzin, while valuing the historical and literary, sees the importance of beginning with the literary and then proceeding to the historical: "he [Polzin] does assert the 'operational priority' of literary over historical criticism, holding that the proper way to proceed is from the inner world of the text to historical investigations." See Phyllis Trible, review of *Moses and the Deuteronomist*: *Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges*, A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, Part 1, by Robert Polzin, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 45, no.1 (1983): 119-120.

[33] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 175. Philips Long disagrees with Baruch Halpern's assertion that the *first step* to understanding Saul's election is the division of sources (*Reign and Rejection*, 174). G. Von Rad advocated the tradition-historical approach beginning with how the text came to be. However, he also showed sensitivity to the literary sense that went beyond the reconstruction of earlier stages. Von Rad moved beyond the "how?" of the text to the "what?" (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 8). Lyle M. Eslinger observes that in the historical-critical paradigm modeled by Wellhausen conflicts in the text are "the result of composite authorship over an extended period of time." See *Kingship of God in Crisis: A Close Reading of 1 Samuel 1-12*, Bible and Literature Series; 10 (Decatur, GA: Almond Press, 1985), 14. This demands a literary dissection of the text into various sources seeking authorship, time, context and intention. Only after determining the historico-critical background can the "structure and composition of a biblical book become intelligible" (Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 15). Eslinger refers in particular to Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. P.R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 130. The movement from diachronic to synchronic seems methodologically back to front.

[34] Paul Borgman, *David, Saul, and God: Rediscovering an Ancient Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11.

narrative analogies—connections with similar or linked passages elsewhere in the Deuteronomistic History.[35]

The presumption that the final text makes sense sometimes requires an effort we should not abandon too readily. Polzin's observation is a reminder that in moving too swiftly from the synchronic study or resorting too soon to calling in "that self-excusing catch-all termed *the redactor . . .* we simply remove from our shoulders the responsibility of reading."[36] An attempt to first appreciate the existing narrative is necessary and "labeling any part of the narrative as secondary and contextually incoherent is a *last* resort and may be a failure in interpretation rather than in the narrative itself."[37] With regard to the Saul texts, "the biblical literature is virtually our only source of information," therefore "proper interpretation of the literary deposit is fundamental to any theologizing or historical reconstructing that we may attempt with respect to Israel's first king."[38]

Investment in synchronic study can occasionally obviate the urgency for further diachronic consideration. Literary artistry, suspense, drama, comparison, contrast, intentional repetition or development, ambiguity, and omission can all convey a strong message in terse Old

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[35] I place text critical matters with synchronic considerations as part of establishing the optimal final form text. Textual criticism is sometimes placed within the context of the historical critical method, more associated with diachronic concerns. Here too, however, it *precedes* literary criticism and the quest for sources, forms or editorial work. See Pontifical Biblical Commission, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, § I, A, 1, 36.

[36] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 172.

[37] Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 38-39, emphasis added. Eslinger refers to Jan P. Fokkelman's *Narrative Art in Genesis* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975), 2. The practice of dividing up the final form of the text into "separate redactional sections followed by an interpretation of the individual sections as separate expressions of different socio-historical situations may mistakenly attribute independent status and even socio-historical existence to themes, viewpoints, and concepts that owe their existence and particular nuances solely to their actual setting in the context of the whole narrative, the final form of the text" (Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 40).

[38] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 2.

Testament narrative.[39] Attunement to literary aspects sometimes cautions against an overly hasty resort to posit diachronic activity. Insightful synchronic or literary study, then, may "sometimes have a vital role to play in modifying certain historical-critical conclusions."[40] For instance, the recognition of literary coherence and skill in 1 Samuel 15 dispenses from the need to see it primarily as the product of many later additions.[41] For Philips Long, "greater sensitivity to repetition as a stylistic device not only enriches our synchronic reading of a text but may also call for a reassessment of some of our diachronic conclusions."[42] Narrative analogy, wherein narratives interact, indicates commentary on the action being described. In narrative analogy contrasts are made between Saul and Gideon (Judges), Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam 13-14), and Saul and David (1 Sam 16-31). In addition, thematic comparisons are made between Saul and Hezekiah (concerning trust) and Saul and Josiah (concerning cultic obedience). The reader will draw his or her own conclusions from the contrasts. This is part of the narrative's showing rather than telling. Barbara Green (wrongly, in my view) thinks such comparisons or analogies are "simplex" (Chapter 2).[43]

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[39] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 233.

[40] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 38.

[41] Philips Long also gives 1 Samuel 15 as an example of this (*Reign and Rejection*, 236). I agree with his conclusion about 1 Samuel 15 but reach it in a different way (Chapter Four). I disagree with him about 1 Samuel 10:8 and 13:7b-15. He argues against the common assertion that these were added later, an assertion he claims "is based on insubstantial evidence." His literary study concludes, "a higher degree of narrative coherence and ideological consistency than has commonly been recognized" is found in 1 Samuel 9-15 (236).

[42] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 37.

[43] Barbara Green, *King Saul's Asking*, Interfaces (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), xvii. To overlook these narrative analogies is to impoverish interpretation. Patterns and comparisons are deliberate and meaningful in the Deuteronomistic History. This is illustrated in Alison Joseph's identification of prototype strategies as part of deuteronomistic poetics in Kings (cf. *Portrait*). Green interprets from a Bakhtinian approach. In Chapter Two I argue for a suitable poetics applied appropriately. Joseph provides a fine example. While I recommend caution in the application of the Bakhtinian theory out of which Green makes this observation (Chapter 2), by the end of my research I see value in some of Bakhtin's insights, especially attention to other voices in the text (Chapter 5).

Eslinger proposes "a close reading of the text," rather than concern with the socio-historical milieu.[44] Examples of such readings are examined in Chapter Two. They bring new insights to the ancient texts. Chapter Two also deals with the shortcomings and pitfalls of an insensitive application of certain synchronic methodologies to the biblical text. Some literary approaches claim that meaning is not connected to history or that texts can be interpreted without reference to the history or context behind them. Yet texts cannot just mean anything at all or whatever the reader wants them to mean. An arbitrary or overly subjective reading can sometimes result from a postmodern approach, reserving the right, as John Collins notes, "to affirm one interpretation over another but on grounds that are strictly ad hoc . . ."[45] Historical criticism can help reestablish or support objectivity in analysis.

Even the most rigorous synchronic study reaches its limits in service of the text (Chapter Two). Despite Polzin's tremendous contribution to the synchronic study of Saul texts in *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, it has been observed that he "does not do justice to the text" since he never gets around to the diachronic, though acknowledging its importance.[46] Further advancement of textual understanding demands other methods too. The synchronic method reveals its limits by raising problems it cannot solve unaided. It needs the diachronic perspective. Often it is "the unevennesses and difficulties in the present text" that lead to hypotheses of

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[44] Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 40. Eslinger notes that "the greatest failing of historical-critical readings of the narrative is a neglect of the narrative's voice structure." Eslinger continues: "Literary explanations of the narrative are inherently stronger because they are primarily descriptive and so subject to refutation; a holistic literary approach eliminates the undesirable multiplication of historical assumptions, and its conclusions can be accepted or rejected as they agree or disagree with the text (cf. Polzin 1980:5-7). The literary approach is a way out of the proliferation of studies whose conclusions cannot be compared because they depend on varying, non-verifiable hypotheses and assumptions." See Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 427-428. The reference is to Polzin's *Moses and the Deuteronomist.*

[45] John J. Collins, *Encounters with Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 37.

[46] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 11.

underlying sources.[47] The final form text provides signals to how that text was shaped over time. Diachronic methodology is employed most naturally and fruitfully in response to indications or signals in the final text that suggest background redactional activity. To unfold the text adequately, both the "finished product" and the contributing "raw material" should be taken into account.[48] The value and limits of the synchronic method seek assistance and light from the diachronic. Indeed, historical perspectives serve to help, not hinder, literary readings.[49] A text can hardly be viewed as adequately interpreted unless some connection has been made to its historical context. Interestingly, most synchronic approaches overlap into diachronic presuppositions or conclusions (Chapter 2).

Even *theologically* the diachronic plays a key role. Acknowledging the immense contribution of historical criticism to scriptural understanding, Joseph Ratzinger observed that "as the human element in sacred history became more and more visible, the hand of God, too, seemed larger and closer."[50] Deuteronomistic writers were clear that God acted in history. Historical-critical/diachronic study helps us understand better what authors attempted to communicate and how audiences would have understood the message and the medium. While the method adopted in this dissertation was chosen in light of the observations of critical scholarship, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, a key document for Catholic biblical studies, further refines the model adopted here. It succinctly outlines strengths and weaknesses of

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[47] Moberly, *Mountain of God*, 23.

[48] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 11. A summary overview of selected scholarship is offered, 6.

[49] Cephas T. A. Tushima, *The Fate of Saul's Progeny in the Reign of David* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 45. Tushima is writing of Philips Long's *Reign and Rejection*.

[50] Joseph Ratzinger, "Foundations and Approaches of Biblical Exegesis," *Origins* 17, no. 35 (February 1988): 593-602, 595.

synchronic and diachronic approaches taken in isolation from each other—recommending the use of both and the interplay between them. No single scientific method is "fully adequate to comprehend the biblical texts in all their richness."[51] Rather, harmonization between synchronic and diachronic methods is praised, recognizing that they are "mutually complementary and indispensable for bringing out all the truth of the text and for satisfying the legitimate demands of the modern reader."[52] In the final analysis, I hope to advance the work of bringing out the truth of the rejection of Saul texts for the reader. The interplay between synchronic and diachronic is essential in this theological project.

1.5   Chapters Two, Three, Four, and Five

This chapter introduced the topic, provided the context, described the model, and provided a rationale for the method employed. A brief description of subsequent chapters follows. Chapter Two describes, appreciates, and critiques synchronic approaches to the rejection of Saul. Most synchronic accounts of 1 Samuel refer also to historical or diachronic considerations. Understanding the developmental history of the text—how it came to be? Why? When?—helps comprehend reasons for and motivations behind its production and sheds light on its purposefulness. These aspects are sketched in Chapter Three which outlines four diachronic stages behind the Deuteronomistic History and the accounts of Saul's rejection, setting the groundwork for Chapter Four. Chapter Four is devoted to 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 as a cross section of the Deuteronomistic History and the core of Saul's rejection. Placing both texts in one longer chapter facilitates comparisons, contrasts, and conclusions. Finally, Chapter Five looks at what is often termed "Deuteronomistic Theology," especially as presented by Noth, Von

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[51] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, § I, B, 41.

[52] John Paul II, Address on the Interpretation of the Bible in the Church (23 April 1993), §III, 14, Pontifical Biblical Commission, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (15 April 1993), 7-21, 18.

Rad, and others. My research conclusions are further refined when compared with the classic articulation of this theology. This also provides an opportunity to highlight what is valuable about Deuteronomistic Theology, of which the accounts of Saul's rejection are a focused expression. Chapter Five concludes with final methodological, theological, and pastoral reflections.

Chapter Two

2 Synchronic Considerations Surrounding First Samuel and Saul

2.1 Introduction

Chapter Two deals with authors who approach the text from a synchronic perspective. Acknowledging their important contribution, the chapter also identifies trends, offers a critique, and suggests a way forward in terms of biblical poetics and diachronic direction. The chapter draws on the work of key authors, such as Gunn, Miscall, Polzin, Eslinger, Green, Fokkelman, Alter, and Berlin, and addresses the following questions: Is there an overriding image of Saul more characteristic of synchronically focused authors? Is the tendency of synchronic commentary to sympathize with Saul while being critical of David, Samuel and even YHWH? The impression that synchronic scholarship is generally sympathetic to Saul and critical of David is investigated. Why synchronic scholarship tends to form a positive image of Saul (and a negative image of Samuel, David, and YHWH) is partly related to methodology. This observation, in turn, questions the appropriateness of applying methods designed for much later secular narratives to ancient biblical narrative. I conclude that an appropriate biblical poetics is possible and best serves a responsible interpretation of the text of 1 Samuel.

The brief literature review is followed by a synchronic sketch of 1 Samuel 13-15 and its context. The sketch helps identify challenges seeking diachronic resolution. In isolation, the synchronic approach is insufficient in providing a complete account of the text. Questions arise from a synchronic reading that go beyond its scope. Some examples are pro- and anti-monarchy texts side by side as well as doublets, inconsistencies, anomalies, differing traditions and emphases, etc. Difficulties meriting diachronic discussion in Chapter Three are identified at the

end of the synchronic sketch. In the end, 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are identified as later

additions to their contexts.

2.2   Authors and Issues

2.2.1   Introduction

There is not one synchronic reading of Saul but many. A selection of authors will be

presented. Some take a clear synchronic or literary approach (e.g., Gunn, Polzin, Miscall,

Fokkelman). However, it is difficult to separate authors neatly into two groups simply on their

adherence to synchronic or diachronic methodolgies. Most authors who highlight the value of

the final form of the text also refer to historical considerations or context. Often, we can only

note that some authors emphasize the synchronic and others the diachronic while many take both

into account. Some authors, important for diachronic considerations in Chapter Three, will be

mentioned here, since they also have a literary focus, e.g., John Van Seters. While the

delineation between synchronic and diachronic authors is not always clear, this is a positive

discovery. It serves to endorse the direction of this dissertation—the need for synchronic-

diachronic interaction and the difficulties and consequences of artificially isolating either

method.

Authors selected for attention here are Gunn, Miscall, Polzin, Eslinger, Green,

Fokkelman, Alter and Berlin. Most are sympathetic to Saul and less so to Samuel, David, and

YHWH. Fokkelman's work stands out for its exhaustive detail and single-minded literary

tenacity. Green is less sympathetic to Saul than her synchronic colleagues, with Frovlov viewing

her as the exception in this regard. [53] Authors are taken in approximate chronological order—

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[53] Serge Frolov, review of *How the Mighty are Fallen?: A Dialogical Study of King Saul in 1 Samuel*, by Barbara Green, *Review of Biblical Literature* 06/2004, http://www.bookreviews.org.

some refer to predecessors—or as the work of one seems to flow from another, with the question

of suitable biblical poetics coming last with Alter and Berlin. How their use of a synchronic

approach influences their view of the rejection of Saul and the characters of Saul, David, Samuel

and YHWH determines the attention given to each. Our discussion will be guided by the

approach of Antony Campbell, which avoids focusing on "one interpretation of the texts as

though it alone were right," instead proposing "at least one interpretation—as appropriate, as

adequate and responsible."[54] This seems the best way to proceed and advance scholarship.

Attempting one approach well assists all approaches. A sketch of the work of some authors

relevant to 1 Samuel and Saul follows.

2.2.2   David M. Gunn[55]

David Gunn sees the story of Saul as one of the Bible's "uncomfortable stories,"[56] as

"serious entertainment," and a challenge to moral reflection.[57] He takes the "final form" of the

text out of interest, and because no one has succeeded in "delineating the constituent sources of 1

Samuel."[58] Any redactional tensions in the text are grappled with and "subsumed . . . in a

complex but artistically satisfying whole."[59]

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[54] Antony F. Campbell, *1 Samuel*. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature; v. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 2003, 23.

[55] David M. Gunn, *The Fate of King Saul: An Interpretation of a Biblical Story*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 14 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press), 1980.

[56] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 9.

[57] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 11. Eslinger describes the purpose 1 Samuel 1-12 as "designed more to entertain and educate the reader than to inform and accurately portray events for the reader" (Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 56).

[58] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 13.

[59] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 14.

Gunn expresses his view of the main characters, Samuel, Saul, David, and YHWH, displaying not a little bias. Samuel is a terrifying bully and YHWH is inscrutable: "why should the king be browbeaten by the fulminations of a religious functionary and the dictates of his inscrutable God?"[60] Gunn claims the elders of Bethlehem are terrified at Samuel's approach to anoint David in 1 Samuel 16 because "Samuel can be a dangerous man."[61] (The real reason is not fear of Samuel but fear of Saul, fear that perceived disloyalty at Bethlehem might result in Nob-like slaughter). From the beginning, Saul has no chance of success since YHWH resents Saul as supplanter king.[62] Through the evil spirit YHWH manipulates Saul.[63] Saul is the sacrifice demanded because of the request for a king and the failure that proves YHWH was right. Here Gunn, like Saul, misses the point and misunderstands sacrifice, thinking it can somehow substitute for obedience (1 Sam 15:22-23). Gunn misunderstands the depths of Saul's failure (Chapter Four). Gunn acknowledges that "David is shown to be innocent" and does not grab the throne or raise his hand against Saul.[64] Gunn observes that on both occasions when Saul is found guilty of breaking a commandment, he is attempting to offer sacrifice and showing loyalty to YHWH. Gunn notes that the God who looks not at exteriors but into the heart, seems preoccupied with superficial trifles and "Saul's culpability is more technical than of moral substance."[65] Gunn argues that YHWH is a jealous God and from the start Saul has no chance at

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[60] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 123.

[61] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 77.

[62] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 128.

[63] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 129.

[64] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 116.

[65] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 124.

all.[66] YHWH is the true king and the people's king must fail completely.[67] Gunn sees YHWH as jealous and manipulative. "The evil spirit points unambiguously to Yahweh's manipulation of Saul."[68]

Gunn's contribution is significant. He attempts to provide what in his time was the less frequently articulated view of Saul as hero and YHWH as oppressor. Saul is "an innocent victim of God" showing God's darker side[69] while David knows only God's favor.[70] Gunn makes interesting points and offers fresh insights. His focus on the final form of the text is important. Lyle Eslinger notes that "Gunn's view is helpful in directing the focus of interpretation away from tangential diachronic hypothesis, which is inherently non-verifiable, back to the interpretation of the existing text."[71] Gunn also raises helpful points such as Saul's clinging to his kingdom, "what is no longer his through the free gift of others."[72] This explains the painful unfolding of 1 Samuel 16-2 Samuel 1. I agree with Gunn when he writes that Saul's failure is not merely about disobedience but is more nuanced and subtle. I argue that more profound matters are at play such as trust and covenantal attentiveness expressive of relationship with YHWH (Chapters Four and Five). I also agree with Gunn's blanket observation that YHWH is the true king and the people's king must fail completely.[73] It could be said that the Deuteronomistic

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[66] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 125.

[67] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 127.

[68] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 129.

[69] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 123.

[70] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 131.

[71] Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 39.

[72] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 122.

[73] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 127.

History as a whole attempts to make this point: YHWH is the true king and the nation can thrive only in allegiance to YHWH, a point Timo Veijola makes eloquently.[74]

There are difficulties with Gunn's approach. He makes the unlikely claim that 1 Samuel is "serious entertainment."[75] Alter claims that "no biblical author wrote merely to entertain his audience" and there is "no evidence of a class of professional storytellers in ancient Israel analogous to the bards of Greece."[76] I disagree with Gunn's overall tendency to view Saul as subject to forces beyond his control, with little power over or responsibility for what transpired: from the beginning "the future is loaded against him" (e.g., 10:8).[77] The story of Saul and his rejection loses much of its power and meaning if Saul is not a free and responsible moral agent.

That Gunn focuses on YHWH as just another character in the literature is a reminder of the value and limits of literary criticism applied indiscriminately to certain texts. To view YHWH as just another flawed or even capricious character in the Saul texts is to set aside the intentionality of the final deuteronomistic authors and to miss the meaning and purpose invested in the text, perhaps even the central message of the narrative. A deconstructionist approach may shed new light on old texts, but with its emphasis on the text as text, on all characters as limited or flawed, and on the reader, it may also hamper apprehension of what authors and first readers intended and understood.[78]

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[74] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122.

[75] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 11.

[76] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 234.

[77] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 115.

[78] See Chapters One (on the model assumed) and Five for more on this.

Gunn does not take account of the wider synchronic view such as the Deuteronomistic History or the books of Samuel, admitting that this is "in principle, deficient."[79] Reading 1 Samuel apart from its wider synchronic context means that helpful contexts, analogies, emphases, and understandings are not taken into account, leaving important episodes misunderstood, e.g., Saul's approach to battle or his relationship with the cult. Such context is important. Gunn himself concedes that an overview of the greater unit (Deuteronomistic History and 1 Samuel) "would push into the background certain elements which I find to be prominent and vice versa."[80]

2.2.3   Peter D. Miscall[81]

Peter Miscall comments on other authors, praising especially Gunn, Alter, and Polzin (see below). He departs from and challenges historical criticism and its methods because "they do regard and treat the Old Testament as simplistic and primitive."[82] Miscall uses literary criticism to display all the options available in the text of 1 Samuel, even if some are not convincing. He presents a spectrum of interpretations, including a good Saul, a bad David, and a bad Samuel.[83] He questions the reliability of David, especially in 1 Samuel 24-25, and how representative Samuel's word is of YHWH's.[84]

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[79] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 14. His defense is that "variety is the spice of life."

[80] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 14.

[81] Peter D. Miscall, *1 Samuel: A Literary Reading*, Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).

[82] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, vii.

[83] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, xviii.

[84] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, xiii.

Reading Miscall, one is left with the sense that the study has opened up many possibilities but that nothing has been resolved. The study is fine, but inconclusive; the search for options is all. Miscall is comfortable with the ambiguities. He does not seek resolution or discovery of "the true meaning, the author's intention, what it really meant, what really happened, the purpose of the text . . . an essential meaning."[85] Reading and interpretation must continue and, for Miscall, "There is no essential, definable 'what' that 1 Samuel is 'about.'"[86]

Miscall's point is well made in that a final, definitive articulation of what the text means may never be reached: the process of interpretation continues. Brueggemann sees this as an essential dimension of biblical theology.[87] Miscall's approach can be contrasted with that of Fokkelman who claims to seek the definitive meaning. While the truth stands somewhere in middle, I see Fokkelman's approach as ultimately more fruitful. Appreciating that the text has meaning and significance and attempting to get as close as possible to a "definitive" sense by grappling with issues increases focus, clarity, and understanding of the text.

Miscall claims his is not a deconstructionist reading though he acknowledges he is influenced by deconstruction. This influence accounts for the "indeterminacy and ambiguity and . . . refusal to argue for one interpretation of 1 Samuel."[88] He highlights aspects overlooked in previous interpretations. It is difficult to discern how Miscall is *not* a deconstructionist.

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[85] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, xvi.

[86] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 185.

[87] An attitude of "ongoing adjudication" is faithful to the nature of the text itself. See Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 64.

[88] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, xx-xxi.

2.2.4 Robert Polzin[89]

Some points of interest from Polzin's work on 1 Samuel are presented here. I will not enter into the complicated question of implied narrator or author or real narrator, etc., distinctions that have puzzled several commentators. I agree with Eslinger's assessment that Polzin's reading is too complicated, contrived, and dependant on presuppositions. I acknowledge Campbell's prudence in not dealing with Polzin or Fokkelman.[90]

Polzin opines that the source-oriented approach can be "highly speculative" and involves "neglect of the real text" that is actually before us.[91] Thus Noth's view of how the Deuteronomistic History came to be composed "mostly fails to account for its artful construction."[92] Noth concentrates on "superficial aspects" such as a "recognizable chronological framework and its periodically didactic sermons" and his analysis "claims more than it delivers."[93] Noth and his followers, e.g., Cross, praise the history for its greatness, yet by focusing on the pre-texts they miss the features of the final text that make it great, that make the Deuteronomistic History a literary masterpiece.[94] If one accepts theories like Cross's double edition view, then the final text, the real text, is just the product of "a well-intentioned hack."[95]

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[89] Robert Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History:* Part Two: 1 Samuel, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989).

[90] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 20.

[91] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 6.

[92] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 10.

[93] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 11.

[94] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 11.

[95] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 13.

Polzin agrees with Van Seters who observes that Noth "attributed too little of the work to the author himself [the deuteronomist] and too much to his sources and 'traditions.'"[96] Yet Polzin criticizes Van Seters's literary analysis for being simply a detailed description of the *literary history* behind the text of Joshua–2 Kings.[97] Van Seters, like others, wants to "establish a coherent pre-text out of what he believes is the ideological mess of the real text."[98] For Van Seters there is a strong contrast between the deuteronomistic view of David and the (later added) Court History's critique of David. In *In Search of History* Van Seters removes fourteen chapters, the Court History, from the original Deuteronomistic History, viewed as central by most scholars, "thus robbing Noth's deuteronomist to pay Van Seters's redactor."[99] This identification of later material would be further developed in Van Seters's *Biblical Saga of King David.* Polzin suspects that Van Seters and others respect their own reconstructions of the pre-text more than the real and final text.

Polzin betrays inconsistencies similar to those he criticizes in Van Seters and others. He argues that "the text of 1 Samuel makes sense, however worked-over the text is scribally . . ."[100] He embraces a discourse-oriented (concerned with the text itself) rather than source-oriented (getting behind the text) approach. Often a source-oriented approach seeks the pre-texts "once violated . . . by the heavy hand of the redactor."[101] Polzin, however, proceeds to identify two different voices in the text of Samuel, 1) that of the Deuteronomist and 2) that of the (later)

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[96] Van Seters, *In Search of History*, 307, 359 (cf. Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 15).

[97] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 14.

[98] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 14.

[99] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 15.

[100] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 17.

[101] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 6.

narrator. Polzin's original "anti-monarchic deuteronomist"[102] expresses a negative view of David, implicating David in Saul's death and David as an example of Israel abandoning YHWH. The later narrator, in turn, attempts to exonerate David by offering a positive view of David. It is unclear how *this* two-voice approach differs from that criticized by Polzin in Noth's, Cross's, or Van Seters's identification of other voices. Each, including Polzin, identifies significant earlier and later strata. Each, therefore, does *not* take the final text in and of itself as Polzin recommends.

Two unusual interpretations of Saul's rejection in 1 Samuel attract attention in Polzin's *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*. First, Samuel anointed Saul as *prophet* as well as king. This was to maintain control over Saul as puppet king, and, since Samuel is head of the prophets, he could control Saul's prophecy also. Samuel is upset over Saul's rejection only because Samuel loses control over Saul. Samuel mixes the prophetic and royal in Saul's case. Eslinger's review of *Samuel and the Deuteronomist* notes that, "According to Polzin, Samuel abuses his prophetic authority when he admits King Saul into the ranks of the prophets (1 Sam 10:6, 10-13) as a means of keeping Saul firmly under his own prophetic authority (pp. 101-107)."[103] Saul is the only king of Israel said to prophesy and so Saul is set up for failure. "Is Saul among the prophets?" does not bode well (10:12; 19:24).[104] Prophecy was meant to limit the authority of kingship so Samuel's encouragement of Saul to be both king and prophet is "tantamount to

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[102] Lyle Eslinger, "Polzin on the Deuteronomist: A Review Article," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 82, no. 3/4 (1992): 461-482, 462, https://doi:10.2307/1454868.

[103] Eslinger, "Polzin Review Article," 462.

[104] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 101. In Christian tradition David is viewed as a prophet through the psalms attributed to him.

leading the people once more into the very idolatry God intended to avoid."[105] Polzin over-emphasizes this point but it cannot be sustained. That the Samuel character as presented in 1 Samuel would blur the distinction between prophet and king is unlikely. The opposite is the case. First Samuel, with its Samuel-Saul/David relationship, reflects and even establishes the paradigmatic prophet-king dynamic for the remainder of the Deuteronomistic History. In any case, Saul's prophesying was merely temporary (cf. Num 11:25), indicating the beginning and end of his reign.

Second, the people attempted to halt the process of kingship and return to the system of judges but Samuel forged ahead preferring a puppet king to a rival judge. Polzin argues that in 1 Samuel 11:12-15, when those who said, "shall Saul reign over us?" are sought to be put to death, the people wanted to reverse the decision about a king and return to the system of judges. Samuel rejects this and insists on moving forward with kingship: "Come let us . . . renew the kingdom."[106] Polzin over-does this unusual interpretation in his readiness to denigrate Samuel whom he views as a failure as a prophet:[107] "We see Samuel acting in the self-serving belief that a subservient king is better for him than a juridical peer."[108] Samuel is "insensitive to the interests of God" and, like David, Samuel is "blackened by the Deuteronomist's pen."[109] This is speculative and hypothetical. Serious indications of a "blackening" of Samuel or David are found in the text only if imposed on it.

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[105] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 106-107.

[106] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 116-117.

[107] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 124.

[108] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 130.

[109] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 153-154.

Polzin's interpretation of 1 Samuel 10-11 is "provocative but depends entirely on one debatable point: his reading of the ambiguous phrase in 11:12."[110] Polzin turns the usual reading of 11:12 on its head. His interpretation is not just novel but untenable. The people's proposal of death for those who ask, "Shall Saul reign over us?" is against those who *resisted* Saul's kingship, not those who sought it. It is not that the people wanted to execute those who proposed Saul's kingship, rolling back on kingship as Polzin suggests. It is unlikely that all the people who acclaimed Saul as king in 10:24 would now seek the death of those who supported the kingship. This illustrates how Polzin often reverses the sense of the text, giving it a meaning opposite to the obvious, i.e., subverting the text. The text is clear that Saul's kingship is not Samuel's project but YHWH's, at the people's request (9:15-17; 10:1-9, 24; 11:6, 15). Much of Polzin's argument is merely suggestive. Marc Z. Brettler agrees and notes that "Polzin himself raises the central question that must be considered in relationship to this work: 'How much artful contrivance can the text bear?'"[111] Polzin over-reads and misreads the text.

Like other synchronic commentators Polzin connects text and historical context. This is desirable but diverts from his discourse oriented claim. Polzin makes historical assumptions (the setting is exilic) and genre assumptions (the tone is persuasive rather than authoritative)[112] without justifying these choices.[113]

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[110] Eslinger, "Polzin Review Article," 462.

[111] Marc Z. Brettler, review of *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, 1 Samuel*, by Robert Polzin, *Journal of Religion* 70, no. 4 (1990): 625-26.

[112] Richard G. Bowman, review of *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, by Robert Polzin, *Hebrew Studies* 34 (1993): 177-181, 181, www.jstor.org/stable/27909358.

[113] Some examples are given: "Saul's reign appears to be the Deuteronomist's prefiguring image of kingship itself as described throughout the History" (Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 213). "Samuel's birth and death encompass the book and express its central topic, the birth and death of kingship in Israel" (218). Polzin sees 1 Samuel 28-31 (the rise of Samuel from death and the death of Saul) as a "reprise of the royal parable on the

For Polzin, Samuel is the sinful manipulator rather than Saul, the ill-fated victim.[114] Even in the accounts of Saul's failure and rejection, Polzin emphasizes what he sees are Samuel's failures, Samuel's controlling of Saul, and Samuel's unreliability toward Saul. Saul is "more sinned against than sinning, more manipulated than manipulating, with Samuel just the opposite."[115] Polzin even concludes that "the stories in 1 Samuel 29-31 do not shrink from placing responsibility for the death of Saul and the defeat of Israel upon the shoulders of David himself."[116] Polzin, like Miscall, takes a deconstructionist-like approach. Those traditionally—and perhaps unjustly—viewed as villains (Saul) are rediscovered as heroes, while those viewed as heroes (Samuel, David, YHWH) are presented as villains.

Apart from being something he criticized in others, Polzin's two-voice theory is not easy to follow.[117] In the final analysis, Polzin's reading of the Saul story is remote from what could be described as an ordinary, common reading, i.e., attempting to take the most obvious meaning of the text.[118] Polzin's reading of the text gives the impression, not so much of rigorously following

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rise of Samuel and the death of Eli at the beginning of the book. The account of the death of Saul and his sons is also about the death of Israel and its kings" (219). Saul's reign acts like a "shadow parable" looking to David's reign and beyond to the exile. The reader sees there "the same false start and providential delay that embodied Saul's rule" (219). With Saul finally taking his own life in 1 Samuel 31, there is a faint hope that Israel might return home "kingless to its own land," which is what would happen under Ezra and Nehemiah (224). For Polzin, the story of Hannah, too, is a parable about desiring kingship. Greger Andersson suggests Polzin reads 1 Samuel 1 as an allegory (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 32).

[114] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 147.

[115] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 147.

[116] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 223.

[117] Attempting to unravel the voices Eslinger summarizes: "The variety of suggestions about what voice governs meaning in the narrative is rich, almost to the point of contradiction" (Eslinger, "Polzin Review Article," 469). Polzin blends Wayne Booth's notion of *the* implied author who gives meaning or sense to a work with Mikhail Bakhtin's emphasis on many voices in the text.

[118] I concur with Greger Anderrson's summary that Polzin's interpretation "is too far-fetched. It is so complex, and depends on so many sub-interpretations, that it is difficult to imagine how the intended meaning of such a text could have been grasped by anyone" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 35). An example is Polzin's claim that David was probably involved in Saul's killing. The Amalekite's lying that he was responsible for Saul's death

the rules of a literary approach, but of an imposition on the text. Polzin's approach, like that of

Barbara Green (see below), depends largely on the literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin,[119]and

stands against the "fragmenting approach of historical criticism."[120] Yet Tushima notes that

"Polzin's avowed commitment to a literary understanding of the text does not deprive his

interpretation of historical grounding."[121] The synchronic cannot entirely be isolated from the

diachronic. Like Green, Polzin sets his interpretation in the historical context of the exile.[122]

Polzin's literary approach—based on Bakhtin's multi-voiced approach developed from Fyodor

Dostoevsky's novels—is applied by Polzin to Joshua-2 Kings. The question arises: is this a

suitable or *appropriate* application?

Borgman observes that Polzin often shows good insight "but his essential project of

pointing to how the text itself, as we have it, implicates David [and we could add Samuel] almost

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(2 Sam 1) suggests that David is lying in denying responsibility for it. Polzin's argument is complicated, partly to do with the Amalekite of 2 Samuel 1 being a double for David and the deuteronomistic author. See Robert Polzin, *David and the Deuteronomist: 2 Samuel*, Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 5-6. See also Andersson's comments in *Untamable Texts*, 194. Polzin uses literary and Bakhtinian terminology (such as the Amalekite as a double) but his argument is unsustainable and expressive of how literary-identifying critics easily "read their own ideologically biased interpretations into a text" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 196). Polzin's interpretation differs greatly from a common reading. Hannah's desire for a child represents Israel's desire for a king. The birth of Samuel is about the birth of kingship in Israel. Samuel's birth is about Saul's birth as king (Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 25-26). The problem with this is that in the text Hannah is presented positively and kingship negatively (1 Sam 8 and 12). If Hannah represents Israel's request for kingship then Hannah should be presented negatively. Perhaps analogous to how the traditional "spiritual sense" of Scripture should be built on the "literal sense": the text cannot just mean *anything*. See Piux XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* §§ 26-27. A correspondence between what the text says and what it supposedly means would be expected.

[119] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, Acknowledgments (unpaginated): "Over the years, the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin and his school have influenced me profoundly; I only hope that my own reflections, which try to capture the spirit of Bakhtin's work, accurately convey something of the enigmatic power of his genius." See also 18, 22.

[120] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, 37.

[121] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, 40.

[122] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, 40.

everywhere in the story emerges as quite suspect."[123] Polzin claims that "*The narrative seeks constantly to exonerate him* [David]: Polzin's assumption of the need for exoneration is based on what must be guessed, read into the text."[124] Polzin, influenced by Bakhtin, helpfully increases awareness of various voices in the text. What is questionable in his interpretation is how these voices appear to express something very different from or even at odds with the text's more obvious, immediate, or basic sense—the sense likely intended by the final redactor.

Polzin's work is a fine example of the synchronic tendency to view Saul as, in Tushima's words, "the hapless victim of both Samuel's lust for power and the darkness of God's displeasure."[125] Polzin also offers the opposite view of Van Seter's *David Saga.* There, the positive deuteronomistic work comes first and is later undermined by the ironic and negative *David Saga*. With Polzin, the negative (deuteronomistic) view comes first, followed by the attempt of the later narrator to make it positive. This contradictory view has received little if any scholarly comment. Van Seters's approach will receive further treatment in Chapter Three.

Eslinger's work, used above in my critique of Polzin, is deserving of mention. Dealing only with 1 Samuel 1-12, Eslinger's *Kingship of God in Crisis* (1985) offers a glimpse of scholarship in the 1980s beginning to emerge out of historical-critical hegemony with some openness to literary or final form approaches. In direct contrast to Polzin who stressed the anti-monarchic stance of the deuteronomist, Eslinger's "close reading" notes that the narrator "does not condemn kingship, and if the narrator is the deuteronomist [see Polzin], then . . . generally

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[123] Paul Borgman, *David, Saul, and God: Rediscovering an Ancient Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 268.

[124] Borgman, *David, Saul, and God*, 268.

[125] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, 38.

accepted opinions about the deuteronomist's negative attitude toward the institution of monarchy need reconsideration."[126] This conclusion carries some weight because of the general openness to David in the wider history and the kind of kingship envisaged.

2.2.5   Barbara Green[127]

Like Polzin, Barbara Green's approach in *King Saul's Asking* is based on that of the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin. Her diachronic perspective is close to that of Polzin, seeing the Saul story as a response to the question of kingship after exile. Green concurs with Polzin's view that "Saul represents the monarchy in general."[128] She sees 1 Samuel addressing "the questions of a community deliberating over . . . whether to return from exile with David's leadership (with royal dynastic presence) or without it."[129] Green views Saul as "the embodiment of Israel's whole experience with kings." The story was "shaped for a sixth-century community with its own leadership problems: How to return from exile? If—or since—not with kings, why not, and how not?"[130] "Saul is a cipher for a several-hundred-year experience of Israel with kings" and the story of Saul makes "an experience visible for us to see and ponder helpfully."[131] Dynastic sons were not a solution to the problem of leadership in Israel.[132] For a synchronic reading this all sounds very diachronic.

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[126] Eslinger, *Kingship of God,* 428.

[127] Green, *King Saul's Asking* and *How Are the Mighty Fallen*.

[128] Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 9, note 11, Green's words describing Polzin's view.

[129] Green *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 3.

[130] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, 119.

[131] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, 121.

[132] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, 121.

At this point a question may be posed: does synchronic reading, in some cases and perhaps unconsciously, tend toward allegorical interpretation? For Green, Polzin, and others, Saul and his rejection stand for something else. For Green, Saul's reign is an allegory for the disaster that was kingship. Synchronic interpretation, attempting to connect with history, easily moves into the realm of allegory (Saul stands for kingship in Israel) or typology (kingship in Israel becomes an extension of the experience of Saul's reign). This underlines the tendency and the need for the synchronic to eventually connect with the diachronic and historical. Synchronic approaches, if responsible or convincing, should be shown to have some basis in history or real world connection.

In answering the riddle of how to return from exile without kings, Green notes that in the request for a king (1 Sam 8)—and Saul was the first—"God appears not to have been thought of," yet this relationship is presented as *primary* in the texts.[133] Here, in my view, Green identifies why YHWH is not just another character like any other in the text, one who might be wrong or prejudiced. In the view of the deuteronomistic redactors, YHWH was not just another flawed character. More will be said of this later. Moreover, Green identifies key theological points largely overlapping with my conclusions in Chapters Four and Five.[134] I agree with

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[133] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, 120.

[134] Kingship in Israel went wrong and should not be reconstituted because they—people and kings—disregarded YHWH. Requesting a king was rejection of YHWH. Kingship was unable to perform its primary function "to safeguard . . . the fundamental relationship between God and Israel," i.e., the covenant (Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 11). Josiah's reign highlights the need for Torah-based life, a reminder also given in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Monarchy would fail but Torah would still be necessary and life-giving (Chapters Three and Four). The failure of most kings would not undermine the idea of an ideal king (David) (12). Prophets would make known YHWH's view (13). That Saul lacks a prophet after his rift with Samuel bodes badly. The disobedience of kings is illustrated by wrong worship, thus undermining the king's primary responsibility "to guard the relationship between God and people" (48, see also 14). Green expresses succinctly a conclusion Chapter Four reaches independently, i.e., that Saul showed no covenantal sensibility or attentiveness: "Saul was unable to mind carefully the relationship holding God and people together" (121). In the end Saul learns that his opponent was not David but God and "Saul had spent his life at cross-purposes with God" (122). Saul's death was not so much about the death of an individual as "the self-destructiveness and self-destroying nature of the royal institution" (122). Yet

Green's appreciation of an approach such as Campbell's Prophetic Record as a suitable working hypothesis for the development of the Deuteronomistic History.[135] Traditional materials are incorporated into the Deuteronomistic History as Noth observed. This is a position I take in Chapter Three. Acknowledging the existence of older accounts preserved in something like Campbell's Prophetic Record, it is possible also to recognize later editorial deuteronomistic phases such as the Josianic edition or even later updates such as DtrN.

Green's account is impressive in extracting meaning and theology from the story of Saul. Green writes of the transformative value of engagement with biblical texts like the story of Saul.[136] This fits well the dissertation model adopted (Chapter One). These are purposeful, theological texts challenging the reader to transformation through obedience. She provides a meaningful, literary, synchronic reading. Yet Green too—and rightly—cannot overlook the diachronic aspect, the historical context of the sixth century exile, which provides context for the meaning extracted from the texts. The significance can be fully grasped only with the synchronic/diachronic interplay that uncovers the theological message. Green notes her agreement with scholars such as McKenzie (2000) even though McKenzie's approach is

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Green sees a note of hope and even reconciliation with God in the kindness shown to Saul by the medium at Endor (125). This encounter "allows the eleventh-hour collapse of at least some of his stubborn resistance to the workings of God's project in his life" (467). His end is presented somewhat sympathetically. Saul's struggle with the silence of God speaks to our contemporaries (451). God hardly speaks to Saul, mostly about Saul (456). God never speaks to Saul directly. See Stephen B. Chapman, *1 Samuel as Christian Scripture: A Theological Commentary* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 56. On the other hand, Saul's speaking to God is also unimpressive (Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 457). Chapman claims that Saul never prays (Chapman, *1 Samuel as Christian Scripture*, 56-57). Saul's character displays "a failure in general relationality" (Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 458).

[135] Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 6.

[136] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, xxi.

historical-critical and Green's literary-critical.[137] Among synchronic commentators, Jan Fokkelman adheres most strictly to a literary synchronic reading, though he too refers to history.

2.2.6   Fokkelman[138]

Few commentaries compare with the meticulous work of Fokkelman on the narratives of 1 and 2 Samuel. Fokkelman's adherence to literary analysis is singular. Fokkelman performs an exhaustive literary study of the final form of the text of First Samuel. While his insights are often useful and well expressed, I disagree on many occasions with his observations, structures, chiasms, interpretations, and conclusions.

Fokkelman views the text as "a system of systems" with "a scale of twelve levels."[139] He presents his model as objective and neutral: "The model is unassuming and plain because it respects the fact that the narrator and poet use no material other than language. It has little or no pretensions in terms of content and is ideologically neutral. It does not prejudge in respect of religion, morals, or philosophy . . ."[140] While such a statement is understandable given the method adopted, any method—literary or historical-critical—can be placed at the service of ideology. Fokkelman's assertion of objectivity contrasts with Miscall's statement of non-interest in establishing any kind of definitive sense of the story of Saul. Synchronic commentary is a broad church.

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[137] Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 8.

[138] Jan P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel: A Full Interpretation Based on Stylistic and Structural Analyses*, Vol. II, *The Crossing Fates* (I Sam. 13-31 & II Sam.1), Studia Semitica Neerlandica, 20, 23, 27, 31 (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1986).

[139] The detail involved in his literary approach is evident in his twelve step process dealing with: 1) sounds; 2) syllables; 3) words; 4) phrases; 5) clauses; 6) sentences; 7) sequences/speeches; 8) scene-parts; 9) scenes; 10) acts; 11) sections/cycles; 12) book or composition (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 4).

[140] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 6.

Fokkelman, asserting that there are "few real disadvantages" to his method, concedes limitations posing the question: *after* the twelve steps scale have been gone through, where does one go from there? He notes two important limitations. First, "The real interpretation or exercise of literary criticism does not start until we place the work as a whole in subsequent horizons, which may be of historic, psychological or spiritual nature. The model reaches no further than it reaches and gives us no criteria for the final categories of interpretation and still less for aesthetic or moral value judgments."[141] It is interesting that Fokkelman mentions historic and spiritual horizons here. This dissertation, in a related vein, argues the need for the synchronic to be placed within the horizon of the diachronic or historic (Chapter Three) and the need for the combination of both in order to arrive at sound theological conclusions (Chapters Four and Five). While Fokkelman focuses most on synchronic over diachronic considerations, he does not rule out diachronic or theological considerations at a later stage. With limited success he interjects some psychological insights of his own in the course of his interpretation, one of the broader horizons he lists above.[142]

Second, Fokkelman writes that "the model is not concerned with the specific literary qualities of texts such as Job or Samuel and is suitable *mutatis mutandis* for the analysis of any act of speech . . . such as the leading article of the morning paper. . . . [I]t is neutral and meaningless in respect of the poetic function of the language or the literary quality of texts. The

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[141] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 7.

[142] E.g., the meeting between Saul and David outside the Addulam cave (1 Sam 24): Saul has "for a considerable time lived with a very negative uncorrected picture of David which was largely a pure projection of his own great virtually unwieldy negativeness and need. . . . The true David completely crushes the negative picture of David that Saul has built up, a bewildering experience for the king. And all this relates only to the dark pathological side of Saul, his ego." Saul operates "against the background of a fixed pathology" (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 467-468).

aesthetic factor escapes it."[143] Thus a cautionary note is sounded against an absolute or rigid

application of Fokkelman's twelve step process to all biblical texts in the same way. Philips

Long makes the point that while the Old Testament may be read as literature, this should not

imply that "the entire corpus is 'literary' in the same sense or to the same extent."[144]

Approaching Scripture as pure literature may be helpful "as a methodological *first step*," drawing

attention to textual details. This is different from "asserting that the Old Testament *is in fact*

purely imaginative literature and, therefore, by definition non-referential. Such an assertion may

be true of some portions of the Old Testament, but certainly not all."[145] The difficulty with such

a procedure is that the method (literary analysis) is allowed to dictate the model (which would

presume at least some referentiality, historicity, and theology).[146] As Robert Alter, closely

associated with biblical literary emphasis, aptly observes, the Old Testament "uses manifestly

literary means to serve chiefly religious—it might be more accurate to call them—covenantal

ends."[147] My assessment of Fokkelman's "full interpretation based on stylistic and structural

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[143] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 7.

[144] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 12.

[145] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 13.

[146] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 13.

[147] Robert Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type-Scene," *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History* 3, no. 2 (1983): 115-130, 116; Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 14. Fokkelman sees the application to the Books of Samuel of the twelve step approach as practice providing feedback to theory (hermeneutics) (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 8). Theory, represented in the twelve level model, is mediator between the text and the reader so that meaning is not just an extraction from text to reader (the text is the source of meaning) or an imposition on the text by the reader (the reader is the source of meaning). The value of the former, the text giving up its meaning, is obvious. The latter, the reader aspect, is important because a text can speak only "when a reader devotes competent attention to it" (8). With the twelve level model a certain "deferment" enters in, e.g., with steps nine to twelve, and the interpreter can wait longer before "investigating his subject within the framework or against the background of the history or the religion of Israel . . . or theological position of the suspected author, etc" (9). Fokkelman's view on deferment expresses in a different way why the theological question, especially that of Deuteronomistic Theology, is "deferred" or bracketed in the dissertation until Chapter Five, when the basic research has been completed. This is part of the attempt to discover rather than impose meaning.

analysis"[148] is somewhat positive. His commentary on 1 Samuel is useful and opens up

interesting insights. I question whether such meticulous textual scrutiny was necessary in all

cases to reach insights which could have been reached in any case with a careful, if less exacting,

reading. At times Fokkelman's analysis comes across as overly-technical, clinical, and

belabored.

Robert Alter[149] observes with satisfaction the growth in literary approaches but expresses

concern about the "superimpositions of one or other modern literary theory on ancient texts that

in fact have their own dynamics . . . conventions and . . . techniques."[150] Russian formalism,

applied too rigidly, serves as an example of the imposition of modern literary theory on ancient

biblical texts. Both its proponents mentioned here (Polzin and Green), come to very different

conclusions. This raises questions about the alleged neutrality or objectivity of literary theory

(Fokkelman). Alter partly exempts three scholars (M. Fishbane, Shimon Bar-Efrat, and

Fokkelman) from his criticism of superimposing modern literary theory on ancient texts.

However, Alter does observe that Fokkelman "shows a certain tendency to interpretive overkill

in his explications, at times discovering patterns where they may not be, and assuming with a

notable degree of strain that form must always be significantly expressive."[151] M.Z. Brettler also

challenges some of Fokkelman's chiastic structures as forced or having tenuous correspondence

between "corresponding" sections. Brettler asks: "Is the structure really there?" Is there really

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[148] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, frontispiece material, unpaginated.

[149] From whom Fokkelman borrows the term "*The Crossing Fates*" for his work on the texts depicting the Saul-David dynamic (1 Sam 13-31; 2 Sam 1). See Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, Preface, unpaginated.

[150] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 16.

[151] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 16.

"concentric symmetry"?[152] James Kugel also critiques Fokkelman's structures: "True enough, his diagram is symmetrical— but is the text?"[153] *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* aptly asks: "Is there sometimes the risk of attributing to certain biblical texts a rhetorical structure that is really too sophisticated?"[154]

Characteristic of synchronic commentators, Fokkelman views Saul sympathetically and Samuel and YHWH less so. Fokkelman is correct that Saul displays "great courage and confidence by waiting a week for Samuel against all reason and military-political logic."[155] That said, the matter is more complicated as will be seen in Chapter Four. Saul's courage is noted and he receives a dignified burial "that his soul can find rest."[156] Samuel, however, "pulls the rug from under him [Saul], on grounds which are at least open to dispute. . . . He [Saul] answers the religious zeal of the harsh Samuel with religious fanaticism in Ch. 14." Saul "breaks under heavy theocratic demands which can scarcely be satisfied."[157] He is "a man harassed by God," "the victim of a God whose rationality is beyond our ken," a God whose character is created by the narrator.[158] This last point highlights the need for the broader view, the wider horizon noted by Fokkelman himself for the completion of the literary study. For the texts of 1 Samuel, especially those concerning Saul, this means that connection with the broader Deuteronomistic History and

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[152] Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, Old Testament Readings (New York: Routledge, 2002), 11.

[153] James L. Kugel, "On the Bible and Literary Criticism," *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History* 1, no. 3 (1981): 217-236, 225.

[154] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* § I, B, 1, 44.

[155] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 690.

[156] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 691.

[157] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 690.

[158] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 691.

thought/ideology (theology even) is necessary for a more complete interpretation of the texts. Fokkelman's conclusion is bleak, unsatisfactory, and in my view incompatible with what the deuteronomistic authors valued and attempted to communicate in their history, not least, the story of Saul. Fokkelman implies that YHWH is inscrutable and writes that the ways of the God character in the Saul narratives can hardly be a surprise since "they [the covenant people] had already suffered heavily under the dark unpredictability and the capricious exercise of power by whom they consider to be their God of the Covenant, and it was for that very reason that they had tried to erect a buffer and replace the theocratic system by the monarchy."[159] There is no evidence that the request for a king was the result of a dark or negative perception of YHWH as Fokkelman suggests. If anyone was a buffer between the people and YHWH, it was Samuel (1 Sam 7:5, 8-17; 8:10, 21-22; 10:25; 11:14; 12:7, 11, 14-25) as was Moses before him.

Fokkelman unflinchingly pursues his literary task. However, literary approaches are servants, not masters, and should not be applied over-rigidly. Not all texts are the same. The text under consideration should determine the model, the method, and the appropriate application of the method (Chapter One). First Samuel is not the morning paper or a Russian novel. P.M. Wetherill, notes that in approaching the text and its parts, "categories should not be interpreted narrowly, nor should they be seen as watertight compartments: [they] represent different angles from which a text may be approached . . ."[160] By rigidly following his rules, Fokkelman at times misses the main point of the narrative and its meaning. He also argues that the text does not

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[159] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 691.

[160] P.M. Wetherill, *The Literary Text: An Examination of Critical Methods* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), xvi. See also Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 41.

mean what ordinary readers think it might mean.[161] Theory, however, should not be used as "a

shortcut to the 'real' meaning of a text."[162] Andersson notes that his criticism of Fokkelman is

not that he does not follow a rule-system but that, "his application of these rules from bottom-up

leads to a situation in which he in the end will read against the very ability to understand [the]

narrative communication these rules attempt to describe."[163] In other words, an overly-rigid

application of a system, which may or may not be suitable for the text, causes the applier to miss

the main sense of the narrative and its message. The Saul story is a perfect example. If Saul is the

hero and Samuel, David and YHWH are villains, the meaning of the texts is changed or even

subverted.

Some scholars, e.g., Fokkelman, Polzin, Van Seters, and others presume the text has a

literary or narrative character and approach it as literature. Difficulties arise when they rigidly

apply the theories and methods of secular literature "such as double-voiced text, intertextuality,

irony, and narratology." This results in readings that do not correspond with "conventional

understanding" or "common intuitions."[164] A trend of unusual readings on the part of some

synchronic interpretations gives an impression of postmodernist or deconstructive tendency:

conventional heroes become villains and vice versa. Andersson observes, "Fokkelman appears to

try to strike his audience by suggesting new and, what he assumes to be, radical interpretations.

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[161] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 53. A concrete example of this is Fokkelman's interpretation of 2 Kings 4 where he sees the woman, and not Elijah, as hero, suggesting that the text "does not mean what ordinary readers might be misled to believe" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 50). Since the woman of the story fulfils his criteria for a hero, Fokkelman's rules have "misguided" him into arguing that she is the center of interest when she is the means of Elijah performing a miracle. See Jan P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 95.

[162] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 53.

[163] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 59. The addition of "the" seems necessary here.

[164] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 54.

Accordingly, he is not playing the kind of game he claims to play in his introduction to biblical narrative."[165] Andersson acknowledges it is difficult "to follow Fokkelman's reasoning and to grasp his method." Fokkelman constantly refers to his narratological rules but does not explain how a text gives up its *meaning* from these rules.

The *poetics* of Hebrew narrative explained by Adele Berlin and others, indicates that it is unnecessary to apply literary analysis indiscriminately to the Hebrew texts. Poetics explains how literary conventions work in the Hebrew Bible and so helps recover "an ancient literary competencey" permitting the ancient text to be interpreted "according to historically appropriate criteria."[166] Thus poetics links the literary and historical approaches in a manner preferable to an indiscriminate or a-temporal application of literary method, taking no account of contextual history.[167] More will be said of poetics below with reference to Adele Berlin and Robert Alter.

2.2.7 Robert Alter[168]

While Alter can seem somewhat harsh in his criticism of modern critical scholarship, he has succeeded in winning much sympathy for the final text and securing proper attention for the synchronic, literary reading. He notes the literary student of the Bible "has as much to learn from traditional commentaries [e.g., *midrashîm*] as from modern scholarship." The difference he avers is that between "assuming that the text is an intricately interconnected unity . . . and assuming it is a patchwork of frequently disparate documents."[169] He makes the point that the better the

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[165] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 178. Referring to Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative*, 155.

[166] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 16-17, 42.

[167] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 18.

[168] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), already cited but reproduced here for consistency with how other authors are presented in Chapter Two.

[169] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 11.

artistic and literary dimension of the text is understood, the more the text will give up its meaning and theology. In this way he advocates for an appropriate poetics. The "religious vision of the Bible is given depth and subtlety precisely by being conveyed through the most sophisticated resources of prose fiction."[170] Alter's understanding of biblical narrative and its interest in how "man must live before God, in the transforming medium of time" assists the formation of a theological vision in Chapters Four and Five.[171]

Alter discusses the influence and importance of the final redactor— "the weight of literary interest falls upon the activity of the *final* redactor . . ." With balance, he also urges caution in this lest the redactor's prowess be exaggerated as "a consummate literary artist," since, the redactor often also comes across as an "assembler of sources, as scholarship has assumed."[172] Alter thinks the Deuteronomistic History developed over time, incorporating older stories, spanning the Josianic reform, and given final form in exilic times.[173] Like so many who focus on the final form, Alter makes a definite connection with historical time, cementing the insight that the synchronic should be linked with the diachronic.

Alter sees the Book of Samuel as "the artistic pinnacle" of the Deuteronomistic History[174] and the story of Saul and David, to which a third of the Former Prophets is devoted (1 Sam 8-1 Kgs 2), as "one of the greatest pieces of narrative in all of Western literature."[175] Alter

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[170] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 23.

[171] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 24.

[172] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 21.

[173] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, introduction, xv-xviii.

[174] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, xviii.

[175] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, xvii.

does not exclude theological considerations. He views the texts as theologically purposeful. A central concern of this dissertation—that the Saul narratives are in fact at the service of a covenantal understanding—is something that Alter explicitly asserts.[176] Alter will later be brought into the discussion concerning the imposition of modern literary theory on ancient biblical texts.

2.2.8   Adele Berlin[177]

Berlin is used here mostly as a response to the earlier question of the suitability of applying modern, literary theory to ancient, sacred texts. She explains the art of poetics, which describes the components of literature and the rules governing their use.[178] Berlin makes the key point that poetics should be derived from the literature it seeks to describe and not imported from an alien literature.[179] In this light, caution is urged in the application to ancient sacred texts of literary theory developed and suitable for later Russian literature. Berlin also writes of narrative analogy, whereby the reader is meant to read one story in terms of another. She notes the importance of character contrasts, and that repetition is not redundancy but calls attention to similarities or differences.[180] Such narrative analogy is important in interpreting, for instance, the story of Saul, meant to be read in the light of Judges, Gideon, Jonathan, and David (Chapter Four). This approach, however, is portrayed by Green as "simplex" and the "opposite of . . . Bakhtinian assumptions." By "simplex" Green means something "reducible to a formula" or "the

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[176] Robert Alter, "How Convention Helps," 116.

[177] Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Bible and Literature Series, 9 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983).

[178] Berlin, *Poetics*, 15.

[179] Berlin, *Poetics*, 19.

[180] Berlin, *Poetics*, 136.

applying of 'messages' from one situation to another (unfortunately popular within various sorts of biblical study), the temptation to crystallize 'the meaning'. . ."[181] Not only may some biblical texts be read in the light of others, to be adequately understood they *should* be read comparatively. The theme of trust in YHWH in battle is an example (1 Sam 13-14). Additionally, some biblical texts, especially parts of the Deuteronomistic History, are understood best as fixed formulae, and their significance can only be appreciated in the light of related formulae and texts. The regnal formulae and summaries of 1-2 Kings are prime examples as Alison Joseph has demonstrated in *Portrait of the Kings.* The key to their interpretation in a particular case lies in what is included or excluded in comparison with other regnal formulae. In this, Berlin's observation proves helpful. Texts *should* be compared and contrasted: they are sometimes formulaic. On the other hand, the Bakhtinian view expressed by Green—that comparisons are "simplex" and we construct fresh and distinctive meanings—conceals a deficiency conceded by Gunn, that of not taking account of the wider synchronic view.[182]

2.3   The Saul of Synchronic Commentary: Trends, Critique, Poetics

In general, synchronic commentators tend to view Saul positively and blame his failure on others or external factors: everything was stacked against Saul and he had no chance of success. Conversely, David (favored with every advantage), Samuel, and YHWH, are generally viewed with suspicion by synchronic commentators. The views of many synchronic

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[181] Green, *King Saul's Asking,* xvii. For Bakhtin, Green notes, "each of us participates in the complexity of the voicing, selecting some aspects and bypassing others, attending to certain things while disregarding others," and therefore "our construction of meaning will be fresh and distinctive . . ." (Green, *King Saul's Asking*, xvii). Green's summary helps shed light on Polzin's unusual insights since both share Bakhtinian assumptions. Bakhtinian insight may assist the process of entering into the text anew. This needs to be tempered, however, by Berlin's call for appropriate biblical poetics.

[182] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 14.

commentators (e.g., Gunn, Polzin) bear a faintly deconstructionist hue: Saul is the hero; Samuel, David and YHWH are villains. Negative criticism of David is characteristic of much synchronic study: "David was, for the most part, unjust and calculating in his dealings with the Saulides."[183] However, whether this trend is *strictly* synchronic is difficult to gauge. Green, synchronically oriented, is generally favorable to Samuel and YHWH. Van Seters, Halpern, McKenzie, and Rosenberg, espousing mainly diachronic methodology, also "distrust such characters as Samuel and David."[184]

With synchronic readings, new interpretational options are opened up. Miscall is a good example of this alertness to many options. The highlighting of options and the opening up of new interpretational paths and insights are welcome. The impression is conveyed at times, however, that nothing is resolved, pursued, or developed extensively.

No impassible chasm separates the literary and historical approaches. The literary approach can supplement the historical. Most synchronic writers do not limit themselves to the world of the text but refer to a real world beyond it and so dabble also in the diachronic. For instance, David's sins, Tushima observes, raise serious questions about "the renewal of the Davidic dynasty and its kingdom in the post-exilic era."[185] Andersson notes that "new" methods sometimes just give new names to observations "earlier scholars had made, even though they studied the texts diachronically."[186] Many synchronic scholars "start out as literary scholars but become 'uncritical' historians because their focus on the referent is, so to speak, reinforced by

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[183] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, xii.

[184] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 145.

[185] Tushima, *Fate of Saul's Progeny*, 318.

[186] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 17.

their belief in its historicity (they thus take on the same stance as many pre-critical interpreters)."[187] Some of the synchronic conclusions merge with diachronic ones. Some give the impression of a return to (pre-critical) patristic allegory or typology, e.g., Hannah's desire for a child stands for Israel's desire for a king; Saul is a symbol of the monarchy and embodies its failure; Samuel is a symbol of deuteronomistic law; the Amalekite (2 Sam 1) stands for the deuteronomist or David.

Some commentators who emphasize the synchronic approach, e.g., Van Seters and Polzin, critique others for carving up the text between different sources or underlying currents but proceed to do the same, ending up with completely different and even opposite results. This may be a salutary reminder that a literary or synchronic approach by itself is no guarantee of neutrality, objectivity, or consensus. No plain sense of the text emerges with literary analysis. The most effective check on a synchronic view is an appropriately related and applied diachronic study.

Writers like Polzin and Green are guided by the literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin but both, rooted in Russian Formalism, produce very different results. The work of Green is broader and more balanced. Green is more sympathetic to the text and does not approach the text with the same suspicion as Polzin. She also sees it as purposefully theological which explains differences in accounts and conclusions between her and Polzin. Green's account is impressive in extracting meaning and theology from the story of Saul. Many of Polzin's arguments are merely suggestive: there is much reading-into and "over-reading" and his theories are unconvincing. Polzin's attempt to identify different voices in the text comes across as muddled or inconsistent.

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[187] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 187.

The validity or value of Fokkelman's strict application of literary theory to biblical texts raises questions. He reads the Bible as one might read any piece of literature, applying general, narrative rules. This, however, disregards the "strangeness" of the Bible, strangeness in terms of content, composition, narrative conventions, genre, and purpose.[188] Questions arise as to the suitability of indiscriminately applying contemporary literary theories with their presuppositions to ancient texts, texts composed with a different world view or for purposes not taken into account by contemporary literary theory. A method or theory that excludes the idea of divine action in the world may overlook what was most important in the composition and purpose of such texts. Alter in his *Art of Biblical Narrative* notes, "the manifest influence of the vogue of Structuralism on these Bible Scholars has not been a very fruitful one."[189] One notices the imposition of modern literary theory on "ancient texts that in fact have their own dynamics, their own distinctive conventions and characteristic techniques."[190] It is inappropriate to force modern interpretative categories "on a set of texts that are theologically motivated, historically oriented, and perhaps to some extent collectively composed."[191] The caveat expressed about Fokkelman's strict literary approach or Russian Formalism gives rise to preference for a suitable biblical poetics as described by Berlin, Alter, and others. This respects more the particularities of the ancient text in attempting to interpret it. Appropriate poetics brings together the literary and historical dimensions and so has a better chance at getting at the meaning of an ancient text.

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[188] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 9.

[189] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative,* 16.

[190] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 16.

[191] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 26.

In *Untamable Texts*, Greger Andersson discusses literary approaches, their strengths and weaknesses. Andersson notes that literary theories or narratology can be applied too rigidly, too logically, or as a "closed system." [192] The theory can be taken more seriously than the text and made to dominate it, rather than being at the service of its interpretation. One example of this, emerging from the synchronic readings, is the treatment of YHWH as merely another literary, fictional, or flawed character. Within a broader reading as biblical literature, and in particular for the final deuteronomistic redactors (Chapter Three), YHWH is not just another figure but is different and "Other": even history unfolds at YHWH's word. Rather than caprice on YHWH's part, what comes across more powerfully is the infidelity of the people and the pathos, patience, and constancy of the long-suffering God they are called to "love" with the loyalty of obedience (cf. Deut 6:4-5). The thrust and ideology of the Deuteronomistic History indicates it is *not* Saul who is treated badly by Samuel, YHWH, or David (Chapter Four). Rather, in 1 Samuel 15, as elsewhere in the history, it is YHWH who is treated badly by his people (Deut 32:4-22). A literary study limits itself by ignoring such considerations. One aspect, perhaps specific to the poetics of biblical narrative, is that authors used an "omniscient 'persona,' because they claimed to be inspired by God," assuming privileges they did not have in ordinary life.[193] The final deuteronomistic redactors likely viewed themselves in this way. This is very different from the Bakhtinian approach which, as Green expresses it, exposes as "inadequate and misleading" the idea that a narrator could be "reliable, omniscient, and objective."[194]

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[192] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 3. He attempts to foster dialogue between different literary studies of the Bible, narrative theory, and biblical texts (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 5).

[193] Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 68-69.

[194] Green, *King Saul's Asking*, xviii.

A literary study will concentrate on the "artistic form of the final text and a focus on the

<u>intent</u> of the final redactor, rather than the appreciation that these texts have a <u>literary</u> *raison*

d'être."[195] The Deuteronomistic History, of which 1 Samuel is a key part, expresses its own

ideology (Chapter One). An adequate comprehension of the text will take account of the

identifiable ideology of the final redactors. In addition, ideologies in the Bible should not be

hidden, undetectable, completely removed from the ordinary reader, or discoverable only to the

select or specialized reader. Here I agree with Meir Sternberg. Any necessary "gap-filling" to

explain a biblical text, "can only expand and deepen our understanding, not change the meaning

of a text."[196] The "gap-filling" of Polzin and Van Seters (Chapter 3) alters the meaning of the

texts. The highlighting of what is unusual or generally unremarked in the text, or the inversion of

a text's conventional meaning so that heroes become villains and vice versa, is often "not only a

result of [an] approach to narrative literature" but also reflective of "the ideological and

moralistic bias of the interpreters."[197] Andersson writes of "[a] common ideological inclination

. . . to question those characters that traditionally have been taken to act in accordance with the

norm of the narratives."[198] Andersson agrees somewhat with Yairah Amit that Saul is not

presented as a total villain. The narrative is more subtle. It investigates human predicaments and

what it means to be human.[199] We can be affected by Saul's situation and sympathize with him.

However, Andersson disagrees that the narrative implies we are totally free to make up our own

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[195] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 17. Underline added for emphasis since italicization is already present.

[196] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 48-57, 230-235. See also Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 161.

[197] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 172.

[198] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 172. He cites Amit and Fokkelman as examples. Mieke Bal suggests that sometimes, in Andersson's words, "biblical scholars are guided by a parasitic moral code" (Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 172). See Mieke Bal, *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre, and Scholarship on Sisera's Death* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 50.

[199] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 175.

minds about Saul. "The author has created a complex narrative about Saul's temptations and failures, *not* a story about Samuel's mistakes and his plotting against the king."[200] Diachronic considerations in Chapter Three support this conclusion.

It has gone unremarked in commentaries that scholars, swift to view David's sparing of Saul (1 Sam 24 and 26) with suspicion, are slow to apply a similar hermeneutic to Saul's sparing of Agag (Chapter Four). David's sparing of Saul is seen as establishing a self-serving taboo against lifting a hand against YHWH's anointed.[201] Saul's sparing of Agag could and should be viewed similarly. This indicates an ideological oversight in synchronic reading. Saul's sparing of Agag demonstrates the tendency of kings to place themselves above the command of YHWH (Chapter Four) in contrast to the deuteronomistic vision of the king as first to obey, the model Israelite because of his internalization of the law (Deut 17:14-20).[202]

The trend of treating Saul sympathetically and David, Samuel, and YHWH unsympathetically in synchronic scholarship has been observed. It can be partly explained by a deconstruction-like tendency attempting to highlight neglected aspects of the text or to challenge more traditionally established interpretations. Some authors, however, are unconvincing in their attempts to exonerate Saul and denigrate David, Samuel and YHWH.

In summary, this section presented the work of selected synchronically focused authors. Strengths, trends, limitations, and challenges were identified, along with the need for an appropriate biblical poetics (cf. Alter, Berlin, and Sternberg). A tendency from the synchronic to

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[200] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 175. Emphasis added.

[201] John Van Seters, *The Biblical Saga of King David* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 183.

[202] Richard J. Clifford, *Deuteronomy: With an Excursus on Covenant and Law*, Old Testament Message; v. 4 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982), 100-101.

the diachronic was observed. While Edelman observes that "a literary analysis of the narrative concerning the career of Saul ben Kish can stand on its own merits without being linked to questions of historicity,"[203] it becomes clear that most synchronic writers do not limit themselves to the confines of literary analysis of the final form. They postulate diachronic views providing a general setting for their synchronic work. The irresistible movement from synchronic to diachronic on the part of some scholars claiming a strictly literary or discourse oriented approach confirms the view that a discourse oriented approach cannot avoid dealing with source questions also. The synchronic tends to lead to the diachronic. This tendency confirms the thrust of this dissertation, highlighting the importance of combining methodologies. Neither the synchronic nor the diachronic can remain entirely isolated or apart from the other. Interaction rather than isolation is the best dynamic for discovering the meaning and theology of the texts.

How Saul, David, Samuel, and YHWH are presented in the synchronic survey raises diachronic questions for Chapter Three: Is the story mainly about David and the Saul story preserved only as part of that?[204] If so, David, not Saul (as many synchronic commentators suggest), is the hero, at least in the final text. This diachronic insight changes the way the story is read. Yet too much space is devoted to Saul and the development of his character for him to be merely an appendix. I believe the Saul story has its own value (Chapter Four), even if closely interwoven with the story of David and the rest of the history. This leads to the question of a final compiler or editor of the final text. Considerable skill is evident in those who "shaped the past traditions into the present text."[205] Alter notes that "the weight of literary interest falls upon

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[203] Diane Vikander Edelman, *King Saul in the Historiograpghy of Judah*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 121 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 11.

[204] As Campbell suggests. See Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 2.

[205] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 1.

the activity of the *final* redactor, whose artistry requires far more careful attention . . ."[206] This raises another question for Chapter Three: can a final redactor be identified in the Saul texts? Cross's exilic Dtr² or Veijola's DtrN are primary contenders. I opt for DtrN.

Having surveyed and evaluated a selection of synchronic scholarship, a brief synchronic outline of 1 Samuel up to 1 Samuel 13-15 will be sketched. This will assist the identification of issues deserving further diachronic consideration in Chapter Three.

2.4 Synchronic Sketch: Context of First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

2.4.1 Introduction

The wider Deuteronomistic History context of 1 Samuel was already acknowledged and sketched in Chapter One. Building on the insights of others, this section will outline briefly how 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 fit into 1 Samuel. This section will also focus on matters directly relevant to the two passages in question: text-critical issues, identifying synchronic issues leading to diachronic questions, and laying foundations for Chapters Three and Four.

2.4.2 First Samuel 1:1-16:13: Broad Context of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

A. Campbell sees 1-2 Samuel as the "beginnings of stable monarchy in ancient Israel." Within this, Campbell labels 1 Samuel 1:1-16:13 as the mainly prophetic "Preparations for David's emergence as king-to-be" and 1 Samuel 16:14-2 Samuel 8:18 as "Political moves to establish David as king." For Campbell, the thrust is toward David,[207] implying Saul is not the hero. What was foreshadowed in 13:14 and 15:28 becomes actual in 16:1-13: "the prophetic

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[206] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 21.

[207] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 20.

moves to establish David as king are now complete."[208] While broadly accepting Campbell's

outline, much space is devoted to Saul. His character is drawn too masterfully to be merely an

appendage to David, and his story carries its own message. Edelman claims 1 Samuel is very

much about Saul. Gunn, too, sees 1 Samuel 9-31 as a unit treating Saul.[209] Eslinger sees 1

Samuel 1-12 and 1 Samuel 16-1 Kings 2 (focusing on David) as clear and distinct units. His view

supports mine, that 1 Samuel 13-15 should be taken together in order to understand better the

two accounts of Saul's rejection in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.[210] Eslinger's main argument is that 1

Samuel 1-7 and 8-12 cannot be understood in isolation from each other.[211] First Samuel 1:1

begins a new section and 12:1-25 closes the period of the judges. This is confirmed by the regnal

formula in 13:1. The age of the kings has begun.[212] Andersson agrees that 1 Samuel 13-15

constitutes a synchronic unit. Within 1 Samuel 8-15, 1 Samuel 8-12 recounts the inauguration of

the monarchy while 13-15 describes Saul's rise and demise.[213] From a *narrative* point of view,

the story of David begins with 16:1, though *diachronically* many scholars place 16:1-13 along

with 15:1-35 (Chapter Three). Synchronically, then, following Eslinger and others, 1 Samuel 1-

12 is a unit, 13-15 is another unit narrating the dual rejection of Saul, and 16:1 indicates a

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[208] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 152. Campbell further divides 1 Samuel as: 1) prophetic ("the arrival of Samuel on the scene" [1:1-4:1a]); 2) liturgical—Campbell prefers the term to cultic which "evokes old-fashioned prejudices against ancient faith" (the ark [4:1b-7:1]); 3) prophetic (Saul and the emergence of monarchy [7:2-12:25] and the dismissal of Saul and ascent of David [13:1-16:13]) (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 24-25).

[209] Edelman, *King Saul*, 11; Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 12-18.

[210] Alfons Schulz also sees 1 Samuel 13-15 as a unit. See Alfons Schulz, *Die Bücher Samuel*, Exegetisches Handbuch zum AT VIII/1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1919), vii. Cited in Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 47.

[211] Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 49.

[212] Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis*, 51.

[213] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 81.

deliberate shift of focus from Saul to David who then becomes the protagonist. Attention now turns to 1 Samuel 13-15 as context for the rejection of Saul.

2.4.3   First Samuel 13:2-7a: Immediate Context of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

Following 12:1-25 and the regnal formula 13:1, a fresh narrative section begins with 13:2. Decreasing numbers—three thousand, two thousand, one thousand, and "the rest of the people" (13:2)—convey the impression of steady decline.[214] By 13:15 only six hundred remain and things are "slipping away from Saul."[215]

Saul refers to the people as "Hebrews" (*hā ʿiḇrîm*) in his call "Let the Hebrews hear!" (13:3). The term "Hebrews" evokes subjection, servitude, Egypt and dispersion.[216] The choice of "Hebrews" in 13:3 seems to be a rallying cry for the people to come together as "Israel." The narrator does not continue Saul's use of "Hebrews" in 13:4 but uses "Israel" (13:2, 4 [x2], 5, 6). However, "Hebrews" recurs in 13:7 (MT) as the people disperse (cf. also 13:19). Resumption of the term "Hebrews" in 13:7 hints at the weakness of Saul's leadership suggesting he is incapable of convening or leading the covenanted people, Israel. The movement from "Hebrews" to "Israel" evokes the move from Egypt to Horeb—the exodus and the covenant. The opposite movement suggests something about Saul's kingship as uncovenantal. The "Hebrews" rallied in 13:2-3 haemorrhage until 13:7a, the term "Hebrews" framing the section 13:2-7a. First Samuel 13:2-7a could be described as the gathering and scattering before battle. By 13:7 the situation has deteriorated as some continue to leave (v.7a) and those who remain with Saul are "trembling"

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[214] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 27. See also the scattering in 1 Samuel 13:8, 11.

[215] Garrett Galvin, "First Samuel," in *The Paulist Biblical Commentary*, ed. José Enrique Aguilar Chiu et al. (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 248-270, 259.

[216] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 30. "Hebrews" and "Israel" may not be synonyms here. In 14:21 those fighting alongside the Philistines are "Hebrews" but they join Saul and Jonathan "to be with Israel." Those scattered or under other (foreign) rule are "Hebrews." Those gathered and joined to the people under Saul are "Israelites."

(v.7b). From 13:7b on, the reduced number has stabilized. Some expectations from 9:16 and 10:8 are realized in 1 Samuel 13, namely an encounter with the Philistines, the movement from Gibeah to Gilgal, and reference to the Philistine garrison.[217] The tension of waiting seven days (13:8) is highlighted by the gathering might of the Philistines (13:5), the declining confidence of the Israelites (13:6-7), and Samuel's delay (13:8).

2.4.4   Textual Critical Challenge: Haplography in 13:15?

The major text-critical issue around 13:7b-15 comes in the last verse. The Masoretic Text describes Samuel's departure from Gilgal to Saul's home town at Gibeah of Benjamin immediately after Saul's rejection (13:15a). Samuel's departure for Saul's home after his rejection is puzzling. Fokkelman suggests the move expresses sympathy for Saul, a sign that Samuel "has not completely dropped the king" and "of his personal involvement with Saul."[218] Attractive as Fokkelman's interpretation is, and though the Masoretic Text merits serious consideration as *lectio difficilior*, the Septuagint reading is more convincing, together with the suggestion that the Masoretic Text suffered from haplography.[219] McCarter explains: "a scribe's

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[217] Whether Gibeah (Gibeath-elohim [10:5]; Gibeah of Benjamin [13:2, 15]) is sometimes interchangeable with Geba (13:3, 16) or simply geographically close to it does not affect the interpretation of the passage. More important is the clear movement from Gibeah to Gilgal. Following the call to Gilgal in 13:4, Saul is there by 13:7b, as Samuel directed him in 10:8. First Samuel 13:7b-15 presupposes 10:1-8 (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 32). As in 1 Samuel 10 the references to Gibeath-elohim and the Philistine Garrison (10:5) lead to Gilgal (10:8), so too the references to Gibeath/Gibeah/Geba (13:2-3) and the Philistine Garrison (13:3-4) lead to Gilgal (13:4, 7-15).

[218] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 43.

[219] "One must weigh the dictum *lectio difficilior praeferenda est . . .* against making sense of the text." See Steven L. McKenzie, *1 Kings 16-2 Kings 16,* International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2019), 22. Joseph notes "the LXX often preserves the best reading" (*Portrait*, 29). NRSV translates LXX: "And Samuel left and went on his way from Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army; they went up from Gilgal toward Gibeah of Benjamin." R. Alter, E. Fox, and *The Jewish Study Bible,* 2nd ed. translate MT while noting LXX.

eye . . . skipped from the first 'from Gilgal' to the second."[220] This is highlighted in bold in the

Greek below, from which the pre-haplography Hebrew may be easily reconstructed:

> καὶ ἀνέστη Σαμουηλ καὶ ἀπῆλθεν **ἐκ Γαλγαλων** εἰς ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ κατάλειμμα τοῦ λαοῦ ἀνέβη ὀπίσω Σαουλ εἰς ἀπάντησιν ὀπίσω τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ πολεμιστοῦ αὐτῶν παραγενομένων **ἐκ Γαλγαλων** εἰς Γαβαα Βενιαμιν καὶ ἐπεσκέψατο Σαουλ τὸν λαὸν τὸν εὑρεθέντα μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ὡς ἑξακοσίους ἄνδρας (1 Kingdoms 13:15).[221]

I accept the explanation of haplography and the Septuagint as witness to the earlier

Hebrew reading and translate accordingly in Chapter Four. In the Septuagint version Samuel

went his own way and Saul, Jonathan and the people went from Gilgal to Gibeah/Geba of

Benjamin (13:15-16). There is no need, then, to explain Samuel's visit to Gibeah of Benjamin—

a journey he did not make—or to explain how Saul, Jonathan and the people arrived at

Gibeah/Geba of Benjamin (13:16). Having dealt with the major text-critical challenge

surrounding 13:7b-15, the unit will be defined.

2.4.5   Establishing the Unit: First Samuel 13:7b-15

The general movement in 13:2-7 is from Gibeah of Benjamin (or Geba) to Gilgal.[222] The

reverse movement, from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin, takes place in 13:15.[223] This frames the

Gilgal episode and underlines its importance. First Samuel 13:16 begins a new episode with the

opposing sides in place: Saul's people at Geba of Benjamin and the Philistines at Michmash. The

movement from Gibeah, Saul's tribal Benjaminite base, to Gilgal, place of national assembly,

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[220] P. Kyle McCarter, *I Samuel*: *A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*, Anchor Bible vol. 8, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 227.

[221] Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935, 1979), 524.

[222] The people are summoned to Gilgal (13:4). Saul is waiting there (13:7b).

[223] In the Masoretic Text (MT) it is the movement of Samuel. In the Septuagint (LXX) it is the movement of the rest of the people and Saul. The point is that the journey is made from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

reflects the move from local to national government. The move from Gilgal back to Gibeah

indicates the reverse and Saul's incapacity as national leader.

First Samuel 13:2-7a is about the people. Saul is present merely as the leader who

summons them to Gilgal (13:3-4). Only in 13:7b does the narrative shift the focus back to Saul

where it remains until 13:15 inclusive. Saul is the central character of 13:7b-15. Samuel's

absence from 1 Samuel 13-14, except in 13:8-15, helps set the unit apart. The section on Saul's

rejection begins with the disjunctive 13:7b, "Now Saul was still at Gilgal."

First Samuel 13:15a could act as the natural conclusion of the unit ("And Samuel arose,

and went up from Gilgal . . ."), separating 15a from 15b and beginning a new section with 15b. It

is preferable, however, to take the entire verse 13:15, including 13:15b, as the conclusion of the

unit. First Samuel 13:16 ("Now Saul and Jonathan his son . . .") disjunctively begins the next

section (13:16-18).

First Samuel 13:7b and 13:15a *and* 15b refer to the same group of people with Saul at

Gilgal. This group frames the section focusing on Saul's rejection (13:7b-15): those "trembling"

(13:7b), the "rest of the people" (13:15a), and the "six hundred men" (13:15b). Reconstructing

from the Greek, mention of "the people" (13:7b and 15 [2x]) frames the beginning and end of the

section 13:7b-15.[224] First Samuel 13:7a refers to an entirely different group of people, those who

fled, and 13:16 begins a new section presenting opposing sides. Thus 13:4-7a and 13:16 describe

the lining up and preparations for battle, framing the events at Gilgal in 13:7b-15. Mention of

Gilgal in both 13:7b and 15 also helps establish the unit, though it is also mentioned in 13:4.

First Samuel 13:15b intensifies the hopelessness of the situation and is best read with

13:7b-15a. Saul has been condemned (13:13-14). Samuel has departed (13:15a). The odds are

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[224] The frame also exists in the Masoretic Text though with only a single mention of the "people" in 13:15.

insuperable. Six hundred men (13:15b) is nothing compared with the tens of thousands of

Philistines (13:5). In 13:7b-15 the focus is on Saul, his plight, his disobedience, his response to

Samuel, and his rejection.[225]

2.4.6   Connecting Passages: First Samuel 13:16-23; 14:1-46, 47-52

First Samuel 13:16-23, framed by mention of Saul, Jonathan and the people in 13:16 and

22, and Philistines and Michmash in 13:16 and 23, leads into 14:1-46. Two considerations from

14:1-46 assist an understanding of Saul's rejection. First, Saul's inaction contrasts with

Jonathan's initiative rooted in covenantal trust (14:6). Second, Saul is increasingly isolated (13:6,

7, 11, 15) and left very much alone.[226] Alienation increases between Saul on one side, and

YHWH, Jonathan, the people,[227] his kingly role, and the cult/covenant, on the other.[228] Saul's

rash vow (14:24) leads to diminished victory (14:30) and a grave cultic infraction (14:32) similar

to those of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Cultic-covenantal issues surface in all three chapters (1 Sam

13, 14, 15).[229] If the reader is not convinced of Saul's unfitness to be king by 13:15, he or she

will be convinced by 14:46.

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[225] The Vulgate distinguishes the unit as 13:7b-15, beginning new paragraphs with 13:7b and 13:16. See *Nova Vulgata: Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio*, ed. typica altera (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986, 1998), 372-373. The LXX does not, perhaps because of the variant text reading in the LXX for 13:15. McCarter (*I Samuel*, 224-225) comes to the same conclusion about the delimitation of the text as outlined here: beginning a new paragraph for 13:7b; seeing it as disjunctive ("*But* Saul was still at Gilgal . . ."); and concluding the section with 13:15b (". . . some six hundred men"). The later insertion *includes* 13:7b-15a and possibly 13:4b with it reference to Gilgal (*I Samuel*, 230).

[226] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 98.

[227] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 129.

[228] First Samuel 14:37 reads: "But he [YHWH] did not answer him [Saul] that day." YHWH's silence toward Saul seems to be the fulfillment of 1 Samuel 8:18 where, as a result of the people's request for a king, "YHWH will not answer you in that day" (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 124). Increasing distance between Jonathan and Saul emerges through the course of 1 Samuel 14. Jonathan "did not tell his father" (14:1) leads later to explicit criticism of his father, "My father has troubled the land . . ." (14:29).

[229] The reference to the *only* altar Saul built in 1 Samuel 14:35 supports this conclusion. It is hardly a favorable judgment (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 123) and was merely a response to the troops hungrily

First Samuel 14:47-52 summarizes Saul's reign (signaling its end), his military success, battles, and family. Significant is the absence of any mention of YHWH, contrasting with the similar summary for David (2 Sam 8:1, 6, 12, 14) and Samuel (1 Sam 7:13). Even his family list (14:49-51) "is a checklist for 1-2 Samuel in that we can enumerate the members of Saul's house as they die."[230] Saul continued to enlist strong warriors (14:52) opening the way for David's entry into his service (16:21). First Samuel 14:52 leads naturally to 16:21-22, linking 14:1-52 with 16:14ff., and giving credence to the diachronic view that 15:1-35 and 16:1-13 were added later (Chapter Three).

2.4.7   Establishing the Unit: First Samuel 15:1-35

First Samuel 15:1 begins a new episode dealing with Saul's commission to put Amalek under the ban. The entire chapter is framed by the theme of making Saul "king over Israel" (15:1, 35). First Samuel 15 is distinct from preceding accounts. Though prominent in 1 Samuel 13-14, Jonathan does not appear here. Samuel, absent for 1 Samuel 13-14—with the exception of 13:7b-15—plays a key role in 1 Samuel 15 (implying both passages are prophetic). First Samuel 15 concludes with both Samuel and Saul returning home, Samuel to Ramah and Saul to Gibeah of Saul (15:34-35). In 16:1 Samuel, challenged by YHWH to overcome his grief for Saul, is commissioned to go and anoint David. A new episode begins.

While 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 fits well into its Philistine-threatened context, 1 Samuel 15 unexpectedly introduces Amalek and another account of Saul's rejection. No time indication is provided. There is no explicit reference to the first account of the rejection of Saul (13:7b-15). It

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slaughtering and eating with the blood, a wrong for which Saul's rash oath was responsible, and for which the building of an altar was an unnecessary overreaction (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 68), cf. Deut 12:16.

[230] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 97; cf. also more broadly, 97-98.

is easy to view 1 Samuel 15 as a later insertion, yet it is not entirely unrelated to its surroundings. There are traces of reflection on 13:7b-15. Amalekites are mentioned in 14:48 among the plunderers from whom Saul rescued Israel (14:47-52). Saul's regnal summary in 14:47-52 indicates a settled time of relative peace, "when the Lord your God has given you rest from all your enemies on every hand" (Deut 25:19). Such was the time the ancient score with Amalek was to be settled (Deut 25:17-19; cf. Exodus 17:8-16). First Samuel 15:1-35 also has links with subsequent passages.[231] First Samuel 15 can be read as a coherent literary unit.

2.5   Challenges from Synchronic Sketch: Diachronic Questions

Some apparent textual tensions may be resolved by attention to literary skill and narrative development of character or plot. First Samuel 15 will provide an example of such (Chapter Four). Other texts such as 13:13-14 demand recourse to diachronic insights. Examples of issues or texts requiring diachronic attention are listed below. Issues may be divided into 1) broader traditions and 2) specific insertions. The specific insertions are subdivided into a) texts surrounding 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 and b) the units themselves.

2.5.1   (1) Broader Traditions

Ambiguity in the names of Samuel and Saul in 1 Samuel 1:20 (*šə'iltîw*) may indicate traces of older Samuel or Saul traditions or a Saul tradition transferred to Samuel. Greater ambiguity about roles may have existed in an earlier time[232] and "the author of the book of

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[231] E.g., 1 Sam 16:1-13 (Samuel is told to abandon his mourning over Saul's rejection in 1 Samuel 15 [cf. 16:1]); 1 Sam 24:4-5 (David's cutting the hem of Saul's cloak [cf. 15:27-28]); 1 Sam 28:14 (Samuel's robe [cf. 15:27-28]); 1 Sam 28:17-19 (divination [cf. 15:23]); 1 Sam 28:18 (Amalek); 1 Sam 31 (Saul's death [cf. 15:35]); and 2 Sam 1 (the Amalekite's account of Saul's death).

[232] Moshe Garsiel provides examples of relevant scholarship. See Moshe Garsiel, *The First Book of Samuel: A Literary Study of Comparative Structures, Analogies and Parallels* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Revivim Publishing House, 1985), 143, note 2.

Samuel exploits its various connotations."[233] Related to this is the question of the king offering

sacrifice. David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to good effect (2 Sam 6:17-18;

24:25). Saul offers the burnt offering and prophesies. Are these early traditions or simply used to

illustrate Saul's disobedience and unsuitability? That a sympathetic treatment of Saul is

discernible alongside a negative presentation bespeaks an interesting diachronic development of

the text. Different interests or concerns are also evident in the texts portraying Saul's rejection.

Such interests are cultic and covenantal, prophetic, concerning obedience (to the prophet but also

to the word or command of YHWH), and interest in the figure of David. The question of the

relationship between these various coexisting interests arises and how they came together.[234]

Diachronic perusal (Chapter Three) is important in responding to these questions.

2.5.2   (2) Specific Insertions

2.5.2.1   (a) Surrounding 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 (1 Sam 8; 12; 13:1; 14:47-52)

First Samuel texts close to 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are mentioned here as possibilities for

further diachronic interest. The biblical text provides clues concerning sections that might be

earlier or later. Some scholars see pro-Saul and pro-monarchic passages as earlier and anti-Saul

or anti-monarchy passages as later, perhaps tinged with the negative experience of monarchy and

exile. A widely accepted division is: 1 Samuel 8:1-22; 10:17-27, and 11:12-12:35 as anti-

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[233] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 73.

[234] Did they come together concurrently or consecutively? Did different strands dominate at different stages? In what chronological order did the elements come together? Did one strain or tradition win out over other (competing) voices? What does the displacement of one concern by another say theologically? Were Saul and David traditions originally independent and then later united, or did they constitute a single tradition from the beginning? How were the traditions transmitted? Was there an ancient prophetic document transmitting prophetic traditions, including the Samuel tradition? What is the relationship between traditions and is a diachronic unfolding discernible? Can distinctions be made in the final text between prophecy and deuteronomism?; between earlier and later deuteronomism? Have the lines between various strains become too blurred so that earlier traditions are now irrecoverable? If not, how are these and their textual manifestations to be distinguished?

monarchic, and 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-11 as pro-monarchic.[235] While pro-monarchic texts are not necessarily earlier or anti-monarchic texts later, the question may be raised: are sections such as 1 Samuel 8 or 12 later and perhaps deuteronomistic? In particular, is there a connection between 1 Samuel 12 and 13:7b-15? Is the king referred to in 12:13 and 25 generic, i.e., any unfaithful king, or is Saul intended? Do 12:13 and 25 give the opening for the insertion of the rejection of Saul in 13:7b-15? Do 1 Samuel 12 and 13:7b-15 belong to the same period or have the same origins? Were they inserted around the same time? How are they related? (DtrN?). Both highlight the importance of obedience and 13:7b-15 puts a face to the unnamed king of 12:13 and 25.

Two other key passages are noted here to augment the picture of the diachronic context of 13:7b-15, especially the shifting view of Saul from positive to negative and the move from Saul to David expressed for the first time in 13:13-14. Saul's regnal formula in 13:1 and his regnal summary in 14:47-52 are both viewed as "later framing passages."[236] Why are these two passages placed where they are now found? They seem somewhat out of place. Some scholars link 1 Samuel 14:47-52 (Saul's regnal summary) with 16:14 (the departure of YHWH's spirit from Saul and the rise of David), seeing them connected at the DtrG level which did not yet know 1 Samuel 15:1-35 or 16:1-13.[237]

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[235] Bill T. Arnold and H.G.M. Williamson, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 867.

[236] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 249.

[237] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81. The question of 1 Samuel 24 and 26 should also be mentioned for completeness and diachronic interest. As with 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, these are two accounts of a similar event. First Samuel 24-26, however, is beyond the scope of this work. First Samuel 10:8 should also be mentioned for its connection to 13:7b-15.

2.5.2.2   (b) First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 as Secondary to Current Location

(i) First 13:7b-15. With 13:7b-15 a negative note is introduced into the positive Saul

tradition. The narrative proceeds smoothly from 13:7a to 13:16. Apart from 13:7b-15 there is no

indication in 1 Samuel 13-14 that Saul has just been rejected. There is no reaction from Saul

"who goes back to mustering his troops, and the text sees fit to concentrate on details regarding

the Philistines' technological superiority."[238] That Samuel is present only here in 1 Samuel 13-14

raises diachronic questions about 13:7b-15 as an insert. Further indications of 13:7b-15 as insert

may be discernible in the variations in the conclusion of the unit in the Masoretic and Septuagint

texts (13:15), though haplography explains these cogently.

First Samuel 13:7b -15 is an intrusion into 1 Samuel 13-14. It fits awkwardly, even for

the flow and geography of the account. The reader is "shunted unceremoniously" from Gibeah to

Gilgal and back to Gibeah (13:3, 7b [cf. 4b], 15): 13:7b-15 seems like a development of what

was originally a non-event at Gilgal (13:4b), but with the insertion the prophetic editor makes his

point.[239] First Samuel 13:4b may have been original. First Samuel 13:7b-15a is a "heterogeneous

episode," and "clearly extraneous to the original context."[240]

(ii) Second, 15:1-35. At an earlier stage it is likely that the regnal summary of Saul's

reign, announcing its end (14:47-52), proceeded directly to 16:14 where that end is signified by

the Spirit of YHWH's departure from Saul, an evil spirit tormenting him, and the introduction of

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[238] Everett Fox, *The Early Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: A New Translation with Introductions, Commentary, and Notes*, Schocken Bible; v. 2 (New York: Schocken Books, 2014), 332.

[239] McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 230.

[240] Fabrizio Foresti, *The Rejection of Saul in the Perspective of the Deuteronomistic School: A Study of 1 Samuel 15 and Related Texts*, Studia Theologica-Teresianum; 5 (Rome: Edizioni Del Teresianum, 1984), 160. For Foresti, Samuel acts more like a judge: he is made so by DtrH. Foresti sees 13:7b-15 and 10:8 as closer to deuteronomistic accounts like 1 Samuel 7, 8, 12, 15 than to the earlier 1 Samuel 13-14. I agree that 13:7b-15 (especially 13:13-14) is closer. I disagree with Foresti in that Samuel is presented here as *prophet* and, while 13:13-14 is deuteronomistic, 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 retain prophetic features.

David. This may explain the seeming intrusiveness of 1 Samuel 15. On the other hand, the

(later) placement of 1 Samuel 15:1-35 fits well just after Saul's regnal summary which gives the

impression of stability: the Amalekites were to be dealt with in such a period of stability. A later

author thought the best place for this account was "at the point of suture between the two ancient

complexes"—the old Saul tradition and the history of David's rise, i.e., between 14:52 and

16:14. Like Van Seters, Foresti agrees that 15:1-35 and 16:1-13 go together (Chapter Four).[241]

Campbell summarizes what he calls the "fairly general consensus among scholars that

15:1-35 is a substantial unity"[242] and, like V. Philips Long, supports the literary coherence of 1

Samuel 15. Views abound about the secondary nature of parts of 15:22-31. Little, however, is

compelling or conclusive (Chapter Four). First Samuel 15 is connected with other prophetic

passages, e.g., 9:1-10:16, where anointing by a prophet (Samuel) is highlighted: 10:1 is echoed

in 15:1, 17, and Saul's self-deprecation in 9:21 is echoed in 15:17.[243] First Samuel 15, though

inserted later, is not entirely out of place.

Both 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are units distinct from their immediate contexts. They are

insertions of prophetic origin with later deuteronomistic additions. From the synchronic

observation that Samuel appears only in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 (and 16:1-13) but not in

surrounding passages (1 Sam 13-14; 16:14-19:17—he reappears only in 19:18-24) implies that

both units have an interest in Samuel in a way not shared by surrounding texts. They are

prophetic in origin. That both accounts of the rejection of Saul by Samuel take place at Gilgal

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[241] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 168. Foresti argues that 16:1-13 is DtrN. See also Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 356; cf. also 182-183.

[242] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 156.

[243] Bruce C. Birch, *The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy: The Growth and Development of I Samuel 7-15*, Dissertation Series, Society of Biblical Literature; No. 27 (Missoula, MO: Scholars Press, 1976), 107.

indicates a common circle of origin, a center of prophetic activity. Gilgal appears as a key assembly location in 1 Samuel 11-12, where Samuel is cultic officiant. Both rejection accounts show strong prophetic influence, but they are not doublets and have different purposes.[244] First Samuel 13 is concerned with the Philistines, cultic fidelity, and Saul's dynasty, while 1 Samuel 15 is concerned with Amalekites, holy war and ḥērem, and the rejection of Saul himself. First Samuel 13 explains why Saul's line did not continue; 1 Samuel 15 explains why Saul himself was rejected. It makes sense to see 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 (in particular 13:13-14) as chronologically later than 15:1-35 as Birch suggests: the rejection of the individual comes before the rejection of descendants. Why 15:1-35 is not prior to 13:7b-15 in the narrative remains a question. If the Gilgal mention in 13:4b triggered the inclusion of the Gilgal incident of 13:7b-15, why *that* Gilgal episode rather than the Gilgal episode that became 1 Samuel 15? Synchronically, however, the precedence of 13:7b-15 makes sense: the condemnation of Saul in 15:1-35 is the *first step* in the realization of 13:13-14, the elimination of his dynasty.

2.6   Conclusion

Chapter Two reviewed a selection of key synchronic authors. A brief literature review was provided, followed by a search for trends in the synchronic approach concerning Saul, Samuel, David and YHWH, an evaluation of the approach, and recommendations for an adequate biblical poetics used appropriately. Three important insights emerged from this study and await further development in Chapter Three. First, if the Saul narratives survived only by being joined to those of David, then Saul is *not* the hero—David is—at least in the final form of the text. Such a diachronic insight would undermine the deconstuctionist direction of much synchronic commentary on Saul texts. Second, synchronic considerations bring to the fore the

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[244] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 105, 107.

importance of the final redactor who shaped the narratives. In Chapter Three I will argue that these redactors were deuteronomistic editors much concerned with obedience. This realization also significantly influences interpretation. Third, both of these points serve to underline the importance of a diachronic investigation (Chapter Three).

The study of synchronic authors was followed by a brief synchronic sketch of the context surrounding 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. This included addressing a textual critical question in 13:15 and defining the relevant units as 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Following the methodology adopted, diachronic questions emerge naturally from the synchronic study. Chapter Three attempts to address diachronic questions arising from Chapter Two, especially the later addition of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, their provenance, and subsequent redactions.

Chapter Three

3   Diachronic Consideration of the Rejection of Saul in 1 Samuel

3.1   Introduction

Chapter Two dealt with authors espousing a primarily synchronic methodology. It provided a brief synchronic sketch, delimited the units 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, and identified questions to be addressed from a diachronic viewpoint. Chapter Two reviewed key synchronic authors and trends concerning Saul, Samuel, David and YHWH, recommending an adequate biblical poetics used appropriately. Three important insights emerged from this study for further development in Chapter Three. First, if the Saul narratives survived only by being joined to those of David, then in the final form of the text Saul *cannot* be the hero—David is— undermining much deconstuctionist-synchronic commentary. Second, synchronic considerations bring to the fore the importance of the final redactor who shaped the narratives. In this chapter I will argue that these redactors were deuteronomistic editors who highlighted obedience. Third, both of these points serve to underline the importance of a diachronic investigation. Chapter Three attempts to address diachronic questions arising from Chapter Two, especially the later addition of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, their provenance, and subsequent redactions. Chapter Three focuses on the challenges identified in Chapter Two, building the diachronic foundation for more detailed study of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in Chapter Four.

Unlike Chapter Two, this chapter does not offer a literature review or summary of trends characterizing diachronic approaches. The aim is to trace the diachronic development of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Authors with a predominantly diachronic interest will naturally contribute here. Some get more attention. Veijola and Van Seters get particular mention, prescinding from any claim to comprehensive treatment of their work. Veijola's work,

sometimes viewed as excavative, displays respect for the text. His attention to detail and resulting theological insight is impressive. Van Seters's work is also thorough, however, he approaches the text with suspicion, seeing irony, parody, and even subversion.

For convenience, Chapter Two divided issues or texts requiring diachronic attention into 1) broader traditions and 2) specific additions. 1) An attempt will be made to trace the broader traditions behind and connected with 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. A fourfold movement is identifiable from first, older stories or traditions; to second, their preservation and transmission in prophetic sources, something like Campbell's Prophetic Record (an early ninth century document preserving older traditions that continued to develop over time); to third, their inclusion in the compilation and editorial work of deuteronomistic authors around the time of Josiah (640-609 BCE, with the discovery of the book of the law in the Temple in 622); to fourth, later or final editing at the hands of post-587 BCE deuteronomistic authors, strongly emphasizing fidelity to the law, often referred to as "nomistic" deuteronomistic editors (DtrN). It is difficult to ascertain with certainty the time of the final redaction DtrN. I locate it in the time of the exile (587-539).[245] 2) The specific additions are subdivided into a) texts related to or surrounding 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 and b) the units themselves.

Regarding the units themselves, in this chapter I will show that 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 is an insertion into the wider context of 1 Samuel 13-14. It is largely prophetic in style, message and content. To the short prophetic passage a brief deuteronomistic insert (13:13-14) was added, an

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[245] I opt for an exilic setting. A postexilic setting would have been influenced by a positive view of King Cyrus of Persia as presented in Second Isaiah. This would have modified the negative view of monarchy. Unlike the Book of Isaiah, where Isaiah 36-39 (cf. 2 King 18:13-20:11) is followed by Isaiah 40 and the movement of return, return was not yet in the foreground of deuteronomistic thought. The completion of the Deuteronomistic History remains substantially in the time frame before Isaiah 40 and concrete hopes of return. After the exile, focus shifted to return, temple rebuilding, and community factionalism, none of which receives significant attention in the Deuteronomistic History. The final editors (DtrN) are exilic rather than later postexilic. Their immediate concern is the exile, its causes, how to respond to it, and how to repent and return to YHWH. The "return" (šûḇ) theme in the Deuteronomistic History refers more to repentance and return to YHWH than return to Persian Yehud.

important diachronic consideration *within* 13:7b-15. Broader diachronic questions about 15:1-35, its origins, its prophetic provenance, and later influences are also broached. First Samuel 15 offers a prophetic presentation of major covenantal themes, with light, later retouching (DtrN). The presentation of each passage is followed by a discussion of both units and their mutual diachronic relationship. Finally, using Van Seters's *saga* hypothesis, a brief critique of some diachronic pitfalls is offered.

The following two sections—"Broader Traditions" and "Specific Insertions"—draw on points of interest identified in Chapter Two as diachronically relevant.

3.2 Broader Traditions: Complexities and Challenges

A diachronic overview of the Saul texts within 1 Samuel and the Deuteronomistic History is necessarily more speculative than a synchronic overview based on the final form of the text. In a subsequent section I trace four diachronic stages perceptible in the historical development of deuteronomistic texts (including 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35). These stages are based on what I view as the best insights of scholarship. While it is important to articulate a diachronic view point, it is also appropriate to acknowledge the difficulties in establishing such a chronology. This section—Broader Traditions: Complexities and Challenges—attempts to lay a foundation for the diachronic view adopted below. It acknowledges complexities and challenges, and cautions against an overly confident outline of a process that is somewhat irrecoverable: this is not an exact science. The identification of broader traditions in this section notes the rich diversity of various strands, as well as illustrating the complexities and challenges involved in creating a relative chronology. The temptation to simplify stages in a neat sequence is tempered by awareness of the navigational challenges.

Indications are present of various traditions, now interwoven but still discernible, in the final text. An important part of Noth's insight was that the Deuteronomistic History incorporated various traditions.[246] Though descriptions of the diachronic process differ, other scholars—Veijola and Campbell for example—accept such a process.[247] Broader strands or traditions are discernible in cultic-covenantal concerns, prophetic interest, deuteronomistic obedience, and Davidic interest. There are traces of Saul as prophet and cultic officiant. Positive elements of an older Saul story are still within view but are often "overwhelmed by the final editor."[248] A sympathetic view of Saul coexists with the accounts of his rejection, bespeaking an interesting diachronic development of the text.[249] Scholars speculate about a generally positive old Saul tradition, the history of David's rise to replace Saul, and a court history or succession narrative

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[246] Noth's Deuteronomist converted "the manifold historical material at his disposal into a unified whole" (Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 26). Noth attributed about two thirds of the Deuteronomistic History to extant sources (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 24).

[247] Timo Veijola acknowledged that the basic history (for him, DtrG) incorporated older traditions. For Veijola, these traditions did not contradict his (DtrG's) pro-monarchic view (*Das Königtum*, 116). The earlier deuteronomist's positive view of the monarchy was checked somewhat by his impression of Saul (117) but he still viewed Saul as a central part of the sacred history and saw the role of the judge subsumed into kingship (118). DtrG's somewhat positive view of Saul is evident in that Saul is given the title *nāḡîḏ*, "a title shared [in DtrG] only by David and Solomon" (118). It is used by DtrP of Jeroboam and Basha, and by DtrN for David and Hezekiah (76). "Im ganzen dürfte es für DtrG ein Rätsel gewesen sein, warum Jahwe nicht Saul, sondern David zu einem dauerhaften Königtum erwählt hatte (2 Sam 3:10; 6:21), - ein Rätsel, das er rational bewältigen weder konnte noch wollte" (118). For DtrG, it was a mystery why Saul's kingship did not endure (118). DtrG also takes a strong interest in Davidic theology. He did not condemn the later kings just because they were *kings*, but because they were *bad* kings (118-119). Though referring to DtrG, Veijola's points may be adapted *mutatis mutandis* to my proposal of earlier and later deuteronomistic work (Josianic and DtrN). The earlier Josianic version had a more positive view of kingship. It received, rather than composed, much of its content. The positive title *nāḡîḏ* was already Saul's in the prophetic tradition. It was not given to him by DtrG.

[248] Galvin, *David's Successors*, 79.

[249] At the beginning of his reign Saul was presented positively in contrast to the "worthless fellows" (*ûḇənê ḇəlîyaʻal* (10:27) who challenged his reign. Saul manifested forbearance. Holding his peace with magnanimity, he differed from the later troubled Saul. In contrast to the worthless fellows who criticized him are those who surrounded him, "warriors whose hearts God had touched" (10:26). Saul's treatment of the Kenites in 1 Samuel 15:6 wins sympathy for Saul, highlighting his sense of *ḥeseḏ*, justice, and prudence. Samuel displays genuine sympathy for Saul even as he dismisses Saul from office. Some of these instances are related directly by the narrator (15:11, 35; 16:1) indicating the sincerity of Samuel's anguish over Saul. Jonathan tells David that YHWH would be with David as he had been with his father Saul (20:13). Saul banished the mediums, though had access in his desperation (1 Sam 28:7-25). In the end Saul had support from Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam 31:12) and was buried in his father's tomb.

leading to Solomon's assumption of the throne. The original deuteronomistic compilers or

editors had access to older traditions.[250] While it is possible to identify concerns focused on cult,

prophecy, or law, it is challenging to disentangle and separate various traditions or movements

within the text. Much of what was earlier, later, or separate is now irrecoverable, apparent from

the variety of divergent scholarly views. Noth claimed his deuteronomist had no interest in

cultic/priestly matters.[251] Others, such as J.G. McConville and A. Joseph, argue for clear cultic

interest.[252] It is also not clear whether cultic concerns are earlier or later. Scribal studies indicate

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[250] Including "the ancient story of Saul's call in 1 Sam 9:1-10:16" and 1 Sam 11 (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 73). These were from a preexisting, predeuteronomistic Saul tradition (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 115). There may have been older traditions about Samuel as prophet, with traces visible in the allusion to Samuel as an anonymous prophet, "man of God," or "seer" (1 Sam 9:6, 9). The presentation of Saul prophesying raises the question of an older tradition of Saul as prophet as well as king (1 Sam 10:6, 10-13; 19:23-24). Robert Polzin raises this question of earlier ambiguity about prophet-king roles (*Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 101-107). The prophetic manifestations could be vestiges of an older prophetic tradition associated with Saul. More likely, they are transient indications of his election. The relevance of this to 13:7b-15 is that if Saul were a prophet he, like Samuel, could have offered sacrifice with impunity. The ambiguity between the names of Samuel and Saul in 1 Samuel 1:20 (*šə'iltîw*) may indicate a trace of this and the author makes the most of it (Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 143 note 2; 73). J.P. Fokkelman argues it is unnecessary to conclude that an old Saul story was taken over for Samuel's birth story. "According to the norms of Hebrew narrative art her [Hannah's] explanation of the name Samuel is sound in every way" and need not indicate an ancient Saul birth story taken over and applied to Samuel. "[T]he points of contact between the proper noun and the key word of the motivation . . . are often few in number. . ." (*Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel: A Full Interpretation Based on Stylistic and Structural Analyses*, *Vow and Desire [I Sam. 1-12]*, Vol. IV, Studia Semitica Neerlandica [Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1993], 56). Questions linger. Is it a *later* interpretation that gives the impression that something good—sacrificially imploring YHWH's favor before battle—could turn into something unacceptable because performed by the wrong person? Was this a later (deuteronomistic) imposition on 13:7b-15? Yet what is viewed as the older tradition did not defend Saul's offering sacrifice or highlight that he prophesied twice. See Arnold and Williamson, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*, 867. See also Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 81. That the earlier Saul presented in 1 Samuel 13-14 could have offered sacrifice with impunity is unlikely in the light of 1 Samuel 9-10, also viewed as earlier, where Samuel is clearly the one to offer sacrifice (9:13) even before the "addition" of 10:8 pointing to 13:7b-15. Saul offering the burnt offering to disastrous effect is an important factor in 13:7b-15, yet in 2 Samuel 24:25, David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to good effect. It is difficult to state whether the legitimacy of the king offering sacrifice or prophesy comes from an earlier tradition but that such was overlaid with a later understanding in which roles (e.g., prophet, priest, king) were more clearly defined. If such an early tradition existed in which Saul's role as sacrificial officiant was acceptable, this would support the view that 13:7b-15 is expressive of later thought. Saul is not presented as a prophet but rather as playing his kingly role in the prophet-king dynamic, taken up and enhanced by the deuteronomistic editors. The Targum is uncomfortable with the idea of Saul prophesying. See Robert Hayward, "Some Notes on Scribes and Priests in the Targum of the Prophets," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 36, no. 2 (October 1985): 210-221, 217, https://doi:10.18647/1213/jjs-1985.

[251] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 124-125, 137-142.

[252] J.G. McConville argues that the deuteronomistic author "has an intrinsic interest in priesthood" and that his history is "no obituary for priesthood as such." See J. Gordon McConville, "Priesthood in Joshua to Kings,"

that diverse concerns can coexist and develop concurrently as well as consecutively, cautioning

against imposing too rigid a developmental hypothesis.[253] Cultic concerns are older and

prophetic, but they are also important to the deuteronomistic writers, especially the Josianic

deuteronomists who review the history of kings in light of cultic as well as broader covenantal

fidelity. Indeed cultic fidelity is a significant indicator of covenantal fidelity. On this, Saul and

the kings from David on are judged.

There is a tendency to trace development from cult, to prophecy, to law. Wellhausen saw

1 Samuel 15 as later deuteronomistic because of "the attitude of subjection, which the king is

supposed to show to the word of God, mediated by the prophet, an attitude which is understood

as superior to cultic practices."[254] Samuel's transition from priest at Shiloh to prophet for all

Israel is reflective of "the replacement of the temple by the prophetic word as a medium of

access to the divine will, a central theme of the Deuteronomistic theology in the exilic and

postexilic periods."[255] Robert Alter remarks of Samuel's replacing the priestly house of Eli (1

Sam 1-3) that: "sacerdotal guidance will be displaced by prophetic guidance in the person of

Samuel."[256] While this movement from cult to prophecy may be present, Samuel continues to

perform priestly functions such as offering sacrifice and the cult remains a key measure of kings

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Vetus Testamentum 49, no. 1 (1999): 73-87, 86-87. A. Joseph describes the Deuteronomistic History as a "cultically focused history" (Joseph, *Portrait*, 226).

[253] Older texts can span centuries and while Form Criticism describes the link between genre and social group, scribalism challenges this: priests, prophets and sages could be scribes and have several interests, not merely one. See JiSeong James Kwon, *Scribal Culture and Intertextuality: Literary and Historical Relationships between Job and Deutero-Isaiah* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 148-149. The importance of textual criticism in forming a diachronic vision is also important. Useful on this is George J. Brooke, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Demise of the Distinction between Higher and Lower Criticism," in *New Directions in Qumran Studies: Proceedings of the Bristol Colloquium on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 8-10 September 2003*, Library of Second Temple Studies; 52, ed. Jonathan G. Campbell, William John Lyons, and Lloyd Pietersen (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 26-42.

[254] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 16-17.

[255] Römer, *So-Called*, 94.

[256] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 243.

to the end of the Deuteronomistic History. Cultic interest is not entirely replaced by the prophetic. Yet the text suggests a shift in emphasis from cult to prophecy, a manifestation of the increasing priority of the prophetic word of YHWH.[257]

The chronological sequence in the blending of various elements raises the question of the possible theological significance of the later displacement of one concern with another—a benefit from the combination of the synchronic and diachronic methods. I argue for the integration over time of various traditions or strands into the Deuteronomistic History and 1 Samuel. Older stories and cultic and prophetic interests are not abandoned or lost but are subsumed into deuteronomistic writings, finding their final form in the later nomistic focus (DtrN). Earlier traditions are recalibrated and become part of the nomistic vision. Through incorporation they do not necessarily lose their validity, force, or vitality, though they are read in a new context and in a new way. Prophecy preserves older stories and traditions such as the anointing of Saul or the military exploits of Saul and Jonathan. In the end, prophecy is absorbed into deuteronomism and becomes the call to fidelity to the deuteronomic law with Samuel as its mouthpiece. Prophecy becomes the voice appealing for obedience—more to the established written word than to the oracles or oral exhortations of prophets. Thus prophecy is preserved, changed, and redeployed.[258]

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[257] For Veijola, "Obeying the voice of YHWH was a concern for DtrP" (1 Sam 15:19, 20, 22; 28:18). For Veijola, DtrP was a later deuteronomistic redaction with prophetic interest, composed after the exile, possibly including older prophetic stories (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 88).

[258] Something similar happens with cultic concerns, though this is beyond the scope of this project. The cult maintains its importance within the deuteronomistic vision expressed around Josiah, cult centralization, the elimination of idolatry and syncretism, etc. In this (later) light the earlier cult is assessed. Allowances are made for older traditions incorporated and set before Josiah's time, e.g., in 1 Samuel, but even there, cultic obedience is required and the prophet (Samuel) is presented as an official quasi-levitical priest figure. A later clarification of roles (e.g., prophet and king) is read back into earlier narratives (Samuel and Saul).

3.3   The Diachronic Background of First 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35: Four Key Stages

3.3.1   Building on Campbell's Prophetic Record

Much of the diachronic sketch presented below is based on what I view as the best

scholarly hypotheses. Attempts to trace earlier sources are challenging. These are often

irrecoverable because absorbed by later forms, sometimes so felicitously that the line between

different traditions is blurred, making a source or stage chronology difficult to recreate. A prime

challenge lies in distinguishing prophecy from deuteronomism, and then, earlier from later

expressions of deuteronomism.

The diachronic view outlined here builds on Antony Campbell's hypothesis identifying a

*pre*deuteronomistic Prophetic Record from 1 Samuel to 2 Kings 10, "a record of the prophetic

activity claimed in the guidance of Israel with regard to its kings, from Saul to Jehu."[259] For

Campbell, the text provides signals that "pre-exilic optimism predominates and that exilic

pessimism is an add-on rather than being integral to the core of the document." Campbell and

O'Brien observe, "[t]he warnings and threats do not seem to be integrated into the composition

but *inserted later at discrete critical points*. They read as *strategically placed afterthoughts

(=revision)* rather than integral parts of the composition."[260] What Campbell articulates about

exilic additions applies also, in my view, to the *later* placement of both accounts of the rejection

of Saul. First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are both preexilic, prophetic texts bearing older

stories. They are taken up, reshaped by deuteronomistic authors, and strategically placed in their

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[259] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 31. The Prophetic Record was first outlined in Antony F. Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings: A Late Ninth Century Document (1 Samuel 1-2 Kings 10)*, Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series; 17 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1986). My interest is not in the precise delimitation or extent of such a record. It is in acknowledging the existence of a prophetic tradition preceding the deuteronomistic compilers and underlying much of the deuteronomistic corpus.

[260] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 14, emphasis added.

current locations as deuteronomistic reflection, warning, and invitation. They constitute a check on optimism, especially about kings. Most of all, they are a call to obedience.

Campbell's hypothesis has several advantages. It takes account of the optimism and hope in the Davidic line expressed in much of the history, especially those parts centered on Josiah. It accounts for the preservation of earlier material, the origins of which may extend over centuries, as well as the prophetic stamp imprinted on some older traditions.[261] It takes account of the expanse of older and especially prophetic material over much of the Deuteronomistic History.[262] That much of the prophetic work was already incorporated into the Deuteronomistic History at an earlier rather than later stage partly explains the literary coherence of the text.[263]

Additionally, Campbell's work explains the prophetic provenance and interest of even more recently inserted texts, including 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. In my view, in addition to the prophetic strands already incorporated into the Deuteronomistic History as expressed by Campbell, largely prophetic texts like 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 were also available to later deuteronomistic editors who added them to their history. These inserts were not merely newly

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[261] The importance and expanse of the prophetic material indicates it is not only from the later, post-587, prophetic, deuteronomistic redaction proposed by the Göttingen School (DtrP). It should be noted that DtrP, as proposed, may also include some traditional prophetic stories, conceding some prophetic traditions as older and preexilic (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding,* 12).

[262] Notably in the books of Samuel and Kings, especially 1 Samuel 1-2 Kings 10 (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 12).

[263] McCarter agrees that a prophetic source was used by the deuteronomistic writers in 1 Samuel. This "middle stage in the growth of the First Book of Samuel" has been neglected in scholarship. McCarter saw it as eighth century BCE, of Northern origin, perhaps after 722, and pre-deuteronomistic. From the North it brought its negative view of kingship. In its later context of Judah, it saw hope in Davidic promise. Since some scholars trace (proto-) deuteronomistic ideology back to the North, it is no surprise to note an affinity between prophecy and deuteronomism (McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 18, 22). This connaturality between prophecy and deuteronomism is remarked in this work. Karel Van Der Toorn sees the scribes behind Deuteronomy as priests (levites) who moved from the North to Judah after 722. They were lawyers, concerned with the Torah which they saw "stood for a way of life and a certain vision of history" (*Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007], 171).

composed arrivals: their antiquity and prophetic pedigree facilitated their incorporation into the final deuteronomistic text.

I broadly follow Campbell's model but not in every detail. I assert with McCarter that there is an older prophetic tradition behind texts in 1 Samuel but do not need to pursue its wider extent or limits in the history as Campbell does.[264] I do not strictly follow Campbell's verse by verse analysis of 1 Samuel 15.[265] I agree with Joseph's position of broad agreement with Campbell, affirming that "pre-Dtr prophetic texts are certainly integrated into the history." [266] While Campbell sees both texts as of prophetic background and used by the deuteronomistic historians, he does not outline in detail the eventual placement of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in their current locations or the chronology of that placement, something I attempt here and in Chapter Four. In some ways I go beyond Campbell. For example, as well as noting the DtrN influence on both texts, I assert that 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 were placed in situ by DtrN. Campbell comes close to this position but does not assert that DtrN gave 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 their final position. Campbell acknowledges, with Veijola, the probability ("as seems probable") that 13:13-14 comes from a "late deuteronomistic hand."[267] He also speculates that "an editor of Israel's texts and traditions" placed 13:7b-15 in its location as "a variant tradition to ch. 15 in a place in the

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[264] McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 18. For Campbell, it is from 1 Samuel 1 to 2 Kings 10 (*Unfolding*, 27).

[265] Campbell provides a detailed verse by verse outline of 1 Samuel 15 and the various prophetic developments of the older story of Saul's rebuke (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 157, especially 158-159 for a detailed outline). He suggests the prophetic editors added three blocks of text in 1 Samuel 15. My interest is more general and I believe it is difficult to distinguish clearly the prophetic overwriting from the older story. In Chapter Four I allude to traces of the older story but focus on the literary skill of the prophetic work.

[266] Joseph, *Portrait*, 43: She is "unsure whether the prophetic tradition used in Kings is as complete and comprehensive as Campbell lays out."

[267] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 140.

text where it could be easily recovered and where it would be appropriate."[268] Campbell echoes Birch's view that 13:7b-15 is "a secondary addition . . . at a later time under the influence of the account in chapter 15."[269] I agree that 13:7b-15 was placed synchronically before but diachronically after 15:1-35. I explicitly argue, however, that the texts were placed by DtrN.

3.3.2 Four Stages

Campbell writes that in the books of Samuel the gamut from "the emergence of prophets and kings . . . through to the end of Israel's national independence" may be glimpsed.[270] This leads to the articulation of my view that diachronic movement is discernible from 1) older pro-Saul stories, to 2) prophetic tradition, to 3) deuteronomistic concerns around the time of Josiah, i.e., an earlier, extensive, deuteronomistic layer, to 4) later deuteronomistic interest characterized by Mosaic nomistic emphasis: the final redactors are deuteronomistic with special focus on the law (DtrN). Exilic suffering and related reflection sharpened this later focus. Elaborating on these four stages we can say that early, positive Saul traditions were preserved and transmitted by prophetic tradition spanning centuries. Campbell's Prophetic Record proposal provides a cogent model or description of this process of preservation and expansion. This prophetic tradition, preserving the Saul texts, put its own stamp on them. Later, as Noth's theory broadly suggests of older sources, this prophetic tradition was used as a key source by the deuteronomistic authors who in turn put their stamp on the material with minor insertions, larger additions, and new compositions at various earlier or later stages. In the end, in the deuteronomistic corpus, "the prophet has the divinely commissioned task of proclaiming the

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[268] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141.

[269] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 74.

[270] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 17.

[deuteronomistic] law."[271] Other traditions and interests come progressively under the influence of an increasingly fixed law code or book. A Mosaic, legal lens provides the final view. The four key stages in the process toward the final text are outlined below, as well as how this applies to 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.

3.3.3   Stage One: Older Stories

The section "Broader Traditions: Complexities and Challenges" listed possible older traditions and the challenges of outlining a clear chronology. Similar challenges apply to tracing older stories in the Saul texts, but there are indications of positive Saul materials including old Saul stories (9:1-10:16 [or 10:27]; 11) and Saul and Jonathan stories (1 Sam 13-14). In older, positive Saul traditions Samuel's role may have been presented more in terms of a judge who intervened for the people and offered sacrifice (1 Sam 7:3-15; 8:1-3). Samuel's being the anonymous seer of 1 Samuel 9:6-13, viewed as an early text, suggests the remnant of an older story now overwritten by more explicit prophetic interest. In the final form, the anonymous seer is incorporated smoothly and becomes part of the overall prophetic story's literary skill, displaying plot development, drama and suspense. A possible shift from cultic to prophetic interest has already been noted in "Broader Traditions."[272]

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[271] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 211. Deuteronomy 18:15-22 joins the law and the prophets, the role of Moses and the prophets after him. My addition of "deuteronomistic" in parentheses.

[272] Samuel's priestly role (1 Sam 2:18; 3:1, 3) is a dimension of his overall prophetic role even though the prophetic is more prominent. In the narrative of 1 Samuel, Samuel replaces the Elide priestly leadership in Israel. The priests have failed and God does something new in Samuel. There is a possible shift from cultic to prophetic interest, though cultic interests remained deuteronomistically important. However, "[t]exts that appear to be associated with an early setting can be later products and vice versa" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 31). In the Pentateuch, for instance, some see indications of the increasing influence of priesthood and cultic law (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 242).

Scholars acknowledge an older layer of stories or traditions. Römer writes of "the stories of Saul's reign, mostly war-stories" viewed as a prelude to David's reign.[273] He concedes these may preserve some historical information.[274] An indication of the older Saul-Jonathan story in 1 Samuel 13-14 is present in the use of the term "Hebrews" (*'ibrîm*) for Israelites in 13:3, 7a, 19. It does not appear within 13:7b-15, but only before and after. Greenberg argues it is an "archaic term that served in pre-Davidic times to designate Israel as one ethnic group vis-à-vis others": after the founding of David's kingdom the term appears only in Jonah.[275] McKenzie acknowledges older stories about Saul-Jonathan battles with the Philistines.[276] Campbell and O'Brien agree: 1 Samuel 13-14 is viewed as "a self-contained collection of traditions about Saul and Jonathan," a "pre-deuteronomistic tradition . . . attached to the Prophetic Record for . . . storage and retrieval."[277] The prophetic rejection of Saul by YHWH in 1 Samuel 15 is based on an older story of Saul's rebuke by Samuel: "there is no trace of an older story *without Samuel* as there is in 9:1-10:16."[278]

Campbell observes that while some older Saul traditions may be preserved in 1 Samuel 13:1-15:35, they reach us "in Davidic clothing."[279] Some scholars claim that the Saul stories

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[273] Römer, *So-Called*, 145, 94-97.

[274] Römer thinks it is unlikely they "were written already in the tenth century BCE" (Römer, *So-Called*, 145). Römer sees 1 Sam 13-14 as directed to the History of David's Rise in the seventh century BCE while 1 Sam 15 is "an exilic Deuteronomistic creation." Römer's tendency is to ascribe later dates to sources and texts.

[275] Moshe Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus: A Holistic Commentary on Exodus 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013), 23.

[276] McKenzie, *King David*, 30.

[277] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 249.

[278] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 258, emphasis added.

[279] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 29.

have been preserved mainly because of their link with David stories and out of Davidic interest, otherwise, they would not have survived. The Saul stories contribute immensely to the story of David, which would be only sparsely reconstructed without them. Both Campbell and McKenzie, in their later work, express the view that the texts are more about David than about Saul. This should not undermine the Saul narratives in themselves. They have their own value and significance of which more will be written below.

3.3.4   Stage Two: Prophetic Tradition

Campbell's Prophetic Record hypothesis offers a cogent model for understanding the development of texts behind 1 Samuel 13-15.[280] For Campbell, the Prophetic Record appeared as an attempt to interpret the events of Israel's history, "organizing and expanding the traditions from Samuel, Saul, and David to its own day to situate the experience of profound change within the context of God's guidance and God's will, as well as within the ambit of prophetic guidance and prophetic power."[281]

In addition to preserving and expanding prophetic material, the prophetic tradition stored and transmitted other older material and earlier traditions.[282] For Campbell, this record was an

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[280] Spanning 1 Samuel 1:1-2 Kgs 10:28 the record "is claimed as an ancient document. References back and forth—themes, concepts, or language—bind its various traditions into a coherent whole" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 10). With the catalyst of Jehu's rebellion (2 Kgs 9-10), the Prophetic Record attempts to interpret the Samuel, Saul and David traditions and to expand them. Emphasis on God's guidance and will is indicative of that prophetic understanding (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 32). Campbell's Prophetic Record seeks to explain "the distinctive prophetic redaction" in texts of the Former Prophets such as the anointing of Saul and David (including 1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 15:1-35; 16:1-13) and how God guided events through prophets (Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, 111-112). Spanning several centuries from the ninth century, the record was an attempt to preserve and interpret the tradition in a prophetic light. Prophetic overwriting, i.e., adding to written documents, "is visible in 1 Sam 9:1-10:16 and 15:1-34, also in 2 Sam 7:1-17" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 10).

[281] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 32.

[282] While David M. Gunn summarizes scholarship on Judges as moving from a historical kernel to exilic reworking (*Judges* [Oxford: Blackwell, 2005], 272), Blenkinsopp notes a *prophetic* influence on how judges are portrayed—"justice, only justice you shall pursue" (cf. Deut 16:19-20)—as well as the prophetic link between ethics

early source or collection with prophetic interest, built up over an extended time, and later taken up into the Deuteronomistic History. Campbell is not alone in viewing the development of what eventually became the Deuteronomistic History as a process over centuries. Blenkinsopp sees much deuteronomistic writing as the work of scribes, even as he notes we know little of them. To some extent, Carr, Kwon, and van der Toorn fill this lacuna with their work on scribal culture and transmission.[283] In this way older Saul traditions were preserved and transmitted. The early Saul-Jonathan story of 1 Samuel 13-14 was preserved but changed with the addition of the prophetic account of Saul's rebuke in 13:7b-15* (i.e., 13:7b-15 without the later addition of 13:13-14). Later, with deuteronomistic intervention (13:13-14), this became the rejection of Saul (Chapter Four). In this way, a negative or critical element was applied to the Saul texts. Both accounts of Saul's rejection portray this prophetic vision. In 1 Samuel 15 the prophetic redactors reworked an older story about Saul's failure to destroy Amalek, highlighting prophetic instrumentality in the inauguration of kings. Campbell's view is that prophetic editors changed the rebuke of Saul in the older story behind 15:1-35 into a story of his rejection.[284]

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and cult (Deut 16:21-17:1), and criticism of cultic disorders, perhaps influenced by early Ephraimite (i.e., Northern) prophecy (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 212).

[283] See Kwon, *Scribal Culture and Intertextuality*; David McLain Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Karel Van Der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and Hebrew Bible.*

[284] For Campbell, prophetic editors changed Saul's title from *nāḡîḏ* (9:16; 10:1; [cf. 13:14, where it is applied to David and is deuteronomistic]) to *melek* (king) in 1 Samuel 15:1, 11, 17, 23, 26, 35; 16:1, indicating the move from earlier positive potential and promise to prophetic rebuke/rejection characteristic of the prophet-king (*melek*) dynamic reflecting prophetic interest. See Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 254-255; also, Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, 111-113. Ralph Klein, on the other hand, sees the term *nāḡîḏ* as of prophetic origin, its use in 1 Sam 9:16 and 10:1, attached to Samuel, supporting this view. Its use in 13:14 (DtrN) continues this positive usage of the term *nāḡîḏ* to make the point that there can only be one and it is now David, not Saul. See Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary; 10 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 151. For Klein, then, Saul as *nāḡîḏ* is prophetic and Saul as *melek* is deuteronomistic. Campbell's view of *melek* as prophetically negative is more convincing in the light of the prophet-king dynamic, generally not a positive one. Samuel calls Saul "king" in the rejection declarations (15: 23, 26) and YHWH regrets that he made Saul king through Samuel (15:31; 16:1; cf. 15:1). Prophecy was to keep kingship in check. These rose and fell together. Perhaps the most that can be said is that

The Saul-David texts were joined at an early stage, certainly by the prophetic stage (later ninth century BCE) and before the deuteronomistic stage (later seventh century BCE). This has consequences for interpretation. Campbell attributes to prophecy *Samuel's* anointing of Saul (rather than Saul's commission by an anonymous prophet), some prophetic endorsement of Saul, a rebuke of Saul (13:7b-15*), Saul's rejection in 1 Samuel 15, and the anointing of David (16:1-13).[285] The import of this is that the Saul-David connection was already in the prophetic work, either received as joined in older sources, or joined and amplified by the prophetic writers. Weinfeld, in agreement, holds that the deuteronomistic writers used *pre*deuteronomistic material containing a Saul-David narrative. The deuteronomistic writers did not need to supply their own prophetic word of God for these events. They took them over from prophecy.[286] The Saul-David connection was *not* a creation of the deuteronomistic scribes as suggested by Veijola and Van Seters.[287] Campbell speculates that "the beginnings of David's story may well go back to the beginning of Saul's (1 Sam 9:1)," ending around 2 Samuel 8:15.[288] For as far back as traceable, the Saul-David story was one, even if originally built on separate Saul and David stories. If the

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Saul as *nāḡîḏ* emerged from the older traditions or early prophecy, while Saul as *melek* emerged from later prophecy or early deuteronomistic tradition.

[285] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 16. Campbell attributes the prophetic anointing of David (1 Sam 16:1-13) entirely to prophetic rewriting.

[286] Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 15. Agag's punishment, for instance, reflects his actions (15:33) as does Saul's (15:23). Such commensurate retribution reflects both prophetic and deuteronomistic interest. While in 1 Samuel 15, the prophetic was taken over by the deuteronomistic, it is often difficult to distinguish them.

[287] Veijola argues that it was the deuteronomistic editors who put the Saul and David stories together: "predeuteronomistically there was no connection between the Rise of David Narrative and the Samuel and Saul story or the Succession Narrative; only with the deuteronomistic editing were the major traditions of the first kings brought together." See Walter Dietrich and Thomas Naumann, "The David-Saul Narrative," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study; 8, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J.G. McConville (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 276-318, 308. See also Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 129.

[288] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 28.

Saul stories were preserved mainly as part of the David story, this important diachronic perspective sheds new light on much synchronic commentary on Saul and David. If the Saul stories are preserved mainly as part of the David story, then David is the focus and the hero, not Saul. Diachronic insight clarifies synchronic interpretation.

The *prophetic* interest in these texts is David rather than Saul. In 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 Samuel's role demonstrates prophetic interest and provenance. Samuel arrives on the scene and departs once he has anointed David as king (16:13). Samuel subsequently appears only briefly (1 Sam 19:18-24; 25:1; and in ghostly form in 28:11-19).[289] Campbell sees the texts "oriented toward the Davidic monarchy, rather than toward a monarchy embodied first in Saul and then in David."[290] Abimelech and Saul show that kingship can be short-lived and point to the enduring kingship of David in 2 Samuel.[291] Campbell acknowledges development in his own thought, from seeing Samuel's primary role as inaugurator of the monarchy itself, to Samuel's main task, that of anointing David. In this light, the inauguration of the monarchy, the rejection of Saul, and 1 Samuel 1-15 all prepare for David. For the underlying prophetic thrust, God's endorsement of David as king through his prophet is central.[292]

I agree with Campbell's observation that David is the main interest of the *prophetic* thrust that includes the inauguration of the monarchy, the prophetic word, and the prophet-king relationship. That said, I do not believe this undermines the significance of Saul in the final

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[289] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 24-25.

[290] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 26.

[291] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 28.

[292] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 2-3. Campbell observes that "despite 1 Sam 7-8 and 10:17-27, as well as 1 Sam 12—the *prophetic* moves in 1 Sam 1:1-16:13 are seen as directed toward establishing David as king, followed by the *political* moves to establish David as king (1 Sam 16:14-2 Sam 8:18)" (*1 Samuel*, 3).

narrative. The Saul material attracts new interest during the exile as Saul becomes the focus of later reflection. Saul embodies the nation; recapitulates the (Deuteronomistic) history; embodies infidelity; and offers an explanation as to why the Davidic promises failed thus far. In Chapters Four and Five I will argue that Saul's role is significant and not merely an appendage to David.

Challenges exist in delineating the soft border between prophetic and deuteronomistic tradition because "contributors are remarkably anonymous"[293] and because of the considerable agreement between both on key common concerns such as obedience,[294] the prophetic word,[295] and Davidic kingship. In time, the prophetic tradition was subsumed into the Deuteronomistic History in a manner suggested by Campbell and Joseph[296]and compatible with Noth's "honest broker" taking over older traditions.[297] Prophecy, as Levinson observes, is subordinated "to the textual authority of a deuteronomistic Torah."[298]

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[293] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 200.

[294] Such is clear in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15; 15:1-35 and 12:14 regarding obedience. "Both prophetic tradition and this deuteronomistic tradition are here singers of the same song" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 161).

[295] Weinfeld distinguishes the <u>deuteronomistic</u> understanding of the divine word at work in history, an *active* rather than mantic word, from the <u>predeuteronomistic prophetic</u> word, more related to immediate events. The deuteronomistic word of God relates to all periods and generations and presents a "long-range divine historical scheme." Everything is a result of "the prophetic word of God which foreordained it" (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 15). While hardly a strict rule of thumb, Weinfeld's means of distinguishing prophetic from deuteronomistic word is of some value. The specifically deuteronomistic 13:13-14 takes a much longer term view of the rejection of Saul and rise of David. It refers to the *extended* future spread out before Saul in his dynasty. This contrasts with the prophetic 15:28, where the kingdom is ripped from the hands of Saul and given to David with immediacy, at that very moment.

[296] Joseph, *Portrait*, 235.

[297] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 84.

[298] Bernard M. Levinson, "The Reconceptualization of Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History's Transformation of Torah," *Vetus Testamentum* 51, no. 4 (2001): 511-534, 534.

3.3.5   Stage Three: Josianic Deuteronomistic History

Noth posited the Deuteronomistic History as an exilic work incorporating older traditions. I accept F.M. Cross's revision of Noth's hypothesis, namely, that much of the Deuteronomistic History is expressive of Josianic optimism founded on the promises to David (2 Sam 7:1-16). This preexilic work (Dtr[1]) was updated during the exile by something like Cross's Dtr[2].[299] Alison Joseph, like Cross and others (e.g., Clements, Campbell, Carr, Knoppers, Nelson, and Davis) accepts that much of the Deuteronomistic History is preexilic.[300] Like Rofé and Campbell, Joseph discerns prophetic sources included and shaped by the Deuteronomistic historians.[301]   A Josianic Deuteronomistic History took shape before and around the reform of

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[299] Dtr[2] was a light "retouching" turning the history into "a sermon on history addressed to Judean exiles" (Cross, "Themes of the Book of Kings," 287-289). Weinfeld concedes the likelihood of Cross's double redaction view: "two editorial strands may be discerned in the deuteronomistic history" (*Deuteronomic School*, 7-8). Weinfeld discerns three stands (if Jeremiah is included): the Book of Deuteronomy (later seventh century); the deuteronomistic edition of Joshua-Kings which became fixed in the sixth century (*before* 550 BCE, the date set by Cross for his Dtr[2] [Cross, "Themes of the Book of Kings," 287]); and sections of Jeremiah.

[300] Joseph, *Portrait*, 20-21. "The primary thematic and ideological concerns reflected in DtrH are most appropriate for the preexilic period. The hopefulness of the reign of Josiah and the unconditional Davidic promises, both as organizing frameworks and as historical events, lose their import and purpose if attributed to an exilic context" (21). She cites Gary Knoppers's question, why someone living in the exile would write such "an ambitious and laborious history" to convey only guarded hope of divine compassion following repentance? (21). See Gary N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, Volume 1, *The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam*, Harvard Semitic Monographs (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 25. For David Carr, the evidence suggests the "later preexile as a time for the creation of the Deuteronomic vision in Deuteronomy, and the reign of Josiah as the most likely time for its inclusion in a broader history" (*Tablet of the Heart*, 141). Richard Nelson also argues the advantanges of the double redaction. See Richard Nelson, "The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History: The Case Is Still Compelling," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 29, no. 3 (March 2005): 319–337, https://doi:10.1177/0309089205053477.

[301] Ronald E. Clements sees an earlier (preexilic) draft of the Deuteronomistic History as "the foremost literary legacy of the Josianic revival of the Davidic kingship ideology" ("A Dialogue with Gordon McConville on Deuteronomy. 1. The Origins of Deuteronomy: What are the Clues?", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56, no. 4 [2003]: 508-516, 516). Alison Joseph argues the majority of the history was composed *before* the 587 exile. Its concerns indicate as much: emphasis on the law code as foundation of the deuteronomistic reform; cultic centralization and fidelity; Josianic optimism; and Davidic hope shown in awareness of or instrumentality in shaping the Davidic prototype strategy with Josiah as the ideal king (even over David) (Joseph, *Portrait*, 232, 234). The extended process was influenced by the fall of Samaria (722 BCE), the siege of Jerusalem (701 BCE), and ongoing military threats. Joseph sees the deuteronomistic writer as using a "semi-comprehensive northern document completed by the time of Hezekiah" but also other *prophetic* texts which he "searches out, includes, and/or composes," further incorporating "prophetic oracles from southern prophets regarding the kingdom of Judah until the reign of Josiah." The detueronomistic writers not only find, select, and preserve these documents, they order them, rechronologize them, and "craft the narrative to most effectively convey [their] goals" (Joseph, *Portrait*, 235). This is compatible with the incorporation of an older Northern tradition. See Alexander Rofé, "Ephraimite versus Deuteronomistic

King Josiah (2 Kgs 22:1-23:30).[302] In Josiah's reform "the temple has been replaced by the

'book of the law' as the authoritative mediator between God and the people."[303] The reform and

the book finding are best dated to the seventh century BCE.[304]

I largely accept Alison Joseph's assessment that Cross's double redaction of the

Deuteronomistic History provides the most convincing account of that history. However, instead

of distinguishing both layers as earlier, preexilic, Josianic (Dtr[1]) followed later by an exilic layer

(Dtr[2]),[305] I categorize them more specifically as the Josianic edition followed by a later version

along the lines of the Göttingen School's DtrN. For those who presented the final form of the

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History," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J.G. McConville (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 462-474. For more on the Northern tradition see also McCarter, *I Samuel*, 18-22, and Van Der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 171.

[302] This history selected and organized Israel's traditions "from Moses to the time of Josiah," situating Josiah's reform within the sweep of Israel's traditions (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 32). Enthusiastic reform, especially cultic, hopes of expansion toward the North, confidence in the Davidic promises, the implications of the covenant, and the need for fidelity characterize the Josianic Deuteronomistic History, as well as hope of life and prosperity from these (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 17). Such enthusiasm makes little sense after the exile. Josiah's reform (622 BCE) is supported by archaeological evidence such as the disappearance of astral amulets from Judah around or just after this time (Römer, *So-Called*, 56).

[303] Davis, *Reconstructing the Temple*, 82.

[304] Römer acknowledges Josiah's cultic reform in the seventh century BCE: ". . . the origins of the Deuteronomistic literary productions should be located in the Jerusalem court, during the seventh century BCE" (Römer, *So-Called*, 104). The authors were probably scribes (*So-Called*, 53, 104). Extra-biblical evidence points to the disappearance of astral motifs and deities in Jerusalem around Josiah's reign, indicative of some historicity for Josiah's reform in 2 Kings 23 (*So-Called*, 53-54). Römer locates the book-finding account (2 Kgs 22:3-20) in the later Persian Period with the aim of replacing "the temple cult by the reading of the book" (Römer, *So-Called*, 56). There are no strong arguments against locating the book-finding motif described in 2 Kings 22:1-23:30 around the time of Josiah: it is not necessarily Persian. There are much older pre-Josianic examples of book finding. See Nadav Na'aman, "The 'Discovered Book' and the Legitimation of Josiah's Reform," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 1 (2011): 47-62, 49. In addition, the Huldah references are early, perhaps around 622 BCE. Her home address is given as the Mishneh quarter on the Western Hill of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 22:14). According to archaeological research, this area was deserted from 587 until the second century BCE. The Huldah account displays specific, preexilic, geographical knowledge and indicates the "late First Temple date of the text written when the quarter formed an integral part of . . . Jerusalem" (Na'aman, "The 'Discovered Book,'" 57). Others see the roots of these texts and concerns as much earlier. See Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 511-534. See also Carr's *Tablet of the Heart*, 114, 117, 137-138, 141, indicating the possibility of extended scribal reflection. Levinson in particular writes: "Possibly, Deuteronomy stemmed from the hands of court scribes under Manasseh who were committed to the ideals of Hezekiah . . ." ("Reconceptualization," 527).

[305] Cross, "Themes of the Book of Kings," 287-289.

text, obedience to the book of the law is the primary concern. This can be seen in the movement from the Josianic deuteronomistic writers (to whom the law was important) to later nomistic emphasis (for which the law was primary).[306] My adoption of Cross's Josianic Deuteronomistic History combined with the Smend School's DtrN may seem eclectic—an odd blend of the block and layer models. Dietrich himself, however, at one stage proposed something like a prophetic document from the seventh century BCE, eventually taken up in the Deuteronomistic History.[307] Interpreting the biblical material in terms of a Josianic History and a later DtrN brings together the best insights of both models and applies them to the texts of Saul's rejection, striving to uncover their diachronic history.

3.3.6 Stage Four: Deuteronomistic "Nomistic" Emphasis (DtrN)

The basic outline and content of the Deuteronomistic History was already present in the Josianic version. It received further refinement and specificity in a later, nomistically oriented deuteronomistic edition (DtrN). This revised and tempered the earlier, hopeful, Josianic vision, introducing threats, warnings,[308] theodicy and appeals. A *disobedient* monarchy (and people) led to the loss of independence and collapse of all. Obedience was the great concern of DtrN.[309] The

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[306] A later nomistic redactor (DtrN) was negative toward the monarchy in general but positive toward the figure of David. Veijola assigned 1 Samuel 10:8; 12:1-25; and parts of 13:7b-15 (especially 13:13-14) to DtrN. See Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 44-52; Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251.

[307] Walter Dietrich, a proponent of the layer model, suggested something like earlier prophetic stages of development, not unlike what Campbell developed as the Prophetic Record. Dietrich proposed that "a book containing prophetic narratives, covering the history of opposition to the monarchy from Saul to Manasseh, was put together in the seventh century BCE by circles independent of court and temple. It was this publication, he maintains, that inspired and informed the exilic revision of Dtr and, perhaps in a later edition, accounts for the Chronicler's allusions to prophetic sources and his otherwise unattested stories featuring prophets (e.g., Oded, 2 Chron 28:9-11)." See Joseph Blenkinsopp, review of *David, Saul und die Propheten: Das Verhältnis von Religion und Politik nach den prophetischen Überlieferungen vom frühesten Königtum in Israel*, by Walter Dietrich, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108, no. 1 (1989): 123-24, https://doi:10.2307/3267479.

[308] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 17.

[309] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 121.

later nomistic deuteronomistic writer (DtrN), to whom is ascribed much of 1 Samuel 8; 12; and 13:13-14, sees the silence of YHWH toward his people and Saul (1 Sam 14:37; 28:6, 15) as a consequence of disobedience (1 Sam 8:18), viewing the request for a king as apostasy from YHWH.[310] In demanding a human king Israel renounced YHWH as their king (1 Sam 8:7).[311] For DtrN, then, the monarchy is simply an institution against YHWH's will, the personification of the stubborn will of the people (1 Sam 8:18; 12:13), a "foreign body" (*Fremdkörper*), something alien to the constitution of God's people.[312] While Veijola concedes it is difficult to trace developments in the text, he argues that DtrN is the first to draw the theological conclusion from the realization of the kingship of YHWH that "there should be no human king at all" ("*dass es gar kein menschliches Königtum geben dürfte*").[313] Veijola asserts that this insight is among the most valuable in the theology of DtrN, and this insight was neglected in research because such legal emphasis was perceived as monotonous: "Wenn ich recht sehe, gehört diese Einsicht

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[310] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 66-67. In my view the silence of YHWH toward Saul may also spring from reflection on the perceived silence of YHWH toward Israel in the exile, a period during which YHWH did not speak or address his people until just before the return of 539 BCE (cf. Isaiah 40). This point is similar to another I propose, i.e., that an increasingly stable, written Torah inspires a conception of YHWH as unchanging or immutable (1 Sam 15:29). It suggests the influence of (divinely guided) history, as understood by the deuteronomists, on what became viewed as a divinely inspired text. This highlights the mutuality in relationship between history and text, between diachronic and synchronic.

[311] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 97.

[312] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 119, 98. DtrN added Jotham's fable against Abimelek to make the point that a true savior or judge-like figure does not accept the offer of kingship (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 113-114). DtrN's attitude to the monarchy casts a cloud over DtrG's positive view of it and corresponds to the concrete assessment of the first king, Saul. Having just become king, Saul soon learns of his condemnation as he disobeys a commandment of YHWH (1 Sam 13:13-14, DtrN). As the negative alternative in the rule established by 1 Samuel 12:14-15, Saul's first rejection comes early in the account. The devaluation of Saul in 1 Sam 13:13-14 happens in favor of David who, for DtrN, embodies the ideal figure, anchoring David's exemplariness in his obedience to the law (*Das Königtum*, 119-120). First Samuel 12 is DtrN's compromise attempt: if king and people are obedient to God's commands, they have a chance. DtrN's polemic against kingship is rooted in the insight that YHWH is the only king and no human rival will be tolerated alongside him (Judg 8:23; 1 Sam 8:7; 12:12). Israel was subject to YHWH as king (*Das Königtum*, 121). DtrN criticized the monarchy less because of social ills the kingship brought than because of its fundamental incompatibility with the willingness to trust in YHWH's intervention in danger (*Das Königtum*, 121). This becomes clear in my synchronic study of 13:7b-15 (Chapter Four).

[313] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122, author's italics, my translation.

zu dem Wertvollsten in der Theologie des DtrN, der in der bisherigen Forschung wegen seiner monotonen Betonung der Gesetzestreue etwas stiefmütterlich behandelt worden ist."[314] A human king is acceptable only within the obedience conditions outlined in 1 Samuel 8 and 12. Hertzberg succinctly expresses this reality as regards Saul: "Only he who allows God to be wholly king, and who is therefore himself completely obedient, can be king over the people of God."[315]

Kingship fostered disobedience and idolatry, taking people away from YHWH their true king (1 Sam 12:12), from election and covenant, and from the trust and obedience expected of them. Saul embodies these concerns. It is no surprise that 1 Samuel is dedicated to Israel's first king, rejected but personifying the deepest concerns and challenges of YHWH's people reflecting on their history. The end of Saul's kingdom (1 Sam 15) and his dynasty (1 Sam 13:13-14) portend and explain the end of the monarchy itself. Such considerations highlight the value of the Saul texts in themselves, even if originally preserved as part of the David story. They explain the seeming failure through disobedience of the Davidic promises and so earn their place in the broader David story. In this way the final redactors (DtrN) make a significant theological contribution.

By the time of DtrN (c. 587-550 BCE) free, oral prophecy lies in the past.[316] In the final form of the text the prophet's divine commission is no longer to declaim oracles but to proclaim

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[314] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122.

[315] First Samuel's depiction of the rejection of Saul and the election of David provided imagery associated with future messianic longing: "Only the man 'on whom the spirit of the Lord shall rest' (Isa 11:2) can really be the king of Israel." See Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *I and II Samuel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library, 2nd German ed., trans. J.S. Bowden (London: SCM, 1964), 133. See also Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 25-26.

[316] "My servants the prophets" are spoken of as if in the past (2 Kgs 17:13). The frequently repeated phrase in Jeremiah and 1 and 2 Kings, "his servants the prophets," implies "retrospective allusion" suggesting that "prophecy, or at least this kind of prophecy, is understood to be a thing of the past" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 235). With the disappearance of monarchy and the rise of an increasingly fixed law, continued, active, free, predictive, oral prophecy became questionable. This is probably the sense of Zechariah 13:3. Emphasis shifted from the present

the deuteronomic law.[317] The written law book becomes front and center in the presentation of

King Josiah's reform in 2 Kings 22-23.[318] In Deuteronomy 17:14-20 the emphasis is not on the

power of monarchy but on the king as model Israelite reflecting on the law. This is a different

highlighting of the law than with Josiah, where the king was leader, cultic guide, destroyer of

idolatry, enforcer, and primary agent (2 Kgs 22-23). In DtrN, in what succeeds the Josianic

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to the past, "from the spoken to the written word, and from direct prophetic utterance to the interpretation of written prophecies" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 234). The shift of emphasis is evident in later prophetic books (e.g., Zech 1:4-6) and in "the reinterpretation of earlier prophecies in the later parts of the book of Isaiah" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 235). The prophetess Huldah, though consulted, is peripheral, the last whisper of live, oral prophecy in the Deuteronomistic History. Some see the Huldah scene as indicative of "growing tension between prophet and law scribe" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 234) with prophecy ceding to written word. Deuteronomy attempted to find a compromise between prophet and law scribe (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 234).

[317] "The principal function of the prophet is now to proclaim the law" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 233, 211). The prophet is divinely commissioned to do so. Prophets are after the likeness of Moses the prophet (Deut 18:15-22). Moses—and the stable law—become the "fountainhead of prophecy" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 233).

[318] That prophecy gives way to the written law is clear in Zechariah 1:6 as "my *words* and decrees," transmitted *in the past* to "my servants the prophets," now refer to something more tangible in fixed form (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 235). Deuteronomy 4, viewed as later, speaks of "the *words* which I command you (Deut 4:2; 1:1). That the words are not to be added to or subtracted from (Deut 4:2) implies a fixed text and the emphasis is nomistic, i.e., keeping the commandments which YHWH commanded. Deuteronomy 4:44 proceeds to outline the law to follow: "This is the law (*hattôrāh*) which Moses set before the children of Israel . . ." Deuteronomy, as "the/this *tôrāh*" or "this book of the *tôrāh*," is now "authoritative scripture," to be read and pondered as "scripture" (Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 63, 11). Nicholson provides a list of relevant passages (Deut 1:5; 4:8, 44; 17:18, 19; 27:3, 8, 26; 28:58, 61, etc.). This law is not just to be read and implemented (Josiah in 2 Kgs 22-23) but reflected on (Josh 1:8; Deut 6:6, etc), especially by the king who, in this way, is presented as the model Israelite (Deut 17:14-20; cf. Ps 1). The imagery of the "scroll of the law" (2 Kgs 22) connects with the prophetic scroll in Jeremiah 36. In both cases, the scroll is "scripture to be read" (Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 88). It is clear in 2 Kings 22-23 that the "words" are "the words of the book of the law." They are *written* words, an allusion to which we get in 1 Samuel 15:1. "The words of the book of the law" or variations thereof appear frequently in 2 Kings 22:11, 13 [2x], 16, 18; 23:2, 3, 24. This is the work of deuteronomistic scribes with an interest in the law, perhaps levites since the deuteronomic law was entrusted to levites (Deut 31:24-26). Weinfeld observes this movement of later reflection on the *tôrāh* in the law of the king in Deut 17:14-20. He sees Deut 17:18-19 as a later interpolation. He notes that Deut 17:18-19 "mar the continuity of the law. Verse 20 follows naturally after v. 17 . . ." For Weinfeld, Joshua 1:8 has reworked the idea of Deut 17:18-19 by "extending and developing it" (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 5). Joshua 1:7 and 8 exhort fidelity to "all that is written" (1:8) in the "entire law" (1:7) now expressed in a book (1:8; cf. Deut 17:18-19). This focus on the entire law written in a book gives a glimpse of the nomistically oriented deuteronomistic writers (DtrN). Emphasis shifted to the book of the law and nomistic obedience in exilic times when king, temple, priest, city, and nation were destroyed, undermined, or inaccessible. The expansionary process of this written law can be glimpsed in Joshua 24:26: "Joshua wrote these *words* in the *book of the law* of God" (the words of the covenant, with statutes and ordinancs, at Shechem; emphasis added). Two points should be noted here. Joshua 24 is viewed as a later text, after the Josianic history, and therefore likely exilic (DtrN). What is startling is that *Joshua* wrote the words as Moses did. Joshua too is a lawmaker (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 162-163). The now stable book of the law developed organically. Joshua writes out the law of Moses, perhaps adding to it or updating it. It is inconceiveable that Joshua was writing another, different, or unrelated law.

Deuteronomistic reform movement, the tone is more subdued. The only role left to the king is to read and reflect on the law. The worst has happened with "the collapse and dissolution of the Judaean state."[319] In the Book of Deuteronomy, outside of 17:14-20, there is no trace of kingship.[320]

Now, it is possible to distinguish Josianic from nomistic deuteronomism in that the book replaces the king. In the Josianic deuteronomistic context, temple and cult are still there but the king promotes and implements the book. In the later "nomistic" strain of deuteronomism, temple and cult are gone and *the book replaces the king*. This supports Veijola's insight that there can be no king but YHWH, a fruit of exilic, deuteronomistic reflection for DtrN. The image of the king presented in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 evokes the memory of Josiah. However, in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 the king's role is much less involved or active. Little is made of the king in Deuteronomy. He is to observe the law. The law is above the king. The law has replaced the king. The "'unkinged' figure of Deut. 17:14-20" is unlike the king of 2 Kings 22-23: Torah has replaced the king because there was no longer any king.[321] The conclusion from Deuteronomy 17:14-20 is that the leader in Israel is charged with a primary task, that of being "an exemplary Israelite in meditating upon and fulfilling the requirements of 'the book of the *torah*.'"[322] More than any other injunction "this solemn requirement will resound throughout the history of the

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[319] Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 53

[320] Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 53-54, 108-110. Not setting a non-Israelite over Israelites is probably a carry-over from earlier Assyrian hegemony; not multiplying chariots, wealth, or wives, a reference to Solomon's excesses. It is a negative judgment on kingship. Much of Deuteronomy, then, is "counterfactual literature," evident in its "intense 'mono-Yahwism,'" "fierce iconoclasm," fear of "religious encroachment" or syncretism, "apprehension for continued fidelity to YHWH," and vision of Israel as "people of YHWH" and community of "brothers."

[321] Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 66.

[322] Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 112. See also Clifford, *Deuteronomy*, 100-101.

kingdoms in the Deuteronomistic corpus."[323] Obedience to the written *Torah* takes precedence.
The glories of kingship and Temple are past or are dependent on a future hoped for at the
pleasure of divine and not human initiative. In exile or later diaspora the only response could be
meditating on and observing Torah (Josh 1:7-9; Psalm 1) which became "the most important
pillar of Israel's life in postexilic times."[324] For this, DtrN was largely responsible.

Having sketched in a general way the four-level diachronic development behind much of
the Deuteronomistic History, texts closer to the context of 1 Samuel 13-15 will be examined,
especially with a view to establishing a chronology of their placement. Chapter Two already
identified 1 Samuel 13-15 as a distinct section within 1 Samuel.

3.4   Specific Insertions Surrounding First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

The biblical text provides clues to later additions and passages of diachronic relevance to
13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Some have been identified in Chapter Two as 1 Samuel 10:8; 11; 12;

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[323] Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 112.

[324] Jean Louis Ska writes: ". . . the law became the most important pillar of Israel's life in postexilic times, more important than the patriarchs and the temple, the key to interpreting the Former Prophets and the Psalms and, most probably, the entire scriptures. In sum, the postexilic community of Israel preferred to house its renewed identity in a city of words, the Torah, rather than in an uncompleted city of stones, Jerusalem" ("Why does the Pentateuch Speak so Much of Torah and so Little of Jerusalem?" in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Rise of the Torah*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament; 107, ed. Peter Dubovský, Jean-Pierre Sonnet, and Dominik Markl [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016], 113-128, 126). Nili Wazana, reflecting on the Law of the King (Deut 17:14-20), expresses something similar. The Assyrian model of kingship was utterly rejected. After the fall of Jerusalem "the law was adapted to the new scholarly ideal of a religious leader, relying on the Book of Torah (Deut 17:18-19)" and this corresponded with the Babylonian current of highlighting the religious and scholarly role of the king. See Nili Wazana, "The Law of the King (Deuteronomy 17:14-20) in the light of Empire and Destruction," in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Rise of the Torah*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament; 107, ed. Peter Dubovský, Jean-Pierre Sonnet, and Dominik Markl (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 169-194, 190. This seems the most likely time period (exilic) for the shaping of the Law of the King. Rainer Albertz puts it earlier, in the time of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, when the Shaphanide Scribes resisted the ruling kings (Jer 26:24; 36:9-26). See Albertz, "Why a Reform like Josiah's Must Have Happened," in *The Hebrew Bible and History: Critical Readings*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe (New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 404-424, 413. Others see it as much later, e.g., Philip Davies in the fifth century BCE. See Davies, "Josiah and the Law Book" in Grabbe, *Hebrew Bible and History*, 391-403, 402. While Wazana's idea of the scholarly religious leader may have contributed somewhat to the vision of the pious leader in Israel, for the most part this vision was the consequence of reflection on infidelity as causally behind the difficult experiences of 587 BCE.

13:1; and 14:47-52. Within the scope of this work, only some can be treated briefly. Some scholars see pro-Saul and pro-monarchic passages as earlier and anti-Saul or anti-monarchy passages as later, tinged with the negative experience of monarchy and exile. As noted in Chapter Two, a widely accepted division is: 1 Samuel 8:1-22; 10:17-27; and 11:12-12:35 as anti-monarchic, and 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-11 as pro-monarchic.[325] First Samuel 8 or 12 are viewed as later and part of a deuteronomistic framework around 1 Samuel 9-11.[326] Much of 1 Samuel 12 is material reworked by deuteronomistic editors to "produce the chapter in its deuteronomistic form."[327] Campbell agrees that 1 Samuel 12 is an independent tradition deuteronomistically revised.[328] The main thrust of deuteronomistic revision here was hostility toward the monarchy and emphasis on obedience.

A difficulty arises concerning the link between 10:8 and 13:7b-15: in 10:8 Saul is given his Gilgal instructions. First Samuel 10:8 and 13:7b-15, are connected and viewed as later additions by the same deuteronomistic hand (DtrN).[329] In 1 Samuel 11:14-15, however, Saul and Samuel are *already* together at Gigal but no allusion is made to the command of 10:8 or its outcome in 13:7b-15. First Samuel 11 is viewed by Veijola as an early pro-Saul tradition, its *later* insertion into the text explaining how the presence of Samuel and Saul at Gilgal (1 Sam 11:14-15) did not interrupt the trajectory between 10:8 and 13:7b-15.[330] Veijola's explanation

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[325] Arnold and Williamson, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*, 867. See also Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 81.

[326] McKenzie, *King David*, 30.

[327] Dennis J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament*, new ed., Analecta Biblica; 21a (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981), 212.

[328] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 123.

[329] DtrN for Veijola. See Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 44-52; Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251.

[330] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 49.

that 1 Samuel 11 was placed in situ *after* 10:8 and 13:7b-15 (or 15:1-35) is unsatisfactory. If 1 Samuel 8 and 12 form a later deuteronomistic frame around 9-11, as argued,[331] then 11 was already in place. In any case, it is unlikely that 1 Samuel 11 could be viewed as satisfying the demands of 10:7-8 where enemies are Philistines not Ammonites as in 1 Samuel 11.

A synchronic connection exists between 1 Samuel 12 and 13:7b-15. The king referred to in 12:13 and 25 is not merely generic, any unfaithful king, but particular, Saul, whose failure and rejection appear immediately in the next chapter (13:7b-15). First Samuel 12:13 and 25 provide the opening for the insertion of the Gilgal rejection of Saul in 13:7b-15, placed in its current location by the detueronomistic editors of 1 Samuel 12 or shortly afterwards (DtrN). The placement of 13:7b-15 in the first available niche after 1 Samuel 12—literarily and chronologically—is appropriate. Saul *is* the king warned against: "behold the king whom you have chosen" (12:25, 13). In the final form of the text, Saul's rejection is not the consequence of a minor cultic infraction, but of failure to accept the compromise proposal of 1 Samuel 12: only through obedience to prophet and commandment can the monarchy survive. First Samuel 13:7b-15 was added to 1 Samuel 13-14 around or after the addition of 1 Samuel 12. Both are deuteronomistic in their final form (cf. 13:13-14); both highlight the importance of obedience; and 13:7b-15 puts a face to the king generically mentioned in 12:13, 25. Deuteronomistic editors had 13:7b-15* available to them from a prophetic source. They inserted the prophetic account of Samuel's rebuke of Saul (13:7b-15*) into 1 Samuel 13-14 complete with deuteronomistic rejection (13:13-14). This will be explored in Chapter Four.

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[331] McKenzie, *King David*, 30.

Two other key passages augment the picture of the diachronic context of 13:7b-15 and

15:1-35, the shifting view of Saul from positive to negative, and the move from Saul to David.

These are Saul's regnal formula in 13:1 and his regnal summary in 14:47-52. They wrap up

Saul's reign and are both viewed as "later framing passages."[332] First Samuel 13:1 is missing

from the Septuagint, an indication that it is a later addition to the Masoretic Text. The text of

13:1 may be corrupt, though Campbell notes that the "two year" reign may be the time from

Saul's assumption of kingship to David's designation as king. Its historicity is supported by

Barthélemy, Campbell and others.[333] Campbell suggests that 14:47-52 was set in its current

location to mark "the end of the literature that has its primary focus on the achievements of Saul

as king."[334] McKenzie and Veijola also see 14:47-52 as deuteronomistic.[335]

In summary, 1 Samuel 12 and 13:7b-15, and 13:1 and 14:47-52 were added later by a

deuteronomistic hand. The reasons for their current placement are unclear. Some scholars link 1

Samuel 14:47-52 (Saul's regnal summary, signifying the conclusion of his reign) with 16:14 (the

departure of YHWH's spirit from Saul and the rise of David), and see these connected in the

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[332] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 249.

[333] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 137.

[334] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 135.

[335] McKenzie sees 14:47-52 as coming from the same deuteronomistic source as 13:8-15a, as he defines the unit (McKenzie, *King David*, 30). Veijola sees 14:47-51 coming from the basic Deuteronomistic historian (DtrG), perhaps using an older source. First Samuel 14:52 (DtrG) tempers the positive portrayal of Saul in 14:47-51 and is viewed as a link to the second rejection of Saul in 1 Samuel 15:1-35 (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81). It was characteristic of DtrG to include a character summary at the end of a unit, e.g., 1 Sam 7:15-17 (Samuel) and 2 Sam 8 (concluding the history of David's rise) are attributed to DtrG (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81). This reflects the pattern evident in the Books of Kings (McKenzie, *King David*, 30). With 14:47-52, the deuteronomistic authors closed the account of Saul's reign and the focus shifts to David, implying that 1 Samuel 15 was added later. To 1 Samuel 14:47-52, DtrG connected the history of David's rise beginning in 1 Samuel 16:14. DtrG did not yet know 1 Samuel 15 or 16:1-13 (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81), supporting the view asserted here that 15:1-35 was placed in its current location at a later time.

earlier deuteronomistic work (DtrG) that did not yet know 1 Samuel 15 or 16:1-13.[336] This

indicates that 14:47-52 was in place before 15:1-35, making 15:1-35 an even later arrival to its

current location. I believe 15:1-35, of early prophetic origin, was placed in its current location by

later deuteronomistic editors. Between 14:47-52 and 16:14 was a fitting niche for its

placement—between Saul's regnal summary and the introduction of David into Saul's court.[337]

First Samuel 15:1-35 fits well into its place after Saul's regnal formula (14:47-52) which gives

the impression of socio-political stability and relative peace. In such a time the Amalekites were

to be dealt with. Campbell's view of 1 Samuel 15 is convincing. While he sees 15:1-35 as

closely connected with 16:1-13, he sees it as earlier and "the creation of the prophetic circles

claiming their mandate to establish and dismiss kings."[338]

Chapter Two already delimited the textual units 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 from a synchronic

point of view. These units are now examined briefly from a diachronic point of view.

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[336] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81. See also Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 123: 1 Samuel 15:1-16:13 is a later addition "interrupting the original continuity between 14:52 and 16:14."

[337] Foresti suggests 1 Samuel 15 was largely composed and added by DtrP because 13:7b-15 came too early in the account and a "mere cultic transgression" did not seem serious enough to justify the rejection (*Rejection of Saul*, 167). DtrP thought the best place for his account (1 Sam 15) was "at the point of suture between the two ancient complexes"—the old Saul tradition and the history of David's rise, i.e., between 14:52 and 16:14. Like Van Seters, Foresti agrees that 15:1-35 and 16:1-13 go together. Foresti argues that 16:1-13 is DtrN (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 158). Foresti holds that DtrP composed 1 Samuel 15 in the light of David's campaign against Amalek (1 Sam 30:1-31; 2 Sam 2:1ff.): if David won the kingship in an Amalek campaign, then Saul lost in a similar campaign (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 171). A. Graeme Auld proposes something similar and explains the genesis of 1 Samuel 15 in terms of "a fresh author" returning to Saul's regnal summary (especially 14:47-48) and reading it in the wider context of its source which Auld sees as the summary of David's actions in 2 Samuel 8:11-12. See A. Graeme Auld, *I and II Samuel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 167. Saul's attack on Amalek (14:47-48) could not have been completed, otherwise David would not have had to fight them later. Also, David dedicated all the booty and the Amalekites to YHWH. This provoked reflection on Saul's failure against Amalek and the question of what Saul did with the booty (Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 167). Where Saul failed, David succeeded. If 1 Samuel 15 were created in the light of 2 Samuel 8:11-12 as Auld suggests, then Saul is doomed to failure in performing the destruction demanded (Exod 17:8-16; Deut 25:17-19) since the Amalekites are still around for David to fight, and in the end, to kill Saul (2 Sam 1) (Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 169). This view makes 1 Samuel 15 later. I disagree with Foresti and Auld that 1 Samuel 15 is a later composition reflecting on the texts mentioned. Reference to Amalek in 14:48 is the catalyst for the insertion of an already extant 15:1-35, not its fresh composition.

[338] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 257.

3.5   First Samuel 13:7b-15: Prophetic Insertion with Deuteronomistic Addition

3.5.1   Insertion

First Samuel 13:7b-15 is a reworked prophetic addition with final deuteronomistic editing. Though important to 1 Samuel 13 in its final form, and ultimately changing its narrative direction, 13:7b-15 is literarily inessential to the plot of 1 Samuel 13-14.[339] Most scholars view it as an addition. It contrasts with its immediate context, the older Saul story in 1 Samuel 13-14. The narrative proceeds smoothly from 13:7a to 13:16 as noted in the unit's delimitation (Chapter Two). The original text before the insertion (13:7b-15) ran from 13:7a to 13:16:

> 7a Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. 16 Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people who were present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin; but the Philistines encamped at Michmash.

This lends itself best to the narrative flow. First Samuel 13:4b, with its mention of Gilgal, was already part of the original text rather than a later addition with 13:7b-15 (and perhaps 10:8). The Gilgal reference in 13:4b was the catalyst for the later insertion of the Gilgal passage in 13:7b-15. The Gilgal episode alluded to in 13:4b was originally a non-event in the earlier pre-insertion version,[340] an account of "Saul's abortive attempt to gather reinforcements at Gilgal,"[341] and of preparations for the Battle of Michmash in 1 Samuel 14. The Philistine mobilization at Michmash may have changed plans resulting in a stay at Geba. Additionally, Gilgal was not a strategic military venue but was more a place of liturgical assembly, a shrine

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[339] Philips Long, building on the scholarship of others, argues for the congruence of 13:7b-15 with the surrounding text—that it is not simply dropped into 1 Samuel 13-14. Mention of Gilgal in 13:4b prepares for 13:7b-15. Philips Long and others argue that 13:4b is not a later insertion but part of an important structure (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 56-57). First Samuel 13:4b demands a convocation at Gilgal. Philips Long indicates connections between 1 Samuel 10 and 13, seeing 10:7 as suggestive of the strike against the Philistine Garrison (13:3) and 10:8 as explicitly pointing to 13:7b-15 (*Reign and Rejection*, 51-55, 88). He argues that 13:7b-15a "should be retained as integral to its present context" (*Reign and Rejection*, 131).

[340] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 230.

[341] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 96; the phrase is his but this is not the point he is making.

with links to prophecy where the Samuel-Saul stories of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 arose or were preserved. Gilgal was viewed as a center of prophecy.[342] The new arrangement, with the inclusion of 13:7b-15, is "awkward" for the flow and geography of the account. The reader is "shunted unceremoniously" from Gibeah to Gilgal and back to Gibeah (13:3; 7b [cf. 4b]; 15).[343] Without 1 Samuel 13:7b-15, the narrative proceeds smoothly from 13:7a to 13:16. With 13:7b-15, a negative note is introduced into the positive Saul tradition. Outside of 13:7b-15, there is no indication in 1 Samuel 13-14 that Saul has just been rejected. There is no reaction from Saul, "who goes back to mustering his troops."[344] That in 1 Samuel 13-14 Samuel is present *only* in 13:7b-15 suggests that 13:7b-15 is a prophetic insert.

Stephen Pisano, like McCarter, and citing Birch, proposes 13:7b-15 is "a later addition to the original narrative." It is an interpolation: "if the story-line is followed immediately from v. 7a to v. 15b, Saul and his troops never left their encampment in the Gibeah region."[345] Pisano's outline makes sense: troops begin to disperse in 13:7a and in 15:b Saul counts the six hundred who remain. The movement could also be from 13:7a to 13:15b or 16. In summary, the Gilgal incident need not have happened and interrupts the narrative flow. Campbell thinks it could have

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[342] Gilgal is associated with Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2:1). Both 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 concern a conflict between Samuel and Saul at Gilgal, perhaps preserved by early prophetic circles at Gilgal (Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 105). Arguments have been made that Gilgal was the Judean locale of Ezekiel. See William Hugh Brownlee, "'Son of Man Set Your Face': Ezekiel the Refugee Prophet," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 54 (1983): 83–110, 83, 93-94, 96-98, 103-104.

[343] For McCarter, 1 Sam13:3-7a followed directly by 13:15b is "the beginning of the account of the battle of Michmash Pass, as directly continued in vv 16ff." He defines the insertion as 13:7b-15a (McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 230).

[344] Fox, *Early Prophets*, 332.

[345] Stephen Pisano, *Additions or Omissions in the Books of Samuel: The Significant Pluses and Minuses in the Massoretic, LXX and Qumran Texts*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis; 57 (Freiburg [Schweiz]: Universitätsverlag, 1984), 181. See McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 230.

been simply "stored" here, a suitable place, as a variant of 1 Samuel 15:1-35,[346] implying that

15:1-35 was already in place when 13:7b-15 was inserted, a view supported by Birch.[347] Given

the impossibility of stating whether 13:13-14 was added to 13:7b-15* before or after 13:7b-15

was set in its current location, I propose that 13:13-14 was added to 13:7b-15* around the time

13:7b-15 was added to 1 Samuel 13-14.

The following section focuses on the prophetic-deuteronomistic dynamic in 13:7b-15,

developing the assertion that it is a prophetic insertion with a deuteronomistic addition.

3.5.2   Prophetic Insertion with Deuteronomistic Addition

For Campbell, 10:8 and 13:7b-15 were formed "in the prophetic circles responsible for

the prophetic record" where "obedience to the prophet is demanded" and prophetic legitimation

included the withdrawal thereof.[348] Birch sees 13:8-14, as he defines the unit, as entirely

prophetic. In 13:7b the location of the rejection incident is established at Gilgal and in 13:15a

"Saul is returned from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin" (LXX) to continue what was interrupted

with 7b. Inserted in between (13:8-14) is "a prophetic oracle of judgment pronounced against an

individual."[349] Westermann's prophetic elements of accusation and announcement are present.[350]

Birch assigns 13:8-14 to just before the time of the writing prophets in the eighth century BCE.

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[346] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141.

[347] Birch, *Rise of the Israelite Monarchy*, 74.

[348] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 250.

[349] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 80-84, 80 (cf. 105-108 for 1 Samuel 15). Campbell agrees with Birch's assessment (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 139).

[350] Phllips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 85-86.

Both Campbell and Joseph see the likelihood of influence from older northern prophecy here.[351]

For this reason Birch notes the impossibility of assigning 13:7b-15 to the Deuteronomist.[352]

Charles Conroy observes that 13:7b-15 traces its origins to the "prophetic redactor of the Saul

and David material."[353] McCarter, too, views 13:7b-15 as a *prophetic* insertion, a significant

development of what was originally a non-event at Gilgal (13:4), the prophetic editor made his

point with the insertion of 13:7b-15*.[354] The concern in 13:7b-15 is the prophetic one of making

or deposing kings, and the prophet uttering judgment on the king. Indeed, 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

provide the first examples of this prophet-king dynamic paradigmatic of the Deuteronomistic

History. Kingship is suspect and tolerated only as subject to the prophet, YHWH's spokesperson.

McCarter recognizes in 13:7b-15 "the prophetic theology of political leadership that structures

the stories of Samuel and Saul in their present form." "Most dubious," continues McCarter, "is

the dynastic aspect of kingship, since it interferes with the free divine election of the king as

exercised through the prophets. Yahweh must have 'a man of his own choosing' as king."[355]

Prophetically, Saul's lineage too, must be swept away. Agreeing with Birch and McCarter that

13:7b-15 is a largely prophetic insertion, I disagree with them that there is nothing

deuteronomistic about it.[356] Campbell concedes there is no formal messenger formula or

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[351] Joseph, *Portrait*, 235. Hosea 13:9-11 is illustrative of this anti-monarchic tone. See the earlier section outlining the four diachronic stages.

[352] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 83.

[353] Charles Conroy, *1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings: With an Excursus on Davidic Dynasty and Holy City Zion*, Old Testament Message; 6 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 60.

[354] McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 230.

[355] McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 230.

[356] While disagreeing that 13:7b-15 is *entirely* DtrN as Veijola saw it (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 117), I see 13:13-14 as DtrN. Van Seters and McKenzie view 13:7b-15 as a deuteronomistic, pro-David addition expressive of the 2 Samuel 7 ideology (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 37; McKenzie, *King David*, 28-31, 30). For Van Seters, the Deuteronomist's history ended with 2 Samuel 7, the Court History following as a later addition. I agree that with the

prophetic oracle present.[357] This makes it easier, in my view, to assign 13:13-14 to a

deuteronomistic rather than prophetic hand. In addition, the absence of the theme of repentance

in the final form of 13:7b-15 challenges the labeling of 13:7b-15 as *entirely* prophetic. While

disagreeing with Van Seters on the history and sources behind it, I agree with him that 1 Samuel

13:7b-15 *in its final form* is a deuteronomistic addition, "at great pains to lay out the basis on

which Yahweh chose David, as the man after God's own heart, to succeed Saul," a view

climaxing in 2 Samuel 7.[358] Steven McKenzie views 13:7b-15 as deuteronomistic, offering a

positive description of David.[359] The positive glimpse of David in 13:14 prepares for the History

of David's Rise in 1 Samuel 16:1-2 Samuel 5:3, sometimes viewed as an apologia for David's

reign over Saul's.[360] The background of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15*, however, lies not in

deuteronomistic hands, but in the earlier prophetic tradition in Campbell's sense.[361] Bearing

signs of later deuteronomistic editing, 13:7b-15 is older and prophetic. It comprises an earlier

Saul tradition, Saul's rebuke by Samuel, preserved by prophetic tradition, taking its present

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deuteronomistic (nomistic) frame and content (13:13-14) 13:7b-15, originally prophetic, *became* deuteronomistic in its final form.

[357] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 140. Campbell sees 10:8 as secondary but prophetic, along with 13:7b-15. Veijola proposes 10:8 and 13:7b-15 are DtrN (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 117).

[358] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 37. For Van Seters, the Deuteronomist's history ended with 2 Samuel 7.

[359] McKenzie, *King David*, 28-31, 30.

[360] McKenzie, *King David*, 32.

[361] First Samuel 13:7b-15 is not merely pre- or almost deuteronomistic in Foresti's sense. Foresti claims that 1 Samuel 10:8 and 13:7b-15 play the role of "pre-deuteronomistic redactional links between the two works [the positive Saul tradition and the history of David's rise], a suture which must have occurred shortly before the redaction of DtrH" (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 161-162). This view echoes the classic theory of origins of 1 Samuel 7-14 expressed by Wellhausen, Noth, and others, that the deuteronomistic authors revised older, positive Saul traditions, adding a negative view of the monarchy (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 163). Nor is 13:7b-15 merely the distilled fruit of reflection on the wider Deuteronomistic History then superimposed on an earlier, positive Saul tradition as suggested by Van Seters (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 129). Nor is it, in its entirety, later nomistic-deuteronomistic, though I agree with Veijola that 13:13-14 is DtrN (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 76, 119).

shape under a deuteronomistic hand, and receiving a final insertion from DtrN (13:13-14), something demonstrated in Chapter Four.

The interests expressed succinctly in 13:13-14 have their own longer-term history. Views presented in 1 Samuel 13:13-14 predate the deuteronomistic historians as something they inherited and transmitted with their own particular stamp. While deuteronomistic concerns are more in the foreground in the final form, these deuteronomistic themes themselves have an older history and go back further than 587 BCE and the time of Josiah. For Campbell, for instance, "the transfer of the kingdom to David is already central to the Prophetic Record,"[362] implying that the accounts of the transfer of the kingdom from Saul to David—the Saul-David movement—is *pre*deuteronomistic. The Saul and David materials were united *before* the work of deuteronomistic editors. This is an important insight from inspection of the dynamic between older traditions, prophecy, and deuteronomism. It challenges the theory that 13:7b-15 and 15:1-16:13 are entirely deuteronomistic compositions, created to link the Saul and David stories, a view expressed by Veijola and Van Seters.[363] The tradition out of which 10:8 and 13:7b-15 grew is older and predeuteronomistic, of prophetic provenance or earlier. An older prophetic tradition lingers behind the final text shaped, in the end, by deuteronomistic authors.[364] It may

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[362] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251.

[363] Van Seters opines that the connection between Saul and David was *invented* by the Deuteronomistic authors and that 1 Samuel 13:8-15a is modeled, not on an old prophetic tradition but on the pattern of the larger Deuteronomistic History now "imposed on the independent Northern Saul tradition." "There never was an 'original' connection between Saul and David. This was the design of the Dtr Historian" (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 129). First Samuel 15:1-16:13 is a later addition "interrupting the original continuity between 14:52 and 16:14" (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 123). See also Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 81.

[364] This prophetic tradition is different from the Göttingen School's later detueronomistic DtrP, allegedly responsible for much of 1 Samuel 15. Others also see earlier stages behind the formation of 13:7b-15. Fabrizio Foresti views 13:7b-15 as *pre*deuteronomistic (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 160): Samuel acts more like a judge: he is made into this by DtrH. However, Foresti sees 13:7b-15 and 10:8 as closer to deuteronomistic accounts like 1 Samuel 7, 8, 12, 15 than to the earlier 1 Samuel 13-14. Foresti sees 10:8 and 13:7b-15 as *pre*-DtrH: very close to deuteronomistic time and style and grafted onto the old Saul tradition.

be that the Saul, David, and Samuel figures were joined together in common stories in the earliest traditions.

The diachronic view stated here helps explain how various contrasting strands—pro-Saul, anti-Saul, anti-monarchic, and pro-David texts—coexist in the final form. The preservation of the ancient Saul stories in the prophetic tradition best explains the positive Saul stories, as well as the prophetic challenge leading to Samuel's rebuke of Saul in 13:7b-15.* This subsuming of prophetic tradition by the deuteronomistic writers into their history explains the coexistence of so-called anti-monarchic (prophetic emphasis on obedience, prophet-king dynamic, and rebuke) and pro-David sentiment (deuteronomistic-Davidic idealism). Prophetic tradition emphasized the negative aspects of monarchy and its disobedience while carrying a positive overall view of Davidic election and promise. Josianic, deuteronomistic reflection developed hope in an obedient Davidic king. Exilic, nomistic experience greatly tempered such optimism, deepening a negative view of kingship, and focusing seriously on the need for obedience.

3.6   First Samuel 15:1-35: Prophetic Addition with Deuteronomistic Retouching

First Samuel 15 is a distinct unit. Campbell summarizes what he calls the "fairly general consensus among scholars that 15:1-35 is a substantial unity" with literary coherence.[365] Despite some reworking, the list of "duplicates and inconsistencies [raised by some] reflects a failure to recognize the evident progress intended in the narrative. Fragmentation of the whole is not justified."[366]

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[365] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 156.

[366] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 157. Campbell disagrees with Foresti and Dietrich in their hypotheses of DtrP and DtrN activity here.

Views abound on 1 Samuel 15 and its origins.[367] It is regarded as of prophetic origin (Birch, McCarter, Campbell); as deuteronomistic (Wellhausen); as later deuteronomistic with a prophetic slant (DtrP) with later DtrN additions (Veijola; Foresti);[368] and even as post-deuteronomistic (Van Seters).[369] Because some scholars saw 1 Samuel 15 as anti-monarchic, they also inferred (mistakenly) that it was deuteronomistic, associating it with 1 Samuel 7, 8, 10:17ff, and 12. Many, therefore, saw it as deuteronomistically formed, though drawing on older sources. In reality, however, 1 Samuel 15 "is neutral towards the monarchy but negative toward Saul."[370] Noth did not see the chapter as deuteronomistic.[371] I agree largely with Noth.

The tradition of Saul's Amalekite campaign is from an old Saul tradition but, McCarter observes, "it comes to us wholly as part of the prophetic reworking of the Saul materials." Samuel the prophet is central and "the prophetic narrator is principally concerned . . . with obedience to the (prophetically transmitted) word of Yahweh" and the obedience of kings.[372] Campbell sees "an older story . . . reworked by the prophetic redactors," the reworking indicating that prophets were God's instruments for making or deposing kings. Campbell also sees 15:1-35 as closely connected with 16:1-13.[373] As in 13:7b-15, a rebuke is upgraded to a rejection. In

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[367] Foresti summarizes in *Rejection of Saul*, 16-24.

[368] Different from Campbell's largely preexilic record spanning centuries is Foresti's view, reflective of Veijola's, that the exilic prophetic deuteronomist (DtrP) is responsible for much of 1 Samuel 15. Foresti sees DtrP as responsible for the original account of 1 Samuel 15. DtrP modeled 1 Samuel 15 on DtrP's earlier compostion 2 Sam 11:27b-12:15a (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 70).

[369] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 123, 125.

[370] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 166.

[371] See Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 55. Noth saw 1 Sam 15:24-31 as secondary, the evidence for this "obscure" (Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 94-95).

[372] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 270.

[373] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 255, 257.

13:7b-15 prophetic rebuke was strengthened by later deuteronomistic rejection (13:13-14). In 1 Samuel 15, the older inherited story's rebuke is changed to prophetic rejection (15:23, 26). This happens within the prophetic account, not as a later post-prophetic development. This assertion will be developed in Chapter Four which sees Agag as pivotal, a key observation overlooked by scholarship.[374]

First Samuel 15:1-35 is, as McCarter, Campbell and Birch suggest, substantially from a prophetic source.[375] The elements of prophetic accusation and announcement are present along with the correspondence between sin and punishment in kind (15:23b, 33; cf. 1 Sam 2:29, 32; 2 Sam 12:7-11; 1 Kgs 20:42; 2 Kgs 20:17). Such commensurate retribution is presented for both Saul and Agag. The accusation, announcement, and commensurate punishment directed at Agag are typically prophetic (15:32-33).[376] Other prophetic indications are: the fourfold repetition of "the word of YHWH" (15:10, 13, 23, 26) and links between Samuel, Nathan, and Gad receiving YHWH's word in 1 Samuel 15:10 and 2 Samuel 7:4; 24:11;[377] the prophetic sign act (15:27-28); and the anointing theme (15:1, 17, continuing into 16:1-13). The "oracle" of 15:22-23 shows prophetic origins and style manifested in its poetry. Other prophetic indications are the summoning to holy war in 15:2 and the phrase, "Thus says YHWH of hosts" (15:1-2), likely of prophetic provenance and associated with the initiation of a holy war.[378]

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[374] With the exception of Sternberg (*Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 482-515) and to some extent Campbell (*1 Samuel*, 154-155).

[375] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 270; Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 160; Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 102.

[376] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 100-103.

[377] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 180.

[378] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 71.

First Samuel 15 is also connected with other prophetic passages.[379] Birch does not entertain the idea of later scholars that the Samuel figure is *merely* a deuteronomistic construct, or worse, a post-deuteronomistic parody of prophecy.[380] The role of Samuel as presented indicates the prophetic provenance of 1 Samuel 15. Birch is emphatic that: "The role of Samuel, the view of the king, and the concern for obedience to God's word are all presented in terms consistent with the traditions of the early prophets. Samuel appears here as a clearly prophetic figure," like Nathan in 2 Samuel 12.[381] This again indicates that Samuel was originally part of the Saul-David story.

In 1 Samuel 15 kingship is transferred prophetically from Saul to David (15:28). Yet with the rebuke and rejection (15:22-23, 26), Saul repents albeit imperfectly. Some kind of repentance secured Samuel's return with Saul to worship (15:24-25, 31).[382] The efficacy of repentance in Saul's final plea, Samuel's return with him, the divine guidance of history and events,[383] and the explanation of sin working itself out in punishment—prophetic theodicy[384]—are all viewed as prophetic, even if willingly adopted by the deuteronomistic writers. Focus on repentance with Samuel's returning and worshipping with Saul after Saul's second declaration of repentance (15: 24, 30, 31) is expressive of the prophetic view that "an act of repentance has the power to retard, if not to commute, the divine punishment." Indeed, Foresti continues, "repentance is so powerful,

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[379] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 107; e.g., 1 Sam 9:1-10:16, where anointing by a prophet (Samuel) is highlighted: 10:1 is echoed in 15:1, 17. Saul's self-deprecation in 9:21 is echoed in 15:17.

[380] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 126: Samuel is an artificial construction, a parody of prophecy as expressed in Deut 18:15-22.

[381] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 104.

[382] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 255. See also Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 157.

[383] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 32.

[384] Cf. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy*, 97.

that it can condition, nay even change, the course of history, for it can induce God to modify his decisions."[385] Ahab's repentance secures YHWH's favor, though he too was guilty of breach of ḥērem in sparing Ben-Hadad (1 Kgs 21:29; 20:42).

Suspicion of cultic sacrifice over obedience is also a prophetic concern (cf. Jer 7:21-26; 1 Sam 15:22).[386] The prophets emphasized obedience over cultic observance and equated disobedience with divination and idolatry (1 Sam 15:22-23; cf. Isa 1:10-17; Amos 5:21-24; Jer 7:1-15; Hos 6:1, 6). The focus in 1 Samuel 15 on cultic sincerity—obedience rather than hypocritical sacrifice—along with the theme of YHWH *repenting* (15:29) evokes similar themes in other prophetic writings, e.g., Amos, Joel and Jonah. Amos 5:21-24 provides an example of Northern prophecy's critique of empty cult. In Amos 7:3, 6 YHWH *repents* twice at the appeal of the prophet, but when further appeal is no longer possible, YHWH releases the destruction threatened. These are older prophetic concerns going back to the eighth century Northern Kingdom. Thematic continuity and similar concerns to those of eighth century writing prophets like Amos (5 and 7) and Hosea (13:9-11) add credence to Campbell's Prophetic Record hypothesis.

First Samuel 15 is the "prophetically oriented conclusion to the story of Saul's rise to power which began in 9:1."[387] It also looks ahead to David. Along with 16:1-13, 1 Samuel 15:1-35 "is the prophetic introduction to the change"—David's anointing, also prophetic, is the sequel

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[385] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 139, e.g., Saul, David, Ahab, Josiah, also Jeremiah 18:8, 11; 26:3; 36:3, etc. While Foresti has DtrP and the deuteronomistic redactor of Jeremiah in mind, DtrP is not necessarily only post-587 BCE but may incorporate older prophetic stories.

[386] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 270.

[387] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 270. Campbell and O'Brien make the same point (*Unfolding*, 258).

to 15:28.[388] This supports the conclusion already drawn that the link between Saul and David was predeuteronomistic. It was already present in the prophetic work.

Substantial agreement between prophetic and deuteronomistic strands makes it difficult to unravel what is skillfully interwoven. Westermann takes 15:27-29 as prophetic, his work on prophecy suggesting that the prophetic act (15:27-29) belongs to the wider prophetic speech (15:14-29). Only at a later time were prophetic act and prophetic speech separated and by the exile, prophetic judgment speech against Israel disappeared.[389] While Weinfeld assigns 15:25-30 to deuteronomistic hands,[390] under his own principle outlined earlier, 15:27-29 should be assigned to prophetic sources. The *pre*deuteronomistic prophetic word relates more to present and actual events. The deuteronomistic prophetic word relates to all periods and generations and presents a "long-range divine historical scheme" (e.g., 2 Sam 7:19). The view taken in 15:27-28 is immediate and short term—the kingdom is ripped from Saul at that very moment and given to David. It is concerned with the individual King Saul. This contrasts with the longer term view of the deuteronomistic 13:13-14 with the elimination of a dynasty, something extended, at some time further in the future. However, as observed, the elimination of a royal dynasty was also of prophetic interest since dynasties got in the way of the prophetic making and breaking of kings. While Weinfeld's principle is helpful in a general way for distinguishing between the predeuteronomistic prophetic word and the later deuteronomistic prophetic word, it is not an

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[388] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 271.

[389] Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 159, 205.

[390] Weinfeld mixes the prophetic and deuteronomistic describing 15:28 as "a deuteronomic prophecy" and phrases like *qāraʿ . . . mamləkūṯ* (15:28) indicating "deuteronomistic prophetic composition." For Weinfeld, 15:25-30a "are of deuteronomic origin" (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 15). Weinfeld sees the tearing of the kingdom from Saul as indicative of deuteronomistic concern with the Davidic Dynasty (*Deuteronomic School*, 354-355).

exact rule of thumb, especially since prophecy was taken up into deuteronomism with its interest in long term history directed by "the prophetic word of God which foreordained it."[391]

While in 1 Samuel 15 there are no indications of revision from the Josianic deuteronomistic stage, there is a perceptible move from prophecy to *later* deuteronomism with indications of a light, "nomistic," deuteronomistic redaction (DtrN). Significant is the later DtrN introduction of the term *ḥērem* (15:3, 8-9 [3x], 15, 18, 20, 21) into the older Amalek story presented anew in the prophetic 1 Samuel 15 (cf. Exod 17:14; Deut 25:19). The concept of *ḥērem*, that of total destruction, was implied in the older texts of Exodus and Deuteronomy, but the term was not used. In 1 Samuel 15 the term *ḥērem* is newly applied by DtrN to Amalek to express the total destruction involved: "for DtrN, the *ḥērem* is total, including persons, animals and property."[392] That the idea of total destruction was already present in the older accounts indicates there is no diachronic layering of three difference stages of *ḥērem* increasing in intensity. This undermines the argument of those who see total *ḥērem* as a much later deuteronomistic idea, and therefore see two or three *ḥērem* levels of increasing intensity in 1 Samuel 15 indicative of later, added, diachronic layers (Chapter Four). As in the earlier Amalek texts to which 1 Samuel 15 refers, the fresh term, *ḥērem*, implies totality. The introduction of the term *ḥērem* into the older Amalek story emphasizes anew, for a later time, the total destruction required. By this I mean that the term highlights the gravity of Saul's disobedience. It reveals the degree of fidelity required, i.e., total obedience. It accentuates the cultic-covenantal perspective, linking it with Deuteronomy. It reflects a later understanding of fidelity as uncompromisingly

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[391] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 15.

[392] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 126, 128. "[T]he conception of *ḥērem* held by DtrN is more radical than that of DtrH" (*Rejection of Saul*, 129). For DtrH "the exclusive objects of the *ḥērem* are persons" while opening up the possibility for the inclusion of animals and property also (*Rejection of Saul*, 130).

total, and the need for complete avoidance of syncretism and how this would apply to exilic and postexilic life (Chapter Four).

In the final form of 1 Samuel 15, however, something broader than the prophetic message of Samuel to Saul is intended. In both accounts of Saul's rejection, the final form focus is on the "more general, conceptual manner of disobedience to God's word or commandment."[393] The obedience demanded is to the command of YHWH per se (as in 13:13-14), most likely to written words as indicated by the later addition of "the words of" (*diḇrê*) in 15:1: "obey *the words of* YHWH."[394] The addition suggests a later stage when emphasis had shifted to the importance of written words. It reflects a tendency toward greater emphasis on obedience to the *word(s)* of YHWH as spoken prophecy increasingly gave way to written words. It may be attributed to the deuteronomistic redactor DtrN.[395] This emphasis, the work of deuteronomistic editors (DtrN),

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[393] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 105.

[394] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 78. Its absence in the LXX and Vulgate, along with the fact that the phrase is a hapax in the Masoretic Text, implies *diḇrê* is a later addition to the Masoretic Text.

[395] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 79. Emphasis on the commands or "words" of YHWH as written words suggests nomistic interest. The insertion of "the *words*" into 1 Samuel 15:1 reflects exilic texts like Deut 1:1; 6:6; 17:18-19. That these are *written* words is clear in Deuteronomy 6:9; 11:18, 20; 27:3; Joshua 1:7-8; 23:6; 2 Kings 22:11, 13 [2x], 16, 18; 23:2, 3, 24. The "words" intended with the insertion of *diḇrê* indicates a broadening beyond the specific command of 1 Samuel 15:1. The phrase echoes the very first words of Deuteronomy: "These are the *words* . . ." (*'ēlleh haddǝḇārîm*, Deut 1:1). Significantly, the phrase "the words" appears in the exhortation to the king in Deuteronomy 17:19: "observe all the *words* of this Torah" (*kol- diḇrê hattôrāh hazz'ōt*). This is viewed as a later text (Foresti, *Rejection*, 79). Nili Wazana dates Deuteronomy 17:18-19 to after 587 BCE, the timeframe of DtrN (Wazana, "The Law of the King," 170, 190). Most view Deuteronomy 17:14-20 as a later text (e.g., Philip Davies, Fokkelman). I see it as DtrN. Vermeylan sees it as DtrH. See Jacques Vermeylen, "The Book of Samuel within the Deuteronomistic History," in *Is Samuel among the Deuteronomists?: Current Views on the Place of Samuel in a Deuteronomistic History* ed. Cynthia Edenburg and Juha Pakkala (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 67-91, 83. Some claim it is much earlier (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding,* 43, 70), dating back to the Shaphanide scribes and the time of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, e.g., Rainer Albertz, "Why a Reform Like Josiah's Must Have Happened," 413. Others date it to the time of Josiah or even to Manasseh, e.g., Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 528. There is emphasis in Deuteronomy on *written* words (Deut 27:3; 6:9; 11:18, 20) and the Torah seems best summarized as "this commandment" (30:11) or "the word" (30:14; 32:47) (Markl, "Deuteronomy," 149, 152). In Chapter Four I argue that for the redactor (DtrN) and for the final form of the text in exilic times, the "command of YHWH," emphasized in 1 Samuel 13:13-14, is equivalent to the "words" of 15:1. Their content is the same. The reader is enjoined to obedience to the "command" or "words" of YHWH as expressed in fixed form in the book of the law. This observation, that the content of the "command of YHWH" in 13:13-14 and the "words" of 15:1 coincide, has gone unremarked in commentaries.

indicates movement from the concrete particularities of both prophetic accounts of tension

between Samuel and Saul at Gilgal to the formulation of a more generic call to nomistic

obedience. This can be glimpsed in the different sense of "words" used in 1 Samuel 15:11 and

15:1. In 15:11 the prophetic "words" refer to Saul's specific commission from Samuel to put

Amalek under the ban. In 15:1 the "words," inserted later by DtrN, refer to the commands, the

fixed words of the book of the law, encapsulated in the *Shema*, "the [written] words that I am

commanding you" (Deut 6:6, 8-9; cf. 1:1 etc.).

Saul's role was not the offering of burnt offerings (13:7b-15) or the recalibration of

longstanding covenantal responsibilities (15:1-35). His responsibility was obedience to the

prophetic word or command of YHWH. In exilic times, this was interpreted and presented as a

lesson on Torah obedience. The Law of the King (Deut 17:14-20), synchronically anticipating

the story of Saul, is diachronically later, written in exile. It offers the antidote to a Saul-like reign

and its consequences.[396]

3.7   Relationship between First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are both prophetic, dealing with a Samuel-Saul

conflict at Gilgal. Both contain elements of "judgment-speech to individuals."[397] Clear examples

of this are the accusing questions: "what have you done?" (13:11) and "what is this bleating of

sheep in my ears?"(15:14). The prophet establishes the facts of the case as in a judicial

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[396] The law of the king "includes only one positive duty, to read the Torah every day" and "denies the king's role in the cult." See Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 523; also Joseph, *Portrait*, 153.

[397] Westermann, *Prophetic Speech*, 137. Embedded in the wider deuteronomistic narrative and therefore more difficult to identify than other prophetic speeches (cf. Westermann, *Prophetic Speech*, 129), it is still possible, in my view, to identify prophetic speech in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15* and 15:1-35.

process.[398] This is particularly evident in 15:1-35 where questions and varying replies gradually expose Saul's guilt. The prophetic provenance and interest of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are highlighted by Samuel's presence in both units, in stark contrast with his complete absence in surrounding texts, except for 16:1-13, generally joined with 15:1-35. That both accounts of the rejection of Saul by Samuel take place at Gilgal, further indicates common origin and the same prophetic circles and influence, though they are not doublets and have different purposes.[399] First Samuel 13 is concerned with Philistines, cultic fidelity, and Saul's dynasty, while 15 is concerned with Amalekites, holy war, *ḥērem*, and the rejection of Saul himself. First Samuel 13 explains why Saul's line did not continue; 1 Samuel 15 explains why Saul himself was rejected.

In this section on the relationship between 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 I will briefly state my diachronic view before developing various aspects. Later deuteronomistic editors (DtrN) added 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in the light of 1 Samuel 8 and 12 and the concern of these chapters with obedience and the consequences of disobedience. These editors already had the material for 13:7b-15* and 15:1-35 available to them from the prophetic tradition—something like Campbell's Prophetic Record—perhaps from prophetic circles at Gilgal. The deuteronomistic editors readily incorporated prophetic traditions into what would become their Deuteronomistic History. Prophecy shared much ideology later viewed as deuteronomistic. These later deuteronomists made their own additions (13:13-14) and minor adjustments (in 15:1-35) to the prophetic texts they transmitted. First Samuel 13:1 and 14:47-52 were already in place before the addition of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.[400] Mention of Gilgal in 13:4, and of Amalek in

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[398] Westermann, *Prophetic Speech*, 144.

[399] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 105, 107.

[400] For Veijola, 14:47-52 was the work of DtrH and so earlier than DtrN (*Das Königtum*, 81). See also Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 254.

14:48, suggested the inclusion of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in their current locations. The

disobedience expressed in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 explains and justifies the abrupt end to Saul's

reign already announced in 13:1 and 14:47-52. The addition of both units permitted the

deuteronomistic editors to 1) transmit the positive Josianic vision of David (especially 13:14; cf.

the prophetic 15:28); 2) to present the Saul story as reflection on the history of the people in

general—as the Deuteronomistic History in microcosm—and in doing so, to explain the failure

of the Davidic promises thus far; and 3) most of all, to highlight the importance of obedience to

the law in a period grappling with the loss of king, prophet and temple.

The question of which account of Saul's rejection influenced the other arises. Birch and

others see 13:7b-15a as "a secondary addition to the chapter at a later time under the influence of

the account in chapter 15."[401] I agree with Birch's view but would modify it. The influence, in

terms of older predeuteronomistic *prophetic* reflection, is mostly in the direction of 13:7b-15 to

15:1-35.[402] However, there are also indications of later *deuteronomistic* influence from 15:1-35

to 13:7b-15. Later deuteronomistic reflection, taking account of 1 Samuel 15, makes the addition

of 13:13-14 to 13:7b-15*. First Samuel 13:13-14 is later than most of 15:1-35.

That Saul himself was rejected (15:1-35) led to the further need to see his lineage rejected

to make way for the Davidic line (13:13-14). In addition, from 15:1-35, so clear about Samuel as

prophetic-cultic officiant, the inappropriateness of Saul's offering sacrifice in 13:7b-15 may have

received increased deuteronomistic accentuation, though the idea of Saul offering the burnt

offering already met with dispproval in the prophetic account (13:7b-15*). The final form of

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[401] Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, 74. Birch lists scholars who share his position.

[402] First Samuel 15:1-35 "builds on and goes beyond the prophetic condemnation in 13:7b-15a" (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 255).

13:7b-15 is in agreement with the thinking of 1 Samuel 15. Both have DtrN overlays (e.g., 13:13-14; 15:1, 3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20, 21, 29). In 13:7b-15* the rebuke is for the cultic delict (13:11-13a). Knowledge of the already extant rejection in 1 Samuel 15 stimulates the movement from mere rebuke to rejection in 13:7b-15, expressed in the strongly pro-David/anti-Saul deuteronomistic language of 13:13-14 (Chapter Four).

In summary, there is interaction between both texts in both directions: 15:1-35 shows prophetic reflection on 13:7b-15* and 13:13-14 indicates deuteronomisic reflection on 1 Samuel 15. The prophetic editors of 1 Samuel 15 changed an older story rebuking Saul for not destroying Amalek into the story of his rejection. First Samuel 15:22-23, 26 go beyond the original prophetic rebuke of 13:7b-15* to rejection.[403] In the light of this prophetic rejection of Saul in 1 Samuel 15:22-23, 26, later deuteronomistic editors added 13:13-14 to 13:7b-15*, changing the rebuke there to rejection of Saul's line.[404] First Samuel 13:7b-15, in its final form, is diachronically later than 15:1-35 as Birch suggests. The Gilgal mention in 13:4b triggered the inclusion of the Gilgal incident of 13:7b-15. Mention of Amalek in 14:48, together with the relative stability expressed in 14:47-52, suggested the current location of 15:1-35.

3.8 Diachronic Scholarship: Summary and Critique

Diachronic scholarship plays an essential role in attempting to unravel the development of the text. This is not only an exercise in historical criticism. It feeds also into questions of meaning and theology. Awareness of stages, displacement or modification of traditions, attention

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[403] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 255.

[404] Sometimes in the Deuteronomistic History punishment of the line precedes punishment of the individual. David is spared when he repents, but his first son, born out of his adultery with Bathsheba, dies (2 Sam 12:13-23). See also Hezekiah in 2 Kings 20:16-19—not his finest hour.

to earlier voices, and the interests and concerns of final editors greatly enhance our understanding of the texts and what they say to us. Diachronic scholarship provides increasing insight into texts, shedding its own light, and furthering theological interpretation.

Examples of diachronic scholarship, Veijola and McCarter approach the biblical text in a sympathetic manner. As an observation, however, I note that McKenzie and Van Seters provide examples of a tendency in some diachronic commentary to treat the biblical text more rigorously than their own hypotheses. The work and insights of McKenzie and Van Seters are greatly appreciated and contribute significantly to this work. Both McKenzie and Van Seters demonstrate that diachronic commentary can be just as negative toward David and positive toward Saul as synchronic commentary (Chapter Two)—an important point dispelling an oversimplification of either synchronic or diachronic tendencies.[405] In this section, I deal briefly with Van Seters's work (see also Chapter Two), to illustrate some tendencies in diachronic scholarship. This is done with a view to seeking a more critically balanced and theologically rewarding approach to the Saul texts.

Illustrative of a diachronic approach, Van Seters's work is chosen here to demonstrate potential pitfalls in diachronic scholarship. Despite stated appreciation for the text, he approaches it with some suspicion. While not touching directly on 13:7b-15 or 15:1-35, Van Seters's work is

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[405] Scholars of a diachronic tendency sometimes tend to present hypotheses as absolute facts, e.g., Steven McKenzie argues that David most likely did not go to Ramah to escape from Saul: Ramah was too far from Bethlehem, David's destination. The point of the story is "purely apologetic," aimed at showing Samuel's support for David (McKenzie, *King David*, 82). A page later, McKenzie's hypothesis is presented as historical fact: "We have already seen that the story of David's support from the prophets at Ramah (19:18-24) is unhistorical and a later addition" (McKenzie, *King David*, 84). Later, McKenzie suggests that Saul's fear of David was due to a failed coup attempt by David, though he admits this is impossible to prove (*King David*, 87-88). McKenzie views the two accounts of Saul falling into David's power in 1 Samuel 24 and 26 as of no historical value because the historical David would certainly have slain Saul given an opportunity (*King David*, 96). To interpret 24 and 26 in this way is to miss their point, i.e., skilful narrative development contrasting the decline of Saul and the increased self-possession and confidence of David.

relevant to 1 Samuel.[406] He notes one cannot "assume that the 'final form' of the text is homogeneous or the reflection of a single mind" and that "emphasis on artistic and thematic aspects of the story of David has often been at the expense of important issues having to do with the diachronic development of the text." [407] Van Seters gives serious attention to the diachronic and synchronic, seeing a shift in genre from history to saga. He argues for two competing, contradictory narratives, one idealizing David as model king (the Deuteronomist), the other, viewing David as manipulating, violent, unjust—a typical oriental despot (the *Saga* writer).[408] This tension leads Van Seters to a discussion of social and historical context, placing his *David Saga* in the late Persian period.[409] His view breaks the unity at the heart of the Deuteronomistic History. He sympathizes with Saul, rejected "because of a trivial cultic irregularity," and is critical of David, "entirely governed by his own interests and political ambitions," one who is "completely untrustworthy."[410]

Van Seters's work illustrates that synchronic scholarship does not monopolize suspicion of Samuel, David and YHWH. It is present also in diachronic work. Van Seters's bias against David, Samuel, and YHWH, and in favor of Saul is evident. It is most obvious in his blaming

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[406] First Samuel 15 is an author's new presentation of the rejection of Saul and "is related to his creation of a new introduction to the story of David in 16:1-13, which is so closely attached to it." Van Seters argues for postdeuteronomistic parody, that 1 Samuel 15:1-35; 16:1-13 is from a single, *post*deuteronomistic author (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga,* 125). Van Seters argues that the postdeuteronomistic author of 15:1-16:13 provided the interpretative opening needed for the later subverting approach of the author of the *David Saga.*

[407] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 51, 52, 353.

[408] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 1. For accounts A and B see *Biblical Saga*, 196, footnotes 28 (A) and 29 (B).

[409] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 2.

[410] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 346, 350.

David rather than Saul for the slaughter of the priests of Nob in 1 Samuel 22:18-19.[411] Van

Seters's efforts to exonerate Saul for the slaughter of the priests of Nob is a remarkable

subversion of the obvious meaning. Van Seters's questionable interpretation is not necessarily

reflective of the diachronic approach. In Miscall's assessment, McCarter, who also takes a

diachronic approach, argues that the texts of 1 Samuel 9-2 Samuel 5 "defend David against

charges that he assumed the kingship violently and illegitimately; the chapters are an apology for

David that clarify his legitimacy and propriety."[412] Alter, too, though mainly interested in

narrative, argues the opposite of what Van Seters claims. The book of Deuteronomy influenced

the revising of the Former Prophets in its light. What came later were *pious* revisions, not cynical

or subversive reversals of meaning.[413] Even if earlier David memories were improved, reshaped,

changed or subverted to offer an apologia for or critique of David, account should be taken of the

final form of the text with its purported deuteronomistic viewpoint. That deuteronomistic

worldview is central and gives the text much of its purpose, meaning, and theology. What

informs 1 Samuel 15:1-35; 16:1-13 and the subsequent David story is not post-deuteronomistic

parody but concern for deuteronomistic obedience. Redactors were not only compilers, they were

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[411] David's anointing by Samuel is "treacherous" and it "casts a shadow over all David's actions . . ." (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 348). The clearest example of bias is Van Seters's attempt to justify Saul's treatment of the priests of Nob. There we have "the portrait of a ruler who is driven mad by his obsession with the realization of the loss of the dynastic succession" (*Biblical Saga*, 349). Saul is quasi-exonerated having slaughtered the priests of Nob while David is guilty and treasonous simply for having been elected and anointed by Samuel. Van Seters, however, does add that it is not the house of Saul as such that is being condemned but the institution of the monarchy (*Biblical Saga*, 349). Van Seters's pro-Saul and anti-Samuel outlook presents Samuel as a "terrifying figure" who chops up Agag—but surely no more terrifying than Elijah (1 Kgs 18:40) or Elisha (2 Kgs 2:23-24) or Saul himself (1 Sam 22:18-19). Van Seters views Samuel negatively, "Saul is left a broken man begging for his [Samuel's] support" (*Biblical Saga*, 126). For Van Seters, David is treacherous and David's relationship with Jonathan is "completely disingenuous" (*Biblical Saga*, 348). When Jonathan makes a covenant with David, Jonathan "knows nothing about David's treasonous anointing by Samuel, and David uses Jonathan's affections to his own advantage" (*Biblical Saga*, 348-349, 356). Against Van Seters it should be noted that the anointing was not at David's instigation: he was a passive recipient. There are also indications that David cared for Jonathan as a friend, e.g., in 1 Sam 20:41 where *David wept even more* than Jonathan at their parting: David wept "the longer" (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 364).

[412] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, xvii.

[413] Alter, *Ancient Israel*, xvi-xvii.

"creative authors who gave the final texts a meaningful form."[414] Samuel is not just another character in the story. He has a particular purpose and message: "he is rather 'the word' that has to be uttered for readers to realize what a story this is."[415] Isolating various "voices," as Van Seters does, is difficult for the historical-critical scholar since "contributors are remarkably anonymous."[416] Polzin's observation is correct, that Van Seters, like others, wants to "establish a coherent pre-text out of what he believes is the ideological mess of the real text."[417] Polzin correctly identifies one of the temptations of the diachronic method—a temptation to which he himself succumbs despite his claimed espousal of the synchronic.

Van Seters's work raises another concern already flagged—the adoption of an appropriate method. Chapter Two recommended an appropriate poetics suitably applied for a synchronic approach. Suitable model and method are important, respecting the nature of the text as ancient scripture with theological purpose (Chapter One). Concretely, is Van Seter's *saga* genre, emerging from a different culture and time, the most suitable lens through which to view the David story? In *In Search of History* (1983) Van Seters borrowed from the commonalities between Herodotus and biblical studies. In *Biblical Saga* (2009) he draws on the first millennium Icelandic *saga* genre. Following the logic of appropriate poetics raised in Chapter Two, it appears somewhat incongruous to draw literary poetics from these two very different milieux, imposing them on the ancient biblical text, and drawing conclusions that completely change the text's meaning, even subverting it. Van Seters's work reveals a weakness in the diachronic

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[414] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 15. Alter also takes this view (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, xvii).

[415] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 175.

[416] Andersson, *Untamable Texts*, 200.

[417] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 14.

methodology adopted, leading to mistaken conclusions about David, Samuel and YHWH. An ideologically constructed hypothesis (presuming a negative view of David), built on a completely different culture, genre, and time (the *saga*), is rigidly imposed on the biblical, deuteronomistic text, which is then forced to fit the hypothesis. Van Seters's *David Saga* seeks, in his own words, "the complete subversion of the deuteronomist's David story and its royal ideology."[418] The *David Saga* forces an image of David as treacherous, scheming and disloyal.

For Van Seters, there was no original Saul-David connection: the deuteronomistic authors took over Northern, Benjaminite, Saulide traditions and used them to fashion their account, including traditions about Moses, the Law, the wilderness, the conquest, and the judges.[419] I agree with the incorporation of such Northern and Saulide traditions, but this happened much earlier. Van Seters misses a key link in the chain, i.e., the prophetic tradition which transmitted yet older traditions and from which the deuteronomistic writers received them. The Saul and David accounts were already joined by the time of Josiah: it is difficult to imagine a rise of David without the Saul accounts.[420] In my view, if the Saul-David stories did not originate together, which they likely did, they already formed one story at a very early stage. The deuteronomistic writers did not join Saul and David traditions and make them into a Saul-David story. They received the Saul-David story from the prophetic authors.

A complete assessment of Van Seters's hypothesis is beyond the scope of this work. His project, articulated in *The Biblical Saga of King David*, is ambitious, but little is proved. Parody and subversion are in the eyes of the beholder. While he claims the late Persian Period as the

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[418] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 344.

[419] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 345-346.

[420] Römer, *So-Called*, 96.

time of the *David Saga*, his description of it has a contemporary ring. The outlook is "a very cosmopolitan one, in which people are judged for who they are, regardless of ethnic or tribal affiliations." It is a more "secular" outlook "competing with the more 'doctrinaire' views of his time."[421] While the Persian Period is largely viewed as a time of relative tolerance, the contemporary writer does well to guard against anachronistically reading modern day values back into ancient texts. Van Seters himself observes how "remarkable" it is that the *David Saga* parody found acceptance "within the deuteronomistic corpus of Samuel-Kings."[422] Remarkable because unlikely! Campbell and O'Brien's caveat about applying contemporary views to ancient texts is prescient: "Modern resistance to prophetic absolutism should not lead us to eviscerate an ancient story."[423]

3.9   Conclusion

Chapter Three focused on questions identified in Chapter Two suggesting recourse to diachronic investigation. Broader traditions and specific additions were examined and the diachronic development of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 was traced. Four layers were identified, from older traditions, to the prophetic tradition, to a Josianic Deuteronomistic History, to a later retouching highlighting the law and concern for obedience (DtrN). Both passages relating the rejection of Saul were identified as basically prophetic. Both are later insertions. Both interrelate and mutually influence each other. Both have later deuteronomistic additions or retouching.

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[421] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 359.

[422] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 359.

[423] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251.

A brief critique of diachronic study illustrated by the work of Van Seters offers a reminder not to neglect the final form of the text in favor of a selected pre-text, chosen through either hypothesis or ideology. A suitable synchronic approach, appropriately applied, is the best corrective to the temptation to set a diachronic hypothesis overbearingly above the text itself (Chapter One).

Most of all, this chapter attempted to build a diachronic foundation for the detailed study of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in Chapter Four. The main diachronic contribution is the discovery that the older and gradually expanded texts are to be read in the light of later emphasis. Various traditions are mustered and placed at the service of a final, redactional vision—the call to obedience to the book of the law. In this light, the Saul stories, somewhat in the shadow of David, assume their own meaning and renewed significance for future generations.

Chapter Four

4   A Close Reading of First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35: Synchrony, Diachrony, Theology

4.1   Introduction

Earlier chapters discussed the importance of interaction and mutual enrichment between the synchronic and diachronic methods. The background work of Chapters Two and Three provides the broader context of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, up to the delimitation of each unit. For the delimitation of the texts, textual critical questions were resolved, especially with regard to 13:15. The preparatory work of Chapters Two and Three broadly established the units as later inserts, of prophetic provenance, adopted and adapted by the deuteronomistic writers. This chapter will focus more intensively on the text and meaning of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.

Chapter Four focuses on 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Each unit is examined synchronically, diachronically and comparatively in order to discover the meaning and theology of the rejection of Saul. Account is taken of context and similar or related texts. Both units are compared and contrasted. The chapter seeks to do its own groundwork and reach its own conclusions *before* comparison with what is widely accepted as deuteronomistic theology in Chapter Five.

Similar concerns arise from both accounts, e.g., the role of Samuel and the prophetic word, cultic and covenantal interests, and the importance of obedience. In both accounts, rebuke becomes rejection, the unnamed David is described and praised, and some sympathy is shown to Saul. First Samuel 13:7b-15 tacitly locates Saul's failure in the absence of trust of a pressurized Saul. First Samuel 15:1-35 views it as a failure in covenantal attentiveness and responsibility on the part of an increasingly stubborn and gainsaying Saul.

Interplay between synchronic and diachronic study clarifies the texts (13:7b-15 and 15:1-35). Each is largely prophetic, preserving older traditions, and adopted willingly by deuteronomistic authors. Diachronic scrutiny increases understanding of the synchronic—and vice versa. A *synchronic* surprise is that Agag is central to the narrative of 1 Samuel 15, suggesting that Agag references are not secondary to the main presentation of the story but focus the unraveling of the Saul-Samuel exchange, and provide substantial literary unity in the Amalek account. *Diachronically*, 13:13-14 emerges clearly as a deuteronomistic insert. An emphasis on obedience, not only to cultic practices or to the spoken prophetic word but especially to the increasingly fixed, written words and commands of YHWH, is introduced and informs the final text. In the end, the prophet is presented as the mouthpiece of deuteronomistic law. *Theologically*, an exilic audience is exhorted to obedience through the old accounts of Saul's rejection, accounts enhanced by prophetic transmission and marked by concern for the book of the law. However, when failure in deuteronomistic obedience overwhelms, the prophetic call to return (*šûḇ)* gives new hope.

4.2   First Samuel 13:7b-15: Translation and Notes

7b Now Saul was still at Gilgal while all those following him trembled. 8 He waited seven days—in accord with the arrangement spoken[424] by Samuel—but Samuel did not come to Gilgal and the people scattered from him. 9 Saul said: "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings" and he offered the burnt offering. 10 Just as he completed the offering of the burnt offering Samuel arrived and Saul went out to meet and greet him. 11 Samuel said: "what have you done?" Saul said: "When I saw that the people had scattered from me and you had not come on the day arranged and the Philistines were gathering at Michmash 12 then I thought, 'now the Philistines will descend on me at Gilgal and I will not have sought YHWH's favor,'[425] so I braced[426]

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[424] *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* suggests the verb "to speak" (*'mr*). See Rudolf Kittel, Karl Elliger, and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia,* editio quarta emendata (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990), 465, note 8ᵇ (hereafter cited as *BHS*).

[425] *lō' ḥillîṯî*. With the sense of to soften, flatten, put in a gentle mood (for the piel form, along with *pᵊnê* YHWH). See Ludwig Köhler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, editio

myself and offered the burnt offering." 13 And Samuel said to Saul: "You have acted foolishly. You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you,[427] for indeed YHWH would have made firm your kingdom[428] over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom will not endure. YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart and YHWH has appointed him as prince over his people since you did not observe what YHWH commanded you." 15 Then Samuel arose and went on his way from Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army; they went up from Gilgal toward Gibeah of Benjamin. Saul counted the people who were present with him, about six hundred men.[429]

4.3   First Samuel 13:7b-15: Synchronic Commentary

4.3.1   Introduction

The text of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 is more "compressed and *hintergründig*" than elsewhere

in the Books of Samuel.[430] It is a key passage because here Saul's fate changes from election to

rejection, giving direction to the rest of 1 Samuel. Important considerations emerge from the text

of 13:7b-15 bearing on an adequate understanding of the rejection of Saul. Five considerations

are identified as follows. First, trust in YHWH. Second, cultic legitimacy and the question of

who should offer the sacrifice (cf. 10:8). Third, the prophetic word and Samuel as spokesman for

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photomechanice iterata cui adjectum est Supplementum Lexicon Germanico-Hebraicum (-Aramaicum) et Correctiones Additamentaque I. A. Continens (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 300 (hereafter cited as Köhler).

[426] *wā'eṯ'appaq*. In the hithpael, to "contain, control oneself" in the sense of to "be solid, strong" (Köhler, 79). The sense is to steady or brace oneself for a perceived duty while unsure or reluctant.

[427] The Septuagint draws more attention than the Masoretic Text to the command as Samuel's: "you did not observe *my* command which YHWH commanded you" (οὐκ ἐφύλαξας τὴν ἐντολήν μου, ἣν ἐνετείλατό σοι Κύριος) (Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, 524). In the end, however, it is YHWH's command. Vulg. follows MT (*Nova Vulgata*, 372). McCarter goes with MT noting that LXX reading "is not demonstrably inferior" (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 227).

[428] Here kingdom is meant in the sense of *dynasty* or royal lineage since Saul's "kingdom," which could have endured forever, will now be given to one who is not his son.

[429] Reconstructing from LXX as argued in Chapter Two (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 227). My translation borrows from NRSV translation of LXX (13:15bcd). First Samuel 13:15 (MT, my translation) reads: "Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin while Saul counted the troops who remained with him—about six hundred men."

[430] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 33. He delimits the section as 13:8-15a (32).

YHWH. Fourth, obedience to the command of YHWH (13:13-14). Fifth, movement toward David, the man after YHWH's heart (13:14).

4.3.2   (1) Trust in YHWH for "the battle is YHWH's" (cf. 1 Sam 17:47)

In this section I will focus on Saul's lack of trust. This absence of trust in YHWH means that Saul cannot do what YHWH asks of him, either in cult or in battle. Absence of trust in YHWH frames 1 Samuel 13:7b-15. In 13:7b Saul remained at Gilgal but "the people followed him trembling" (13:7b), indicating lack of trust in YHWH, at least on the part of the people (cf. Judg 7:3). In 13:15 Saul's numbering of the troops indicates reliance on human resources rather than YHWH, suggesting Saul shared the lack of trust.[431] Saul displayed neither trust nor the attentive obedience expressive of that trust in YHWH's delivering power. Both are connected here. Saul's intentions may have been good in proceeding to offer the burnt offering in pressurizing circumstances. He claims he was seeking YHWH's favor (13:12). He had waited seven days. Troops were dispersing. He had to act. The context of 13:7b-15 seemed to demand pragmatism. That was Saul's mistake. In the wider context, Yahwistic trust overrides pragmatism: "Pragmatism is not rewarded when dealing with the holy. Saul pays a heavy price."[432] His lack of trust leads to the covenantal inattentiveness that inclines to disobedience and finally rejection.

The theme of Saul's lack of trust will be developed here. It stands out in contrast to the trust of other leaders. In 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 Saul does the opposite of what is demanded by

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[431] Counting troops was viewed unfavorably. It indicated trust in human resources only and was thought to leave the people vulnerable to malefic forces, e.g., 2 Sam 24:1-17 (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 582, note on 2 Sam 24:3). The people belong to YHWH alone and not to the king so they were not the king's to number. This would be an issue for Saul who saw the people more as his than YHWH's, especially in 1 Samuel 15.

[432] Galvin, "First Samuel," 248-270, 259.

Deuteronomy 20:1-4 which forbids fear and trembling (*lō' ṯîrā'; 'al-tîrə'ū*) for YHWH will be with them to deliver them as when he brought them forth from Egypt. Saul, without trust in YHWH, continues to fear and tremble in battle to the end: *wayyar' šā'ûl 'eṯ-maḥănēh pəlištîm; wayyirā' wayyeḥĕraḏ libbô mə'ōḏ* (1 Sam 28:5). Campbell notes that Saul's failure is not merely cultic but based on fear: he saw the threat of the Philistines and his troops slipping away (13:11-12). Prophetic theology includes obedience based on faith and avoidance of fear.[433] Saul is "out of accord with the 'Yahweh war' ideology that informs 1 Sam 13-14."[434] Saul disobeys because he does not trust.

The trust of figures surrounding Saul—judge-like, Jonathan-like, David-like trust in YHWH—is examined first. Such narrative analogy provides the broader context. First Samuel 13:7b-15 presents a seemingly impossible scenario. In the light of passages already encountered in the Deuteronomistic History, the odds against Saul should not have mattered (e.g., Deut 20:1-4). Trust secured YHWH's positive intervention on behalf of YHWH's people. This is illustrated in the charismatic figures of Judges and more immediately as YHWH fights for his people in 1 Samuel (1 Sam 11; 14:1-14; 17).[435] The implication in 13:7b is not that defeat is inevitable but that trust in YHWH is essential. First Samuel 13:7b presents a crisis, offering Saul an opportunity.

The Book of Judges provides examples of the dynamic between trust on the part of leaders and YHWH's intervention on behalf of his people, summarized in YHWH's assurance to

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[433] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141. Campbell cites Isaiah 7:9: "If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all."

[434] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 90-91.

[435] YHWH fighting for his people is not something new in 1 Samuel. It is a principle linked to the covenant. Exodus 14:13-14 reassures Israel: ". . . *the Lord* will fight for you, you have only to be still." The principle is present in Joshua and Judges: YHWH battles for his people (Judges 4:14-15, 23; 23:3, 23:10, etc.).

Gideon: "I will be with you" (Judg 6:16). Similarities abound between Judges 7-8 and 1 Samuel 13, between Gideon and Saul. In both cases the enemy is described as being like sand on the seashore: *kaḥôl šeʿal- śəp̄aṯ hayyām lārōḇ* (Judg 7:12); *kaḥôl ʾăšer ʿal-śəp̄aṯ hayyām lārōḇ* (1 Sam 13:5). The theme of kingship is present in both contexts: Gideon's honorable decline of kingship in Judges 8:22-23, and Saul's rejection as king in 1 Samuel 13-15. The "fearful and trembling" (*yārē' wəḥārêḏ*) were sent home (Judg 7:3). The "trembling" of Judges 7:3 recurs in 1 Samuel 13:7 (*ḥārəḏû*). In Judges 7:3 "trembling" indicates those through whom YHWH cannot work and who are dismissed. In 1 Samuel 13:7 trembling indicates fear and implies lack of trust in YHWH. In Judges 7-8 Gideon's three hundred men faced Midianites and Amalekites (cf. 1 Sam 15; 28; cf. 2 Sam 1). In Judges 7:2-7 Gideon was commanded to reduce the troop number to three hundred, half the number with Saul (1 Sam 13:15), so that they could not take credit for victory. Victory is to be credited to YHWH alone. The battle is YHWH's, not Israel's: it is YHWH who delivers (Judg 7:2, 7, 9, 22; 8:3). The comparisons between the judges and Saul texts are noteworthy, reminding the reader that the leader's trust in YHWH is essential in order to give YHWH an opening to fight on behalf of his people. Moshe Garsiel indicates resemblances ("associations, hints, allusions, and analogies") between the Saul and Judges narratives and the contrast between Saul at Michmash and Gideon's Midianite war. While he suggests the Saul narrative is influenced by the earlier Judges narrative, synchronically it can be stated that in 1 Samuel 13-14 "the reader is pressed to keep in mind the entire Gideon cycle and the comparison which arises."[436] This synchronic analysis indicates the resemblances only to demonstrate the impact of the contrast between Saul and Gideon on the reader.

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[436] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 99, 91.

The contrasts and comparisons between Judges and 1 Samuel extend beyond Gideon and Saul in 1 Samuel 13-14. The *ḥērem* theme in 1 Samuel 15 evokes Achan in Joshua 7 and Saul's demise mirrors that of Achan.[437] YHWH's departure from Saul and displacement by an evil spirit (*wərūaḥ YHWH sārāh mē'im šā'ūl ûḇi'ăṯattû rūaḥ rā'āh mē'ēṯ YHWH*, 1 Sam 16:14-15) evokes Abimelech's failed attempted at kingship (Judg 9:53-54), also associated with an evil spirit from God (*wayyišlaḥ 'ĕlōhîm rūaḥ rā'āh bên 'ăḇîmeleḵ ûḇên ba'ălê šəḵem*, Judg 9:23). Garsiel notes that an evil spirit spelling the end of kingship is something peculiar to these texts in Judges and 1 Samuel.[438] The link between trust and YHWH fighting for his people also extends back to Joshua, e.g., in Joshua 10:8-12 Joshua is told not to fear (*'al tîrā'*), panic overwhelms the enemy (*wayhummēm*, cf. 1 Sam 7:10) then routed by YHWH on behalf of his people.

On the other side of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 two examples of trust in YHWH stand out: Jonathan and David. Jonathan's confidence rests not on military strategy but in YHWH. Jonathan's attitude echoes that of the judges, that YHWH delivers the enemy to Israel (Judges 7:2, 7, 9, 14, 15, 22; 8:3, etc.). Jonathan was conscious of acting as part of the covenanted people, the circumcised as distinct from the "uncircumcised" (14:6): ". . . it may be that the Lord will act for us; for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few" (14:6). "The Lord has given them into our hand" (14:10). The Jonathan narrative (1 Sam 14) also echoes that of Judges 7 where trust on the part of leaders elicits divine intervention.[439] Joshua, Judges,

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[437] The drawing of lots is involved in the discovery of Achan as culprit and Saul as king. Like Achan, Saul and his sons die violent deaths together. Unusually in Hebrew culture, their corpses are burnt (1 Sam 31:12; Josh 7:25) (Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 498).

[438] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 98. Similarly, in Judges 16:20, YHWH's departure (*YHWH sār mē'ālāyw*) signifies the demise of Samson (cf. 1 Sam 16:14).

[439] The description in 1 Sam 14:15 is of divine intervention vindicating Jonathan's trust: "There was a *panic* in the camp, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison and even the raiders *trembled*; the earth *quaked*; and it became a *very great panic*" (*wattəhî **ḥărāḏāh** bammaḥăneh ḇaśśāḏeh ûḇəḵol hā'ām, hammaṣṣāḇ wəhammašḥîṯ **ḥārəḏū** gam-hēmmāh; **wattirgaz** hā'āreṣ, wattəhî **ləḥerdaṯ** 'ĕlōhîm*). Jonathan placed his trust in

Jonathan, and David express clear confidence in YHWH. Saul does not. The implication is that Saul does not share that confidence and that with six hundred men and complete trust in YHWH, Saul, in 1 Samuel 13 (or 17), could have done something comparable to Gideon with three hundred, Jonathan with two, or David in single combat. In the face of seemingly impossible odds, "we do not hear him [Saul] trusting . . . there is no single restraint to God in granting victory."[440] Jonathan is a foil to Saul. He is everything Saul is not. Jonathan is always viewed positively. He is courageous but most of all, he trusts completely in YHWH.[441] In 14:6 Jonathan's "perhaps" or "it may be that" (*'ûlay*) leaves God free to act or not. Faced with insurmountable obstacles (13:2-14:6) Jonathan trusts and YHWH delivers.

Jonathan's trust in YHWH prefigures David's who takes similar military initiative. Both invoke the covenantal relationship with YHWH by viewing the enemy as the "uncircumcised" (*hāʿărēlîm hāʾēlleh* [Jonathan in 14:6]; *kî mî happəlištî heʿārēl hazzeh kî ḥērēp̄ maʿarḵôṯ ʾĕlōhîm ḥayyîm* [David in 17:26]). From 1 Samuel 16 to 2 Samuel 1 a "string of comparative structures involving Saul and David" is provided.[442] Saul lacks the trust possessed by Jonathan and David.

In the context of 1 Samuel or the wider Deuteronomistic History, Saul should have known that his kingdom would be established only through reliance on YHWH. The reader

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YHWH who delivered: "The Philistines *fell* (*wayyippəlû*) before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer, coming after him, killed them" (14:13). In 1 Samuel 14:20 "every sword was against the other, so that there was very great confusion" (*hāyəṯāh ḥereḇ ʾîš bərēʿēhû, məhûmāh gəḏôlāh məʾōḏ*). Something similar happened in Judges 7:22: "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled . . ." (*wayyāśem YHWH ʾēṯ ḥereḇ ʾîš bərēʿēhû ûḇəḵol hammaḥăneh; wayyānās hammaḥăneh*).

[440] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 53.

[441] McKenzie, *King David*, 84.

[442] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 107, 92.

knows this from before the beginnings of the monarchy through "the programmatic poem spoken by Hannah" (1 Sam 2:9): "for not by [human] might does one prevail."[443] Toward the end of the monarchy Hezekiah would be a model of trust.[444] In Judges, and in Jonathan and David, Saul is surrounded by accounts of trust highlighting his deficiency. This contrast is key to understanding his rejection in 13:7b-15. Under extreme pressure Saul was unable to place his confidence in YHWH to act and so was unable to obey YHWH's command through Samuel (1 Sam 13:7b-15; cf. 10:8). The lack of trust led to fear, self-reliance and disobedience. The model king of Israelite reflection trusts: "the King trusts in YHWH" (Ps 21:7). Saul was not the king to trust or submit to YHWH and so could not receive the fulfilment of YHWH's promises of deliverance and dynasty (13:13-14). YHWH "demands to know whether the kings trusted in Yahweh (*bāṭāḥ*, 2 Kgs 18:5)." Lack of trust leads to "breach of cultic unity." [445] Saul's protestation to Samuel of his desire to seek YHWH's favor (13:12) is short lived. His cultic carelessness continues from 13:7b-15, gains momentum in 1 Samuel 14,[446] takes a new form in 15:1-35, continuing until his final tryst with divination in 1 Samuel 28. In short, lack of trust means Saul cannot do what YHWH asks of him, either in cult or in battle. Saul's cultic disobedience will be examined next.

4.3.3   (2) Cultic Legitimacy: who should offer the Sacrifice?

How Saul failed to "observe the command of YHWH" (13:13-14 [2x]; 10:8) is connected to the cultic question: who should offer the sacrifice? At Gilgal Saul awaited Samuel (13:8; cf.

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[443] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 41.

[444] 2 Kings 18-20, especially 19:6-7, 32-34.

[445] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology of History," 156. Von Rad does *not*, as I do, causally link lack of trust and cultic disobedience. However, he sets cultic demand and demand for trust close together.

[446] Saul requests the Ark but interrupts the priest: "withdraw your hand" (14:19); he is directly responsible for the cultic sin of 14:32-34; he built only one altar ever—as an overreaction to the earlier cultic sin (14:35); he has to be reminded to approach YHWH (14:36), from whom there is no response (14:37).

10:8) but then braced himself to offer the burnt offering and the peace offerings

(*hāʿōlâ wəhaššəlāmîm*, 13:9-10). Saul's "bracing" himself to offer the *ʿōlâ* (13:12) is linked with

the surrounding tension and fear. That he had to "brace" himself to offer the *ʿōlâ* also underlines

his appreciation of the importance of this sacrifice and the gravity of his act. While the *šĕlāmîm*

could be offered by the people, the *ʿōlâ* was reserved to priest-like figures like Samuel—even

apart from the specific command that Samuel would offer both *ʿōlôt* and *šĕlāmîm* (10:8).[447] Saul

had just offered the burnt offering but not the peace offerings when Samuel arrived (13:9-10). By

then, Saul had done his worst. Had Saul simply prepared the peace offerings first, something he

could have legitimately done while awaiting Samuel's arrival to come and bless them (cf. 9:13),

he would not have committed such a serious cultic delict. That Saul did not get to offer the peace

offerings—a sacrifice to be shared and eaten—foreshadows alienation rather than communion in

the imminent rupture between Saul, Samuel, YHWH, Jonathan, the people, David, and his own

kingship. The sympathy of many scholars is with Saul here, noting that sacrifice before battle

had precedents. [448] Whatever the historical permissibility for kings offering sacrifice, in the

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[447] The *šĕlāmîm* sacrifice "functioned as a common meal shared by the offerer, the priest, and YHWH (see Lev 3:1–17)." See Andrew R. Davis, *Tel Dan in Its Northern Cultic Context*, Archaeology and Biblical Studies, JSTOR; 20 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 61. The people could prepare and eat the *šĕlāmîm* even if these had to be blessed by a priest-like figure before shared (e.g., 1 Sam 9:13). Davis explains further: "[First Samuel] 9:11–13, 22–25 offers a brief description of a *zebaḥ* that takes place on a *bāmâ* and is designated for the people (*lāʿām*). Again, there is no mention of cultic specialists on hand for the sacrifice, except for Samuel, who as seer (*rōʾeh*) must bless the sacrifice (v. 13). The lack of such specialists and Samuel's arrival after the slaughter of the animal suggests that one of the people was responsible for the *zebaḥ*" (Davis, *Tel Dan*, 157). The *šĕlāmîm* were more numerous than the *ʿōlâ*—entirely consumed by fire, offered to YHWH, and seen as the more perfect sacrifice. Only a priest-like figure could offer the *ʿōlâ*, generally first among the offerings in lists and importance. See James W. Watts, "*ʿōlāh*: The Rhetoric of Burnt Offerings," *Vetus Testamentum* 56, no. 1 (2006): 125-137, especially 125, 129, 131-133.

[448] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 63. Saul's intention was "to seek YHWH's favor" (13:12). Shaul Bar argues, "What Saul did was essentially permissible" and notes that Samuel was in the wrong and not Saul. See Shaul Bar, "Saul and Samuel," *Expository Times* 126, no. 7 (2015): 326-33, 328. Fokkelman, too, is sympathetic to Saul here (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 36).

narrative itself Samuel is unambiguous about who should offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings (10:8).[449]

Cognizant of Samuel's clear command in 1 Samuel 10:8, Samuel's claim to sole cultic authority is consistent with Deuteronomy's view of cultic prerogatives. Synchronically, further observations may be made. Deuteronomy 17:8-13 immediately precedes the law of the king (Deut 17:14-20) and commands obedience to the (levitical) priest and the judge (Deut 17:9, 12). Samuel, an Ephraimite, is presented as ministering priest, serving (*məšārēṯ*) YHWH and dwelling in the sacred precincts (1 Sam 2:11, 18; 3:1, 3).[450] Samuel is also portrayed as judge (*wayyišpōṭ šəmûʾēl ʾeṯ yiśrāʾēl, kōl yəmê ḥayyāyw*, 1 Sam 7:15). That the law of the king follows immediately the command to obey implies particular application to the king. Nothing in Deuteronomy 17:14-20, with its depiction of a limited role for the king, suggests that the king should offer sacrifice. The king's duty was to read the law and keep it (Deut 17:18-20): his duty was covenant obedience including the cultic compliance expressive of this. Deuteronomy does not give the king a role in the cult,[451] suggesting it was illicit for Saul to offer sacrifice. This was Samuel's role—even apart from the specific command of 10:8. While some of Samuel's

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[449] The king's performance of a priestly function "was legitimate in the early days of the kings" (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 36). However, Barton notes that kings performing priestly functions may not reflect the early days of the kings but may spring from later depictions of important or idealized kings like David and Solomon in Chronicles. See John Barton, *A History of the Bible: The Story of the World's Most Influential Book* (London: Viking, 2019), 46. In 2 Samuel 24:25 David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings pleasing to YHWH.

[450] "Ministering" (*məšārēṯ*) is "a term reserved almost exclusively for priestly activity." See J. Gordon McConville, "Priesthood in Joshua to Kings," *Vetus Testamentum* 49, no. 1 (1999): 73-87, 79.

[451] Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 523.

responsibilities as judge are transferred to Saul, especially military leadership, Samuel retains his role as priest and is presented "as an early type of Israelite priest."[452]

More broadly, 1 Samuel begins with the theme of cultic impropriety as Eli's sons (2:12-17, 22-25, 27-36) are contrasted with the faithful Samuel (2:18-21, 26; 3:1-4:1). This provides a framework for understanding the Saul-Samuel dynamic in cultic matters. Saul falls into a category akin to that of Eli's sons. Eli and his sons die at the beginning of 1 Samuel; Saul and his sons die at the end. In both cases, Samuel is the model ministrant and authentic cultic oversight is entrusted to him.[453] First Samuel 9:13 provides another contextual example of Samuel's preeminence: "the people will not eat [the sacrifice] till he [Samuel] comes for he must bless the sacrifice" (*kî lō'-yō'ḵal hā'ām 'aḏ- bō'ô, kî-hû' yəḇārēḵ hazzeḇaḥ, 'aḥărê-ḵēn yō'ḵəlû*). The contrast is clear: the people would wait for Samuel (9:13) but Saul would not wait (13:8-9). Saul imagined he could proceed without Samuel, against Samuel's clear instruction (10:8).[454] In doing so, according to Samuel, Saul acted against the command of YHWH (13:13-14). Waiting seven days was insufficient compliance with Samuel's Gilgal instruction (10:8). Importance is attached to the prophet as the one to make the offerings.[455] Samuel's assertion that he would come and offer burnt offerings and peace offerings *precedes* the command to wait seven days (10:8). This

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[452] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Samuel's Institutional Identity in the Deuteronomistic History," in *Constructs of Prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and Other Texts*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Martti Nissinen (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 165-174, 174. First Chronicles 6:28 presents Samuel as a levite (174). Samuel's role as judge has been entrusted to Saul but Samuel clings to his role as priest (Galvin, "1 Samuel," 259).

[453] The "attention drawing word *hinnēh*" (in both 10:8 and 13:10) brings "the question of the offerings to the foreground"—and the question of who was to offer the sacrifice (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 44).

[454] It was beyond Saul's purview to take initiative with the cult, even under stress (10:8; cf. 13:11, 13). Before the Exodus Moses, Aaron and the people had to wait and see how YHWH would ask them to sacrifice in the wilderness. Matters of sacrifice and cult are not dictated by humans but chosen freely by YHWH. Moses could not negotiate with Pharaoh about how the God of Israel was to be worshipped: "Israel learns how to worship God in the way he himself desires." See Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003) 17.

[455] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 44.

is linked to Samuel's role as mediator or intercessor for the people before YHWH, a role well established (1 Sam 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12) and reaffirmed even *after* the inauguration of Saul's kingship (12:17-24).[456] YHWH's prophet Samuel is the one to offer sacrifice (1 Sam 13:11, 13; 15:32-33) and lead worship (1 Sam 15:25, 30). Moreover, at Gilgal, Samuel is the one to offer sacrifice.[457]

First Samuel 9:13 implies that no one, including the one about to be anointed (Saul), would be presumptuous enough to eat the sacrifice before Samuel's blessing. Presumption on the part of Saul remains unspecified in 13:7b-15 but is named and condemned in 1 Samuel 15:23 (*merî*; *hapṣar*) and likened to idolatry and divination (*qesem*; *ûṯərāp̄îm*). This reflects the view that idolatry in deuteronomistic understanding was not simply the worship of the wrong god. It involved also, in Joseph's words, "wrong place, wrong symbols, wrong deity." [458] It involved worshipping YHWH in the wrong way. In 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 worship was with the wrong *officiant*. The king is subject to the prophet in matters of election, rejection and wars.[459] To these elements, cult should be added. The cult was to be protected, not controlled, by the king. This would be an important concern in 1-2 Kings. V. Philips Long describes the division of roles between king and prophet as "fundamental to the establishment of Israel's theocratic monarchy." The king was to be directed by "the prophet whose responsibility it was to receive and

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[456] Expressed at Mizpah before the monarchy (1 Sam 7:5, 8-17); by the girls in 9:13; at Gilgal when Samuel convened the people: they offered sacrifices (*zəḇāḥîm šəlāmîm*) and renewed the monarchy (11:14-15); when Samuel's role as mediator and intercessor was reaffirmed even *after* the inauguration of Saul's kingship (12:17-24). Samuel's presence is somehow necessary, even in the more participatory sacrifices like 9:13 and 11:14-15.

[457] While no indication of location is given for 1 Samuel 12, it is likely Gilgal. No change of location is given from 1 Sam 11. First Samuel 12:1ff. follows immediately from 11:14-15 which mentions Gilgal (3x). First Samuel 12:12 connects with the Ammonites in 1 Sam 11 indicating continuity between 1 Sam 11 and 12, including continuity of location between 11:14-15 and 12:1ff. Samuel is the one who offers sacrifice at Gilgal.

[458] Joseph, *Portrait*, 198.

[459] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 61.

communicate the divine initiative." Saul fails to recognize this order—"the subordinate nature of

his own kingship"—and so invites his own judgment.[460] Saul's refusal to wait for Samuel

indicates his inattentiveness to the cult, to the covenant, to the prophetic word, and so to YHWH.

It becomes the rebellion akin to idolatry—the rejection of YHWH made explicit in 1 Samuel

15:23, 26.

4.3.4   (3) The Prophetic Word: Samuel as Spokesman for YHWH

Samuel's command to Saul in 10:8 is presented by Samuel as a command of YHWH

(*miṣwaṯ YHWH 'ĕlōhêḵā 'ăšer ṣiwwāḵ*, 13:13-14). Since Samuel makes this connection, the

reader may be wary of the equation. In 1 Samuel 13 there is no divine speech or formal oracle

supporting Samuel's claim. Two views of Samuel emerge among scholars. First, that Samuel is a

cruel liar, failed prophet, or parody of prophecy.[461] Second, that Samuel is a true prophet who

speaks in YHWH's name.[462] The latter view is consistent with a synchronic reading.

Samuel's status as prophet of YHWH and mediator of the divine word is outlined early in

1 Samuel, especially in 3:19-21. "The word of YHWH" (*biḏbar YHWH*, 3:21c) is transmitted

through "the word of Samuel" (*dəḇar-šəmû'ēl*, 4:1). Moreover, Samuel places himself firmly

within the tradition of Moses (1 Sam 12:6-11, especially 12:11) and is presented as a prophet like

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[460] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 90.

[461] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 77; Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 126; Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 116-117, 124, 130, 153-154. Because of perceived ambiguity in 1 Samuel 10:8 Edelman thinks the reader is invited to reflect on the unfairness of the divine will (Edelman, *King Saul*, 79).

[462] As prophet, Samuel brings the word of YHWH to Israel (Deut 18:15-22). See Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 46. Though wary of Samuel, Polzin concedes that in the Deuteronomistic History the prophet is the ordinary means of communication with God. God seeks David and Saul seeks God through the prophet (Polzin, *Samuel*, 184).

Moses.[463] Both have a common connection with Amalek (Deut 25:17-19; 1 Sam 15:2).[464]

Deuteronomy 18:15-22 and 1 Samuel 3:19-4:1 provide the interpretative key for Samuel's words

in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.

Samuel's specific commands to Saul (10:8) are part of what Philips Long calls "prophetic

participation in warfare" expressive of the labor division between king and prophet in Israel's

monarchy. The king was responsible for the military dimension and the prophet for

communicating divine instruction. Kingship in Israel was to be different from that of other

nations. "Ideologically, monarchy in Israel was acceptable only insofar as the king was willing to

acknowledge his subordination to the Great King and his designated spokesman."[465] First

Samuel 10:8 and 13:7b-15 are expressive of this prophetic vision and the prophetic judgment that

follows failure therein.

While obedience is due to Samuel as judge, priest (Deut 17:8-13), and prophet (Deut

18:15-22), this does not mean that Samuel is flawless.[466] Samuel has to struggle and obey

YHWH, even when it displeases him (1 Sam 8:6-7; 15:11, 35; 16:1-13). This obedience

contributes to his authenticity and reliability as a prophet.[467] Samuel's role, along with the

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[463] The words of Samuel are YHWH's words and commands (Deut 18:18), to be heeded (*'ēlāyw tišmāʿūn* [Deut 18:15]; *hāʾîš ʾăšer lōʾ-yišmaʿ ʾel-dəbāray, ʾăšer yədabbēr bišmî; ʾānōkî ʾedrōš mēʿimmô* [Deut 18:19]). The disobedient will account to YHWH (Deut 18:19). The word will prove true (Deut 18:22; cf. 1 Sam 10:9; 28:17).

[464] See Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 45-51.

[465] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 90.

[466] "Samuel is invested with prophetic power by an act of God. But the writer understands that he is also a man, all too human . . ." (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 229-230).

[467] Some scholars highlight differences between Samuel and YHWH. Two points may be made in response. First, the differences are never public but private, struggled through and resolved between YHWH and Samuel in dialogue (prayer) in the long silence of the night (1 Sam 15:10-11, 16, 35; 16:1) or in YHWH's patience with Samuel. YHWH gives Samuel time to wrestle with unpalatable ideas (1 Sam 8:6-9, 21-22). Second, Samuel comes around to YHWH's point of view and acts in obedience, e.g., in 1 Sam 15:1-35; 16:1-13 where "the reluctant prophet thus faithfully exacts . . . God's irrevocable ruling." See Jean-Pierre Sonnet, "God's Repentance and 'False

prophetic word and prophet-king dynamic, will be returned to in the section on 1 Samuel 15 and in Chapter Five.

4.3.5 (4) Obedience to the Command of YHWH (13:13-14)

The failure and rejection of Saul rests on his failure to observe (*šmr*) the command presented by Samuel as from YHWH. The failure is articulated twice in the text (13:13-14). Various interpretations arise as to the nature of the failure.[468] Four elements are identifiable in Samuel's command to Saul in 10:8: 1) "And you shall go down to Gilgal ahead of me; 2) then I will come down to you to present burnt offerings and offer sacrifices of well-being. 3) Seven days you shall wait, until 4) I come to you and show you what you shall do." Saul observed two elements (1 and 3) and neglected two (2 and 4). Positively, Saul went to Gilgal ahead of Samuel and waited seven days.[469] Negatively, Saul offered the burnt offering instead of Samuel and did not await further instruction as requested. While Samuel's instruction was clear (10:8), Saul, acting under pressure and possibly in good faith, may have thought himself obedient. Ambiguity and sympathy linger.

The reason for Saul's kingdom not enduring is illustrated in 13:13c-14d, beginning with "You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you" (13c) and

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Starts' in Biblical History (Genesis 6-9; Exodus 32-34; 1 Samuel 15 and 2 Samuel 70)," *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, no. 133 (2010): 469-94, 487.

[468] Edelman proposes Saul's sin was that he did not constrain the people to wait for the seven days (Edelman, *King Saul*, 80). This is unlikely. The command was not only about waiting seven days: it concerned Samuel sacrificing and Saul awaiting further instruction (10:8). Miscall argues Saul's sin here "has nothing to do with sacrificing . . ." but was because Saul had not fulfilled his commission to save the people from the Philistines (9:16) (Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 87). Miscall's view also lacks support. Saul's failure in 13:7b-15 was not an omission (as in 15:1-35) but a commission, clear from Samuel's question: "what have you *done*?" (*meh ʿāśîṯā*, 13:11). Some view the command of 10:8 as ambiguous (generally those who view Saul as victim, e.g., Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 128; Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 33-40) and the gap between 10:8 and 13:7b-15 as "many years" (Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 129).

[469] It is unclear if he awaited the conclusion of the entire seven day period.

concluding with "since you did not observe what YHWH commanded you" (14d). The repetition

of the phrase attracts attention:

> 13a And Samuel said to Saul: b "You have acted foolishly.
>
>> *c You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you* (lō' šāmartā 'eṯ-miṣwaṯ YHWH 'ĕlōhêḵā 'ăšer ṣiwwāḵ)
>>
>>> d for indeed YHWH would have made firm your kingdom over Israel forever. 14a But now your kingdom will not endure.
>>>
>>> b YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart and c YHWH has appointed him as prince over his people
>>
>> *d since you did not observe what YHWH commanded you."* (lō' šāmartā 'ēṯ 'ăšer-ṣiwwəḵā YHWH)
>
> 15a Then Samuel arose and went on his way from Gilgal.

First Samuel 13:13c and 14d, almost identical, frame two phrases referring to Saul and

two phrases referring to David: a declaration of judgment on Saul (13d and 14a) and the

announcement of his successor (14b and 14c). For Fokkelman, 13:13c-14d forms a chiasm with

14a at the center ("But now your kingdom will not endure").[470] Fokkelman's "chiasm" is

unsuccessful: he forces the text, especially 14a, into the desired shape, a tendency criticized in

Chapter Two. Forcing 14a into the center of a chiasm means upsetting the natural balance of the

lines and destroying the double structure of both 13d-14a and 14b-14c which mirror each other.

First Samuel 13d and 14a go together and refer to Saul in the second person singular; 14b and

14c go together and refer to David in the third person singular. The similar phrases 13c and 14d

might be better explained as indicative of resumptive repetition or *Wiederaufnahme*. A

diachronic feature, this will be dealt with in the diachronic section below. In the end, I will argue

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[470] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 40.

that it is a deuteronomistic frame and insertion rather than a *Wiederaufnahme.* Since it deals synchronically with the judgment of Saul and the election of David, that interest will be further examined in the relevant synchronic section below.

The concern in this section is obedience to the command of YHWH. Saul's disobedience in itself is the primary issue. V. Philips Long concludes that Saul's primary failure is not so much "a breach of cultic protocol," though this is present. Saul's primary failure is the "violation of the specific 'charge' associated with his *nāḡîḏ* appointment" (cf. 9:16; 10:1, 7-8).[471] The core issue is disobedience. In the Books of Kings YHWH establishes or dismantles the kingdom in response to the king's obedience—especially cultic obedience—wherein Saul fails. First Samuel 13:13c and 14d surround the intervening judgment, highlighting the need for obedience, just as 1 Samuel 8 and 12, both emphasizing obedience, surround the account of Saul's inauguration in 1 Samuel 9-11. The disobedience identified in both 13c and 14d is the reason for Saul's rejection and the intervening judgment (13d-14c). Obedience to YHWH is primary. Questions about Samuel's word as God's command or the unreasonableness of Samuel's judgment are almost incidental. We saw this in Chapter Two where Samuel's word is interpretative in the narrative. The primary concern of the passage is theology, not social, political or military issues. "In the text, Saul's responsibility is . . . to obey."[472]

At the heart of the "obedience frame" in the final form of the text is the rejection of Saul and announcement of David. The fall of Saul is the downside of the rise of David. Saul and David are at the center, one rejected the other elected. Both are surrounded in 13c and 14d by the assertion that only through observance of YHWH's command can kingship—Saul's or

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[471] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 88.

[472] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 138.

David's—flourish. Obedience is the central message of 13:7b-15, for kingship and for the reader. The obedience motif leads from Saul to David.

4.3.6   (5) Movement from Saul to David, a Man after YHWH's Heart (13:13-14)

First Samuel 13d and 14a indicate that YHWH would have established Saul's kingdom forever ("for indeed YHWH would have made firm your kingdom over Israel forever. 14a But now your kingdom will not endure"). Dependant on Saul's obedience, an enduring Saulide dynasty was possible. That opportunity now in the past, 13:14bc moves toward a successor for Saul, though David is not yet named[473] ("YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart and YHWH has appointed him as prince over his people").

Framed between two phrases highlighting observance of YHWH's commands, the implication is that Saul's rejection because of disobedience holds out hope for an obedient David, sought out by YHWH. David, the man after YHWH's own heart (*kilḇāḇô*, 13:14), evokes Deuteronomy 17:17, part of the Law of the King (Deut 17:14-20) highlighting the risk that the king's heart might turn away (*wəlō' yāsûr ləḇāḇô*, Deut 17:17).[474] The implication is that David's heart will not. The juxtaposition of David's being a man after YHWH's heart (*kilḇāḇô*) and YHWH's appointing ("commanding") of David (*wayṣawwēhû*) indicates that the heart, seat of decision, plays a role in the faithful observance of YHWH's commands. YHWH sees the heart (16:7) and David's heart, sensitive to doing what is right, smote him when he thought he had done wrong (24:7). David is associated with the heart, YHWH's (13:14) and his own, which "represents his inner struggle for recognition of the divine will" and therefore for obedience.[475]

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[473] Until 1 Sam 16:13, 19, etc.

[474] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141.

[475] Edelman, *King Saul*, 194, note 1.

Saul's heart, closed to obedience, is not like David's. Nor is it like Jonathan's. In 14:7 it is said to Jonathan: "Do all that is in your *heart*" (14:6-7). This is never said to Saul, even in similar situations (14:36, 40). Saul's heart is not disposed to the divine will as expressed by Samuel. In the end, his heart is given over to fear: Saul's *heart* "trembled greatly" on sight of the Philistines (28:5). Within the "obedience frame" of 13:13-14, Saul and David are contrasted for the first of many times in 1 Samuel. David must increase and Saul decrease (cf. John 3:30; 2 Sam 3:1). The contrast implies that David's kingship, unlike Saul's, will be built on obedience *and* established forever, alluding to the Davidic promise of 2 Samuel 7.

First Samuel 13:14 depicts David in a rich and meaningful manner, much more so than in 15:28 where David is described blandly as "a companion of yours who is better than you." In 13:13-14 the implication is that David's kingdom will endure. Sought out by YHWH, and a man after YHWH's heart, David is *nāḡîḏ* (13:14). Unlike Saul, David will be associated with obedience. Not used in the somewhat anti-monarchic 1 Samuel 8 and 12, *nāḡîḏ* is positive in tone and was used positively of Saul too (1 Sam 9:16; 10:1).[476] That *nāḡîḏ* was used of Saul when his kingship was still full of promise and potential indicates that David, as presented in 13:14, will be all that Saul was not. The hopes once expressed of Saul are transferred to David with the language of rejection/election that comprises the insertion in 13:13-14. This insertion is anti-Saul, recognizing the end of his kingdom, and enthusiastically pro-Davidic.

Even as everyone abandons Saul—troops, Samuel, and God—the narrator presents Saul sympathetically. Saul's concerns as a military general are presented positively in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 (excepting 13:13-14) and in the wider 1 Samuel 13-14. The sympathy evoked for Saul in 1 Samuel 13 reflects a generally positive view of Saul in 1 Samuel 9-11. In 1 Samuel 13 Saul

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[476] Galvin, "1 Samuel," 259.

shows courage, tenacity, and fortitude as he faces a daunting military threat. In human, military terms he is esteemed. The impression is given of a desperate situation with hopeless odds to which Saul had to respond.

4.3.7   Conclusion to Synchronic Study of First Samuel 13:7b-15

In this synchronic section five key considerations were examined: trust in YHWH; cultic and covenantal fidelity; the (divine) prophetic word; the primacy of obedience to YHWH's command (13:13-14); and the movement from Saul to David (13:13-14).

Saul's disobedience manifested lack of trust in YHWH, a trust manifested by others in similar threatening situations. Abandoning Yahwistic trust, Saul proceeded to disregard Samuel's instruction and cultic role and acted presumptuously in offering the burnt offering, thereby disobeying a command of YHWH. A synchronic reading of 1 Samuel suggests that Samuel speaks for YHWH and that in 13:7b-15—though with ambiguity—Saul disobeyed a divine command. As Saul's successor is indicated, obedience to YHWH's commands is highlighted. The "man after [YHWH's] heart" (13:14) will be idealized as manifesting trust and obedience.

Up to 1 Samuel 13:7a the author's portrait of Saul is positive.[477] With 13:7b-15 there is a tinge of regret. Like for Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:38) and David (2 Sam 7:11-17), YHWH would have established Saul's dynasty forever (1 Sam 13:13-14). With 13:7b-15 as turning point, sympathy for Saul declines (1 Sam 14) and his rejection works itself out in the remainder of 1 Samuel.

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[477] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 77.

4.4   Diachronic Issues Emerging from Synchronic Study of First Samuel 13:7b-15

4.4.1   Introduction

Chapter Three described my view of a four stage diachronic movement discernible from 1) older pro-Saul stories, to 2) prophetic tradition, to 3) deuteronomistic interests around the time of Josiah, to 4) to later deuteronomistic concerns characterized by Mosaic nomisitic emphasis (DtrN). Chapter Three also showed that 1 Samuel 13:7b-15* (i.e., minus the insertion in 13:13-14) is a largely prophetic insertion into the wider context of the older Saul tradition of 1 Samuel 13-14. First Samuel 13:7b-15* is prophetic in style, message and content. Diachronic considerations *within* 13:7b-15 are examined here, especially 13:13-14 as a deuteronomistic addition. This is indicated by what first appears to be a *Wiederaufnahme*. On closer inspection, however, the most that can be claimed is that a deuteronomistic frame sets off a deuteronomistic insertion. As my analysis of 13:13-14 evolved, I moved from viewing it first, as a chiasm (outlined by Fokkelman, though considerably forced) to second, a *Wiederaufnahme* (indicating an addition) to third and finally, identifying it as a deuteronomistic frame surrounding a deuteronomistic addition. This is the central diachronic issue of 13:7b-15 and it touches on the important question of distinguishing prophecy from deuteronomism.

4.4.2   Deuteronomistic Insertion of 1 Samuel 13:13-14 into Prophetic 13:7b-15*: Rebuke to Rejection

Repetition often serves as an indication of textual development. The synchronic study suggested the presence of *Wiederaufnahme* as explanation for the repeated phrase which frames 13:13-14. Here I will argue that it is a deuteronomistic *frame* accompanying an insertion. This change of definition rests on how the original phrase of the proposed *Wiederaufnahme* is characterized. For a sound *Wiederaufnahme*, the "original" line to be resumed ("You did not

observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you") would need to be shown to be prophetic, i.e., attached to the older text. It is, however, deuteronomistic.[478]

In my view, later deuteronomistic editors revised the generally prophetic 13:7b-15* in the light of later emphasis on deuteronomistic obedience, most likely along the lines of DtrN. They selected Samuel's prophetic rebuke to Saul, "You have acted foolishly" (*niskālǝtā*, 13:13), and developed it along the lines of deuteronomistic reflection. This deuteronomistic reflection was added after the mild prophetic rebuke and before Samuel's abrupt departure. This was the ideal niche for further reflection since DtrN would have viewed Samuel's rebuke as too mild and his departure too abrupt. The deuteronomistic insertion intensifies Samuel's prophetic correction of Saul ("You have acted foolishly"). Prophetic rebuke becomes dynastic rejection with new themes introduced. Below, the original text is in bold, the deuteronomistic frame in italics, and the entire insertion (including frame) is indented:

13 **And Samuel said to Saul: "You have acted foolishly.**

> *You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you*,
>
> for indeed YHWH would have made firm your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom will not endure.
>
> YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart and YHWH has appointed him as prince over his people
>
> since *you did not observe what YHWH commanded you.*"

15 **Then Samuel arose and went on his way from Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army . . .**

Originally the text read as given below:

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[478] While the verb "You have acted foolishly" (*niskālǝtā*) is used mostly in the Books of Samuel as well as in Isaiah 44:25, no strong argument can be made that it is prophetic. While the phrase "observing the command(s)" appears in the prophets (e.g., Jer 35:18, though here it is the command of Jonadab), it is more deuteronomistic.

> And Samuel said to Saul: "You have acted foolishly . . . !" Then Samuel arose and went on his way from Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army . . .

Samuel bluntly reprimands Saul and then, in disappointment or anger, swiftly departs. Abrupt departures on the part of a sometimes vexed Samuel are not unusual (cf. 1 Sam 8:22; 10:25; 15:34). It is likely that the first "You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you" (13:13) replaced some earlier elaboration of Samuel's rebuke, but one deemed weak and in need of reinforcement, augmentation, or replacement by the deuteronomistic editors. In any case, Samuel's rebuke ("You have acted foolishly") was expanded with deuteronomistic concerns. The insertion introduces material different in style and content from that of the wider context. The style is poetic, indicated by the *parallelismus membrorum*: two double symmetrically-shaped, matching lines enveloped by the frame. The lines within the frame were arranged artistically as twinned double phrases, one for Saul in the second person singular and one for David in the third person singular: [479]

> for indeed YHWH would have made firm your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom will not endure.
>
> YHWH has sought for himself a man after his own heart and YHWH has appointed him as prince over his people.

The demise of Saul's lineage and Davidic interest appear for the first time here. New concerns—the rejection of Saul and rise of a glowingly presented David—are introduced. These are expressive of more developed reflection on the wider Saul-David traditions and reflective of a broadly anti-Saul and pro-David theology. There is a single movement from Saul to David. The deuteronomistic editors seized the occasion of Saul's disobedience at Gilgal to justify Saulide sidelining and to elaborate how the removal of Saul's line was not sporadic, unjust, or capricious.

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[479] In MT 13:13-14 are not presented as poetry and provided with the sense lines suitable for such a "prophetic" utterance as in 15:22-23, increasing the latter's credibility as a *prophetic* oracle—perhaps a minor indication that 13:13-14 is a *deuteronomistic* insert into a largely prophetic unit.

Only with the insertion of the Saul-David addition in 13:13-14 is 13:7b-15 changed into a story of rejection of Saul's lineage and replacement by David. The frame (observing the command that YHWH commanded) is a deuteronomistic formula expressive of what Weinfeld calls "Observance of the Law and Loyalty to the Covenant."[480] The insertion in between is clearly anti-Saul and enthusiastically pro-David and the Davidic dynasty.[481] It fits in with the positive Davidic view in the wider Deuteronomistic History, a high point of which is the unconditional promise to David in 2 Samuel 7. The insertion strongly articulates the deuteronomistic motif that David and his line legitimately inherited Saul's kingdom. It reflects the "History of David's Rise" characteristic of Josianic optimism in the seventh century BCE when Josiah was presented as the "New David."[482] McCarter writes of "the relentless march of history" toward David and Jerusalem as characteristic of the Josianic Deuteronomist. The pre-deueteronomistic story of movement from Saul and David provided the raw materials but "the Josianic historian shaped his materials to demonstrate this movement of history unambiguously."[483] First Samuel 13:13-14 is a good example of this. The *content* within the frame, though built on earlier and already linked Saul-David traditions, is Josianic-Deuteronomistic. The content is an example of deuteronomistic reflection on kingship: the rejection of Saul's line and the idealization of David, both surrounded aptly by the deuteronomistic frame exhorting obedience to the commands of YHWH. This explains why the description of David in 13:14 is enthusiastic and effusive compared with the more pedestrian

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[480] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 336, 332. See also Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251.

[481] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 354-355.

[482] Thomas Römer's diachronic outline makes sense here. In the time of Josiah, all of Saul's house (except Saul) are presented as recognizing the claims of the Davidic dynasty over Judah and the North (Römer, *So-Called*, 96-97). The Saul account is necessary to legitimate David's rise to power, implying that the Saul-David stories were already joined at this stage.

[483] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 93.

description in 15:28, attributable to an author less enamored with Davidic idealism. First Samuel 15:28 (like 2 Sam 12:11) is prophetic and more concerned with the prophet-king dynamic of election and rejection than with eulogizing kings. It has different priorities to those of deuteronomistic authors.

Veijola goes further by specifying that 13:13-14 is *later* deuteronomistic, i.e., specifically DtrN (Chapter Three).[484] Veijola sees *nāḡîḏ* as positive when used of David by DtrN in the text under discussion (*lǝnāḡîḏ ʿal-ʿammô*, 13:14) and when speaking of Good King Hezekiah (*nǝḡîḏ ʿammî*, 2 Kgs 20:5). First Samuel 13:14 and 2 Kings 20:5 are linked by the term *nāḡîḏ* in Veijola's DtrN layer. I suggest that in the background of both these texts is also the theme of trust: Saul's lack of trust and Hezekiah as model of trust. Trust in YHWH was apparently a concern of the later DtrN—the trust lacking in Saul (1 Sam 13) and desirable in the Davidic king modeled by Hezekiah. DtrN makes a connection between trust and covenant fidelity by choosing to use the same term to describe David (here in contrast to Saul) and Hezekiah. A diachronic observation by Veijola supports this synchronic observation. DtrN criticized the monarchy less because of social ills the kingship brought, but because of its fundamental incompatibility with the willingness to trust in YHWH's intervention in danger.[485] This may be the fruit of reflection on earlier texts presenting lack of trust as significant in understanding Saul's failure (e.g., 1 Sam 13-14; 13:7b-15*). For Veijola, DtrN's negative assessment of the monarchy extended to its first incumbent, Saul, which is why Saul's rejection comes so early in the account. DtrN devalues

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[484] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 76, 44-52; Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251. *Nāḡîḏ* spans the three main deuteronomistic layers accepted by the Göttingen School. It is used of Saul in 1 Samuel 9:16 and 10:1. It later used by DtrG of David (1 Sam 25:30; 2 Sam 5:2; 6:21; 7:8) and Solomon (1 Kgs 1:35). It is used in DtrP of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 14:7) and Basha (1 Kgs 16:2). It is used in DtrN for David (1 Sam 13:14) and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:5). See Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 76. Weinfeld agrees that *nāḡîḏ* in 13:14 is deuteronomistic, though it may also appear earlier (*Deuteronomic School*, 355, n. 9).

[485] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 121.

Saul in favor of David (13:13-14). Saul's demise is highlighted and supported because he is "a non-Davidic king."[486] For DtrN, David embodies the ideal king.[487] While this does not fit in with DtrN's basic anti-monarchic stance, like most of the Old Testament tradition, DtrN saw David as a model, despite his weaknesses.[488]

Chapter Three showed that 13:7b-15* is prophetic in origin and interest. My interest here is to demonstrate that 13:13-14 is a deuteronomistic insert into the prophetic addition. Sympathy between prophetic and deuteronomistic thought makes this difficult.[489] One indicator that 13:13-14 is not prophetic is that there is no call for or indication of repentance on the part of Saul. Repentance was a concern of prophecy. In the prophetic account of 1 Samuel 15 repentance

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[486] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 177-180.

[487] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 119.

[488] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 120.

[489] First Samuel 13:13-14 brings us to the blurred dividing line between the prophetic and deuteronomistic. Having much in common, they are not always clearly distinguishable. Such connaturality makes for smooth sutures, but also makes it difficult to unravel or recover what belongs to each. Campbell argues that some themes identified as specifically deuteronomistic could also be earlier prophetic, e.g., "The transfer of the kingdom to David is already central to the Prophetic Record and would be expected in traditions from these prophetic circles" (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 251). It would be tempting to identify "after his heart" (13:14) as deuteronomistic, since much heart imagery is associated with the positive presentation of David, even in contrast to Saul (see earlier section). However, heart imagery could also be prophetic, e.g., "YHWH looks at the heart" (16:7), talk of God's heart "is not a deuteronomistic preserve" (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 257, 251), and YHWH gave even Saul "another heart" (10:9). The identification of interwoven strata is challenging, illustrated in Westermann seeing 13:13-14 as part of the prophetic announcement, while Weinfeld views 13:13-14, frame and content, as deuteronomistic. This is reflective of the interest of each commentator (Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 156; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 336, 355). Campbell sees *only* the formula "to keep the commandment of YHWH" (13:13-14) as deuteronomistic: "nothing else in these verses (13:7b-15) demands attribution to the Deuteronomists" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 140). He also points out the connaturality between prophetic and deuteronomistic thought: "If the envelope [frame]—insisting that Samuel's word is indeed God's command—comes from the Deuteronomists, it is in full harmony with the prophetic thinking about prophetic authority" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 140). Even the theme of trust, identified as part of the DtrN layer by Veijola, is also a prophetic concern. Saul's fear (13:11-12) is a problem for prophecy too: "The king disobeyed the prophet because he saw his forces slipping away and . . . the Philistines were massing toward the North." Campbell continues, citing Isaiah 7:9 as an example: "In prophetic theology, obedience is based on faith and should not deviate because of fear. . . . In the prophetic view, fear has already undone Saul at the very beginning of his reign" (Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141). Saul is paralyzed by fear (17:11). David is fearless in trust (17:32, 45). The question of what distinguishes prophetic from deuteronomistic thought and expression was already broached in Chapter Three. A major difficulty is the sympathy between both which made it easy for prophecy to be assumed by deuteronomism—making it difficult to disentangle them. Ultimately, for the final text, the deuteronomic law is the foundation of the monarchy (Deut 17:14-20). The final redactors are deuteronomistic with special focus on the law (DtrN).

appears, but in 13:13-14 no opportunity is afforded Saul for repentance. The interest is deuteronomistic, Saul making way for David, not the prophetic concern with repentance.

Another indicator is the close alignment between 1 Samuel 13:13 and the typically deuteronomistic 1 Kings 13:21. Samuel's reproach of Saul in 1 Samuel 13:13 is identical (apart from a change in word order) with the final phrase of 1 Kings 13:21, where the prophet of Israel says to the man of God from Judah: "You did not observe the command of YHWH your God which he commanded you" (cf. 1 Sam 13:13 [cf. 14]). In 1 Kings 13:21 the concerns are also prophecy (two prophets); obedience (disobedience on the part of the man of God from Judah); cultic sin (encouraged by Jeroboam); and dynasty.[490] The convergence of these themes around identical phrases in 1 Samuel 13:13 and 1 Kings 13:21 indicates deuteronomistic provenance. First Kings 13:21, with its emphasis on Josiah, is widely viewed as deuteronomistic.[491] Commentators have missed the connection between 1 Samuel 13:13-14 and 1 Kings 13:21.

Second Kings 17:13, a later text, is key to interpreting *both* 1 Samuel 13:13 and 1 Kings 13:21, situating both texts in a clear deuteronomistic context, and advancing deuteronomistic thought toward later expression in commitment to the written Torah.[492] Like 1 Samuel 13:13 and 1 Kings 13:21, 2 Kings 17:13 highlights prophecy (2 Kgs 17:13 [2x]) and obedience to the commands which YHWH commanded (2 Kgs 17:13, 15, 16, 19). Going further, it situates these commands *within the entire law.* In 2 Kings 17:13, "[observing] the command of YHWH your

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[490] First Kings 13:21 is preceded by Ahijah's prophetic promise to Jeroboam of an enduring house like that of David, dependent on obedience to YHWH's commands (1 Kgs 11:38). First Kings 13:21 also leads to the condemnation of Jeroboam and his dynasty by Ahijah (1 Kgs 14:10-13).

[491] Lissa M. Wray Beal, "Jeroboam and the Prophets in 1 Kings 11-14: Prophetic Word for Two Kingdoms," in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Ancient Israelite Historiography*, ed. Mark J. Boda and Lissa M. Wray Beal (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 105-124, 108.

[492] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 441-442, places 2 Kings 17:13 within the later "national focus," emphasizing the people rather than their kings.

God which he commanded you" (1 Sam 13:13; 1 Kings 13:21) is echoed in "observing my [YHWH's] commands" (2 Kgs 17:13). However, these commands are now clearly "according to the *entire law* (*kəkol-hattôrāh*)[493] that I commanded . . . and that I sent to you through my servants the prophets" (2 Kgs 17:13). Here we have the perfect synthesis of prophecy and deuteronomism with "my servants the prophets" as ministers of the "*entire* (probably written) law." An increasing diachronic specification is evident in 2 Kings 17:13. What was transmitted in older (Saul) traditions, then preserved and augmented in prophetic circles and earlier Josianic deuteronomistic tradition, now takes its final nomistic step. The prophet becomes the mouthpiece of the deuteronomic law: "the prophet has the divinely commissioned task of proclaiming the law."[494] His role has become that of "preacher of the law."[495] This is Samuel's role in the final form of the text and how the reader is meant to hear Samuel's exhortations.

In the Josianic deuteronomistic context, the king promotes and implements the book. In the later "nomistic" time (DtrN), the book replaces the king. This supports Veijola's insight that for DtrN there can be no king but YHWH. In 1 Samuel 13:13-14, later deuteronomistic editors, probably DtrN, latched on to Samuel's mild rebuke and rebuilt it into a powerful deuteronomistic mission statement. This mission statement incorporates the main Josianic deuteronomistic concerns: cult, prophecy, obedience to deuteronomic law, the rejection of Saul's line, the exaltation of David and his dynasty, and YHWH's word as the power that shapes history. DtrN puts its own nomistic stamp on the text.

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[493] Or "all the law." The phrase suggests the *totality* of the law. See Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: Part Three: Synthax*, Subsidia Biblica; 14/II (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996), 518, n. 139e.

[494] Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 211.

[495] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 442.

4.5   Gains in Textual Understanding from use of Both Methods

Diachronic movement is discernible in 1 Samuel 13-14 from the old Saul-Jonathan tradition, to the prophetic tradition expressed in the insertion of 13:7b-15*, to deuteronomistic concerns (13:13-14): the fall of Saul and the rise of an obedient Davidic king (expressive of Josianic hope), as well as nomisitic emphasis on obedience to YHWH's commands (DtrN) when oral prophecy and kings have ceased.

Knowing that 13:7b-15 is an insert (Chapter Three) increases understanding of the 1 Samuel 13-14 dynamic. What was a slow and gradual deterioration in Saul's characterization in 1 Samuel 13-14, becomes an outright rejection of Saul's line. Prior to the insertion of 13:7b-15 there was no turning point for Saul—only positive elements with hints of gradual decline from 1 Samuel 13, to 1 Samuel 14, and then to the eventual, later announcement of Saul's rejection in 1 Samuel 15. Though a later insertion, 13:7b-15 works well in its current location as the turning point introducing and focusing Saul's decline. First Samuel 13:7b-15 explains the gradual decline in Saul from earlier promise (9:1-10; 11) to his hesitancy, erratic imprudence, and negligible achievement in 1 Samuel 14.[496] In the final form, with the addition of 13:7b-15, it can be understood that in 1 Samuel 14:37 Saul's failure to get divine guidance is not merely because of Jonathan and the curse. It is because of the disobedience and rejection of 13:7b-15 (cf. 8:18). This implies Jonathan's innocence and the imprudence of Saul's oath.[497]

First Samuel 13:7b-15 changes how 1 Samuel 13-14 is read. It also colors how previous and subsequent chapters of 1 Samuel are read. In the light of 13:7b-15 some scholars reread the

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[496] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 249-250.

[497] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 180.

earlier positive presentation of Saul up to 13:7b-15 and note subtle hints against Saul's kingship: an "intrusive" author plants "seeds of irony," therefore expectations of Saul are moderated.[498] In this light it seems that the earlier Saul accounts (1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 11; 13-14) were not entirely positive but already contained hints of Saul's limitations, though it is difficult to discern what is earlier and what is from later coloring. The last chapters of Judges (17-21) also cast an early shadow on Saul by presenting a negative image of Gibeah and the Benjaminites.

The later prophetic insertion of 13:7b-15* colors the image presented of Saul before and after. The deuteronomistic insertion (13:13-14) expresses both Josianic optimism and an urgent call to nomistic obedience shaped in the wake of the 587 exile. This experience and reflection created an unfavorable view of monarchy and colored the image of Saul, who becomes a sign of that infidelity and failure. Only David's kingship escaped this negative coloration because of the promise of 2 Samuel 7, an idealized vision of David, as well as the hope that YHWH would not give up entirely on his people (1 Sam 12:22).

Awareness of the provenance of 13:7b-15* and 13:13-14 as prophetic and deuteronomistic respectively, explains the positive and rich description of David in 13:14 (deuteronomistic) compared with the bland description of David in 15:28 (prophetic). First Samuel 13:13-14 is later than much of 1 Samuel 15 (Chapter 3). This helps us grasp the inner direction and rich complexity of the final text beyond what is discoverable by the synchronic method alone.

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[498] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 84, e.g., Saul dividing the oxen and sending pieces through the land (1 Sam 11:7) contains a "hidden association" with Judges 19. Saul seeks Samuel but Samuel seeks David; Saul is anointed with only a vial of oil while David is anointed with the horn, etc.

In summary, the earlier Saul account (1 Sam 13-14) was given a negative focus with the introduction of 13:7b-15. First Samuel 13:7b-15* exhibits something of an older, pre-deuteronomistic, prophetic origin: the prophet rebukes the king. However, the final form as we have it, with the addition of the insert (13:13-14), is deuteronomistic (DtrN). The emphasis is on obedience to the prophet and cultic norms, though much more, to the commands of YHWH, to the "entire law" (cf. 2 Kgs 17:13).

4.6   First Samuel 13:7b-15: Emerging Theological Considerations

This section notes theological considerations arising in 13:7b-15 with a view to further discussion toward the end of the chapter and in Chapter Five. From the synchronic study the reader can identify important elements applicable to life lived before YHWH. These are: 1) trust in YHWH who delivers his people; 2) proper cult-covenantal observance; 3) obedience to the prophetic word; 4) obedience to the command of YHWH (the "entire law") as primary and the role of the David-like/YHWH-like heart in this; and 5) the importance of David. Cultic-covenantal fidelity and obedience to prophetically mediated (divine) commands are expressive of an underlying trust in YHWH of which David, not Saul, is the model.

Diachronically, several points can be made. The negative coloration of 13:7b-15 is broader than anti-Saul and pro-David. It is concerned with the monarchy in general, offering a critique and a meaningful response to its failure. The monarchy itself is "the stumbling block" that trips Saul and even David.[499] Only YHWH can be king in Israel. The account of Saul's rejection calls people beyond the monarchy and back to the covenant with YHWH. The insertion of 13:7b-15 explains Saul's rejection while exhorting readers to trustful, covenantal obedience.

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[499] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 84.

The Horeb covenant lingers in the background. Faced with impossible odds, Israel must "maintain covenant loyalty with God rather than rely on its own devices."[500] So it was against Egyptians, Philistines, and Amalekites. That it was so in exile too was the keen insight and main contribution of DtrN. Yet failure is not the last word. Saul is severely criticized but not demonized, leaving ajar a door of hope for repentance and return—though these are not suggested in 13:7b-15 as they are in 15:1-35.[501]

YHWH is mysteriously at work at all stages, guiding individuals and the course of history which unfolds at YHWH's prophetic word. The prophet-king dynamic is an expression of this. An indication of this subtle guidance is the holding back of names, especially from Saul. In the older story, YHWH guides Saul toward the as-yet-unnamed Samuel (9:6-13). In the later additions, Saul is told he will be replaced by the as-yet-unnamed David (13:14; cf. 15:28). Saul may have no idea where history is tending but the reader knows that YHWH guides it by his word.

4.7   General Conclusion for First Samuel 13:7b-15

Commentaries often present Saul's rejection as unjust, sporadic, whimsical, or biased. At one level, the rejection of Saul in 13:7b-15 is linked to a failure to comply with external, cultic, sacrifical observances. More profoundly, obedience itself is at stake—to the prophetic word, to the command of YHWH (later codified and fixed), and to a living Yahwistic fidelity. Saul's disobedience is indicative of something deeper, something interior expressed exteriorly. He does

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[500] Galvin, "First Samuel," 259.

[501] In 2 Samuel 21:14 Saul and Jonathan are buried in Benjamin in the tomb of Saul's father Kish. Burial in the tomb of one's fathers was a sign of favor. Saul is not presented as the worst king as were Jeroboam, Ahab, or Manasseh.

not have David's heart which is after the heart of YHWH and disposes him to trust and obedience. Saul's disobedience displays lack of Yahwistic trust in following Samuel's (or YHWH's) commands. Saul demonstrates presumption toward sacrificial practice and so to the covenant. In this sense he is negligent of the covenant.

Even without the insertion of 13:7b-15, Saul's decline proceeds through 1 Samuel 13-14. First Samuel 13:7b-15 contributes significantly and literarily in its present location. First Samuel 10:8 points forward to it and 15:1-35 presumes its existence and reflects on it. It serves as a catalyst to Saul's gradual decline, provides the turning point, and introduces David. It provides a cameo of the prophetic-king dynamic, of Josianic-Davidic hope tempered by the monarchy's failure embodied in Saul. It captures and highlights the deuteronomistic (DtrN) exhortation: obey the commands of YHWH. The prophet exhorts to deuteronomistic obedience.

4.8 First Samuel 15:1-35: Translation and Notes

1 Samuel said to Saul: "It was *me*[502] YHWH sent to anoint you as king over his people, over Israel, so now, obey the words[503] of YHWH. 2 Thus says YHWH of hosts: 'I will avenge[504] what Amalek did to Israel—how they [Amalekites] attacked[505] them

[502] An example of "the *affected* object . . . put at the beginning for the sake of emphasis." See Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 583, n. 155o. Vulg. captures this well: "*Me* misit Dominus . . ." (emphasis added). Alter notes, "Samuel, by placing the accusative first-person pronoun at the beginning of his speech . . . once again highlights his own centrality to this whole process." Only because Samuel, "God's unique delegate," anointed Saul can Saul claim to be king. Thus, "Samuel sets the stage rhetorically for the prerogative of cancelling Saul's kingship . . ." (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 321).

[503] Literally: "Listen to the voice of *the words of* YHWH" (*šəmaʿ ləqôl diḇrê YHWH*). Foresti argues *diḇrê* may have been inserted later as an attempt to avoid the anthropomorphism of "listen to the voice of YHWH." The phrase is applied to YHWH only three times in MT (Exod 15:26; Judg 2:20; Ps 81:12) (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 78-79). The addition of *diḇrê* may indicate a later stage when emphasis shifted to the importance of the "words." It may be attributed to the later deuteronomistic redactor DtrN (*Rejection of Saul*, 79). A translation of *diḇrê* is not present in LXX, indicating its later addition to MT: ἄκουε τῆς φωνῆς Κυρίου. Nor is it present in Vulg.: *audi vocem Domini*. The tendency away from anthropomorphism in MT may connect also with the ideology expressed in 15:29: YHWH is not like human beings. This fits with my argument that both 15:1 and 15:29 have later DtrN retouching.

[504] *pāqaḏtî*. Köhler interprets its use here as "call to account," "ask for vindication," or "avenge" (773). Foresti notes that the verb has the meaning "to punish," i.e., when the verb "governs as object terms designating delicts" (*Rejection of Saul*, 94). NRSV: "I will punish"; Alter: "I have made a reckoning of . . ." (*Ancient Israel*, 321).

[Israelites] on their way up from Egypt. 3 So now, go strike Amalek and put under the ban[506] all they have. Do not spare them but kill man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

4 Saul summoned the people and counted them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah. 5 Saul came to the city of Amalek and lay in ambush[507] in the valley. 6 And Saul said to the Kenites: "Go! Leave and go down from among Amalek lest I include you with him for you had mercy on all the Israelites on their ascent from Egypt." So the Kenites left from among Amalek. 7 Saul struck Amalek from Havilah as far as Shur which is before Egypt. 8 He took Agag King of Amalek alive but he put all the people under the ban by the edge of the sword. 9 And Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the flocks and the cattle, the fatlings and the lambs and everything of value: they were not willing to put them under the ban. But all the property that was despicable or worthless, that they put under the ban.

10 The word of YHWH came to Samuel saying: 11 "I repent that I made Saul king for he has turned away from me and did not carry out my words." Samuel was angry and cried to YHWH all night long. 12 Samuel arose early in the morning to meet Saul and Samuel was informed that Saul had come to Carmel, there erected a monument[508] to himself, and had turned,[509] crossed over, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 Samuel came to Saul and Saul said to him: "May you be blessed by YHWH! I have carried out the word of YHWH." 14 Samuel said: "Then what is this sound of the flock in my ears or the sound of the cattle that I hear?" 15 Saul said: "From the Amalekites they took them, for[510] the people spared the best of the flocks and the cattle in order to sacrifice to YHWH your God, but the remainder we put under the ban." 16 Samuel said to Saul: "Be quiet! . . . that I may tell you what YHWH told me in the night." And he (Saul) said to him (Samuel): "Speak."

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[505] *śām lô badderek̠.* Köhler interprets this broadly as "set up against" or "attack" and specifically here as "set oneself in the way against" (920); setting ambushes against Israel (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 321).

[506] *wəhaḥăramtem.* Putting "under the ban" brings out more clearly the *cultic* aspect of the practice since the term is introduced about Amalek only in 1 Samuel 15. Translating as "ban" differentiates from more general language used of Amalek in Exodus 17:14 ("I will utterly destroy" [*māḥōh 'emḥeh*]) and Deuteronomy 25:19 ("you will destroy" [*timḥeh*]). The "ban" highlights the *cultic* connotation over that of violence. See also Dominik Markl on preference for translating as *ban* in "Deuteronomy," in *The Paulist Biblical Commentary*, ed. José Enrique Aguilar Chiu et al. (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 147-193, 151.

[507] Many interpret this as from *rîb,* suggesting contending against or attacking (Köhler, 889). More likely it is the hiphil of *'rb* meaning "to lay in ambush" (Köhler, 82), e.g., NRSV/Alter/JPS (2014). Foresti suggests 15:5b involves giving the Kenites time to retire and so preparing for the insertion of 15:6 (*Rejection of Saul*, 47).

[508] Following Jouön and Muraoka *hinnēh* is translated here as: ". . . *there* erected a monument for himself" (*Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 565, no. 154c). This self-memorialization contrasts starkly with the only altar he built (14:35).

[509] Many regard this *wayyissōḇ* as a *crux interpretum*, suggesting its elimination as "a topographical 'impossibility.'" It "contradicts the trajectory followed by the king" (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 56).

[510] *'ăšer* can have "a weak causal sense" (Jouön and Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 638, no. 170e).

17 Samuel said: "Even if you are small in your own eyes, are you not head of the tribes of Israel and YHWH anointed you king over Israel?[511] 18 And YHWH commissioned you saying: 'Go and put the sinners, the Amalekites, under the ban and fight against them until they are destroyed.' 19 Now why did you not obey YHWH? Instead, you swooped down on the booty and did what is evil in the eyes of YHWH."

20 Saul said to Samuel[512]: "I have obeyed YHWH and have fulfilled the commission on which YHWH sent me. I have brought Agag, King of Amalek, and I have put Amalek under the ban. 21 But the people took from the booty, sheep and cattle, the best of what was to be put under the ban, in order to sacrifice to YHWH your God at Gilgal."

22 Then Samuel said:

"Does YHWH take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices
as in obeying YHWH?
For to obey is better than sacrifice;
to heed [better] than the fat of rams.[513]

23 For rebellion[514] is as the sin of divination,
and presumption[515] as iniquity and idolatry.
Since you have rejected the word of YHWH,
so he has rejected you as king."

24 Saul said to Samuel: "I have sinned for I have transgressed what YHWH spoke[516] and your words for I feared the people and obeyed them. 25 Now then, please forgive my sin and return with me so that I may worship YHWH."

26 Samuel said to Saul: "I will not return with you for you have rejected the word of YHWH so YHWH has rejected you from being king over Israel."

27 As Samuel turned to go he (Saul) seized the edge of his robe and it was torn.[517] 28 Samuel said to him: "YHWH has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and given

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[511] Cf. 1 Sam 9:21a. The particle *'im* may be taken in the concessive sense with protasis and apodosis (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 37-38). Translation as a statement is possible: "Even if you are small in your own eyes, you are head of the tribes of Israel and YHWH anointed you king over Israel." Translating as a question is preferable and interprets more fully the conjunction of *hălô'* and *'im qāṭōn*.

[512] *'ăšer* is used here to precede and indicate direct speech (Köhler, 98).

[513] The *lə* "has almost no value when it introduces a subject infinitive . . ." (Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 437, no. 124m).

[514] *Merî* can be rendered as *Widerspenstigkeit*, *Widerspruch*; rebellion or gainsaying (Köhler, 566).

[515] *hap̄ṣar.* Here the hiphil infinitive absolute acts as subject in a "rather rare" usage (Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 420, no. 123b). Its sense is *Widerspenstigkeit* or insubordination (Köhler, 772).

[516] Literally: "I have transgressed the *mouth* of YHWH."

[517] In the light of what immediately follows, the niphal could be regarded as a divine passive. YHWH, through the prophetic word, is the real agent.

it to a companion of yours who is better than you. 29 For indeed the Glory of Israel does not repent deceitfully,[518] for he is not a human being to repent."

30 He (Saul) said: "I have sinned but now please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel and return with me that I may worship YHWH your God."[519] 31 So Samuel returned after Saul and Saul worshipped YHWH.[520]

32 Samuel said: "Bring Agag King of Amalek to me." And Agag came to him cautiously.[521] Agag thought: "Surely the bitterness of death has passed!" 33 But Samuel said: "As your sword made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women." And he sliced Agag to pieces before YHWH at Gilgal.

34 Samuel went to Ramah and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. 35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death.[522] Indeed Samuel mourned over Saul and YHWH repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

4.9 First Samuel 15:1-35: Synchronic Commentary

4.9.1 Introduction

Important considerations for synchronic study are identified. First, the significance of

Amalek and YHWH's steadfastness is examined, followed, second, by the distinction between

ḥērem and sacrifice. The third consideration involves a longer section on the importance of Agag

to the narrative, taking account of related questions such as different levels of *ḥērem*; Saul's

sparing of the Kenites; the gradual unfolding and unraveling of Saul's defense; his sparing of

Agag as endorsement of royal privilege; and Saul's own view of kingship in Israel. This section

is followed, fourth, by Samuel's prophetic authority, and fifth, by the emerging primacy of

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[518] Translated here as hendiadys. See later discussion in synchronic and diachronic sections.

[519] Unlike in 15:25 where the clear purpose clause demands the final meaning, "*so that* I may worship YHWH," here the context demands that final meaning (Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 400, no. 199m).

[520] Strangely Alter writes: "Samuel turned back *from* Saul . . ." and "All English versions render this, erroneously, to indicate that Samuel . . . accompanied Saul . . ." (*Ancient Israel,* 327, no. 31). Alter is unconvincing here. The passage is prophetic and the power of repentance is signified by Samuel's turning back with Saul.

[521] *ma'ăḏannōṯ*. Köhler suggests the adverb "reluctantly" (544). Agag is apprehensive, unclear as to why he was spared and presuming the threat of death has passed. It is translated as lightly (cheerfully), delicately, or even "with mincing steps" (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 327).

[522] This unusual expression could "have a simple pleonastic-emphatic function, for saying 'never.'" It directs the reader to 1 Samuel 28 (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 131). Saul and Samuel meet again in 19:18-20:1, attributed to the later DtrN which could explain the inconsistency (*Rejection of Saul*, 153-154).

obedience. Sixth, includes a return to the theme of YHWH's steadfast, covenant commitment to Israel (15:29), responding to Saul's failure with renewed initiative in David (15:28), and dealing especially with the question of YHWH's repenting or not repenting.

4.9.2 (1) The Significance of Amalek; an Ancient Covenant Duty; YHWH's Steadfastness

First Samuel 15 offers a prophetic presentation of key covenantal memories (Chapter Three). YHWH will punish (*pāqaḏtî*) Amalek's assault on Israel (15:2). Use of the verb (*pqḏ*), along with references to Amalek, Shur, and Egypt (15:7), evoke the journey from Egypt to Canaan and the Horeb covenant, as well as divine accompaniment (e.g., Exod 3:16; 4:31; 13:19, etc). The reference to *ḥeseḏ* on the part of the Kenites recalls YHWH's *ḥeseḏ* to Israel, to thousands of those who keep his commands (Exod 20:6; 34:6-7; Deut 5:10, etc.). First Samuel 12:8 already referred to Israel's exodus from Egypt. Saul's commission in 1 Samuel 15:1-3 is, in the light of Exodus 17:8-16 and Deuteronomy 25:17-19, part of the unfinished business of exodus, covenant, and settlement. Saul is entrusted with an important covenant-linked duty. YHWH identifies with his people and through Saul, YHWH would punish Amalek: "*I* will punish (*pāqaḏtî*) what Amalek did to Israel . . ." (15:2). Saul was commissioned to redress this injustice (15:1-3), to execute YHWH's "fierce wrath" (28:18), deeply rooted in the YHWH-Israel bond. That YHWH did not forget his promise to avenge Amalek's ancient attack on Israel evokes YHWH's steadfastness (*ḥeseḏ*). From 15:2-3, it is clear that YHWH, Glory of Israel, keeps his word and does not repent deceitfully (cf. 15:29). The destruction of Amalek pertains to Saul's kingly role as "head of the tribes of Israel" and "king of Israel" (1 Sam 15:1, 17-18, 26, 35). YHWH would not establish Saul's kingship because of his failure to obey in this covenantal responsibility.

4.9.3   (2) Distinction between *Ḥērem* and Sacrifice

The original purpose of the ban (*ḥērem*) in the ancient world was to discourage profiteering and plunder in military campaigns.[523] The final chapter of Leviticus links "holiness" words to *ḥērem*: "everything that is *ḥērem* is utterly holy [holy of holies] [*qōḏeš qāḏāšîm*] to Yahweh (Lev 27:28b). Thus *ḥērem* is the limiting instance of consecration." Other people or animals set aside or made holy can be redeemed but "nothing devoted as *ḥērem* can ever be redeemed."[524] The *ḥērem* implies being made over to YHWH through death. This understanding highlights the gravity of Saul and the people sparing what should have been irrevocably and irredeemably placed under the ban as holy to YHWH. Covenantal inattentiveness is shown in the failure to distinguish between the explicitly commanded *ḥērem* and voluntary sacrifices. Worse, Saul and the people spared Agag and what was profitable and gave what was "despicable or worthless" to YHWH in the *ḥērem* (15:9). They hoped to gain from covenantal disobedience but were not meant to profit from the spoils of war.[525]

Commentators often neglect to distinguish *ḥērem* and sacrifice, a distinction important in understanding Saul's disobedience.[526] Saul exchanged the *ḥērem*, demanded by YHWH's word (15:1-3), for sacrifices of his own choosing (15:15, 21). With the *ḥērem* there was no question of selection (15:3). There was a clear distinction between the ban (*ḥērem*) performed on the spot, and sacrifice (*zbḥ*) performed later at a shrine. The *ḥērem* was specified and decreed, giving God what belonged to God: it involved obedience. Sacrifice, apart from those specifically regulated,

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[523] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 153.

[524] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 169. Generally Leviticus 17-26 and 27 are associated with D (Deuteronomistic source), Ezekiel, or P (Priestly source): a later date is given in exile or post-exile (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 224).

[525] Galvin, "First Samuel," 260.

[526] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 49. Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 127: Saul's fault in 1 Samuel 15 rests on "the very fine theological quibble of the distinction between what is devoted to YHWH and what is sacrificed."

was giving voluntarily to God from what belonged to humans. This understanding is borne out later in 1 Samuel 15 where sacrifice, in contrast to *ḥērem*, is presented as discretionary (15:21). Samuel is able to contrast directly obedience with sacrifice (15:22), what God wants of Saul over and against what Saul wants to give to God. Obedience to the commanded *ḥērem* is superior to one's choice of sacrifice. Saul himself articulates this distinction between *ḥērem* and sacrifice in 15:21, indicating he understood it, leading to his formal condemnation (15:22-23). Saul chose sacrifice over obedience (15:22) and manifested presumption akin to idolatry (15:23). Rather than obeying YHWH with the *ḥērem*, or even offering the sacrifices as supposedly intended, Saul's first act after his encounter with Amalek was to erect a monument to himself at Carmel (15:12).

With Saul's failure to complete his mission, Samuel completes it by hewing Agag to pieces "before YHWH at Gilgal" (15:33). As king and military leader, Saul could perform the *ḥērem* (1 Sam 15:3) but, consistent with 13:7b-15, should not offer sacrifice. Worship was regulated by cultic laws (1 Sam 13:11, 13; 15:25, 30), and was Samuel's domain (15:25, 30, 32-33). That Saul was commanded to perform the *ḥērem*, but Samuel offered what is presented in terms of the "sacrifice" of Agag, underlines this distinction. Time had elapsed since the battle therefore it was no longer a question of *ḥērem* but of sacrifice. Appropriate to sacrifice, this was done at a later time, by a designated person (Samuel), in a sacred place, i.e., "before YHWH at Gilgal" (15:32-33). The verb employed presents the action as a sacrificial offering: "Bring me (*ngš*) Agag" (15:32). In the Septuagint, too, Samuel's hewing of Agag is presented in terms of sacrificial slaughter.[527] The verb used for Agag's execution (*wayšassēp*) is a hapax in the

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[527] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 269.

Hebrew Bible.[528] It means "cut" or "hewed." My translation as "sliced" attempts to echo the onomatopoeia of the sword swishing, splicing, slicing, which is what I suggest determined the verb choice (*šsp*) in the Masoretic Text.

4.9.4   (3) Literary Artistry in Narrative Development

In this section five interconnected elements are dealt with, illustrating how various aspects point to a substantial (prophetic) underlying narrative unity.

4.9.4.1   *Different Understandings of* Ḥērem

Three levels of *ḥērem* are identifiable. The *ḥērem* pertains to 1) humans (15:13); 2) humans *and* animals (15:3); 3) humans, animals, *and* property (15:9, 19, 21).   Saul's repeated insistence that he had done what was demanded (15:13, 20) raises the question: have Saul and Samuel different understandings of *ḥērem*? This question may help explain Saul's insistence, Samuel's intransigence, and how both speak past each other until finally Saul concedes.

Various formulations of *ḥērem* practice are found, varying between incomplete and complete. Key examples are listed here: Deuteronomy 13:15-17; 20:10-14 (incomplete), 15-17 (complete);[529] Joshua 6:17-21 (all people and animals *except* Rahab and vessels for YHWH);[530] 8:2, 24, 29 (at Ai all inhabitants are destroyed [8:24] *except* spoil and livestock which may be taken as booty; Joshua kills the king of Ai); 10:16-27 (Joshua kills the five kings).

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[528] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 180.

[529] Foresti claims that Deut 20:15-17 is "an explicative gloss," a secondary deuteronomistic development on Deut 20:10-14. Deut 20:10-14 presents a less strict form of *ḥērem* while 20:15-17 demands total destruction of the cities they were to conquer. Both texts are in the timeframe of DtrH (*Rejection of Saul*, 120-121). Nielsen and Preuss offer some support for this development though no strong consensus is noted in Campbell and O'Brien's developmental summary of Deut 20:1-20 (*Unfolding*, 74).

[530] Part of an expansion or "compositional adaptation" (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 122).

Van Seters justifies Saul's sparing of Agag using Joshua 8:29 and 10:16-27.[531] His argument is unconvincing since in Joshua 8:2 *ḥērem* is not characterized as total: an explicit exception was made for animals. Additionally, Van Seters argues that there was a delay in executing the kings in Joshua 8 and 10.[532] His argument is weak. The King of Ai was killed and hanged on a tree "until evening," implying no delay in the performance of the *ḥērem* (Josh 8:29). So too the five kings were hanged on trees "until evening," implying the same day and no delay (10:26-27). In contrast, in 1 Samuel 15:12 it is the following day at the earliest when Samuel confronts Saul. Agag is still alive, implying that Saul delayed significantly and therefore failed to carry out the *ḥērem*. In any case, Saul's instructions in 1 Samuel 15 were clear: the *ḥērem* was total (15:3, 9, 11, 14, 19). Van Seters's downplaying of the distinction between *ḥērem* and sacrifice is advantageous to his own hypothesis: "Does the narrator wish us to construe the whole event as a parody on deuteronomistic law?"[533]

A question arises involving synchrony and diachrony. While both dimensions may be appreciated in the final form of the text, are the different levels of *ḥērem* identifiable in 1 Samuel 15 indicative of diachronic issues behind the formation of the text or do they indicate literary artistry and effect—intensification as part of storytelling? Focussing on the hitherto unnoticed prominence of Agag, I will argue for the latter. Twice Saul spares people: the Kenites (15:6) and Agag (15:8-9). He makes a prudent decision about the Kenites, then a puzzling decision about Agag. Only *after* 15:20, the admission to Samuel that Saul spared Agag, does the full force of YHWH's rejection fall on Saul. Samuel's realization that Saul spared Agag is the turning point

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[531] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 127.

[532] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 127.

[533] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 127.

of the passage (15:20). Agag embodies Amalek as a people, just as Saul embodies Israel. Before investigating further the sparing of Agag, the sparing of the Kenites will be examined briefly. These are connected. In the sparing of the Kenites, expectations are raised and the impression given that Saul responds swiftly and rightly to his commission. In the sparing of Agag it is clear that Saul has completely failed.

4.9.4.2   Saul's Prudent Interpretation of Divine Command (the Kenites [15:6])

Saul's swift, extensive victory over Amalek and the considerable resources at his disposal serve only to highlight his disobedience. Unlike in 13:7b-15, Saul is under no pressure. That no count is given for the Amalek army indicates the unimportance of the battle.[534] The focus is on the *ḥērem* and on Saul's obedience. In a promising beginning Saul acts immediately with no delay between command and execution as there was between 1 Samuel 10:7-8 and 13:7b-15. Saul's warning to the Kenites (15:6) indicates his determination to perform the *ḥērem.*

The seemingly incidental sparing of the Kenites in 15:6 plays a role in the narrative. It highlights the covenantal motif behind the Amalek-Israel tension and the need for the king to support the YHWH-Israel bond against the enemies of Israel. The covenantal motif is accentuated by the use of *ḥeseḏ*, the Kenite's compassion for Israel as they came up from Egypt (15:6). Now Saul reciprocates. The *ḥērem* is presented as a function of something greater than ethnic cleansing or slaughter. It is at the service of fidelity to the Horeb covenant. Neither

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[534] Fokkelman sees hyperbole in the number of Saul's troops and the geographical extension of his victory (15:7; cf. 1 Sam 27:8ff.; Gen 25:18) (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 88).

YHWH, Samuel, nor the narrator expresses difficulty with Saul's initiative in sparing the

Kenites, indicating it was praiseworthy.[535]

First Samuel 15:6 may be an addition, for the text moves easily from 15:5 to 15:7.

Synchronically, 15:6 changes the way what follows is read. To Saul's credit, it indicates that he

is capable of compassion or reciprocal *ḥeseḏ*. On the other hand, it shows that Saul is capable of

prudent and subtle distinctions and decisions, and grasps covenantal responsibilities. Such

awareness accentuates his guilt and unwillingness (*lō' 'āḇû*) to obey (15:7-9).

4.9.4.3   Agag: the Gradual Unmasking of Saul's Evasion, Deflection, and Disobedience

Agag is pivotal in the unmasking of Saul's deception. Saul defensively claims, "I have

brought Agag, King of Amalek, and I have put Amalek under the ban" (15:20). Saul's statement

in 15:20 is contradictory and puzzling. Amalek cannot have been put under the ban if its king

still lives. Agag was not mentioned by Samuel nor was Saul commanded to bring Agag. Why

would Saul mention Agag first in 15:20? A clever process of deception on the part of Saul is

built up gradually and intentionally in the narrative.

In 15:8 Agag is introduced for the first time and key information is provided: Agag is

King of Amalek. First Samuel 15:9 presumes 15:8 since 15:9 gives Agag's name but no

introduction.[536] In 15:8 Agag is spared by Saul *alone* while Agag's entire people is put under the

ban. The next verse (15:9) builds on this: Saul *and the people* spared Agag, the animals, and

everything else of value (15:9). Either Saul and the people together bear responsibility for the

sparing of Agag, animals, and valuables, or Saul spared Agag (15:8) and the people spared the

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[535] I disagree with Fokkelman's point that since the Kenites were not part of YHWH's instruction, "Saul makes himself God's equal by speaking in just such sovereign terms" (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 91).

[536] It is unlikely that 15:8 is a later insertion based on Joshua 8:23a and that 1 Sam 15:9 is part of the older account as Foresti argues (*Rejection of Saul*, 50).

animals and valuables. In 15:13 Saul announces he has carried out the word of YHWH. From there, the story gradually unfolds—and unravels. Twice Saul spares people, Kenites and Agag (15:6, 7-8). Then twice Saul 1) declares he has obeyed regarding Agag, 2) blames the people, and 3) deflects by associating himself with what he thought would appease Samuel, i.e., what should have happened or what Samuel had not yet condemned.

All Samuel knows from YHWH is that Saul did not carry out YHWH's words (15:11). Samuel does not yet know the extent of Saul's disobedience. It is revealed to him in three stages (hearing, seeing, and telling): first, through what Samuel hears (the animals); second, through what he sees (the booty); and third, through what Saul tells him (Agag), as Saul defensively and inadvertently blurts out that he spared Agag.

Samuel first hears the animals and singles out Saul's sparing of the animals for criticism (15:14). Saul blames the people and associates himself with whatever partial compliance occurred. Saul evades responsibility and replies that the *people* spared them ("From the Amalekites *they* took them, for *the people* spared them . . ." [15:15]). Saul's response could be true under 15:8 but contradicts the collective responsibility of 15:9. The ambiguity leaves the reader wondering about Saul's veracity at this point. In an attempt at self-justification Saul immediately deflects, associating himself with the partial fulfilment of the mandated *ḥērem*: "the remainder *we* put under the ban (*heḥĕramnû*)" (15:15). Saul's attempt to appease Samuel is also evident in his references to YHWH as *Samuel's* God. "YHWH *your* God" occurs three times in Saul's speech to Samuel (1 Sam 15:15, 21, 30).

Second, Samuel then sees the considerable booty and accuses Saul of swooping greedily on it like a vulture (15:19 [*ʿyṭ*]). Saul again protests his obedience and again deflects by

assuming responsibility for what Samuel has *not* yet mentioned, i.e., the sparing of Agag (15:20).

Saul blames the people a second time: "*I have brought Agag, King of Amalek*, and I have put

Amalek under the ban. But *the people* took from the booty, sheep and cattle, the best of what was

to be put under the ban, in order to sacrifice to YHWH your God at Gilgal" (15:20-21). In both

instances of Samuel's accusations, the sparing of animals and booty, Saul recognizes his part in

what Samuel criticizes, but shifts the focus to something Samuel has not yet criticized.

Third, in his self-justifying bluster Saul reveals to Samuel something he did not yet know,

i.e., the sparing of Agag (15:20). Samuel and Saul had not discussed this and YHWH had not

revealed it to Samuel (15:11). Samuel criticizes the sparing of animals and booty because he

heard the former and saw the latter. Samuel did not know about the sparing of Agag until Saul's

admission and did not see Agag until Samuel formally summoned him (15:32). Agag becomes

the focus of Saul's disobedience, the catalyst for Saul's condemnation, and the lightning rod for

Samuel's wrath. The admission on the part of Saul was inadvertent. There is no reason why Saul

might have thought it a good thing in Samuel's eyes. Saul either slips it in as he rehearses

positive actions ("I have gone on the mission"; "I have brought Agag"; "I have destroyed the

Amalekites" [15:20]) or, as Sternberg suggests, Saul hopes to smuggle this bad thing in between

"positive neighbors."[537] It betrays the desperation of one cornered and the blustering

inadvertence of attempted cover-up. Saul is not a clever liar. His story unravels. He condemns

himself out of his own mouth ("I have brought Agag" [15:20]).

The Agag theme is present through most of 1 Samuel 15 and considerable narrative skill

is evident in the development of Saul's deflections and denials and Samuel's eventual

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[537] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 509.

uncovering of the truth. Even in the gravity of what was spared there is build-up from animals, to booty, to Agag. Sparing animals was reprehensible but was ostensibly for later sacrifice. Sparing booty could only have been for self-aggrandizement. Sparing Agag was worst of all. As long as Agag lived, Amalek lived unavenged, and Saul failed in obedience. This explains the dramatic slaughter of Agag by Samuel at the conclusion (15:32-33), avenging God's wrath against Amalek (28:18). This informational nugget dropped defensively by Saul (15:20) confirms to Samuel Saul's utter disobedience and turns the account of 1 Samuel 15 from rebuke to rejection. Saul's revelation to Samuel that he spared Agag is the turning point, the last straw. Saul condemns himself and reveals to Samuel the extent of his disobedience: in sparing Agag, he spared Amalek. Like David in 2 Samuel 12:7, *Saul is condemned out of his own mouth* by inadvertently admitting the worst. This point is missed by most interpreters. In both the Samuel-Saul and Nathan-David encounters the prophet challenges the king. Both passages use the language of YHWH "anoint[ing] you king over Israel" (15:1; 17; 2 Sam 12:7). Both refer to the next king (or usurper) and both use similar terms (*lərē'ăḵā* [1 Sam 15:28]; *lərē'êḵā* [2 Sam 12:11]). Both also use the verb "to spare" (*ḥml*, *wayyaḥmōl*, 1 Sam 15:9; 2 Sam 12:4).[538] Saul spared Agag when he should not have; David did not spare the lamb Bathsheba when he should have. All of this is suggests common prophetic interest and a common source (Chapter Three).

The Agag passages are an integral part of the narrative and unlikely to be secondary, post-prophetic additions. Saul's response to Samuel unmasks his disobedience and captures the psychology of evasion and deception. This view is supported by Samuel's use of the word *merî* to define Saul's sin (15:23). *Merî* can be rendered as *Widerspenstigkeit* or *Widerspruch*: rebellion

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[538] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 490.

or gainsaying.[539] The sense is obstinacy, stubbornness, willfulness, contradiction, opposition. Rebellion in the sense of *gainsaying* fits well with the view that Saul, deflecting and on the defensive, is dissimulating and deceiving. The misunderstanding is not based on different diachronic understandings of *ḥērem*, but on Saul's gainsaying and Samuel's determination to uncover the truth. This insight that Agag is central to the narrative and its unfolding, and that 15:20 is in fact the turning point of Saul's gainsaying, has been missed my most commentators. It is key to understanding the Saul-Samuel dynamic here.

Appreciation of the dialogue around the figure of Agag in 1 Samuel 15 and its turning point in 15:20 provides a lens through which to view the Saul-Samuel dynamic. In my view, Meir Sternberg is one of the few to devote adequate attention to the Saul-Samuel encounter here, viewing it as one of the Bible's finest dialogues: "one of the most intricate pieces of persuasion in the Bible."[540] Sternberg's account is the only one that comes close to reflecting my analysis of 1 Samuel 15 but even he does not identify 15:20 as the turning point.[541] As Saul "gets increasingly entangled and demoralized" Samuel "gets straightforward and resolute."[542] Saul is not only disobedient, but confused, deceptive, shifts the blame to his own people, incriminates himself, and shows himself unfit to be king. He is incapable of an immediate or uncluttered confession of sin like David's (2 Sam 12:13). In both of Saul's attempts at confession, he demands something else (15:24-25; 30). Samuel is not the manipulative figure painted by Polzin, Gunn, Miscall or Van Seters (Chapters Two and Three) against whom Saul never had a chance.

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[539] Köhler, 566.

[540] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 489.

[541] Sternberg, "Ideology, Rhetoric, Poetics," Chapter 13, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 482-515. Campbell touches on it briefly in his account of 1 Samuel 15 and Saul's "evasion" (*1 Samuel*, 154-155).

[542] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 511.

Rather, Samuel is one who seeks to do right by YHWH and by Saul, who struggles to appropriate and then implement YHWH's will (even against Samuel's own will), who weeps for Saul in the night (15:11), and continues to regret Saul's demise (15:35; 16:1). In this masterful dialogue Samuel's judgment is "wrung from him" only after he has inquired, checked, and double-checked "before delivering the final blow."[543]

Great literary artistry is evident in the gradual unfolding of events (hearing, seeing, telling), the skilful kneading of three ḥērem levels, the increasing seriousness in what is spared (animals, booty, Agag), the build-up, suspense, drama, unmasking, revelation, judgment and rejection. This narrative mastery suggests great skill on the part of the prophetic redactors and suggests that forensic diachronic dissection of the text is unnecessary. Synchronic attention obviates the necessity of diachronic scrutiny.[544]

4.9.4.4   Saul's Sparing of Agag: an Expression of Royal Privilege

Building on the developing gulf between Saul and the people in 1 Samuel 14, the chasm between king and people grows in 1 Samuel 15. Saul distances himself from his own people by shifting the blame to them for sparing the animals and booty. Until Samuel's intervention, King Agag, spared by Saul, is treated very differently from his people who are slaughtered.

No reason is given for sparing Agag. The most obvious is that Agag, like Saul, was king. The act epitomizes royal privilege. It is an elitist decision and elicits suspicion. In Chapter Two I reflected on how David's twofold sparing of Saul is interpreted with much suspicion in

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[543] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 505.

[544] Some argue that 15:32-35 is largely secondary *along with added references to Agag and Gilgal through 15:1-35* (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 58-62). A. Campbell sees it as coming perhaps from prophetic circles at the Gilgal shrine and then taken over by the Prophetic Record (Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, 136).

commentary whereas Saul's sparing of Agag is not. Saul's sparing of Agag demonstrates the tendency of kings to place themselves above the command of YHWH in contrast to the deuteronomic vision of the king as first to obey, the model Israelite because of his internalization of the law (Deut 17:14-20).[545] Deuteronomy 17:14-20 presents the antidote to Saul's disobedience.

Behind the account of the sparing of Agag lies an implicit criticism of the tyrannical model of kingship as experienced: "a king in the ancient east, including Israel, was not just a neutral administrator but was a mighty ideological-religious center of power, exerting great influence over the worldview and way of life of every citizen."[546] Veijola applauds the later deuteronomist (DtrN) for resisting this vision and purifying it. This explains why the later deuteronomistic editors were content to take over the prophetic 1 Samuel 15 and use it in their history with minimal rewriting.

Only YHWH can be king in Israel. Monarchy breeds privilege, disobedience, and idolatry. The sparing of Agag is part of the critique, not just of Saul, but of monarchy in general, its lawlessness, its privileges, and its alienation from YHWH. The disobedient sparing of Agag, enemy of Israel, along with all that was good, contrasts strikingly with what was given to YHWH. What was placed under the ban and given to YHWH was all that was "despicable or worthless" (15:9). This vivid image captures, at the beginning of the monarchy, the cultic violations symptomatic of covenantal rupture that would constitute much of the history of the kings. Here, Saul's dereliction of duty in covenantal inattentiveness is revealed as contempt— giving YHWH only what was "despicable and worthless"—a potent image of the monarchy's

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[545] Clifford, *Deuteronomy*, 100-101.

[546] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122, my translation.

lack of care for the covenant it was meant to serve and guard. Saul is indulgent toward Israel's enemy but disloyal to YHWH. The judgment of Saul in particular and of kings in general is questioned here. Agag, identified later as ancestor of Haman, enemy of Israel (Esther 3:1ff.), is honored, while all that was despicable or worthless (*nəmibzāh wənāmēs*) is given to YHWH (15:9). More broadly, fraternization with foreign kings—evoked in the Saul-Agag relationship—generally led to idolatry and disaster.[547] In any case, Saul's own view of kingship in Israel was defective.

4.9.4.5 *Saul's View of Kingship: Saul's People or YHWH's People*

Saul's disobedience and mean-spirited tokenism toward YHWH in the *ḥērem* is an indication of how he views his kingship. Saul's use of the phrase "the elders of *my* people . . . Israel" (15:30) directly contrasts with Samuel's assertion that the people are YHWH's ("It was me YHWH sent to anoint you as king over *his* people, over Israel . . ." [15:1]). The people are not to be numbered since they are YHWH's, not the king's (15:4). First Samuel 12, with its call to obedience and reminder that YHWH is king, echoes in the background: kingship failed because of forgetfulness that "YHWH your God was your king" (12:12).[548] Saul can reign only in YHWH's name as his vassal. In 1 Samuel 9:16-17 "my [YHWH's] people" occurs four times in the context of Saul's anointing and is covenantal language. Samuel's words to Saul in 15:17-19 (cf. 10:1) specify the nature of Israelite kingship: "*YHWH* anointed you king over Israel. *YHWH* sent you on a mission . . . Why did you not obey the voice of *YHWH* . . . ?" The words leave Saul unaffected or unconvinced. In the same breath he speaks of "*my* people . . . Israel" he

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[547] E.g., 1 Kings 11:1-4 (Solomon); 2 Kings 16:7-16 (Ahaz); 20:12-19 (Hezekiah).

[548] We can note connections between 1 Samuel 12 and 15. Both refer to the Exodus, Israel's coming up from Egypt (12:8 and 15:2), and obedience and kingship in general (12:14-15 and 15:11, 19, 22-23, 24).

refers to "YHWH *your* [Samuel's] God" (15:30), distancing himself for the third time in 1

Samuel 15 from Samuel's God (15:15, 21, 30). Saul never speaks of "*our* God" or "*my* God."

The last words of Saul to Samuel ("*my* people . . . *your* God" [15:30]) reveal Saul's view of

kingship. His words indicate Saul's estrangement from YHWH—very different from the

intimate, personal, and conversational relationship of Samuel or David with YHWH. This topic

will be returned to in Chapter Five where the *relational* aspect of the YHWH-Israel covenant is

briefly explored.

4.9.5   (4) Samuel as Prophet: Word of Samuel as Word of YHWH

First Samuel 15:1 begins literally with: "*Me* (*'ōṯî*) [Samuel] YHWH sent to anoint you

king . . ." Samuel is presented as the direct object of YHWH's action and as YHWH's

instrument. Samuel speaks with the "voice of YHWH" (*qôl YHWH*, 15:1, 19, 20, 22); "word(s)

of YHWH" (15:1 [*diḇrê*]; 10, 13, 23, 26 [*dəḇar*]; 11 [*dəḇārāy*]); and "mouth of YHWH" (*pî*,

15:24). In contrast, Saul's view is diametrically opposed to God's. First Samuel 15:11b has

YHWH say: "my words he did not carry out" (*'eṯ dəḇārāy lō' hēqîm*) while 15:13d has Saul

insist: "I have carried out the word of YHWH" (*hăqîmōṯî 'eṯ dəḇar YHWH*). After Saul's failure

to perform the *ḥērem*, Samuel revealed to Saul what YHWH said in the night (15:16).[549] Twice

Saul formally affirms that what Samuel says to him (15:17-19, 22-23) is truly the word of

YHWH (15:16, 24).

First Samuel 15 highlights the centrality of obedience to YHWH's words expressed by

Samuel. To "obey" is used six times, five times with YHWH's words, command, voice, or

YHWH himself as object (*šəma' ləqôl* [15:1]; *lō' šāma'tā bəqôl* [15:19]; *šāma'tî bəqôl* [15:20];

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[549] A single instance early in the night (15:10) leading to Samuel's crying all night (15:11), or a second message delivered much later in the night in response to Samuel's nocturnal crying (15:16).

kišmōaʿbəqôl YHWH [15:22]; *šəmōaʿ* [15:22]). Only once is it used with the people as object (*wāʾešmaʿ bəqôlām* [15:24]). Other words signifying obedience or compliance are also used. To "carry out" or "establish" the words of YHWH is used twice (*hēqîm* [15:11]; *hăqimōṯî* [15:13]). The synonym "to give heed" (*ləhaqšîḇ*) is also used (15:22). The final use of an "obey" word in 1 Samuel 15 identifies Saul's failure when he eventually confesses: "I have sinned for I have transgressed what YHWH spoke (mouth [*pî*]) and your words" (15:24). While in 13:7b-15 (cf. 10:8) it may have been possible to distinguish between the command of YHWH and "your [Samuel's] words" (15:24), in 15:24 Samuel's words coincide with God's command. Samuel *is* the mouthpiece of YHWH. Saul's authority as king "is limited by the demand of obedience to prophetically-mediated divine commands."[550] The word/command of YHWH and Samuel to which Saul should have listened (15:1, 19, 20, 22 [2x]) is in tension with the voice of the people to whom Saul should not have listened (15:24). Saul concedes he listened to the wrong voice.

As Samuel turned to leave, Saul seized the corner of his robe (*biḵnap̄-məʿîlô*), symbol of the kingdom, and it was torn (*wayyiqqāraʿ*, 15:27), a divine passive indicated by the niphal and confirmed by Samuel's subsequent words: "YHWH has torn" (*qāraʿ YHWH*, 15:28). Samuel interprets the tearing of the cloak (15:27) as the kingdom being ripped from Saul and given to one better (15:28). It is a symbolic-prophetic act. What is enacted happens in reality, on "this very day" (15:28). This is the turning point. It will be further realized in 24:4-5 where similar language reappears and Saul's robe (kingdom) is now in David's hand (*wayyiḵrōṯ ʾēṯ kənap̄ hamməʿîl*, 24:4-5). Its final realization is impressed on Saul the night before his death when he sees the ghostly Samuel in the same robe (*məʿîl*) and is reminded that the kingdom had already been torn (*wayyiqraʿ*) from his hands as enacted in 15:27-28 (cf. 28:14, 17; cf. 1 Kgs

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[550] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 136.

11:29-31). While 13:7b-15 signaled the end of Saul's dynasty, 15:28 signals the end of his reign. As a true prophet of YHWH (1 Sam 3:19-4:1; Deut 18:15-22) Samuel's word and act activate the end of Saul's reign, now effectively over.

4.9.6   (5) Obedience

Several dimensions of obedience will be examined. First there is the question whether Saul was disobedient or operating from a different understanding of *ḥērem* to Samuel. Saul strongly protests that he has performed the *ḥērem* (15:13, 15, 20, 21) while Samuel insists that he has failed. Both Saul and Samuel seem convinced of their respective positions, their differences, perhaps, a misunderstanding involving varying definitions of the *ḥērem*, one partial, involving humans, another total, involving humans, animals, and property. In the later diachronic section I had hoped to demonstrate that different understandings of *ḥērem* expressive of different diachronic layers were at work here: that Saul was operating from an earlier understanding of *ḥērem* as partial, and Samuel from a later understanding of *ḥērem* as total. This would explain Saul's protestations of innocence (15:13, 20-21), while Samuel expresses a different understanding.[551] However, Saul's double protestation in the end becomes a double, imperfectly-motivated, confession (15:24, 30), and the centrality of the figure of Agag, along with the skilful unfolding of plot and dialogue, make such a diachronic discovery unlikely or irrecoverable. I have already argued that 1 Samuel 15 does not involve genuine misunderstanding on the part of

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[551] There are many views on this. Gunn insists that Saul's is "a splendidly forthright reply . . . there is no evasion of the pertinent 'facts'" (Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 48). Saul's claim to have fulfilled the word of YHWH (15:13b) must be taken seriously because "the tendentious nature of the composition is so blatant." See Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 176, citing Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23-27*, AB; 3B (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 2421. Foresti identifies two different levels of *ḥērem* at work, an earlier, less complete understanding of *ḥērem* applied to humans only (DtrH), and later insertions reflecting a more complete understanding extending also to animals and property (DtrN) (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 124). The earlier form is partial, the later is total. Saul carries out the partial *ḥērem*, sparing the best of the animals and property (DtrH). For DtrP, the author of the original 1 Samuel 15, the *ḥērem* is also total (15:3, 9, 18). DtrP takes over an earlier account from DtrH and is a bridge to DtrN. By sparing the best animals, goods, and the king (DtrH), Saul did not comply with the later DtrP or DtrN more "totalitarian perspective" (cf. Josh 6:17; 7:1, 11ff, 15) (*Rejection of Saul*, 130, 136).

Saul or Samuel about different definitions of *ḥērem*, but rather dissimulation and deflection on the part of Saul as Samuel progressively uncovers the truth.[552] It is disobedience.

Second, there is *unwillingness* to obey. Saul and the people were unwilling (*lō' 'āḇū*) to destroy Agag and the booty (15:9).[553] Without force or pressure, *willful* disobedience is involved. In the Septuagint it was Saul (singular) who "was not willing to destroy" (*οὐκ ἐβούλετο*),[554] laying the blame even more at Saul's feet and not the people. This is described in 15:23 as a form or rebellion or stubbornness (*merî*) leading to divination (*qesem*).[555] Willful disobedience (15:9), arrogance, or stubbornness (15:23) is the undoing of Saul's kingship (15:23, 26, 28). This was also seen in Saul's evasion and gainsaying when called to account by Samuel.

Third, obeying the *people* and not YHWH (15:24) suggests the opposite of what was asked of Saul and implies abdication of Saul's kingly responsibility. Listening to the people could not sustain kingly leadership in Israel. The foundation could only be obedience to YHWH (1 Sam 12). In 1 Samuel 15:24 Saul claims he feared the people and obeyed their voice (*yārē'ṯî 'eṯ-hā'ām, wā-'ešma' bə-qôlām*) rather than fearing and obeying YHWH. Obeying the people (15:9, 15, 21, 24) would lead to his second rejection.[556]

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[552] Fokkelman notes that Saul's defense involves the repetition of more or less the same position again and again (15:13d, 15, 20) with no new arguments offered (*Crossing Fates*, 98). It is the repetition of excuses as "Samuel exposes the king in his repeated lies . . . ;" Saul "did defy God's word" (Sonnet, "God's Repentance," 487, 492). Samuel speaks past Saul who seems incapable of receiving or appropriating what Samuel says as he deceives and deflects. There was a hint of this in 1 Samuel 10:25 (cf. Deut 17:14-20) when Samuel passed the book of the rights and duties of kingship past Saul and into the presence of YHWH, as if Saul were a passive, uninvolved observer and not a responsible actor or even King of Israel. Synchronically Saul does not obey, demanding "inexorability" from Samuel (Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 107).

[553] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 101.

[554] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 154.

[555] Miscall, *1 Samuel*, 108. Cf. also 28:6-9 ("conjure up for me," *qāsomî*).

[556] The people may have expected "reward in the form of spoils" (Fox, *Early Prophets*, 344). Saul placed human considerations over divine command.

Fourth, the importance of *covenantal* obedience is highlighted. The Amalek reference situates Saul's sin firmly within a covenantal understanding. Saul's failure in 1 Samuel 15 is not a mere minor cultic infraction or holy war detail. To understand it thus is to trivialize it. Neither Samuel nor YHWH is anti-monarchical in the strict sense. They are against "the anti-covenantal sentiment" expressed in the request for a king "like the nations."[557]

Fifth, there is a concern with obedience in a broader sense, obedience to YHWH, and in particular, to the *words* of YHWH. The Amalek event and the *ḥērem* issue are used as an opportunity to exhort obedience in a broader covenantal sense. Obedience itself seems to be the overriding concern (15:1) over and above the material of disobedience. The call to obedience precedes any concretizing description of a particular task: "*Obey* the words of YHWH" (15:1). "[T]he word of YHWH" that comes to Samuel (15:10, 13, 26)[558] is the same word Saul was called to obey in 15:1 (cf. 15:11, 13). This word of YHWH "is held up as the norm to Saul" and is an authority which intervenes and judges.[559] First Samuel 15 presents the primacy of obedience to YHWH. By 15:22 Samuel has moved from a specific command against Amalek, to obedience in general, as in 15:1. The obedience implied is to something broader than what was specified in 1 Samuel 15 or 13. What looks like the unwieldy addition of "the words of" in 15:1 specifies this obedience, indicating a tendency toward greater emphasis on the *word*s of YHWH as prophecy gives way to written word and law book. The prophet exhorts obedience to deuteronomic law. The specific "words" of YHWH that Saul did not carry out against Amalek (15:11, 13) are broadened into the "words" of YHWH to be obeyed by the reader (15:1).

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[557] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 181, cf. 167.

[558] Also "my [YHWH's] words" (15:11); "what YHWH said to me" (15:16); the "commandment of YHWH and your words" (15:24).

[559] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 91.

4.9.7   (6) The Glory of Israel does not Repent Deceitfully (15:29): YHWH's Covenant Fidelity

First Samuel 15:29 deserves attention, revealing rich synchronic and diachronic aspects. Samuel, using "an apparently freshly minted title for Yahweh,"[560] claims that the Glory of Israel (*nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl*) does not deceive (*yəšaqqēr*) or repent (*yinnāḥēm*) (1 Sam 15:29). I have translated *yəšaqqēr* as an adverbial modifier of *yinnāḥēm* in what is generally termed hendiadys: "the Glory of Israel does not repent deceitfully." This recalibrates or even mitigates the perceived contradiction: YHWH's *not* repenting seems to be contradicted twice—in 15:11 (*niḥamtî*) and 35 (*niḥām*). In both instances the narrator informs the reader that YHWH *repented* that he had made Saul king. Van Seters, Gunn, and McCarter view this as a "blatant contradiction" demanding diachronic explanation.[561] Van Seters misrepresents it as "a parody of the theme of divine mercy and forgiveness," using it to support his *David Saga* hypothesis.[562] The phrase merits further consideration.

The conventional manner of rendering 15:29 is, "For indeed the Glory of Israel does not deceive and does not repent for he is not a human being to repent." It is possible, however, to translate it as hendiadys: "the Glory of Israel does not repent deceitfully (or capriciously)." I use the term hendiadys with caution since, in the view of experts, it is overused in defining combinations and it lacks sufficient specificity as an analytical tool.[563] The verbal construction in 15:29 satisfies three qualifications characteristic of hendiadyses outlined by Lillas. They are 1)

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[560] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 177. The title is not used in the Greek text.

[561] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 129. See also Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 41-56; McCarter, *I Samuel*, 268.

[562] Van Seters, *Biblical Saga*, 131.

[563] Verbal hendiadys is generally defined as "a verbal construction consisting of two verbs whereby one qualifies the other . . ." See Jaroslaw Chrzanowski, "Verbal Hendiadys Revisited: Grammaticalization and Auxiliation in Biblical Hebrew Verbs" (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, Washington, 2011), Abstract, i, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

generally found in direct speech, 2) joined syndetically, and 3) "primarily the first verb of the

two . . . is interpreted as an adverbial modifier."[564] The advantage of this translation choice here

is that the apparent contradiction between YHWH repenting (15:11, 35) or not repenting (15:29)

is tempered or reduced: YHWH does not repent or change his mind *deceitfully.* The implication

is that if YHWH changes his mind, there is good reason for it. YHWH is not fickle like human

beings or like Saul whose promising start to performing the *ḥērem* (15:4-7) changes suddenly

and inexplicably by 15:8-9, and then deceitfully as the narrative unfolds.

The disadvantage in rendering the phrase as hendiadys is that an intentionally strong

contrast between repenting and not repenting, between YHWH and humans, may be somewhat

weakened. The diachronic section will further examine this question, arguing in support of

hendiadys which says as much about Saul as it does about YHWH. Synchronic study suggests

that the seeming contradiction between God's repenting and not repenting is not insurmountable.

It may be better described as paradox, often used to express the mysterious nature of God.[565]

YHWH's "not repenting" expresses not intransigence but YHWH's steadfastness and fidelity to

his covenant people and his response to developing situations. It is "irreconcilable with God's

continual care and faithfulness to Israel" that "he should now go back on his decision."[566]

Although YHWH chastens Israel, the "underlying theological assumption" is that "his

commitment to his people is for all time."[567] There are echoes here of Numbers 23:18-24:

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[564] Rosmari Lillas, "*Hendiadys* in the Hebrew Bible: an Investigation of the Applications of the Term" (PhD diss., University of Gothenberg, 2012), 254, 256, https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/29024/1/gupea_2077_29024_1.pdf.

[565] Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 163.

[566] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 106.

[567] Robert Alter, *The Hebrew Bible, Volume 2, Prophets: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019), 852.

YHWH can only bless Israel (see later diachronic section). The rationale behind YHWH's

repenting or non-repenting is his saving will toward Israel manifested in the covenant and

evoked in the Israel-Amalek memory. YHWH may change his mind about individuals involved

in the execution of his saving will toward his people (e.g., Saul), but YHWH does not repent of

that saving will expressed in covenant relationship (1 Sam 12:22). That YHWH was faithful and

consistent and Saul unreliable and fickle meant that lack of repentance about the covenant and

repentance about Saul are appropriate responses. Saul refused to defend the covenant

relationship.[568]

There is another (synchronic) level at which the assertion that YHWH does not repent

(twice in 15:29) does not contradict YHWH's repenting in 15:11a and 35c since, as Fokkelman

observes, these latter "are addressed to us, the narrator is speaking, and that is a different

level."[569] J.P. Sonnet concurs with Fokkelman. Only Samuel and the reader know that YHWH

has repented of making Saul king, therefore Samuel can speak to Saul of YHWH's non-

repentance. Moreover J.P. Sonnet cites 1 Samuel 15 as a "false start scenario" through which

"dramatic divine change" is introduced: "The God who repents is also the God who absolutely

contrives . . . forging his 'forever' design in the crucible of human actions that have proven to be

fallible."[570] In 1 Samuel 15 the resultant dramatic change is the eternal covenant with David (2

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[568] Amalek was not the only enemy of Israel Saul failed to deal with. Apart from 14:47-52, his success against the Philistines, against whom he was explicitly commissioned (1 Sam 9:16), is lackluster.

[569] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 106.

[570] Sonnet, "God's Repentance," 469.

Sam 7:13, 15-16). The covenant with David (13:14; 15:28; 16:1) is "a divine answer to human failure," in this case, Saul's.[571]

Samuel's final relenting and returning to worship with Saul hints that YHWH will not forsake his people but turns back to them. This is conveyed through the use of the verb "to turn" (*šûḇ*) in the Saul-YHWH-Samuel dynamic. Saul pleads that Samuel return with him and is refused. Saul pleads again for this return and Samuel relents and returns with him (1 Sam 15:25, 26, 30, 31). A prophetic element concerned with the efficacy of repentance is present here. There is hope even beyond disobedience.[572] Saul had more than one chance and Samuel's turning back with Saul gives hope to prophetically admonished repentance.

4.9.8   Conclusion to Synchronic Study of First Samuel 15:1-35

Key considerations were examined in an attempt to understand the rejection of Saul: 1) the significance of Amalek and the covenantal context; 2) cultic matters and the distinction between *ḥērem* and sacrifice; 3) the literary mastery incorporating different levels of *ḥērem* around the figure of Agag in the Samuel-Saul dialogue, with 15:20 as turning point. The sparing by Saul of the Kenites in *ḥeseḏ*, and of Agag as endorsement of royal privilege, are also dealt with here, along with Saul's view of kingship, much at variance with YHWH's; 4) Samuel as prophet of YHWH; 5) the importance of obedience, especially to the word(s) (15:1, 10, 11, 13, 23, 26) or commandment (mouth [15:24]) of YHWH; 6) YHWH's covenantal commitment to his

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[571] Sonnet, "God's Repentance," 471-472, 493.

[572] Wolff sees this as a key message of the Deuteronomistic History ("Kerygma," 62-78, 78). See also Gary N. Knoppers who discerns a summons to repentance: "History as Confession: the Fall of Jerusalem and Judah in Deuteronomistic Perspective," in *Writing, Rewriting, and Overwriting in the Books of Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets: Essays in Honor of Cynthia Edenburg*, ed. I. Koch, T. Römer, and O. Sergi (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 287-307, ProQuest Ebook Central.

people (15:29) along with his responding to individual failure with new initiative. As in 13:7b-15 this finds expression in David.

Sparing the best animals, grabbing booty, and showing disdain by offering the very worst to YHWH, Saul performs a deficient *ḥērem* and displays indifference to covenant responsibility. The absence of covenantal sensibility on the part of Saul is striking in the second account of his rejection. As in 13:7b-15 and 14:32, Saul discounts cultic procedure and by extension disrespects the covenant. Sparing Agag seals the failure to carry out the ancient covenant obligation sworn by YHWH (in Exodus), entrusted to Israel (in Deuteronomy), in the person of the king (in 1 Samuel 15). Saul spares Agag just as he would cling desperately to his own version of kingship in Israel, one at variance with YHWH.

4.10 Diachronic Issues Emerging from Synchronic Study of First Samuel 15:1-35

4.10.1 Introduction

The synchronic analysis presented above and the observations of Chapter Two assert that 1 Samuel 15 can be read as a coherent literary unit. Broader diachronic questions about 15:1-35, its origins, its prophetic provenance and later deuteronomistic influence, were broached in Chapter Three. In this section, diachronic questions emerging from *within* 15:1-35 and from the synchronic study just completed are addressed. Six points of particular diachronic interest are selected, namely: 1) the insertion of the word *diḇrê* (15:1); 2) the specific term *ḥērem* applied to Amalek (15:3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20-21); 3) the Kenites (15:6); 4) diachronic possibilities surrounding 15:22-33; 5) the diachronic development, connections, later language, and significance of 15:29; and 6) the question of the *people's* participation in Saul's sins as indication of a later time.

4.10.2 (1) Insertion of *Diḇrê* (15:1)

First, I argue that the addition of *diḇrê* in "obey *the words of* the voice of YHWH" (15:1) is a deuteronomistic addition, probably DtrN, indicating the later importance of obedience to "words" now codified in a law book. This shifts the focus of the account to the later reader who, like Saul, is called to obey "the words" of YHWH. The obedience invited from the reader is broader than the specific commands of 13:7b-15 or 15:1-35. It encompasses the prophetic word in general, but now that word is taken up into the deuteronomic covenant, i.e., "the *words* that Moses spoke" (Deut 1:1ff); "all the *words* of this law" (Deut 17:19; cf. 2 Kgs 17:13, "this entire law"); "the *words* of this book that has been found" (twice in 2 Kgs 22:13). These words refer to the book of the law, a form of the Book of Deuteronomy. In 2 Kings 22:13 these are specifically *written* words (*hakātûb*). The prophetess Huldah, without even appearing in person, endorses the "words of the book" from a distance (2 Kgs 22:14-20). Huldah's socially distanced approval signals the recession of oral prophecy in favor of the written "words of the book," a phrase occurring five times in 2 Kings 22:11-20, following two references to the book of the law in 22:8, 10. This book is evoked in the account of Saul's inauguration as king in 1 Samuel 10:25. A later text, it refers to the rights and duties of kingship *written in a book* and placed before YHWH.[573] Saul did not carry out the "words" commanded (1 Sam 15:1). In 15:11 the "words" were the specifics of the old story, prophetically reworked. In 15:1 the "words" refer to the commands of the deuteronomic law as understood by DtrN (cf. 13:13-14). "These words" (Deut 6:6), this written law (Deut 6:9), defines the YHWH-Israel bond to be honored above all (Deut 6:4-9).[574]

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[573] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 243: Campbell places 10:25 in his (post)exilic royal focus revision.

[574] Campbell and O'Brien see Deut 6:4-9 as Josianic (*Unfolding*, 57). I agree with Römer who sees Deuteronomy 6:6-9 as *exilic*. I see it reflective of the ideology of DtrN, though also expressive of the received

4.10.3 (2) The Term *Ḥērem* applied to Amalek (15:3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20-21)

Second, while the concept of the utter destruction of Amalek is already present in Exodus

17:14 ("I will utterly blot out," *māḥōh 'emḥeh*) and Deuteronomy 25:19 ("you [singular] shall

blot out the remembrance of Amalek," *timḥeh*), the specific term *ḥērem* is applied to Amalek

only in 1 Samuel 15 (15:3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20-21), indicating a later development. Since

Deuteronomy 25:17-19 is deuteronomistic,[575] the specific language of the *ḥērem* applied to

Amalek in 1 Samuel 15 is later deuteronomistic, i.e., DtrN.[576] Hoffman argues that the *ḥērem*

"was a vehicle by which to transmit contemporary ideas."[577] I argue that DtrN used the

vocabulary of *ḥērem* to emphasize the avoidance of syncretism. This assertion will be further

developed in the theological section at the end of the chapter. For now, we can note that there is

development from Exodus 17:14 to Deuteronomy 25:19 to 1 Samuel 15[578] and increasing

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Josianic deuteronomistic tradition. Römer sees Deut 6:4-5 as Josianic with unity of cult (in centralization) and YHWH's unity reflective of each other (*So-Called*, 59). Römer writes, however, that Deuteronomy 6:6-9 "already presuppose[s] an exilic or even postexilic background" (*So-Called*, 59, n. 31). Part of his argument is that the inscribing of the words of the law on every house implies every house becomes a temple in the absence of the Jerusalem Temple because of exile or diaspora (*So-Called*, 176). My view is that the writing of the words of the law was a way of constantly recalling them, just like the king was to read them daily that his heart not be lifted up or turned aside (Deut 17:18-20).

[575] See Chapter Three; also Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 80, note 57. There is consensus that Deut 25:17-19 has deuteronomistic editing.

[576] My conclusion that the addition of *ḥērem* terminology to 1 Samuel 15 is later deuteronomistic, namely DtrN, is circumstantially supported by Yair Hoffman who also sees the use of the term as later—not pre-Deuteronomistic but Deuteronomistic, yet "not invented out of the blue." See Yair Hoffman, "The Deuteronomistic Concept of the *Ḥērem*," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 111, no. 2 (1999): 196-210, 208. He notes that "[t]he Deuteronomistic legislator is the only one in the Pentateuch to articulate the idea of the *ḥērem* as an affirmative law" (198). It does not seem as integrated into the Deuteronomistic corpus as, e.g., the centralization of the cult, an indication of its lateness. It also does not square with the general sympathy toward foreigners in the Deuteronomic codex (199). The application of the term *ḥērem* to the destruction of Amalek may also be later since Amalek was not one of the seven nations to which the *ḥērem* applied.

[577] Hoffman, "Deuteronomistic Concept of the *Ḥērem*," 204. Hoffman's basic idea is that the concept of *ḥērem* (as applied to the seven indigenous nations of Canaan) was used at a later time (for him, postexilic) to oppose xenophobic tendencies culminating around the time of Ezra. The point, as Hoffman sees it, is that the *ḥērem* laws could have "no efficacy whatsoever since, since Canaanites do not exist anymore" (210).

[578] Deuteronomy is dependent on Exodus here. See Joshua Berman, "The Legal Blend in Biblical Narrative (Joshua 20:1–9, Judges 6:25–31, 1 Samuel 15:2, 28:3–25, 2 Kings 4:1–7, Jeremiah 34:12–17, Nehemiah 5:1–12)" in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 134, no. 1 (2015): 105-125, 112.

specificity about who should perform the task, from YHWH himself (Exod 17:14; 1 Sam 15:2), to the people addressed through Moses before the conquest (Deut 25:19), to Saul (1 Sam 15:3). The author of 1 Samuel 15:2 conflates both earlier texts in a "legal blend" by having the divine action against Amalek (Exodus) wrought through the agency of Israel (Deuteronomy), in the person of Saul (1 Sam 15), who is "King over Israel."[579]

4.10.4 (3) The Kenites (15:6)

Third, another question is that of 15:6 as a later insertion. The Kenite reference appears unexpectedly, without preparation, and disappears as swiftly. It offers a contrast with the sparing of Agag and changes how Saul's freedom is viewed. The Kenites offer a deliberate contrast with the account of the sparing of Agag, itself prophetic. It may be prepared for by 15:5b and read as an interruption between 15:5 and 7.[580] Saul's treatment of the Kenites in (1 Sam 15:6) wins sympathy for Saul, highlighting his sense of *ḥeseḏ*. Kenites, Amalekites, and Agag all appear in the prophetic account of Balaam in Numbers 24:7, 20-21. The Kenite reference, then, is likely prophetic also, especially with the allusions to Numbers 23:19 in 1 Samuel 15:29.

4.10.5 (4) Diachronic Possibilities surrounding First Samuel 15:22-33

Fourth, the myriad of scholarly insertion-suggestions around 15:22-33 is too numerous to review here. Any number of verses can be removed around 15:22-33, still leaving a smooth narrative, e.g., 15:22-31, 24-31, 24-30, 25-30a, 24-29, 27-28 or parts.[581] The most obvious

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[579] Berman, "Legal Blend," 112.

[580] Foresti offers other reasons for its being an addition: 15:6a has a peculiar spelling of Amalek confirmed in LXX in contrast with the rest of 1 Sam 15; "*sons* of Israel" is used only here in 1 Sam 15; the ambush of 15:5b is preparatory for the insertion giving the Kenites time to withdraw (*Rejection of Saul*, 46-47).

[581] Martin Noth saw 15:24-31 as secondary, "certainly added later but cannot be ascribed to Dtr . . ." (*Deuteronomistic History*, 55). I argue it belongs to the main prophetic account. A summary of views is available at Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 133. Philips Long gives the example of Weiser who views 1 Samuel 15 as a unity except for 15:25-30aα, intrusive because of perceived repetitions and contradictions. Twice: 1) Saul confesses

scenario, in my view, is that 15:21 proceeded directly to 15:32 in an older story or earlier version. Saul's revelation to Samuel that he spared Agag (15:20-21) leads directly to Samuel's summoning of Agag (15:32). Both 15:22 and 15:32 begin with "Samuel said . . ." First Samuel 15:22-31, then, is a prophetic expansion of the earlier story. The difficulty with this hypothesis is that some adequate, spoken response from Samuel to Saul would be expected, albeit briefly or gruffly. This is what happens in the other, old, prophetic story in 13:7b-15* with the pre-deuteronomistic rebuke of 13:13, "You have acted foolishly," before the deuteronomistic insertion of 13:13-14. This response of Samuel to Saul was the rebuke of 15:22 or an earlier, simpler version of 15:22* before the more expansive, prophetic elaboration in 15:22*-31. This will be sketched briefly.

First Samuel 15:22-31 continues the skilful prophetic expansion around the turning point of the account (15:20), except that now the prophetic expansion digresses from direct reference to Agag until the earlier Agag account is resumed in 15:32. First Samuel 15:20-21 is Saul's final attempt at deflection, by which he seriously implicates himself, admits to sparing Agag, and attempts again to blame the people. This is followed by the expected rebuke by Samuel in 15:22. The poetic layout of 15:22-23 indicates *prophetic* provenance or reworking more clearly, for instance, than 13:13-14 which is deuteronomistic. Thematically, too, 15:22-23 reflects prophetic

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his sin (15:24 and 30a*a*); 2) Saul requests that Samuel return with him (15:25 and 30b); and 3) Samuel utters judgment on Saul (15:23b and 26). The two "contradictions" are 15:29a versus 11a*a* and 35b, and Samuel's refusing to return and then returning with Saul (15:26 and 31). See Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 37; Artur Weiser, "I Samuel 15," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 54, no. 1-2 (1936): 1-28, 3-5. McCarter sees two different conclusions to the story: 1) 15:24-29 where Saul's request is refused by Samuel and 2) 15:30-31 where Saul is honored (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 268). McCarter sees 15:29, YHWH's *not* changing his mind, as indicative of a later addition. The contradiction between 15:29 (YHWH not repenting) and 15:11 and 35 (YHWH repenting) is "so blatant that we must question its originality" (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 268). A possible candidate for an insertion is the text *between* Saul's two confessions ("I have sinned," *ḥāṭā'tî*) in 15:24 and 30, making the original story a less severe rejection. First Samuel 15:27-28, with its tearing of the cloak imagery, is viewed as a later insertion dependent on 1 Kings 11:29ff. (Ahijah and Jeroboam) attributed to DtrP. The later 1 Samuel 15:27ff. is attributed to DtrN as is the related 1 Sam 28:17-18a. This is Dietrich's view (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 87-90).

texts like Amos 5:21-24 and Isaiah 66:2b-4 (Chapter Three) and "belongs to the long tradition of prophetic attacks on hollow cultic practice": without obedience, the cult is empty or hypocritical.[582] Consistent with this view, prophetic expansion continued in 15:24-31 (or 27-31). Within this, 15:27-28 has links with similarly themed passages recognized as prophetic (1 Sam 24:4-6; 28:12-14; 1 Kgs 11:29-40) and centered on the tearing of robes symbolic of kingdom.

The contrasting views of Westermann and Weinfeld on 15:27-29 illustrate the challenge in distinguishing between closely interwoven prophetic and deuteronomistic strands.[583] I agree with Westermann that 15:27-28 is essentially prophetic. The prophetic origin of 15:28 explains why the description of David as "a companion of yours (rēʿăḵā) who is better than you" is bland compared with the later, stronger, pro-Davidic, deuteronomistic description in 13:14. First Samuel 15:28 is concerned more with the (prophetic) rejection and election of kings than an enthusiastic (deuteronomistic) eulogizing of kings, even of David's line. In my view 15:28 is prophetic while 15:29 indicates later reworking and further reflection on prophetic tradition. The predominantly prophetic account of 1 Samuel 15 remains largely intact, despite minor DtrN adaptations.[584]

This fits in with Campbell's view that before any deuteronomistic revision, 1 Samuel 15 was a prophetic reworking of an older story.[585] Apart from some general remarks, I will not

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[582] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 267. This was a concern for eighth century Northern prophets, e.g., Amos 5:21-24.

[583] Westermann takes 15:27-29 as prophetic, suggesting that the prophetic act there belongs to the wider prophetic speech (15:14-29). Only later were prophetic act and speech separated (Westermann, *Prophetic Speech*, 159, 205). Weinfeld mixes both when he describes 15:28 as "a deuteronomic prophecy" and phrases like *qāraʿ . . . mamləḵūṯ* (15:28) as indicating "deuteronomistic prophetic composition." For him, 15:25-30a "are of deuteronomic origin" (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 15).

[584] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 256.

[585] Campbell's suggestion is that the older story, received and reworked by the prophetic redactors, reflects the pattern of "the putative original text for David and Nathan (2 Sam 12:7a, 13a, 13b)" (Campbell and O'Brien,

attempt to trace that older story in detail. There are several possibilities. It was about Saul's

disobedience concerning Amalek and involved Samuel, Saul, and Agag. The older story is

preserved but the prophetic redactors transformed the story from rebuke (15:22) to rejection

(15:23, 26). Prophets were YHWH's agents in the election and rejection of kings (cf. 9:1-10:16).

Prophetic writers are responsible for the literary mastery expressed in the Saul-Samuel dialogue

surrounding Agag, as well as the Saul-Samuel dialogue in the prophetic expansion of 15:22-31.

Agag's complete absence from 15:22-31 is significant and supports my view that 15:22-31 is a

prophetic expansion digressing from the original story of Saul sparing Agag. Agag's absence

here is unremarked in most commentary. The skill of the prophetic redactors created a smooth

narrative flow in 15:22-31.[586] Agag reappears only in 15:32-33.

4.10.6 (5) Diachronic Development, Connections, later Language, and Significance of 15:29

Fifth, 1 Samuel 15:29 merits special consideration. There are indications of prophetic

tradition shared with the Book of Numbers as well as later terminology. A link between

divination and iniquity (*qesem* and *'āwen*, 15:23a) and the Balaam tradition of Numbers 23:23

Unfolding, 255). My synchronic analysis already indicated the connection with 2 Samuel 12: at the questioning of the prophet, both kings condemn themselves *out of their own mouths*. While Campbell does not specifically draw this conclusion, his reconstruction of an old story, later prophetically expanded, is helpful. For Campbell, the old story relates that Saul is rebuked (1 Sam 15:22), confesses, repents (15:24-25), and is accepted by Samuel who returns with him (15:31) (*Unfolding*, 255).

[586] An older story may be present in 15:22*, 24-25, 31, with prophetic overwriting in 15:22*-23, 26-30, but not necessarily. Literarily, the narrative seems more sophisticated and subtle. Saul's second confession is much briefer than the first (15:30, cf. 24): it is without elaboration or even a request for forgiveness, a shift from "forgive me" to "honor me" (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 38). Saul, realizing that forgiveness as reversal of judgment was out of the question, requested what was still possible in order to save face. Saul's request changes from "forgive" to "honor" and with it, Samuel's response changes. Much changes, then, between Samuel's initial refusal to return with Saul (15:26), and his later change of mind (15:31). A careful synchronic reading makes sense of the seeming contradiction of Samuel's non-returning and then returning. Samuel's change of mind can be understood as plot development. The prophet responds to Saul's appeal, indicative of some kind of regret or repentance. Saul's contrition may be questionable but his expression of regret wins him a short term concession not unusual in the Deuteronomistic History (e.g., 1 Kgs 21:29; 2 Kgs 20:5-6; 22:19-20). Saul's continuation as king until 1 Samuel 31 may be a consequence of his request to be honored by Samuel as well as Samuel's continued intercession. Saul's demise follows shortly after Samuel's death. The larger prophetic message is that YHWH responds to repentance and acts through his prophets.

(*qesem*) and 21 (*'āwen*) is clear. Such poetic utterance and imagery was at hand in the prophetic tradition. YHWH's not deceiving or repenting (or repenting deceitfully) in 1 Samuel 15:29 (*yəšaqqēr* and *yinnāḥēm*) reflects Numbers 23:19 with the similar sense of God not deceiving (*wîḵazzēḇ*) or repenting (*wəyiṯneḥām*), though only the verb "to repent" (*nḥm*) is common. Numbers 22-24, including 23:19, is from an older, prophetic tradition.[587] In addition, Amalek receives special mention in Balaam's final oracle (Num 24:20), immediately before the Kenites, as they do in 1 Samuel 15.[588] The idea that YHWH will only bless Israel in Numbers 22-24 supports the interpretation of 15:29 as an expression of YHWH's unchanging, unrepentant, undeceiving, saving will toward Israel. The common vocabulary of divination and iniquity, of God repenting, interest in the Kenites and Amalekites, and the concern with YHWH's commitment to Israel, indicate that the tradition behind Numbers 22-24 and 1 Samuel 15 is an old prophetic one, perhaps ninth century BCE as Levine suggests.

More specific vocabulary was added later to 15:29. Auld argues for later dating of the Masoretic Text's *nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl* and *yəšaqqēr* (15:29).[589] The Greek text (cf. also 4QSam^a) translates a Hebrew version that used "**YHWH**" and the more common verb "to turn" (***šûḇ***) in the sense of repent or change (highlighted in bold): [***Κύριος***] . . . *οὐκ* ***ἀποστρέψει*** *οὐδὲ*

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[587] Baruch Levine argues that Numbers 22-24, with its inconsistent usage of *YHWH* and *'el*, is best seen as an "independent work" outside of traditional J-E categorizations. See Baruch A Levine, *Numbers 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 137-138, 207. Balaam is an "international prophet" (138). The verb for YHWH deceiving or failing in Numbers 23:19 is used in Isaiah 58:11b; Jeremiah 15:18b; and elsewhere (182). Levine argues that the Balaam poems (Num 22-24) were most likely written in Gilead, close to where the *Deir 'Alla* inscriptions were discovered. These mention "Balaam Son of Beor" and date to around the eighth century BCE. There was an Israelite community there from at least the tenth to the eighth centuries BCE. There was what Levine calls a biblical archive including the Balaam poems and "the works of Northern Israelite prophets" (208-209). Numbers 22-24, including 23:19, date from *before* the eighth century BCE (225), i.e., before the *Deir 'Alla* inscriptions. More specifically, Levine dates them from the first half of the ninth century BCE, celebrating Israelite power over Moab before Mesha's campaign and around the time of Omri. The point is that Numbers 23:19 is ancient and prophetic.

[588] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 179.

[589] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 178-179.

μετανοήσει, ὅτι οὐχ ὡς ἄνθρωπός ἐστιν τοῦ μετανοῆσαι αὐτός. The Septuagint translation of

15:29 indicates a Hebrew base text that was simpler, typically prophetic, manifesting earlier

language and interests. A trace of this language is used elsewhere in 1 Samuel 15, especially with

the repetition of the verb *šûḇ*. It is still discernible in the Masoretic Text of 15:31 where

wayyāšāḇ (MT) is translated by *ἀνέστρεψεν* (LXX) much like the Greek version of 15:29 (see

above). In summary, the Hebrew text behind the Greek translation is simpler. The Masoretic text

is more elaborate, especially since the title *nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl* is unique as a title for YHWH in the

Hebrew Bible (MT) and almost certainly later. The Masoretic Text of 15:29 is more worked over

than possible earlier versions.

The use of the verb *šûḇ* instead of *yəšaqqēr* in an earlier Hebrew Text, together with the

verb *yinnāḥēm* has other implications too. It implies translation as hendiadys here is not only

possible but preferable: *šûḇ* is one of the verbs most frequently used in hendiadys, generally

meaning "to do something again (or repeatedly)" and used adverbially as "an explanation of

circumstance."[590] A reconstruction of the *earlier* pre-Masoretic Hebrew text translated by the

Septuagint would read (literally): "YHWH does not return and does not repent," or better and

more idiomatically as hendiadys, "YHWH does not repent again," or "YHWH will not change

his mind again." In the earlier Hebrew version and in the immediate context this is as much a

statement about Saul and his position as it is about the immutability of YHWH. It is Samuel's

attempt to end the discussion, having already uncovered Saul's guilt in 15:20 with Saul's

inadvertent admission to sparing Agag.[591] Campbell agrees with McCarter that the dictum in

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[590] Lillas, "Hendiadys in the Hebrew Bible," 255.

[591] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 268. "The statement seems intended to discourage further expostulation from Saul."

15:29 refers more to Saul's situation than to YHWH's nature.[592] In context, the basic meaning of the earlier pre-Masoretic version is that YHWH will not change his mind *about Saul.* Only the later MT elevates Samuel's relatively simple statement about YHWH and Saul to one about the "Glory of Israel" who, unlike humanity in general, does not repent deceitfully. Saul may not have established or carried out YHWH's word (15:11, 13), but YHWH will not swerve from his word.

An important shift in meaning and theology is discernible here. The Glory of Israel is constant and faithful. Not capricious or unpredictable, YHWH does not change his mind deceptively. Humans, on the other hand, are fickle and unreliable. They repent, in the sense of changing their minds. They need to repent, in the sense of returning to YHWH. The later updating of 1 Samuel 15:29, with its more elevated view of YHWH as the unchanging "Glory of Israel" in contrast with fickle and unreliable humanity, is difficult to categorize with its *hapax legomenon*. I propose that this later language, expressive of this vision or ideology, fits well with the nomistic deuteronomistic view. I propose that *a perception of YHWH as unchangeable accompanies an appreciation of the law as increasingly fixed.* The context of Saul's rejection is the "words" of YHWH he did not carry out (15:11, 13, 26). YHWH's "words," however, as added later by DtrN in 15:1, do not change (or deceive), nor does YHWH repent of his word because it is now a stable word, set in writing, given in the book of the law. This connection between the view of YHWH as unchangeable and the defined written book has gone unremarked in commentaries on 15:29. This view of an unchanging YHWH is not so much one of rigid intransigence as of covenantal constancy. The irrevocable blessing of Israel spoken through Balaam in Numbers (prophetic) is now expressed in the irrevocable gift of the law (DtrN).

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[592] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 254-255.

First Samuel 15:29 is closely connected with Numbers 22-24, especially 23:19, where YHWH will not curse but only bless the people he has set apart in covenant.[593] Indications are that the presentation of YHWH's constancy shifts and is recalibrated as understanding develops. Constancy in covenant and the implied blessing of Israel in the older prophetic tradition (Num 23:19) shifts to determination to abide by the decision about Saul's rejection in the pre-Masoretic version of 1 Samuel 15:29. This constancy is eventually recalibrated in the later Masoretic Text as a more general statement that the *nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl* does not repent deceitfully. Unlike humans, YHWH does not change but is reliable. It is possible to trace the progress between Numbers 23:19, the earlier Hebrew version of 1 Samuel 15:29 (preserved in the Greek text), and the final Masoretic Text version. Reference to God is increasingly elevated in the diachronic progression from *'el* to *YHWH* to *nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl*. Yet the general contrast between God's fidelity and human fickleness is not a DtrN breakthrough, but an older prophetic insight going back to Numbers 23:19 and the ninth century BCE. While a YHWH-human contrast is presented in both Numbers 23:19 and 1 Samuel 15:29, the immediate concern is Israel. The context is covenantal.

The general contrast between YHWH and humans and, more particularly, between YHWH and Saul, underlines that while deception is not to be associated with YHWH, it is with Saul. This contrast between YHWH not deceiving and humans/Saul deceiving suggests that my synchronic and then diachronic conclusions about 1 Samuel 15 are correct. Saul attempts to

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[593] The connections with 1 Samuel 15 are strong. Numbers 22:5, 11 ("a people has come out of Egypt"); 22:12 ("you shall not curse the people for they are blessed"); 22:38 (Balaam can only speak the word God puts in his mouth); 23:9 (Israel is a people living apart and "not reckoning itself among the nations"); 23:12 (Balaam can say only what YHWH puts into his mouth); 23:16 (YHWH put a word in Balaam's mouth); 23:19-22 ("*God is not a human being, that he should lie, or a mortal, that he should change his mind.* Has he promised, and will he not do it? Has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? See, I received a command to bless; he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it. . . . The LORD their God is with them, acclaimed as a king among them. God, who brings them out of Egypt . . ."); 24:7 (mentions Israel's king being higher than *Agag*, another connection with 1 Samuel 15); 24:13 (Balaam says he cannot go "beyond the word of YHWH" to do his own will); 24:20 (notes the end of Amalek); 24:21 (guarantees the security of the Kenites). The prophetic acclamation of YHWH as king among them (Num 23:21) may have sown seeds for DtrN's later insight that only YHWH can be king in Israel.

deceive Samuel in his dissimulating, defensive, and deflecting responses. That this final word of

the Samuel-Saul discussion highlights *deception* in the contrast between YHWH and

humans/Saul means that Saul has unsuccessfully tried to deceive Samuel. First Samuel 15:29 is

Samuel's last word about this. The earlier Hebrew version of 15:29 asserts that YHWH will not

change his mind about Saul as king: that case is closed.

While some see the non-repentance/repentance of YHWH (15:29, cf. 11, 35) as blatantly

contradictory, it is part of a broader prophetic dynamic between YHWH's repenting or not. This

is clear in Amos 7:3, 6 (*niḥam YHWH* in both cases) where YHWH repents at Amos'

intercession but then shows Amos what must happen, closing off the opportunity for further

intercession or relenting. In Amos 7 YHWH repents, but then does not repent: he proceeds to

exercise judgment on the Northern Kingdom. The repenting or not of YHWH was a prophetic

interest (e.g., Joel 2:13-14; Jonah 3:9, 10; 4:2) though not exclusively so.

The specific vocabulary of the "Glory of Israel" not "deceiving," expressive of the view

of YHWH *not* changing (15:29), is later than the original.[594] It was most likely added around the

time of the insertion of "the words" (15:1) and the application of the term *ḥērem* to Amalek, both

attributable to DtrN. The language suggests a view of YHWH as One increasingly elevated and

immutable, a view consonant with his increasingly unchanging word (DtrN). YHWH is true to

his word now written in the Torah. This diachronic analysis does not take away from the literary

unity of the story built around Agag as outlined in the synchronic section. There is minimal

updating of the prophetically reworked account. Prophetic redactors were responsible for the

underlying literary coherence. DtrN sharpens the focus with updating expressing the stability of

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[594] McCarter views the "Glory of Israel" as very late (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 268).

the law, the constancy of YHWH, the seriousness of Saul's disobedience, the deceptiveness of

Saul's response, and the implications for the reader.

4.10.7 (6) The People's Participation in Saul's Sin?

Sixth, in 1 Samuel 15 no external threat is present, only an ancient score to settle. The

greatest threat to Israel is not from outside but from within, especially from the disobedience of

kings. This would become explicit later in the Deuteronomistic History. The emphasis on the

people's participation in Saul's sin gives the impression of a later deuteronomistic trope present

in 1 Samuel 15:9, 15, 21, 24. Through disobedience, not only would the king be swept away, but

"*you* [the people] and your king" (1 Sam 12:25). Second Kings 17:7-23 makes this point about

the people sharing the sin of the kings. If 1 Samuel 15 manifests this later deuteronomistic focus

on the people, then this would undermine the argument above that the Saul-Samuel dialogue

surrounding Agag is largely a prophetic work with minimal later redaction.

In 1 Samuel 15 the usage of "the people" is very different from that of 2 Kings 17:7-23

where blame is shared with the people. In 1 Samuel 15 the function of "the people" is not so

much to share the blame with Saul as to accentuate Saul's culpability and further damage his

image. The image of Saul as weak and pitiful is magnified since at every juncture he seeks to

shift the blame from himself to the people (15:15, 21, 24, cf. 9), diminishing the people's

culpability each time. The threefold blaming of the people by Saul serves only to further

discredit him. In 1 Samuel 15 the people are not primarily blameworthy, though blamed by Saul.

The impression given of Saul declines significantly for shifting the blame to his people.

Samuel's challenge and condemnation is always directed at Saul himself, *never* at the people

(15:8, 17-19, 23, 26, 28). This confirms that the references to the people in 1 Samuel 15 perform

a role very different from the role of the people in 2 Kings 17:7-23. In 1 Samuel 15 the

references to the people are an intrinsic part of the prophetic plot and not later deuteronomistic additions. The people here are part of the prophetic criticism of the king, *not* the later deuteronomistic criticism of the people.

4.10.8 Conclusion to Diachronic Study of First Samuel 15:1-35

Overall 1 Samuel 15 is prophetic with some evidence of later but minor reworking. Interestingly this view largely coincides with that of Noth who found no clear evidence of deuteronomistic reworking in 1 Samuel 15.[595] The prophetic editors received the earlier tradition and "reshaped the older story of 1 Samuel 15 from a rebuke to Saul into the rejection of Saul."[596] First Samuel 15:1-34 is "thoroughly prophetic."[597]

Attention was focused on several diachronic points of interest. First, the addition of *diḇrê* (15:1) and second, the later application of *ḥērem* terminology to Amalek in 1 Samuel 15. Both changes are from DtrN. Third, the sparing of the Kenites (15:6) is prophetic. The fourth point dwelt on the myriad diachronic possibilities around 15:22-33, seeing 15:22-31 as a prophetic expansion of the older story. Fifth, special attention was given to 15:29 and the later language expressive of YHWH's firm resolve, *nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl* and *yəšaqqēr* (15:29), as well as its diachronic development from a pre-Masoretic Text along with an accompanying shift in meaning and theology. The earlier form is as much about Saul as about YHWH who will not change his decision about Saul. The later Masoretic Text form speaks more of YHWH's unchanging will and nature in contrast to human fickleness. This reflects awareness of the increasingly stable law book. The deception contrast set up in 15:29 between YHWH and people/Saul confirms my

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[595] Apart from 15:24-31, as mentioned above (Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 55).

[596] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 279.

[597] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 423.

synchronic and diachronic conclusion that Saul attempts to deceive Samuel and much of 1

Samuel 15 is built around that dynamic. Yet, at Saul's plea that Samuel honor him, his second

attempt at a confession, Samuel returns with Saul, offering a note of hope for the repentant, a

prophetic interest (15:30-31, cf. 24-25). Sixth, references to the "people" in 1 Samuel 15 are not

expressive of the later deuteronomistic tendency to share blame with the people but serve only to

further diminish the image of Saul as king, a prophetic interest. Post-prophetic additions in 1

Samuel 15 are minimal, DtrN, and preserve the skilful literary mastery expressed in the

narrative.

From a methodological point of view, a further step is necessary, namely to compare and

contrast both accounts for a fuller understanding of the dual rejection and its implications. For

example, the question of why a second account of Saul's rejection (1 Sam 15) is necessary can

be answered only after comparing both accounts. The following section compares and contrasts

13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 in their context of 1 Samuel 13-15.

4.11 First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35: Continuity, Development, Difference

This section examines continuity, development, and difference in First Samuel (12), 13,

14, and 15 in order to gain a better appreciation of the relationship between 13:7b-15 and 15:1-

35. A clearer view of this relationship is important since, though different, both texts, in the end,

present a common vision. Here commonalities, developments, and distinctions are sketched.

4.11.1 Continuity between 1 Samuel 12; 13-14; 15

Some basic commonalities between First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 unite both accounts. In addition to the ten or so obvious and already established commonalities,[598] six important points of intersection are briefly sketched here.

First, the Saul of 1 Samuel 15 emerges out of 1 Samuel 12 and 13-14. While Saul is presented sympathetically in 14:47-52, 14:1-46 makes his rejection in 1 Samuel 15 unsurprising, even apart from what the reader knows from 13:7b-15. More than 13:7b-15, the presentation of Saul in 1 Samuel 14:1-46 persuades that Saul was unfit to be king.[599] The Saul of 1 Samuel 15 emerges from the Saul of 1 Samuel 13-14. Fokkelman correctly rejects Gunn's interpretation that 1 Samuel 15 is "just as ambiguous as 13"[600] noting that "[t]his interpretation misses the contact with cap. 14, i.e., Gunn does not see the demonic depth of the incident in Saul's interior and does

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[598] What both accounts have in common is summarized here in list form. 1) Saul disobeys Samuel and/or YHWH in both accounts. 2) Saul is led by the people in 1 Samuel 13-14 and 15 (14:45; 15:15, 21, 24). There is irony that "the king who was appointed at the request of the people (1 Sam 8:4-9, 19-22) should meet with his rejection through his listening further to the voice of the people" (Edelman, *King Saul*, 108). 3) Different kinds of fear inhibit obedience in both accounts: fear of the Philistines shown in the trembling of 13:7 and fear of the people in 15:24 consistent with 14:44-45. 4) First Samuel 12, 13, 14, and 15 all allude to the end of Saul's reign (12:13, 15, 25; 13:1, 14; 14:47-52; 15:23, 28). 5) First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are both anti-Saul and pro-David but not anti-monarchic in themselves. YHWH has already chosen a new king. Not the monarchy but the *kind* of monarchy is in question: David's, not Saul's (Philips Long, *Reign and Rejection*, 166). 6) Both accounts reveal some sympathy for Saul. 7) Rebuke turns to rejection in both accounts. 8) Both accounts indicate that Saul's rejection is not merely for the failure to observe external protocols. In both 1 Samuel 13 and 15 a "generalizing" of Saul's offense takes place. Focus moves from the delict to the primacy of obedience. Saul's failure in each case is symptomatic of something deeper, manifesting resistance and refusal to more than the granular details of what was specified. Trivializing Saul's offense to mere external cultic infraction or failure to observe holy war details misses the point. 9) Both 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 are examples typifying kingship in Israel. Both reveal the reality of the king the people have chosen for themselves over YHWH. Both unpack the consequences of 1 Samuel 12:13 which points to Saul: "See, here is the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; see, the Lord has set a king over you." Immediately after this presentation of Saul, obedience as the condition for royal flourishing is presented (12:14-15, 25). The background of 1 Samuel 12 to both accounts implies that Saul's dual failure is recounted as an explanation of national disaster and as a summons to future obedience rooted in the covenant (12:22, 24). 10) Both accounts are prophetic with deuteronomistic reworking and both are centered on Samuel and Gilgal.

[599] 1 Samuel 14:1-46 presents Saul's weakness, lack of initiative, imprudent oath, failure to recognize that God acted with Jonathan, callousness toward his son, and his being led by the people he was meant to lead.

[600] Gunn, *Fate of King Saul*, 49-54, 53.

not let the Saul of 15 come out of 14."[601] Saul's unfeasibility as king becomes clearer with his

increasing decline and 1 Samuel 15 is more easily understood than 1 Samuel 13:7b-15: "Thus 1

Sam.15 is the continuation and nadir of the descending line from 1 Sam.13-14."[602]

Synchronically, 1 Samuel 15 flows out of 1 Samuel 13-14 and 12. The name of the first king is

not mentioned in 1 Samuel 12 but is hinted at with the repetition of the verb "to ask" (*š'l*) (12:13,

17, 19).[603] The picture of Saul in 1 Samuel 15 is consistent with the declining character presented

in 1 Samuel 13-14, with the rejected Saul in 13:7b-15, and with the disobedient king alluded to

in 1 Samuel 12.

Second, common sacrifical language (*ngš*) and sacred venue (Gilgal) occur in both

accounts. Sacrificial links exist between Saul's: "Bring me (*haggišû*) the burnt offering" (13:9)

and Samuel's: "Bring me (*haggišû*) Agag" (15:32). Both use *ngš* in a sacrificial manner and both

are connected with Saul's misunderstanding of sacrifice. In 13:9 Saul offered illicit sacrifice

when he should have awaited Samuel and further instruction (cf. 10:8). In 15:32 Samuel slew

Agag to complete the covenantal obligation neglected through Saul's disobedience. Both

sacrificial actions (13:9; 15:32) take place "before YHWH at Gilgal." The offering of sacrifice

"before YHWH at Gilgal" marks the beginning and end of Saul's reign (11:15; 15:32).

Third, Saul chooses sacrifice over obedience in both accounts. First Samuel 15:22-23

summarizes much of 15:1-21. It also reflects on 13:7b-15*, Saul's disobedience in offering illicit

sacrifice (15:22), and on his presumption, especially in offering the burnt offering, akin to

idolatry (15:23). In the deuteronomistic historical view Saul was not a cultic officiant and wrong

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[601] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 104, footnote 28.

[602] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 85.

[603] Auld, *I and II Samuel*, 166.

worship constituted idolatry. In 13:9 Saul preempts Samuel and wrongly offers the burnt

offering. In 15:15, 21 Saul and the people spare the animals that should have been put under the

ḥērem in order, supposedly, to sacrifice them to YHWH at Gilgal. Saul's failure is essentially the

same in both passages (13:7b-15 and 15:1-35): he chose sacrifice over obedience. In 13:7b-15

his disobedience was constrained under pressure. In 15:1-35 it was willed in freedom (15:9).

Saul's failure is most obviously in the realm of sacrifice.

From the beginning of 1 Samuel cultic inattentiveness is problematic. Saul and his sons

are compared with Eli and his sons who are rejected because of their contempt for sacrifice (1

Sam 2:13-17). The sins of the House of Eli could not be atoned for "with sacrifice and offering

forever" implying that neither could Saul's failures in sacrifice in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35.[604] In

15:1-35 Saul's purported setting aside of the animals for later sacrifice could not make up for his

failure in the *ḥērem* (1 Sam 15:15, 21).[605] Both accounts underline that sacrifice is important but

obedience more so, and that Saul failed in both.

Fourth, Saul's failure is covenantal in both accounts. The covenant and its concerns are

continually in the background of the Saul narrative.[606] Mentions of Egypt, Amalek, and *ḥesed*

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[604] Despite his name, Saul fails "to ask of the Lord in accordance with the norm established by his predecessors and adopted by his contemporaries" (Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 92). Both the houses of Eli and of Saul would have been established forever (1 Sam 2:30; 13:13). Both Eli and Saul will be replaced by one who will do "according to what is in my heart" or who is "after his own [YHWH's] heart" (2:35; 13:14). After Eli, a faithful priest will be raised up (2:35) and after Saul, an obedient prince over YHWH's people (13:14).

[605] "When someone despises sacrifices he cannot expiate his sins by their means" (Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 61).

[606] Navigating legitimate and illegitimate exceptions to covenantal duties in 1 Samuel 13-15 is complex (e.g., sacrifices, oaths, *ḥērem*, etc.). In 1 Sam 9:13 the people must await Samuel to offer sacrifice. Saul's offering of illegitimate sacrifice is construed as disobedience (13:7b-15). Troops eating slaughter with blood is a sin against YHWH (14:33). In 1 Samuel 14 the people know Saul's oath is wrong and not binding since Jonathan "worked with God." Saul intervenes by building an unnecessary altar (14:35). Saul's reneging on an oath to YHWH concerning Jonathan is acceptable (14:45) while the rashness of the oath is explicitly criticized (14:29-30). Saul's sparing of the Kenites is acceptable (15:6) but his sparing of Agag and failure to perform the *ḥērem* is disastrous. Saul's exchange

evoke the covenant (e.g., 15:2, 6-7). Saul's anointing is surrounded by references to Egypt and Moses, evoking the covenant. [607] Covenantal language is used in the fourfold repetition of "my people" in Saul's calling (9:16) and in 12:20-24.[608] Saul's kingship, inaugurated and renewed in 1 Samuel 9-11, is to be lived in fidelity to the covenant, the message of the 1 Samuel 8 and 12 frame.

From 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 (cf. 10:8) onward Saul's presumption with regard to cult, sacrifice, and covenant is clear.[609] As king, Saul was to avenge the assault of Amalek on Israel en route from Egypt (1 Sam 15). The covenantal context indicates that these kingly duties—proper regulation of the cult and defense of the covenant people—are not arbitrary tasks like David having to secure one hundred Philistine trophies (1 Sam 18:25, 27). They are not the whimsical inventions of a capricious Samuel or an inconstant YHWH. Saul's failure is basically sacrificial-cultic and more broadly covenantal. At root is a failure to understand, appropriate, and submit to the (Horeb) covenant, the bond between YHWH and Israel of which the king was meant to be the first observer (Deut 17:18-20) and defender (1 Sam 15:17-18).

Finally, two additional commonalities are mentioned here with a view to development in the later theological section. Fifth, in both 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 Saul does the *worst* thing under the circumstances. He offers, not the peace offerings, but the burnt offering. He spares, not the

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of ḥērem for sacrifice is unacceptable. Samuel "sacrifices" Agag. In 1 Sam 15:30 Samuel had to return with Saul for licit worship.

[607] 1 Sam 8:8 (Egypt); 10:18 (Egypt); 12:6 (Moses and Egypt); 12:8 (Egypt [3x]).

[608] Serve "YHWH/him . . . with all your heart" (12:20, 24) and "his [YHWH's] people" (12:22 [2x]).

[609] In 1 Sam 14:19 Saul interrupts the priest's attempt to consult YHWH. In 14:36-37 Saul has to be reminded to inquire of YHWH. Saul would neither wait on Samuel's prophetic word (10:8; 13:7b-15) or on the word of YHWH through his priest (14:15-20, 36). This leads to eventual silence from YHWH (28:6) and Saul's resort to divination tantamount to idolatry.

weak or helpless, but Agag, king and epitome of Amalek. Sixth, both accounts display later nomistic interest.

4.11.2 Development and Difference between First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35

Having presented commonalities and concluded that Saul's failure is located in the arena of obedience and the cultic-covenantal realm, exploration of what develops or is distinctive between both accounts follows. Several specificities have already been noted and are listed.[610] This section deals mainly with the important question of 15:1-35 as later reflection on 13:7b-15, thus indicating development and difference between both accounts.

There are indications of increasing specification between both texts and 1 Samuel 15:1-35 demonstrates some later reflection on 13:7b-15. Synchronically, 1 Samuel 15 is to be read in the light of 1 Samuel 13-14 (especially 13:7b-15) and builds on it. Samuel's anger in 15:11 is at Saul's failure to respond when offered another chance after the failures of 1 Samuel 13-14.[611] In 13:7b-15 Saul's loss of the kingdom remains in the future while David waits. In 15:1-35 the judgment concerns Saul himself and is enacted immediately in Samuel's prophetic act and word:

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[610] 1) Saul forced himself to do what was illicit (1 Sam 13:12) and Saul and the people were unwilling to do what was required (1 Sam 15:9). There is commission (1 Sam 13) and omission (1 Sam 15). 2) Samuel's feelings are unrecorded in 1 Samuel 13, conveying the impression of a harsh or ruthless Samuel and YHWH. In 1 Samuel 15 reaction on the part of YHWH and Samuel is provided. YHWH repented that he had made Saul "king" (15:11) or "king over Israel" (15:35). Samuel was angry (15:11) and grieved (15:35). Samuel is presented as more emotionally invested and compassionate. 3) First Samuel 13:13-14 proclaims the end of Saul's dynasty while 15:23, 26, more specifically, expresses the rejection of Saul himself. 4) There is specificity in the presentation of David in each account. David will be appointed "*nāḡîḏ* over all my people" (13:14) and is described as "a man after my own heart" (13:14). In 15:28 David is merely "a companion of yours who is better than you." Though 13:7b-15 is terse in many respects, its description of David (13:14) is richer than that of 15:28. The image of the heart (13:14) opens up connections elsewhere linking Jonathan, David, Solomon, Josiah, and YHWH. In 1 Sam 14:7 the youth says to Jonathan "do what is in your heart . . ." Subsequently Jonathan "worked with God" (14:45). The people do not say to Saul: "do what is in your heart," rather, they respond to Saul with silence (14:39) or with "do whatever seems good to you" (14:36, 40). Saul's heart was not aligned with YHWH's heart as were the hearts of Jonathan and David. Being after the heart of YHWH connects with other texts too, e.g., 1 Samuel 2:35, where one dynasty cedes to another. Solomon's heart should be mentioned here also: in 1 Kings 11:1-9 the "heart" is mentioned five times. Josiah is praised for a penitent heart (2 Kgs 22:19).

[611] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 93.

the kingdom is torn from Saul and given to David at that very moment (*wayyiqqāraʿ*; *qāraʿ*; 15:27-28; 16:1-13; cf.1 Kgs 11:29-32). The kingdom is already symbolically in David's hands (1 Sam 24:4). That this has *already* happened is confirmed in 28:17 (*wayyiqraʿ*). The realization of what in 13:13-14 was in the distant future is advanced significantly in 15:27-28 through prophetic word/action. The violence of the imagery in 15:27-28—the kingdom is torn or ripped from Saul—underlines immediacy, urgency, and irrevocability. The increased specificity and chronological immediacy of 15:27-28 suggests that 15:1-35 is later than 13:7b-15. Synchronically this is so. Reading synchronically, the first step toward the realization of 13:7b-15, especially 13:13-14 and the rejection of the Saulide dynasty, is the rejection of Saul himself in 15:1-35. Diachronically, however, it is otherwise. Prophetic immediacy and focus on specific events predate and give way to more long term deuteronomistic interest in the broader plan of YHWH, the unfolding of history at YHWH's word, and the enduring Davidic dynasty (13:13-14).

Another indication of later reflection on 13:7b-15 occurs in 15:22 where burnt offerings (*ʿōlôṯ*) are contrasted directly with obedience to YHWH. This refers to 1 Samuel 13:9 (*ʿōlāh* [2x]; cf. 10:8, *ʿōlôṯ*) where the burnt offering constitutes Saul's disobedience. This equation of burnt offering with disobedience facilitates the opposition of burnt offerings and obedience in 15:22. The opposition could be made only in awareness of 1 Samuel 13:9. Moreover, it is unlikely that the linking of presumption and idolatry with Saul (15:23) could be made without awareness of Saul's cultic presumption in 13:7b-15 (cf. 9:13). Angelo Tosato views the connection between 15:23a and 15:22 as unclear and 15:23a ("For rebellion is as the sin of

divination, and presumption as iniquity and idolatry") as "a later [deuteronomistic] gloss."[612] I argue that 15:23 is a prophetic expansion and the link between 15:22 and 15:23a becomes clear in the light of 13:7b-15, where Saul's presumption in offering the burnt offering is presented as a grave cultic offense akin to idolatry. Tosato overlooks the movement from 13:7b-15* to 1 Samuel 15 and that 1 Samuel 15 indicates awareness of and reflection on Saul's illicit sacrifice (13:7b-15*). In the light of 13:7b-15*, 15:22 and 23 are connected and comprehensible.

Another important synchronic indication that 1 Samuel 15 reflects on 13:7b-15* is the development in Saul's understanding of Samuel's cultic role. In 1 Samuel 13 Saul disregarded Samuel's cultic role and offered illicit sacrifice, not grasping the distinction between prophet/priest and king and who should offer sacrifice, especially the burnt offering. In 1 Samuel 15 Saul begged Samuel twice to return with him *so that Saul would be able* to worship YHWH (15:25, 30). From 1 Samuel 13 Saul has learned that Samuel is necessary for legitimate worship. The increased clarity of roles in 1 Samuel 15 indicates reflection on 1 Samuel 13:7b-15*.

More so than in 13:7b-15, Samuel's word in 1 Samuel 15 is expressly the word of YHWH. First Samuel 13-14 does not present God as agent or speaker nor is Saul's condemnation introduced with expressions such as "thus speaks YHWH" or "the word of the YHWH" (15:1-2). The reader is alerted to the possibility that 13:7b-15 (10:8) is a command of Samuel only and that Samuel's view may not coincide entirely with YHWH's. In 13:7b-15 the reader may question the justice of Saul's rejection and gain an unfavorable impression of Samuel or even of YHWH. Ambiguity changes to clarity in 1 Samuel 15: in disobeying Samuel, Saul

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[612] Angelo Tosato, "La Colpa Di Saul (1 Sam. 15:22-23)," *Biblica* 59, no. 2 (1978): 251-259, 259: 1 Samuel 15:23 and 29 are glosses from the same source as Numbers 23:18-24. There are references to God not repenting and to divination (Num 23:19, 23). Covenantal emphasis is present with special reference to the exodus from Egypt (Num 23:21-22). See also Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, 133.

disobeys a *divine* command, e.g., "I have transgressed what YHWH spoke and [i.e., coinciding with] your words" (15:24).

The numbering of the people in both accounts makes clear by 1 Samuel 15 that the problem is with Saul himself. In both accounts of Saul's rejection he numbers those at his disposal against the Philistines (13:15) and against Amalek (15:4). In both cases this numbering is associated with self-reliance. In 13:7b-15 the insignificant number of six hundred inspires fear and trembling. In 15:1-35 the immense number indicates that Saul is in control. In 1 Samuel 13 the threat is greater, the guilt less, and sympathy for Saul abundant. In 1 Samuel 15 there is no threat, the guilt is immense, and sympathy for Saul has evaporated. Even with two hundred and ten thousand soldiers (15:4) Saul failed in his mission because he was not willing to obey (15:9, 22-23). The numerical contrast between 1 Samuel 13 and 15 indicates increasing clarification between both chapters concerning Saul's guilt. Unlike in 1 Samuel 13 where Philistine might is described in great detail, we are told nothing in 1 Samuel 15 of Amalek's resources, only of Israel's might and that "Saul defeated the Amalekites . . ." (15:7). All was in Saul's favor, yet Saul still failed. The problem was not with external conditions or numbers. External conditions were used by the Judges, Jonathan, David, and Hezekiah to summon trust and give YHWH the victory.[613] The problem was with Saul himself. While up to 13:7b-15 Saul's portrayal is largely positive, all ambiguity is removed in 15 and "we find only the sinful and self-indulgent Saul here."[614]

In both 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35, rebuke becomes rejection. However, this happens in very different ways in each. In 1 Samuel 15 it happens from within, as part of the

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[613] With only two *swords* or *spears* in all of Israel (1 Sam 13:22) David declared: "the LORD does not save by *sword and spear*; for the battle is the LORD's" (17:47). Saul, Jonathan, and David are given the same opportunity.

[614] Galvin, "First Samuel," 260.

narrative unfolding of the prophetically expanded story, with Saul's disclosure that he spared

Agag as the turning point (15:20). In 13:7b-15 it happens more intrusively, from outside, with

the deuteronomistic insertion and frame (13:13-14). I argued above that 1 Samuel 15 generally

follows 13:7b-15 literarily, synchronically, and chronologically: it reflects on, develops, and

clarifies it. An exception to this is the reverse movement, the diachronic influence from 1 Samuel

15 to 13:7b-15. In light of the rebuke-turned-rejection of 1 Samuel 15, it was necessary to

upgrade the originally prophetic rebuke in 13:7b-15* to rejection with the insertion of the

deuteronomistic 13:13-14. This explains the considerable upgrade in the Davidic description

from 15:28 to 13:14 with the more glowing description of David (13:14). Here, deuteronomism

develops prophecy. It also explains the development by 13:13 (the rejection of Saul's *lineage*) of

15:26 (the rejection of Saul *himself*). Diachronically, the rejection of descendants follows from

the rejection of the king and is later. Not only Saul but also his descendants have to be swept

aside in favor of David's house. Campbell describes 13:7b-15* as already extant in the prophetic

tradition: "to be preserved it needed to be placed in the text before chapter 15."[615] This implies

that 1 Samuel 15 was already in place before the insertion of 13:7b-15. Influence was exerted

from 15:1-35 to 13:7b-15*, most obvious in the later deuteronomistic addition of 13:13-14. Yet 1

Samuel 15 was already aware of 13:7b-15* since both shared a common prophetic background

making possible the influence from 13:7b-15* to 15:1-35.

To conclude this section, there is continuity, development, and difference between 1

Samuel 13 and 15. Most authors acknowledge that 1 Samuel 15 shows awareness of and builds

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[615] Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 250. Birch, too, argues that 13:7b-15 was influenced by 15:1-35. See Birch, *Rise of the Israelite Monarchy*, 74.

on 13:7b-15.[616] Seemingly intrusive, 1 Samuel 15 fits its current location and the Saul of 1 Samuel 15 emerges from the Saul of 1 Samuel 13-14. There is continuity. Commonalities are observable. In both rejection accounts Saul chose sacrifice over obedience. Saul's failure is ostensibly cultic and essentially covenantal. Saul's appreciation of Samuel's cultic role grows from 1 Samuel 13 to 15. The specificities of each account complement each other. A striking element of 13:7b-15 is the lack of trust leading to disobedience, the beginning of Saul's decline. By 15:1-35, this has hardened into rebellion expressed in "gainsaying," resulting not only in the future loss of dynasty (13:13) but the immediate rejection of Saul himself (15:23). In 1 Samuel 15 Samuel's word is expressly that of YHWH while this was not as clear in 13:7b-15. Saul's numbering of people in both accounts leads to the conclusion that the problem lies with Saul himself.

In 15:1-35 prophetic redactors expand and transform an old story of Samuel's rebuke of Saul to one of rejection. Later, in 13:13-14, deuteronomistic redactors transform the original prophetic rebuke of 13:7b-15* into rejection. The inserted rejection (13:13-14) added to the rebuke of the earlier version of 13:7b-15* is influenced by the already literarily integrated rebuke and rejection of 1 Samuel 15. Generally, however, 1 Samuel 15 indicates later prophetic reflection on 13:7b-15* and clarifies it. The deuteronomistic frame and insert (13:13-14, DtrN) and the minor post-prophetic additions by DtrN to 1 Samuel 15 comprise the final adaptations to the accounts of Saul's rejection.

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[616] Foresti perceives an "increasing explicitation" and "a progressive series of three announcements by Samuel" in 13:13ff.; 15:28; 28:17 (cf. 2 Sam 1:1-16) with only the final one (28:17) naming David. Foresti attributes these expansions to DtrN's concern with "the rejection of Saul and the consignment of the royal dignity to David" (Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 141). I disagree. In the description of David the "explicitation" *decreases* from 13:14 to 15:28. In addition, 15:28 is more prophetic than deuteronomistic. Van Seters views 13:7b-15 as deuteronomistic and 15:1-35 as *post*-deuteronomistic reflection on 13:7b-15 (*Biblical Saga*, 125). Again, I disagree since 15:1-35 is prophetic with some deuteronomistic retouching.

4.12   Theological Conclusions from Synchronic-Diachronic Study

Indications are that reflection on the story of Saul's rejection drew lessons to inspire later generations. I will take one synchronic indication and one diachronic indication here. First a synchronic indication: in both 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 Saul does the very *worst* imaginable in each scene. In 13:7b-15 he offers, not the peace offerings, which he or others may have prepared for Samuel to bless, but rather the burnt offering, reserved only to a priest-like figure such as Samuel. In 15:1-35 Saul spares, not just the weak, but the very epitome of Amalek, Agag its king. Saul's doing the worst in each scene acts as a pedagogical tool conveying a clear didactic message for others and for later times. This didactic strategy has been overlooked in commentary on the rejection of Saul. An important diachronic indication that these texts were meant to echo for later times is that both 1 Samuel 13 and 15 suggest observance of a later codified law relevant to times long after the setting of the Saul stories. This is implied in the nomistic (DtrN) language and concerns identifiable in 13:13-14 and parts of 15:1-35.[617]

Specific theological interests arise from the synchronic-diachronic study and are summarized here. In Chapter Five these theological conclusions—the results of my research—will be revisited in the light of a classic articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology.

First and most obviously, the accounts of Saul's rejection constitute a call to obedience: Saul's disobedience is not to be imitated. Its results are disastrous. It is also apparent, especially in 13:13-14, that the heart plays a role in obedience to YHWH's commands and law. Other

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[617] I am surprised that the DtrN redactor of 1 Samuel 15 does not make more of the Amalek reference in Exodus 17:14 that YHWH's promise to eliminate Amalek was to be explicitly written in a book.

contextual and related aspects orbit the concern with obedience and recur in some of the elements identified below, especially in the link between kingship and idolatry.

Second, absence of trust in YHWH is at the heart of Saul's failure in obedience, especially in 13:7b-15. This is reflective of a broad deuteronomistic concern with reliance on YHWH expressed in contrasts between distrust and trust. Saul and Jeroboam are examples of distrust leading to fear and disobedience. Both kings lack trust in YHWH and "take . . . agency in securing the kingdom rather than relying on Yahweh's promise."[618] Such Yahwistic trust is essential if obedience is not to be displaced by pragmatism in terms of self reliance or military considerations (Saul) or political or economic considerations (Jeroboam). In the Saul accounts, read appropriately in the light of similar or related accounts (narrative analogy), it is not pragmatism or self-reliance that YHWH seeks but trust. This was an ongoing concern and inspired further reflection.[619]

Third, Saul's failings in *both* rejection accounts are cult and covenant related, encompassing aspects such as election, *ḥērem*, and syncretism, perhaps summarized best by covenantal attentiveness. While Saul predates Josiah's cult centralization and what A. Joseph identifies as the "prototype strategy" for kings, the accounts of Saul's rejection are part of "a theologically based, cultically focused history." Cult was so important to the deuteronomistic authors that it became *the* measuring rod by which kings were judged. It is the standard by which

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[618] Joseph, *Portrait*, 137. See also note 46 on Saul. Joseph devotes two pages to Jeroboam's lack of trust (*Portrait*, 136-137). "Jeroboam does not trust that Yahweh will be with him . . ." (136). "Jeroboam does not trust Yahweh" (137). The Deuteronomist condemns Jeroboam firstly for this. Jeroboam is contrasted with Hezekiah, "praised for his incomparable trust in Yahweh (2 Kgs 18:5)" (137, note 47); lack of trust is not "David-like" (138).

[619] Hezekiah's trust is accentuated in what Knoppers describes as the "incomparability formulae" of the *exilic* deuteronomists, though this builds on motifs already present in the preexilic (Josianic) edition of the Deuteronomistic History. See Gary N. Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him': Incomparability in the Books of Kings," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 54, no. 3 (July 1992): 411-431, 418-425, 413.

Saul and future kings are measured. Saul does not measure up to this cultic model—not the cult centralization of Josiah he predated, but obedience to Samuel. While the setting of the Saul accounts predates cult centralization by centuries, the real time reflection that completed the editing and insertion of 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 took place in the exile. This exilic reflection located Saul's failure within the broader purview of cultic adherence in the light of the davidic prototype.[620] Saul is the opposite of David who becomes the deuteronomistic "paradigm of the cultically adherent king," "the covenantally adherent David."[621] Cult was a key expression of the covenant for the deuteronomistic historians. Cultic adherence was indicative of the covenantal fidelity demanded as a response to election.[622]

In 1 Samuel 15, an expression of human responsibility to YHWH in covenant relationship is the *ḥērem*. The *ḥērem* became an expression of election in covenant relationship and was most likely used metaphorically to represent avoidance of syncretism at all costs, as well as single-minded devotion to YHWH.[623] This view is characteristic of DtrN who first applied the term *ḥērem* to the Amalek account in 1 Samuel 15, as argued in the diachronic section. This is part of the significance of 1 Samuel 15 for later generations. Moberly confirms my view, expressed above, that *ḥērem* is an expression of election.[624] He argues that *ḥērem* is not a "mere"

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[620] Joseph, *Portrait*, 5.

[621] Joseph, *Portrait*, 226-227.

[622] Cultic-covenantal emphasis finds its place within the broader theological question of election: "what it means to be a chosen people" and "what God required of Israel" (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 3). While Samuel "bears witness to God's ethical constancy beyond human fickleness," there is also the dynamic between "God's ethical seriousness, and the measure of human responsibility" (Sonnet, "God's Repentance," 488, 492).

[623] Fokkelman, *Crossing Fates*, 87.

[624] R.W.L. Moberly, "Election and the Transformation of *Ḥērem*," in *The Call of Abraham: Essays on the Election of Israel in Honor of Jon D. Levenson*, ed. Gary A. Anderson and Joel S. Kaminsky (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 67-89.

metaphor for allegiance to YHWH. It involves demanding practices, i.e., "the rejection, the

absolute non-use, of that which could compromise Israel's covenantal allegiance to YHWH:

intermarriage and the presence of alien religious symbols within Israel's promised land."[625] The

Canaanites, against whom it was to be applied, were never exterminated since they appear again

and again (Judg 1:21-33; 1 Kgs 9:20-21).[626] The Deuteronomistic writers restricted the use of

ḥērem to the primordial nations (seven already extinct nations) to make the point that it was not

meant to be used literally. A theological point was being made: *ḥērem* was to be practiced but

not in a military sense.[627] While it was once a practice on the battlefield, Deuteronomy uses it

only as a metaphor "for practices appropriate to enabling Israel's everyday allegiance to YHWH

within a world of conflicting allegiances."[628] It signified complete allegiance to YHWH. The

ḥērem imagery is a reminder for later times that Israel is set apart for YHWH and must strive

constantly to protect and defend that identity. The addition by DtrN of *ḥērem* language to the

extant prophetic account of Saul's Amalek campaign fits well with the exilic context. A. Joseph,

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[625] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 62. See also Moberly, "Election and the Transformation of *Ḥērem*," 75-76.

[626] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 64.

[627] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 67. Moshe Greenberg, though writing earlier, supports Moberly's point. While *ḥērem* appears in older texts (Exodus 22:19), the *ḥērem* as presented in Deuteronomy is limited and "does not seem to be an early conception." Examples in the Deuteronomistic History often go beyond what is proscribed in Deuteronomy, e.g. Amalek in 1 Samuel 15. Preserving purity of faith was the concern behind the *ḥērem* of the Canaanite nations (Deut 7:1-5; 20:16ff.). A war measure "was converted into a fixed religious duty." Some connect this development with Josiah's reform, though Greenberg dismisses this in favor of an earlier time. Greenberg's view on *ḥērem* as an evolving concept—as I argue it is used in 1 Samuel 15—may be summarized thus: "[T]he ancient, rude notion of enemy *ḥērem* underwent continued revision long after it had ceased to be applied in practice. . . . Originating as a votive prescription of the enemy . . . it was transformed by Deuteronomy into an ordinance to protect the purity of Israel's faith . . ." See Moshe Greenberg and Haim Hermann Cohn, "*Ḥērem*" in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 8 (1971), 344-355, especially Greenberg's contribution, 345-350, 348-349.

[628] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 68. Moberly cites Ezra's marriage laws as such a reinterpretation, "to preserve holiness through the abolition of intermarriage" (69). In the Deuteronomistic view, intermarriage increased the risk of syncretism (1 Kgs 11:8): Solomon's heart turned against YHWH because of his foreign wives and their deities (1 Kgs 11:1-13). "Heart" is mentioned five times in 1 Kings 11:1-9. This is part of the urgency and practicality of the now symbolic *ḥērem*.

for instance, sees deuteronomistic concern in exile moving from cult centralization (as in the Josianic history) to "fighting Baal worship and other forms of idolatry and foreign worship." This was the occasion of the theological intensification against idolatry or syncretism expressed in the specifically cultic-covenantal term *ḥērem*.[629]

In the text of 1 Samuel 15, the term *ḥērem* is introduced by DtrN into the older prophetic account. The term evokes election and its responsibilities as it does in Deuteronomy 7 where the practice of *ḥērem* on the inhabitants of Canaan (Deut 7:1-5) is explained in the related and immediately following passage expressing election rooted in YHWH's choice and love of Israel (Deut 7:6-8).[630] The *ḥērem*, as understood and introduced by DtrN into 1 Samuel 15, was no longer a military holy war obligation. It was more a "*religious idea*" that remained "potent and productive" and which "illuminates the meaning of election."[631]

The theological aspects identified as numbers one, two and three above (obedience, trust, and covenantal attentiveness, including *ḥērem*) are closely related theologically. First Samuel 13:7b-15 locates Saul's failure more in the absence of trust of a pressurized Saul. First Samuel 15:1-35 views it as a willing failure in covenantal attentiveness and responsibility on the part of an increasingly stubborn and gainsaying Saul. Taken together, the accounts speak to two scenarios important in the history of Israel: trust under severe pressure (13:7b-15) and covenantal

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[629] Joseph, *Portrait*, 222. Joseph refers to the exilic Dtr[2].

[630] Moberly, "Election and the Transformation of *Ḥērem*," 77-78.

[631] Moberly, "Election and the Transformation of *Ḥērem*," 68-69. The phrase is borrowed from Jon D. Levenson writing of how the difficult idea of child sacrifice in Israel was transformed. Moberly builds on Levenon's idea to express an understanding of *ḥērem*. Even in Deuteronomy its concern was fidelity to YHWH rather than genocide. Rather than some kind of "ethnic cleansing" in the modern sense, its prime concern was the YHWH-Israel covenant: it is prescribed against *Israelites* too who renounce YHWH (Deut 13:16). It was more about religious identity and allegiance than ethnic identity. See Moberly, "Election and the Transformation of *Ḥērem*," 70-71. Useful on this is Joel S. Kaminsky, "Did Election Imply the Mistreatment of Non-Israelites?", *The Harvard Theological Review* 96, no. 4 (2003): 397-425.

attentiveness in good times (15:1-35). Their absence in Saul is at the root of his rejection. Their cultivation is the antidote to Saul-like disobedience. Yahwistic trust and covenantal attentiveness dispose the heart to obedience, making the heart David-like (1 Kgs 9:4; 11:4; 14:8, etc.). Such dispositions make obedience possible, both in difficult circumstances and in prosperity, when the king's heart might easily turn from YHWH (Deut 17:17, 20; cf. 1 Kgs 11:1-10). Israel's greatest kings are extolled as models of these two qualities: Hezekiah, for trust in YHWH in impossible circumstances (2 Kgs 18-20), and Josiah, for covenantal attentiveness in prosperity (2 Kgs 22-23).[632]

The fourth theological aspect deals with kingship itself, including the related themes of idolatry, obedience, and David. Kingship fed idolatry because most kings were disobedient to YHWH. The request for a king is presented as consonant with the rejection of YHWH (1 Sam 8:7), "a sin resembling 'the service of other gods,'" something akin to idolatry.[633] The idolatry of substituting YHWH as king with a human king ("for YHWH your God was your king" [1 Sam 12:12]; cf. Judg 8:23; 9:7-21) is embodied in the person of Israel's first king and expressed in Saul's disregard for cult and covenant in both rejection accounts. In 1 Samuel 15:23a the stubbornness and rebellion behind Saul's cultic and covenantal disobedience is equated with idolatry. With few exceptions, kingship in Israel facilitated idolatry. Saul spares Israel's enemy Agag while giving the worst to YHWH. Agag encapsulates the depths of Saul's disobedience, becoming its tangible focus. Kings led only to disobedience, disloyalty, and disaster for Israel.

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[632] The accounts of Saul, Hezekiah, and Josiah all indicate DtrN attention. While the account of Josiah in 2 Kings 22-23 is clearly nomistic in theme, other links can be found between Saul and Hezekiah, e.g., both are called *nāḡîḏ* by DtrN (1 Sam 9:16; 10:1 [2x]; 2 Kgs 20:5). DtrN may connect trust with deuteronomistic fidelity.

[633] Garsiel, *First Book of Samuel*, 66.

The destruction of Agag and the prophecy of the end of Saul's reign express the realization that the elimination of kings, as experienced, is for Israel's long term good.

Deuteronomy 17:8-13, 14-20, demanding obedience to priest, judge, and law, lingers in the background of 1 Samuel 13 and 15 and is evoked in 1 Samuel 10:25 where the rights and duties of kingship are written in a book and placed before YHWH (Deut 17:18-19). Obedience to the prophet is also highlighted (Deut 18:15-22). Similarly, the call to obedience of king and people in 1 Samuel 12 influences the reading of 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. The accounts of the rejection of Saul appeal for obedience in cult and covenant; obedience to the prophetic word; and obedience to the word(s) of YHWH in the book of the law (1 Sam 15:1; Deut 17:19). The law of the king (Deut 17:14-20) in its reconceptualization of kingship rejects "the standard Israelite and Near Eastern royal ideology."[634] In doing so, it moves from the monarchical vision of the ancient Near East, so susceptible to idolatry, to a model of Torah obedience ("words" [15:1]) that endures when monarchy disappears. Veijola identified DtrN as the first to draw the theological conclusion from the kingship of YHWH that "there should be no human king at all" (*dass es gar kein menschliches Königtum geben dürfte*).[635] Since YHWH is king there should be no human king—except an obedient king. A human king can thrive only within the conditions of obedience outlined in 1 Samuel 8 and 12. Hertzberg succinctly expresses this reality as regards Saul: "Only he who allows God to be wholly king, and who is therefore himself completely obedient, can be king over the people of God."[636] This explains how an obedient, Davidic figure could be accepted, even within the worldview of the largely anti-monarchic DtrN. The rejection of Saul

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[634] Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 524.

[635] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122, author's italics, my translation. (See Judg 8:23; 9:7-21).

[636] Hertzberg, *I and II Samuel*, 133.

and openness to David find expression just after both rejection accounts: "YHWH is with [David]" (16:18) but no longer with Saul (16:14). David's attitude to YHWH is "consistently depicted as one of trust and obedience."[637] Saul portrays the consequences of their absence. The presentation of the monarchy is not entirely negative since David's is idealized as one of trust and obedience.

The fifth aspect is the prophet-king dynamic and the prophetic word as key to history. Samuel is presented as a prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-22). First Samuel 13:7b-15; 15:1-35 (cf. 28:11-20) are largely prophetic and express prophetic-deuteronomistic interests. Samuel is no longer an anonymous seer (1 Sam 9) but more like the powerful Elijah. Saul is no longer the young hero (1 Sam 9, 11, 13). Samuel is presented as the ideal prophet and Saul as the weak king and transgressor of Mosaic law.[638] The power of the prophetic word is illustrated: what Samuel speaks, comes to pass. This is especially clear in Samuel's prophetic sign/act in 15:27-28. As Samuel interprets and speaks, so YHWH acts. The efficacious, divine, prophetic word is at work in history and shapes it.

Sixth, the story of Saul is the story of the nation and so of the Deuteronomistic History itself in microcosm. It explains the reasons for the exile. The dialogue between Saul and Samuel in 1 Samuel 15, with all its protestations, dissimulations, delays and eventual, unavoidable judgment, reminds the reader that, "even one who starts by appealing against God's judgment must finally come to admit its justness."[639] This is one of the senses of 15:29: Samuel underlines that YHWH's decision about Saul stands and discussion is over. The implication is that it is a

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[637] McKenzie, *King David*, 65.

[638] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 136.

[639] Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 503.

just decision and futile to resist. YHWH's decision can be explained, but not changed. It is the

same with the exile of 587 BCE. Noth suggests that the whole history is a response to the exile, a

theodicy attempting to make sense of the disaster.[640] Yet there is more to the history than that.

The YHWH-Israel bond is damaged but not dissolved.

Seventh, the story of Saul with its discrete sympathy for him and the possibility of

repentance points beyond theodicy. First Samuel 13:7b-15, at least in its final deuteronomistic

form, focuses on the move from Saul to David. There is no opportunity of repentance. In 15:1-

35, predominantly prophetic with minimal deuteronomistic or later reworking, YHWH responds

to repentance and acts through his prophet. In the end, Samuel returns with Saul and through 1

Samuel 15 there is repetition of the verb *šûḇ* as noted. This is indicative of the prophetic concern

with repentance and return, e.g., "Return (*šûḇ*) to me . . . and I will return (*šûḇ*) to you" (Zech

1:3).[641] Return on the part of Samuel (15:30-31, *šûḇ* [x2]) and sympathy for Saul provide hope

for later times. YHWH changes his mind in response to repentance. Foresti notes that in the

broader deuteronomistic view Saul continues for as long as Samuel lives and this is the point of

the repeated obituary (1 Sam 25:1; 28:3), while in the prophetic view, Saul continues because of

his repentance, shown by Samuel returning with him (15:31).[642] Samuel's returning gives hope

of YHWH's repentance in response to human repentance and is expressive of prophetic thought.

The language surrounding YHWH's not repenting deceitfully (*nēṣaḥ yiśrā'ēl lō' yəšaqqēr*,

15:29) is expressive of later, stricter, election/covenant ideas suspicious of Saul and kingship and

characteristic of DtrN. Theologically, however, the prophetic call to repentance abides and is not

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[640] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 89. Noth does not use the term "theodicy."

[641] In Zechariah 1:3 it is "YHWH of Hosts" who speaks as in 1 Samuel 15:2.

[642] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 168-169. For Foresti, this is DtrH and DtrP respectively.

silenced or displaced by the DtrN redaction. The prophetic voice is still heard. This diachronic insight is important theologically.

4.13 Conclusion

First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 were examined synchronically, diachronically and comparatively to discover the meaning and theology of the rejection of Saul. Though somewhat different in style and emphasis, similar concerns arise from both accounts, e.g., the role of Samuel and the prophetic word, cultic and covenantal concerns, and the importance of obedience. In both accounts, rebuke becomes rejection and the unnamed David is described and praised. Sympathy is shown to Saul in different ways in both accounts. Differences were noted. Synchronic and diachronic interplay clarifies the texts (13:7b-15 and 15:1-35). Each account is largely prophetic—*ein Kind der Prophetie*[643]—preserving older traditions, but willingly adopted and adapted by deuteronomistic authors.

Synchronically, Agag is central to the skilful narrative of 1 Samuel 15. This insight, missed by commentators, suggests not just the literary prowess of the prophetic redactors but that most of 1 Samuel 15 is not post-prophetic or deuteronomistic. It was received willingly into the Deuteronomistic History because of the affinities between prophetic and deuteronomistic thought and outlook (Chapter Three). The Agag references are not secondary to the main presentation of the story. There is no story without Agag—or only a faint trace. Agag belongs to the older story expanded skillfully by prophetic writers. Agag is the focus in the unraveling of the Saul-Samuel

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[643] "A Child of Prophecy": using Wolff's description of the Deuteronomistic History in general. See Hans Walter Wolff, "Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 73, no. 2 (1961): 171-186, 172. (English translation: Wolff, "Kerygma," 64).

exchange, providing substantial literary unity in the Amalek account. This point has been overlooked by most commentary.

Diachronically, an emphasis on obedience, not only to cultic practices or to the spoken prophetic word but especially to the fixed words and commands of YHWH, the "entire" written law, is introduced and informs the final text. As temple and kingship disappeared, so too did the role of the prophet. The movement of prophetic word giving way to law book is discernible. In the end, the prophet is presented as the vehicle of deuteronomic law (2 Kgs 17:13).

Theologically, an exilic audience is exhorted to obedience through the old accounts of Saul's rejection, accounts enhanced by prophetic transmission, deuteronomistic reception, and marked by concern for the book of the law. The rejection of Saul, then, is not simply an ancient, transmitted story. It is an invitation to obedience to prophetically-shaped and deuteronomistically-codified divine "commands" (13:13-14) or "words" (15:1; cf. Deut 1:1). These coincide in authority and content, an observation overlooked by commentators. Failure to carry our YHWH's words (15:1, 11, 13) is in fact to turn away (*šûḇ*) from YHWH (15:11). It is relational.

Yet with YHWH, failure is not the last word. When failure in deuteronomistic obedience overwhelms, the prophetic call to return (*šûḇ*) gives new hope. In the end, Samuel does indeed turn back with Saul (*wayyāšāḇ*, 15:31, cf. 25, 26, 30), even at his imperfect expression of repentance (15:24, 30). The reader is challenged to deuteronomistic covenantal obedience, but offered hope through the still perceptible prophetic concern with repentance. He or she is also consoled by the realization that the Glory of Israel does not repent of *ḥesed* toward his people (15:29, 6) or cast them off (12:22). Of the YHWH-Israel bond, YHWH does not repent. The

foundations of faith and life are rooted in the YHWH-Israel bond. The reader is invited to build

anew on these foundations, presented in their final DtrN form.

Chapter Five

5   The Rejection of Saul and Deuteronomistic Theology

5.1   Introduction

Compared to David, Saul's place in the history of Israel became insignificant.[644] Yet much narrative space—some twenty-five chapters, almost an entire book of the Deuteronomistic History (1 Sam 8-2 Sam 1)—is devoted to him. The story of Saul, then, is not simply a bridge between the judges and the Davidic monarchy. The expansive narrative devoted to Saul indicates his importance and significance, raising the question of what meaning Saul and his failure had for those who preserved his memory and read about him, as well as for later generations.

Methodology is key to penetrating the meaning of the Saul story (Chapter 1). Employing synchronic and diachronic methodologies (Chapters 2 and 3), the rejection of Saul was studied closely, particularly as presented in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 (Chapter 4). A fuller picture emerges with both methods in dialogue. Combined insights bring us closer to the meaning of the texts. The fruit is greater theological clarity. Chapter Four concluded that the account of Saul's rejection in its exilic, final form was not simply to tell an old story, the original setting of which was around the tenth century BCE. The final account was to place important considerations before the exilic community, to offer a platform on which lessons could be learned from past infidelity, and on which "the foundations of faith and life" could be built anew.[645] Saul's rejection was pondered and lessons were drawn for later generations. That Saul does the *worst* in both rejection accounts implies the accounts are strengthened by pedagogical hyperbole. That the

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[644] Sirach 44 moves from Samuel to David, omitting any mention of Saul.

[645] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 1. Noth refers to the compilers of the Pentateuchal traditions but I borrow the phrase.

texts echo for *later* times becomes clear with the realization that both 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 suggest observance of a later, codified law relevant to times long after the setting of the Saul stories. This is implied in the nomistic language and ideology (DtrN) used in 13:13-14 and parts of 15:1-35. I concluded that the "commands" of 13:13-14 and the "words" of 15:1 (cf. 15:11) indicate the same content and authority. The obedience exhorted in the final form of the Saul texts is no longer to oral prophecy spoken through Samuel, but to fixed commands, written words, inscribed in the book of the law. What goes for Saul goes for the Deuteronomistic History as a whole. The history gives rise to its own vision, ideology, and theology. The history that reflects on the deuteronomic law is "full of teaching incidents and exempla": David Carr sees Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History as the core of a teaching/scribal curriculum in ancient Israel that would be influential in the exile and beyond.[646]

To avoid circularity in argumentation and in an attempt at greater originality and objectivity, serious discussion of Deuteronomistic *Theology* per se was set aside until now. Only with the completion of the synchronic-diachronic research are my theological conclusions concerning the rejection of Saul compared with a classic articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology. To define Deuteronomistic Theology I will draw on the work of earlier, classic proponents.

Three main tasks await Chapter Five. First, a description of Deuteronomistic Theology in its classic expression will be given. Second, the conclusions of my research (Chapters 1-4) will be reviewed, compared, and contrasted with Deuteronomistic Theology. Third, the positive dimensions of Deuteronomistic Theology will be recognized, with the observation that Deuteronomistic Theology, sidelined for some time, merits rehabilitation.

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[646] Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 142.

5.2   Deuteronomistic Theology

Many scholarly works could be placed under the banner of deuteronomistic interest. A description of Deuteronomistic Theology will be provided here enabling comparison with this dissertation's research. My description of Deuteronomistic Theology is based on the classic presentation of that theology by earlier proponents, especially Noth and Von Rad, and to a lesser degree on observations by others such as Wolff, Childs, Vogt, and Moberly.[647] I will lean more heavily on Von Rad's articulation of "classic" Deuteronomistic Theology. His is perhaps the most systematic and widely recognized, as Veijola comments: "Von Rad constructs on the literary foundation laid by Noth an imposing theological interpretation."[648] The Deuteronomistic History was already described briefly in Chapter One. Its theology is the focus here. The tenets of Deuteronomistic Theology will be outlined below.

Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History mark a turning point in Israelite religion described as a "theological revolution," [649] a theological "purification,"[650] an advance in theological understanding.[651] Deuteronomistic reform is sometimes described as

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[647] Some of these authors were referred to in passing in earlier chapters but were not significantly employed in my research. For instance, Noth was used only in defining the Deuteronomistic History in Chapter One or in noting his assertion that 1 Samuel 15 is not deuteronomistic (Chapter 4). In my research (Chapters 2, 3, 4) I worked with different authors—generally contemporary and more recent than Noth or Von Rad (e.g., Campbell, Joseph, Römer, Polzin, Clifford, Edelman, Green, McKenzie, McCarter, Veijola, Knoppers, Van Seters, Davies, Davis, Galvin, etc.). Weinfeld is also used but I view his work as more focused on deuteronomic phraseology and themes than on theology (*Deuteronomic School*, vii-viii).

[648] Timo Veijola, "Martin Noth's *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* and Old Testament Theology," in *The History of Israel's Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 182, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 102-127, 115.

[649] Moshe Weinfeld, "Deuteronomy's Theological Revolution," *Bible Review* 12, no. 1 (1996): 38-45, 45.

[650] Peter T. Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology and the Significance of* Torah: *A Reappraisal* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns), 2006, 2, citing Von Rad and others.

[651] E.g., Veijola's example of DtrN's realization that there should be no human king at all, except an obedient Davidic one (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122).

"demythologization, centralization, and secularization."[652] Central to Deuteronomy and

Deuteronomistic Theology is "a theology of the supremacy of Yahweh, expressed in the life of

Israel through adherence to *Torah*."[653] In addition, what makes something distinctively

deuteronomistic is the assumption of the authority of "a written law book," Deuteronomy, which

replaces the prophets.[654] Deuteronomy underlines and informs the entire history and "provides

the very pattern for the speeches and testaments in the remainder of the historical books . . ."[655]

In the deuteronomistic vision, "[f]rom first to last . . . Israel's movements are directed by the

divine word originating at Horeb."[656] The Deuteronomistic History is the account of how the law

of YHWH expressed in Deuteronomy was, in the main, not lived out, especially in the lives of

kings.[657] Noth argued for the unity of the deuteronomistic work from the "*consistent theological

view of history* expressed especially in the speeches at key moments (Josh 1; 23; 1 Sam 12; 1

Kgs 8; 2 Kgs 17, etc.)."[658] Weinfeld notes consistency of language and ideology (deuteronomistic

jargon and theology). Deuteronomistic phraseology revolves around "basic Deuteronomic

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[652] E.g., the move from visual theophany at Sinai to aural revelation "from heaven" (Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 1).

[653] Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 6.

[654] Clements, "A Dialogue with Gordon McConville on Deuteronomy," 511.

[655] Römer, *So-Called*, 3-4 for summary; cf. also 41.

[656] Clifford, *Deuteronomy*, 15.

[657] The question of Joshua and Judges as part of the history is not insurmountable. Joshua explains how the land was conquered. The judge cycles bring relief for limited periods. The final chapters of Judges demand the monarchy as life deteriorates and unravels. Many see Judges 17-21, with its negative view of Gibeah and the Benjaminites, as a foreshadowing of Saul's reign. Joshua and Judges form a coherent narrative with the rest of the history.

[658] Veijola, "Martin Noth's *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* and Old Testament Theology," 104, emphasis added. See Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 5-6. Some argue that some of these chapters are later than thought. Moshe Weinfeld agrees with Noth's assessment of the chapters of reflection spread throughout the Deuteronomistic History: "These anticipatory and retrospective summaries are found only in deuteronomistic literature, and have no parallel in any of the other literary strands of the Bible" (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 13). These "chapters of reflection" exemplify the "coherence, causation and significance" that make this genuine historiography (Gilmour, *Representing*, 22). To Gilmour's statement I would add: that make it a deuteronomistic and *theological* historiography.

theological tenets" of which Weinfeld lists nine, as well as offering a compilation of deuteronomistic phraseology.[659] In my attempt to express the substance of Deuteronomistic Theology, I suggest a rearrangement of Weinfeld's list, collating elements into three sections. First, the YHWH-Israel relationship and how this finds expression in the life of Israel. Included here is obedience, reward and punishment, and the written deuteronomic law. Second, the centrality of the divine, prophetic, word of YHWH as shaper of history, as well as the prophet-king dynamic. Third, the image of David and the hope placed in him.

First, the essence of Deuteronomistic Theology is uncompromising fidelity to YHWH in the unique relationship between YHWH and Israel expressed in election and in the ongoing deuteronomistic covenant. This covenant is the YHWH-Israel relationship, regulated by the deuteronomic Torah, the "authentic divine exposition" of the law.[660] The Deuteronomic covenant is viewed as definitive and making a "totalizing claim": it is *the* authoritative Torah.[661] YHWH alone "is presented as the appropriate recipient of Israel's undivided allegiance (Deut 6:4-5)."[662] It finds expression in the monotheistic creed, observance of the law, centralization of the cult in later times, and the struggle against idolatry and syncretism expressed in the attitude of separation from other nations—of which *ḥērem* is an example. These elements are implications or subsets of the relationship with YHWH. This central relationship demands

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[659] Weinfeld lists these including 1) the struggle against idolatry and syncretism; 2) centralization of the cult; 3) the covenant and election (*baḥar*) of Israel; 4) the monotheistic creed; 5) the observance of the law; 6) the inheritance of the land; 7) retribution or material reward; 8) the fulfilment of prophecy; and 9) the Davidic dynasty (Weinfeld, "Deuteronomy's Revolution," 40). See also Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 1.

[660] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 90.

[661] Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 141.

[662] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 8.

unrivalled allegiance and obedience.[663] The YHWH-Israel relationship determines the very

purpose of the history. The YHWH-Israel relationship endures: "For the Lord will not cast away

his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for

himself" (1 Sam 12:22; cf. 1 Kgs 8:51, 53). While demanding fidelity, this relationship gives

hope even after disobedience for "God continues with his people."[664] YHWH's fidelity is

greater than human disobedience. In the light of this enduring covenant, Von Rad's explanation

of "the peculiar aim . . . of this great work" is more convincing than Noth's. Noth suggests the

history is an explanation of the exile, an attempt to make sense of the disaster. It is about justice

deserved.[665] Wolff, Von Rad, and others see it as more—a call to repentance. Embracing Wolff's

view, Von Rad notes the unlikelihood that "a work of such a comprehensive range" would have

been compiled simply to underline that the 587 crisis was "just divine punishment": of what use

would that have been to the generation YHWH had already "written off"?[666] For Von Rad, the

real point of the history was that YHWH awaited his people. Israel's task in exile was to turn

back to YHWH. For the Deuteronomistic historians "the judgment of 587 did not mean the end

of the people of God; nothing but refusal to return would be the end."[667] The central and

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[663] Some see Deuteronomy as introducing the notion of covenant as treaty, and therefore more clearly demanding this allegiance and obedience. McConville argued that "the theological significance of Deuteronomy was its conception of the relation between people and God as a treaty." See Bernard M. Levinson, "The Hermeneutics of Tradition in 'Deuteronomy': A Reply to J.G. McConville," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119, no. 2 (2000): 269-86, 272. First Kings 8:53 expresses this: "For you separated them [your people, Israel] from among all the peoples of the earth, to be your heritage, as you declared through Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God."

[664] The phrase is taken from the summary of Wolff's article "Kerygma" provided in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah* (ed. Knoppers and McConville), 62-78, 62.

[665] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 89.

[666] Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1, *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, trans. D.M.G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 346.

[667] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 346. Some passages associated with the exile indicate this, especially Deuteronomy 30:1-10; 4:25-31; 1 Kings 8:46ff. Von Rad provides other examples of this turning (*šûḇ*) in

overriding YHWH-Israel bond is safeguarded "in spite of all failure on the part of its recipient."[668]

The written law is central. It "teaches the means by which Yahweh's supremacy is lived out by his people."[669] The monarchy takes up much of the Deuteronomistic History but, in the end, it is inessential and swept away, taking formal prophecy with it. Kingship and prophecy rise and fall together. What endures is the covenant with YHWH expressed in the law. No other person or role is essential in the relationship with YHWH. Even the king is optional and his role divided among others.[670] The oral, prophetic word becomes the increasingly fixed, written word of the deuteronomic law. The people can live without kingship but not without the law of YHWH.[671] The deuteronomistic vision of kingship is rooted in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (the law of the king; cf. 1 Sam 10:25) and 1 Samuel 8 and 12. The king was to "write for himself in a book a copy of this law" (τὸ δευτερονόμιον τοῦτο) entrusted to the levitical priests (Deut 17:18), received from Moses, and placed by the ark of the covenant (Deut 31:24-26), indicating continuity between the copied written law code (a version of Deuteronomy) and the tablets of the law in the ark. The king's duty was to write, read, and obey it, a reminder that he was *not* a king like those of other nations (1 Sam 8:5, 20). YHWH was king in Israel (1 Sam 8:7; 12:12): "The king thus serves as a model Israelite by his adherence to *Torah,* thus acknowledging Yahweh's

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1 Sam 7:3; 1 Kings 8:33, 35; 2 Kings 17:13; 23:25 (Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 346). These passages help date the history, placing its final form more in exilic than postexilic times.

[668] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 111. Interestingly Von Rad is discussing the safeguarding of YHWH's promise and the turning of the curse of Israel's enemy's into blessing for Israel, including Numbers 22-24, important in my discussion of 1 Samuel 15:29 (Chapter Four).

[669] Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 229.

[670] Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 230.

[671] Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 70-71.

supremacy and receiving the blessings of being Yahweh's elect."[672] Kings are good only if

faithful to that law. Total loyalty to YHWH is "[a]t the heart of the Deuteronomic world view";

the purpose of the law was to "inculcate a sense of total loyalty to him"; and only obedience

secured the blessings of the covenant.[673]

Second is the importance of the prophetic word of YHWH and its role in shaping history,

especially in the prophet-king relationship. The Deuteronomistic historians were also theologians

with a clear view of how YHWH related to history. Von Rad demonstrated "the focal point of

deuteronomistic historiography is the prophetic word of God fulfilled in Israelite history."[674]

Within the Deuteronomistic History, the prophetic word is a key expression of a broader

intentionality: what seems accidental is understood as caused or used by YHWH.[675] To borrow a

phrase of Trible's: "Within human luck is divine intentionality."[676] For Noth, YHWH is

presented as acting in and through history, in deeds as well as words. The deuteronomistic

portrayal of YHWH at work in history did not demand dramatic signs or miracles; yet all the

time YHWH was understood as guiding and in charge. Even the workings of the heart serve

YHWH's purposes.[677] For Von Rad, it is the deuteronomist's attempt to "understand Israel's

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[672] Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 218-219.

[673] Vogt, *Reappraisal*, 227-228.

[674] This is Moshe Weinfeld's assessment (*Deuteronomic School*, 15).

[675] E.g., David happens to come when the Philistine giant is making his boast (1 Sam 17:23). Hushai is clearly YHWH's instrument thwarting Ahitophel's counsel against David (2 Sam 15:31-34). "Theologically, Hushai is the immediate answer to David's prayer . . . Hushai has been sent by God to David" (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 519). The deliverance of Jerusalem in Hezekiah's time is clearly caused by YHWH (2 Kgs 19:6-7, 32-37). Alter refers to "double causation," i.e., everything is determined by the human actors but "simultaneously, everything is determined by God, according to a divine plan in history" (*Ancient Israel*, 518-519). See also Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 315: "the historian . . . points a finger to God." YHWH intervenes through human agency.

[676] Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, 2, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 176.

[677] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 316.

history solely in the light of the word of Jahweh that gives the work its theological grandeur."[678]

Von Rad expands: "For the Deuteronomist the divine guidance of history is established beyond

all doubt: but that it is by his word that Jahweh directs history, this is practically hammered in to

the reader."[679] The intentionality of the history is revealed in the providential unfolding of

events—caused or interpreted by the divine, prophetic word of YHWH, "the central power of

history."[680] History, then, is "the accomplishment of the word of God which prophets had

proclaimed" from Moses on (Deut 18:15, 18).[681] There is continuity between prophetic word and

Mosaic law expressed in the deuteronomic law book. YHWH's word is revealed in the words of

the prophet, the ordinary means of communication with YHWH: Saul seeks God through the

prophet; God seeks David through the prophet.[682] That God reveals his decisions by means of a

prophetic word is not a new concept. It is also in the Tetrateuch.[683] In the Deuteronomistic

History, however, *the word does something*. As already noted in Chapter Three, "what

distinguishes the deuteronomistic concept is that the divine *dāḇār* is conceived as an 'acting

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[678] Von Rad opines that his deuteronomist did not rationally schematize history. Outside of Israel, history recounting was viewed as a state sponsored task belonging to politics (*Old Testament Theology*, 344).

[679] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 342, 343-344.

[680] Veijola's estimation of how Eichrodt and Von Rad both saw "the word of God as the central power of history according to deuteronomistic belief." See Veijola, "Martin Noth's *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*," 110.

[681] Wolff, "The Kergyma," 64.

[682] Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*, 184.

[683] While it could be argued that some of these themes are also important in the Tetrateuch, some are themes distinctive to the Deuteronomistic History, e.g., 1) "other gods"; 2) the preparation for or living out of the monarchy in obedience to YHWH and judged primarily on cult centralization, etc.; 3) the word of the Lord, especially in prophecy and fulfilment; 4) the exile itself as a theme (found only in the Tetrateuch in Lev 26:27-33, a very late text). While the Tetrateuch recounts YHWH selecting Abraham and his descendents, "it is Deuteronomy that introduces a specific verb [*bḥr*] for this, a term that then passes into the theological lexicon" (Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 43). The place (temple) will be chosen. The city will be chosen. The king will be chosen. David will be chosen (Deut 4:37; 7:6, 7; 10:15; 14:2). Saul was chosen (1 Sam 10:24) (Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 327).

force which begets future events' rather than a mantic word of God which merely reveals the future."[684] Weinfeld agrees with Von Rad that "the Deuteronomist's innovation was to make this prophetic word of God the focal point of his history."[685] This causal understanding of the prophetic word explains how the Deuteronomistic theology of history was first to formulate "the phenomenon of saving history,"[686] a history shaped by the word of YHWH, a word of judgment and salvation. Most of all, this was a sustaining or destroying word directed at kings with whom the people stood or fell.[687] The prophet speaks for God or recalls the king or people to the law. The link between prophecy and kingship is important (e.g., Samuel-Saul; Nathan-David; Ahijah-Jeroboam; Elijah-Ahab). Both are subservient to the word of YHWH and, in the end, to the written Torah.

Third, David, not the monarchy, becomes a type of fidelity to YHWH. Kings like Hezekiah and Josiah are good kings only because of David-like fidelity. YHWH permits the monarchy though the reason for this seems to be more for the sake of David than for the sake of the monarchy. In the Deuteronomistic History the figure of David develops and becomes more important than the institution of the monarchy. David is the faithful king imagined in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Josiah, the best king after David, "out-davids" David in being the *only* one to fulfill perfectly the command of Deuteronomy 6:5, loving YHWH with all three dimensions, heart, soul and might.[688] All Judean kings are measured against David, the perfect

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[684] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 15. Weinfeld cites Isaac Leo Seeligmann, "Aetiological Elements in Biblical Historiography," *Zion* 26 (1961): 141-169, 167 (Hebrew).

[685] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 21.

[686] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 344.

[687] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 344.

[688] Joseph, *Portrait*, 164: "Only Josiah (not even David) completely fulfills the injunction of Deut. 6:5."

king (1 Kgs 9:4; 11:4, 6, 38; 14:8). The deuteronomistic writers had an image of "the perfect anointed" against which the entire history of the monarchy would be measured and found wanting.[689] This image of David, very different from that of the so-called succession narrative (2 Sam 6-20*; 1 Kgs 1-2), became a type of one whose heart is entirely attuned to YHWH and perfectly obedient to YHWH's law. The image of the ideal, Davidic, kingly figure is rooted in 2 Samuel 7, preserving what the deuteronomistic writers took to be the "real meaning of the Nathan prophecy."[690] The promise of 2 Samuel 7 is viewed as an eternal, unconditional covenant (Ps 89:34ff.; 132:11ff.). For Childs, the idealization of David led to a vision of David as "the ideal ruler of Israel, even as a type of the righteous rule of God." David's rule is identified with God's and becomes "a symbol of the rule of God."[691] This explains why DtrN, so negative about the monarchy, includes a positive view of David.[692]

In summary, Deuteronomistic Theology may be condensed into three central points. First, the supremacy of the YHWH-Israel covenant and how that was to be lived in adherence to the deuteronomic law, in the end a written law, the normative Torah. Second, the power of the word of YHWH in guiding history, especially through prophets, especially in the prophet-king relationship, through events, and in the heart. Third, Davidic obedience and promise. The theological conclusions of my research will now be viewed in the light of the above description of Deuteronomistic Theology.

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[689] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology,* 345. Von Rad lists references to David as model of perfect kingship. Alison Joseph makes a similar point (*Portrait*, 5, 226-227).

[690] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 345-346.

[691] Brevard Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, *Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 154-155.

[692] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 120.

5.3 Comparison of Rejection of Saul Theology and Deuteronomistic Theology

This section will review the theology of the rejection of Saul resultant from my research (Chapters 2, 3, 4) in the light of Deuteronomistic Theology sketched above. My seven main theological conclusions outlined at the end of Chapter Four are presented here along with commentary offered in the light of Deuteronomistic Theology. These seven conclusions concern: first, obedience; second, trust in YHWH; third, cultic and covenantal attentiveness; fourth, the link between kingship and idolatry; fifth, the power of the prophetic word; sixth, Saul as image of the nation and the history; and seventh, the possibility of repentance and return.

First, Saul's disobedience and the ensuing disastrous results serve as a deterrent, an obedience-call. Obedience to YHWH and YHWH's commands and words is essential since the YHWH-Israel relationship is primary (Deut 5:6-7). The heart plays a role and facilitates obedience to YHWH's commands (1 Sam 13:14). David's heart, like YHWH's, is more disposed to following YHWH's commands than Saul's.[693] My assessment is wholly in keeping with the classic articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology. Von Rad summarizes: "This question of obedience is the one fundamental notion underlying deuteronomic historical writing."[694] This is the primary concern of DtrN. The role of the heart also comes into play in Von Rad's outline of Deuteronomistic Theology, as seen above.

Second, absence of trust in YHWH is at the root of Saul's failure in obedience, especially in 13:7b-15. This aspect does not appear as significant in the classic articulation of

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[693] Heart imagery opens up dimensions of trust and fidelity, missing in Saul but present in Jonathan and David. Heart imagery "indicates David's greater like-mindedness to YHWH when compared to Saul." See Jason S. Derouchie, "The Heart of YHWH and His Chosen One in 1 Samuel 13:14," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 24, no. 4 (2014): 467-489, 467.

[694] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology of History," 154-166, 156. See also Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 345.

Deuteronomistic Theology. It is an important consideration in the failure of Saul in 13:7b-15 and is presented as important elsewhere in the Deuteronomistic History. Gideon, Jonathan, David, and especially Hezekiah, under pressure, are models of trust.[695] Saul and Jeroboam are examples of distrust. The absence of focus on the theme of trust in the classic articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology is a weakness. The absence may result from trust being viewed as more characteristic of prophetic theology.[696] Received into the Deuteronomistic History, the aspect of trust becomes an important aspect of its theology. This observation highlights a recurring pattern observed in my research: what is sometimes described as deuteronomistic is in fact prophetic. It is important to acknowledge deuteronomism's debt to prophecy.

Third, Saul's failings in *both* rejection accounts are cult and covenant related, encompassing aspects such as election, sacrifice, *ḥērem*, syncretism-avoidance, summarized by what I broadly call covenantal attentiveness. The *ḥērem* became an expression of the separation consonant with election and covenant relationship, and came to represent whole-hearted dedication to YHWH and avoidance of syncretism when surrounded by conflicting attractions. The wider covenantal aspect is well expressed in classic Deuteronomistic Theology: the history is a call to fidelity to the deuteronomic covenant. The cultic aspect, however, is neglected in the classic expression: Noth's deuteronomist had no interest in the cult.[697] Von Rad saw the history as a call to repentance which he saw ultimately as a movement of the heart, a call to prayer: "it

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[695] Hezekiah is presented as the deuteronomistic model of trust and given the related "incomparability formula" just as Solomon is presented as the model of wisdom and Josiah as model of reform (Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him,'" especially 418-425).

[696] Campbell, *1 Samuel*, 141, cf. Isaiah 7:9.

[697] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 93, 99.

was therefore not cultic."[698] He noted that the deuteronomistic historians were not especially

interested in "the faith and worship of Israel" but more in how the word of YHWH functioned in

history.[699] More recent studies, used in Chapter Four, show Noth's assertion of a lack of

deuteronomistic, cultic interest to be unfounded. Saul is the opposite of David, the

deuteronomistic "paradigm of the cultically adherent king."[700] Cult was a vital expression of

covenant up to the time of Josiah (2 Kgs 22-23). Cultic fidelity was the means of measuring a

king's covenantal fidelity to YHWH for much of the history.[701] Samuel's attack on empty cult in

1 Samuel 15:22 emphasizes obedience over cult. Diachronically, this prophetic concern

resonates with the exilic audience of DtrN: obedience to the law was the priority in the absence

of temple cult. Synchronically, however, 1 Samuel 15:22 cannot intend the replacement of cult

by obedience since much of the subsequent history, especially 1 and 2 Kings, is judged on cultic

fidelity, i.e., obedience *in* cultic matters.[702]

Cultic fidelity is an important concern in the Saul narratives and the wider history. Shown

in my research as expressive of wider covenantal attentiveness, it should be included in a

complete articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology. While 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 suggests the need

for trust and cultic obedience under severe pressure, 15:1-35 suggests the need for covenantal

attentiveness in good times. The absence of Yahwistic trust and covenantal attentiveness

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[698] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 346.

[699] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 343.

[700] Joseph, *Portrait*, 226-227.

[701] "The Deuteronomistic Historian devises a prototype of a covenantally adherent king in the portrait of David, who provides the cultic model for subsequent kings to follow" (Joseph, *Portrait*, 5). Josiah is the model.

[702] First and Second Kings span the dedication of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 8) and Solomon's apostasy (1 Kgs 11:1-8), the deuteronomistically viewed idolatry of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 12:25-33), the destruction of Jeroboam's altars in the North (2 Kgs 23:4-20, fulfilling the prophetic word of 1 Kgs 13:1-3), the cultic highpoint of Josiah's Passover (2 Kgs 23:21-25), and finally, the destruction of the temple (2 Kgs 25:9).

facilitating obedience are at the root of Saul's rejection. Their cultivation is the antidote to Saul-like disobedience, making obedience possible in difficult circumstances and in prosperity, when the king's heart might most easily turn from YHWH (Deut 17:17, 20). As seen, Hezekiah and Josiah are extolled as models of these two qualities.

The fourth theological aspect deals with kingship and its connection with idolatry. The request for a king is the rejection of YHWH (1 Sam 8:7); kingship is akin to idolatry. This finds expression in the person of Israel's first king. Saul rejected the word of YHWH, therefore YHWH rejected him (15:23, 26). Kingship fed idolatry because most kings were disobedient to YHWH. Since YHWH is king there should be no human king—except an obedient king. Only David-like obedience is the exception to the general idolatrous penchant. The Saul narrative outlines the consequences of absence of trust, covenantal attentiveness, and obedience on the part of the king (points two, three, and one above). Obedience could have secured Saul's dynasty (13:13) but disobedience led to disaster, early death, dishonor in death, loss of kingship and dynasty, further illustrated through 1 and 2 Kings. The attitude of David, recipient of an unconditional covenant in 2 Samuel 7, is "consistently depicted as one of trust and obedience."[703]

This view of kingship in my research is consistent with the classic expression of Deuteronomistic Theology where royal disobedience is excoriated in the persons of Saul, Jeroboam, Ahab, Manasseh, and others, while David is presented as the model of the observant king against whom all others are measured and found wanting, with the exception of Hezekiah, but most of all, Josiah. Obedience—rewarded in prosperity, possession of the land, long life,

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[703] McKenzie, *King David*, 65.

burial with one's fathers, and dynasty—is a typical deuteronomistic trope. The promises to David of an eternal kingdom are strongly emphasized in Deuteronomistic Theology. The last four verses of 2 Kings (25:27-30) are often interpreted as "an indication that the line of David has not come to an irrevocable end."[704]

The fifth aspect is the prophet-king dynamic and the power of the prophetic word as key to history. Samuel is presented as a prophet like Moses whose prophetic word will come to pass (Deut 18:15-22). First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 (cf. 28:11-20) are largely prophetic, expressing prophetic-deuteronomistic interests. Samuel is presented as the ideal prophet and Saul as the weak king and transgressor of Mosaic law.[705] The power of the prophetic word is illustrated: what Samuel speaks or acts out prophetically comes to pass, either immediately (in the prophetic 15:27-28), or long term (in the deuteronomistic 13:13-14). As Samuel interprets and speaks, so YHWH acts. The efficacious, divine, prophetic word does what it says. It is at work in history and shapes it. YHWH's word does not fail. This prophetic word is seen especially in the prophet-king dynamic. Modeled first in Samuel and Saul, it continues throughout the history.

My conclusions fit well with Deuteronomistic Theology which strongly emphasizes the efficacy of YHWH's word which "achieves its purpose in history by virtue of its own inherent power."[706] Von Rad observes that the prophecy-fulfilment motif in the Deuteronomistic History has its origins in prophecy.[707] His observation supports my argument, based on more recent

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[704] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 165.

[705] Foresti, *Rejection of Saul*, 136.

[706] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 156.

[707] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 159.

scholarship, for the debt deuteronomism owes to prophecy: "In view of its origins, this deuteronomic theology of history may be said to be that of the early prophets . . ."[708] The deuteronomistic understanding of the prophetic word of YHWH at work in history is from the prophetic tradition and is taken over by the deuteronomistic historians. Since the will and word of YHWH are worked out in history, theological truths may be gleaned from reflection on history. This is what the deuteronomistic historians did. They were able to do this convincingly only because the prophetic tradition had done it before them. Deuteronomistic Theology receives its understanding of the prophetic word at work in history from prophecy. This realization does not undermine Weinfeld's distinction between the divine, prophetic word of prophecy and of deuteronomism. However, it cautions against any doctrinaire distinctions between the older prophetic word of prophecy and how that word is understood in the final form of the Deuteronomistic History. A common understanding is transmitted from prophecy to deuteronomism. The possible common Northern roots of both may explain such agreement.[709]

Sixth, the story of Saul is the story of the nation and of the entire Deuteronomistic History in microcosm. For Saul and for the nation, disobedience leads to rejection, loss of dynasty, and kingship. The story of Saul becomes a focus explaining the reasons for the exile. Both the fall of Saul and of the nation are presented as justified. First Samuel 15:29 underlines that YHWH's decision stands, the discussion is concluded; it is futile to resist. YHWH's decision about Saul can be explained, but not changed. It is the same with the exile of 587. Noth suggests

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[708] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 160.

[709] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 22.

that the whole history, presenting the cumulative disobedience of kings and people, is an attempt to explain the exile.[710] The exile was just and deserved in the Deuteronomistic view.

This comparison between Saul's fate as presented in my work and the fate of the nation as presented in Deuteronomistic Theology refines my view of why so much attention is devoted to Saul when David is the heroic figure of promise. *The Saul texts explain the failure, so far, of the Davidic promises.* Saul stands for the nation and in the explanation of Saul's failure we get an explanation of that of the nation. The Saul texts, with their call to obedience, leave the door open to future hope. What unfolds in Saul unfolds later in the nation: Saul embodies the story and fate of the nation. He becomes a parable. Barbara Green is correct is seeing the story of Saul as an allegory for the story of the nation (Chapter 2).[711] The Saul account plays a more significant role than initially imagined. It is no longer only an old story from the distant past. As related in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 it acts as mirror, parable, allegory, warning, and call to obedience and life for the nation and for the reader. It punches above its weight. It explains the disaster, but like Saul, will not remain prone (1 Sam 28:20-25). The word of judgment is spoken but is not the last word. The very articulation of these accounts implies a wider meaning. There is also a word of salvation[712] involving repentance and renewed nomistic fidelity—our next consideration.

Seventh, the story of Saul, like the wider history, is a call to return and repentance. Saul is not immediately cast aside or demonized. After his rejection in 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 Saul

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[710] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 89.

[711] Barbara Green, *King Saul's Asking*, xvi: Saul "embodies the monarchic experience of Israel, [and] shouts 'no more kings.'" Green also describes the Saul story as a riddle: should the exiles return to Judea under kingly leadership or not?

[712] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 344.

continues for many chapters—for the entire second half of First Samuel. There is more Saul material *after* his rejection in 1 Samuel 13 and 15 than before, even if the focus has shifted to David.[713] The continuation of Saul after his rejection gives an opening to hope. Repentance brings restoration or at least delays punishment (2 Kgs 22:16-20). In 1 Samuel 13:7b-15, there is no hint of repentance for Saul. In contrast, in 15:1-35, through his prophet, YHWH responds to repentance. In the end, Samuel relents and returns with Saul. As noted, there is much repetition of the verb *šûḇ* in 1 Samuel 15, indicative of prophetic concern with repentance and return. The return on the part of Samuel (15:30-31, *šûḇ* [x2]), the general sympathy for Saul in 1 Samuel 13, and the considerable delay in the execution of the sentence, provide hope for later times. In the prophetic tradition YHWH changes his mind and relents in response to repentance or YHWH delays in carrying out the punishment. Postponement of punishment expresses the mercy of YHWH who, Von Rad observes, does not overlook "the comparative goodness found even in reprobate kings," including Ahab (1 Kgs 21:29).[714] Von Rad omits to mention that Ahab was spared though he, like Saul, failed in the matter of *ḥērem* when he spared Ben-Hadad. Ahab, like Saul and David, is condemned by a prophet, and condemned out of his own mouth (1 Kgs 20:40-42).[715] To Von Rad's observation I would add Jeroboam, paradigm of the worst Northern king,

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[713] Only four chapters (9-12) concern Saul before his rejection in 1 Samuel 13-15. After rejection, there are seventeen chapters (1 Sam 16-31; 2 Sam 1), concluding with David's encomium of Saul. Saul is rejected as king but not as a man. Samuel's return with Saul upon Saul's (mixed) repentance secures Saul's continuation. In the end, Saul is buried honorably in the tomb of his father (2 Sam 21:12-14).

[714] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 160: "Ahab humbled himself before the sentence of punishment, and for this reason the sentence on his house was not executed in his lifetime (1 Kgs 21:29). Jehu performed certain acts which were pleasing to Yahweh, and thus his descendants were to occupy the throne of Israel for four generations (2 Kgs 10:30; 15:12). . . . Jehoahaz prayed to Yahweh for aid, and in consequence Yahweh mercifully held his hand from punishing the sinful kingdom (2 Kgs 13:23; 14:26)."

[715] The constant reference to prophets in 1 Kings 20:1-43 may indicate a prophetic source or interest (20:13, 22, 28, 35, 38, 41). In addition, Ahab condemns himself out of his own mouth (20:40) as do Saul and David in prophetic contexts. Campbell and O'Brien leave open the question of attribution, noting that Dietrich attributes it to his DtrP (Campbell and O'Brien, *Unfolding*, 399). The already mentioned and nearby 1 Kings 21:27-29 bears prophetic tropes with reference to Elijah, repentance, and YHWH's relenting. Campbell and O'Brien also see it as

whose withered hand was healed when he entreated YHWH *through the prophet*, the man of God from Judah (1 Kgs 13:6). Comparing similar situations—narrative analogy[716]—offers a note of hope: if others were given another chance, why not Saul and why not the exiles? Prophetic intervention following repentance or entreaty delays or mitigates punishment. In 1 Samuel 15 a block of earlier prophetic material is incorporated by the deuteronomistic editors into their history. The underlying prophetic interest in repentance, postponement of punishment, and return is not stifled. It is preserved in 1 Samuel 15 and only slightly reworked by DtrN. Its preservation is significant given that DtrN is broadly suspicious, not only of Saul and kingship, but of human fickleness in general (15:29 [DtrN]).

Noth acknowledged that the historian willingly took over older traditions. He also recognized that his deuteronomist used prophetic stories. However, he thought that the "writing" prophets were unknown to the deuteronomist.[717] Von Rad recognized the prophetic contribution to deuteronomism.[718] Campbell drew attention afresh to the considerable contribution of prophetic material to the Deuteronomistic History. I highlight the largely prophetic foundations of the accounts of Saul's rejection in 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35. Prophetic understanding underlies important ideas, now crystallized as deuteronomistic, such as the acting and interpretative force of the (prophetic) word of YHWH, as well as emphasis on repentance despite individual and systemic failure.

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early (*Unfolding*, 404). While 1 Kings 20 may have prophetic origins, like 1 Samuel 15 it seems to bear a message important for the exiles: if reprobate kings repented and found forgiveness, then why not the exiles?

[716] Discouraged as "simplex" by Green—wrongly so in my view (Green, *Kings Saul's Asking*, xvii).

[717] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 84-88, especially 86.

[718] Von Rad, "Deuteronomic Theology," 159-160.

While Noth's explanation of the history observes that the deuteronomist included older traditions and sources, Noth's view does not advance as far as hearing those older voices address the later reader. This is a shortcoming in Noth's interpretation. Noth acknowledges the absorption of prophetic traditions into the history, but overlooks how these continue to speak, to influence, and persuade. Noth writes that the spirit of the ("writing") prophets "is not a determining factor in Dtr.'s work, as we see from the complete absence of projection into the future." Nor did Noth's deuteronomist follow "the ideology of the so-called national prophets."[719] Noth notes how the preexilic prophets saw catastrophe as the beginning of a new era, but sees his exilic deuteronomist as expressing "no hope for the future": the deuteronomist reports "the last information he has about the history of the Judaean monarchy as a simple fact."[720] Noth's reluctance to hear the prophetic voice leaves the focus of the history in the past and makes it more difficult to understand the history as bearing a message for present or future. Noth's view of prophecy as completely absorbed rather than still conveying its message results in his interpretation of the history as merely explanatory rather than persuasive. Wolff and Von Rad go beyond Noth and let the prophetic texts still speak. For this, Von Rad is praised by Jon D. Levenson.[721] Earlier voices still speak, even in the final form of the text. The Deuteronomistic History (including the rejection of Saul) communicates a message and is persuasive. It seeks to influence life in the present and future, rather than merely explain past disaster.

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[719] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 99.

[720] Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 97, 98.

[721] Levenson makes the point that the Hebrew Bible speaks with theological diversity and is not systematic. There are multiple voices in the text. He praises Von Rad who "allowed the texts of the Hebrew Bible to speak more in their own voices . . . His [Von Rad's] ear was more finely attuned to the plurality of notes sounded in the Hebrew Bible." See Jon Douglas Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 22.

This insight illustrates the immense contribution of diachronic scholarship to a deeper appreciation of the Saul accounts and the Deuteronomistic History (Chapter Three). Such diachronic insight avoids a one dimensional interpretation that may crush the reader with fatalism or uncompromising demands, offering little hope in failure or crisis. Yet this insight also credits the deuteronomistic historians who recognized the worth of the prophetic tradition they received, made it part of their message, and so preserved it for posterity. The much maligned deuteronomists preserved older and comforting traditions, not least the image of a God who changes his mind in the face of repentance, but never changes in commitment to his people.[722] The YHWH-Israel or YHWH-People bond endures as supreme. Failure, even that of Saul or the nation, does not have the last word. The earlier prophetic word of repentance and return continues to echo.

A summary of the key elements emerging from the comparison of my work on the rejection of Saul with Deuteronomistic Theology is appropriate here. The comparison of my research with the classic expression of Deuteronomistic Theology refines my conclusions and further identifies specificities in my work, among which are the importance of trust in YHWH and its facilitation of obedience, the significance of cultic fidelity as part of wider covenantal attentiveness, and the prophetic witness as evident and potent in the final deuteronomistic text. This last consideration is overlooked by Noth and helps explain his interpretation of the history as resigned rather than persuasive. Deuteronomistic Theology draws lessons from history, including the exile, summoning later generations to obedience. Knowing from bitter experience that efforts at obedience often fail, the later deuteronomistic writers (DtrN) also transmitted the

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[722] Noth credits the Deuteronomistic History for preserving earlier traditions: ". . . it is only within this work that an abundance of priceless, old historical tales and reports are preserved." Without it and the material it absorbed "our knowledge of Israelite history would be pitifully small" (*Deuteronomistic History*, 2).

earlier prophetic message calling to repentance and return, intimating that such *šûḇ* will not be

received unfavorably. The classic expression of Deuteronomistic Theology could benefit from

taking account of these three aspects. The system of ideas and values that is Deuteronomistic

Theology is positive, continues to be relevant, and is deserving of rehabilitation. This

observation spurs further reflection on the remarkable contribution of Deuteronomistic

Theology.

5.4   The Positive Contribution of Deuteronomistic Theology

To an extent, Deuteronomistic Theology fell out of favor, misunderstood as a stultifying

or stifling ideology. Duhm had little esteem for the Deuteronomists whom he thought were

"clumsy scribes whose sole obsession was for Mosaic Law."[723] Indications are that this is an

incomplete and perhaps unjust characterization. Four examples are given here. First, the

Deuteronomistic writers were revolutionary in their insights. Second, the various

deuteronomistic updates or layers indicate a living movement, adaptable and responsive to new

situations. Third, Deuteronomistic Theology served as a catalyst for other theologies in the Bible.

Fourth, it is a theology that continues to inspire and challenge.

First, Veijola notes the significant leap in understanding attributable to the

deuteronomistic writers, in particular DtrN. Rather than being promoters of the systematization

or fossilization of earlier vibrant traditions, deuteronomistic editors preserved, reinterpreted, and

went beyond the inherited traditions. DtrN was the first to draw the theological conclusion that

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[723] See Römer's summary of Duhm's view (Römer, *So-Called*, 21). See also an account of Duhm's view in Konrad Schmid, *Is There Theology In the Hebrew Bible?* Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible, 4, trans. Peter Altmann (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 18. Texts like Job were treasured over other texts by Duhm and others since, in their view, these depicted a living relationship with God. The living religion behind the overlaid theology of the Hebrew Bible had to be uncovered, highlighting the need for historical criticism.

"*there should be no human king at all.*"[724] This insight, "among the most valuable in the

theology of DtrN," was neglected in research because of its perceived legal focus.[725] The insight

of DtrN was, in fact, a liberating overturning of monarchical ideology, a purification of

theological outlook to which future theology is indebted. Veijola explains the absolutist, royal

context of the ancient Near East—especially Assyria, Babylon, and even Israel and Judah—as

the context out of which the DtrN view developed.[726] Reflection on this royal model, on the

disaster that was kingship, on the exile itself, and greater appreciation of the kingship of YHWH,

led deuteronomistic thought to this dramatic conclusion. This conclusion inspired DtrN to use

the prophetic material at his disposal to insert what would become 1 Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-

35. The older prophetic accounts of Saul's rejection were used by DtrN to illustrate and interpret

the rejection of kingship as known. The inherited, prevailing, secular, and idolatrous view of

kingship was no longer to be indulged. As noted in my research, intolerance of this despotic view

is perceptible in the accounts of Saul's rejection. Saul is not above the accepted ritual laws

(13:7b-15), nor is Saul indulged in his elitist sparing of Agag (15:1-35). The prophet Samuel

shatters this hegemonic, royalist vision as he reprimands and deposes Saul and disposes of Agag.

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[724] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122: "*dass es gar kein menschliches Königtum geben dürfte*" (author's italics). The translation of Veijola's work in these passages is mine.

[725] Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122: "Wenn ich recht sehe, gehört diese Einsicht zu dem Wertvollsten in der Theologie des DtrN, der in der bisherigen Forschung wegen seiner monotonen Betonung der Gesetzestreue etwas stiefmütterlich behandelt worden ist."

[726] Veijola's words are worth repeating: "The theological significance of DtrN's theocratic view only becomes clear if we try to visualize that a king in the ancient east, including Israel, was not just a neutral administrator but was a mighty ideological-religious center of power who exerted great influence over the worldview and way of life of every citizen. Insofar as DtrN questions the right of this *potestas* to exist, DtrN accomplishes a notable ideological-religious purification—a task for which all later theology, in different circumstances, is indebted." For Veijola, the conviction that ultimately all power belongs to God would inevitably lead to conflict with governing models wherein power becomes an end in itself, with an ideological or religious hue ennabling the monopolization of power (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122, my translation and summary). A positive view of monarchy in the Persian Period came too late for the exilic DtrN. The presentation of Cyrus of Persia in Second Isaiah is of a tolerant and benign monarch. DtrN is uninfluenced by this later view.

DtrN suitably placed this prophetic view where it could speak most to future generations—at the end of Saul's reign and just before the anointing of David. Kingship as embodied in Saul is over; openness to Davidic promise is not. This later DtrN placement is confirmed in the realization that the addition of the accounts of Saul's rejection came too late for inclusion in the "prototype strategy," already well established by the earlier Josianic deuteronomist. It explains why *Saul* is not presented as the model "bad king" in the Deuteronomistic History.[727] What was worst in kingship is present in Saul, though he is not its worst expression (compare with Jeroboam or Manasseh). What was most hoped for would be found in an image of David expressive of deuteronomistic obedience and hope. The principle emerged with DtrN that *only YHWH could be king in Israel*, while also accommodating an obedient, Davidic figure.

Detueronomistic Theology, then can be credited with openness, development, and advancement. It provided an entire spectrum of response to historical circumstances ranging from the optimism of Saul's first anointing and victory over the Ammonites (1 Samuel 9-11), to his rejection and the questioning of kingship, to Josianic hope and expansion, to the disillusionment and dismay arising from the negative experience of most kings. Such deuteronomistic responsiveness leads to the next point.

Second, the Deuteronomistic History provides a positive model of continued theological reflection at several levels. In the earlier Josianic version it expressed confidence and hope

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[727] The "prototype strategy" for the earlier Josianic Deuteronomistic History (Dtr[1]) focusses on David, Solomon, Jeroboam, Josiah, and cult centralization. For the later Southern Kingdom and the exilic Dtr[2] the focus is Manasseh (modeled on Ahab, worst of kings, instead of Jeroboam, the anti-David figure for the earlier Dtr[1]) and condemnation of Baal and idol worship, later concerns (Joseph, *Portrait*, 233-234). Apart from being too late for the Dtr[1] prototype strategy, Saul's deeds are not condemned as strongly as those of Jeroboam or Manasseh.

founded on the unconditional promises of 2 Samuel 7.[728] In its final exilic form the history

explains the devastation of 587 BCE caused by disobedience and appeals for repentance. The

various redactional levels proposed by the Smend School suggest continued and developing

deuteronomistic reflection as the life of the nation spiralled toward destruction and exile as

monarchy declined and collapsed. Rose writes of: "The up-to-date nature of the theological

concepts of the deuteronomists in their time . . ."[729] Like good theologians, they displayed

sensitivity to contemporary issues as they attempted to "give a *response* to the questions of the

time."[730] Their response was impressive and enduring. It was simple—an important

consideration in time of crisis. It was rooted in the acknowledgment that "Israel has sinned," but

went beyond that. It displayed an historical and theological coherence, justifying the term

deuteronomistic. As authors and editors they used the traditional material available, giving it

shape, unity, and finality. They moved from tradition to interpretation as evolving events

demanded new responses.[731] This happened especially in re-readings of older texts. DtrN took up

older material, adapted it, and placed it at strategic points in the extant text. First Samuel 13:7b-

15 and 15:1-35 are parade examples of such theological reflection and actualization.

First Samuel 15, taking up the older Amalek accounts of Exodus and Deuteronomy,

applies the vocabulary of battlefield zeal (*ḥērem*) to uncompromising fidelity to YHWH in daily

life for a later time. This journey or re-application and re-reading is always taken up again in a

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[728] Joseph, *Portrait*, 97. Joseph argues that the promises of 2 Samuel 7 are "mostly unconditional," against Weinfeld who sees them as conditional on obedience (*Deuteronomic School*, 5).

[729] Martin Rose "Deuteronomistic Ideology and Theology of the Old Testament," in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series; 306, ed. Albert De Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 424-455, 452.

[730] Rose, "Deuteronomistic Ideology," 450.

[731] Rose, "Deuteronomistic Ideology," 451, 453.

biblical theology that is vital and robust. Moshe Weinfeld remarks how expressions not found in

the Book of Deuteronomy but present in the Deuteronomistic History and in deuteronomistic

sections of Jeremiah (JerD) indicate development and dynamism.[732] The reconceptualization of

kingship, too, is expressive of a living movement.[733] The deuteronomistic movement went

beyond explaining the past, as Noth thought, to providing a meaningful theology, an invitation

and challenge to live well in the present crisis with an eye on the future. The deuteronomists and

their theological work describes "humans before God, humans as sinners, but called to

conversion."[734] There was hope in repentance (Wolff). There was also hope in the unconditional

promise of 2 Samuel 7 (Von Rad; Cross), a hope glimpsed by some at the end of the history (2

Kgs 25:27-30) where "a scion of David . . . is yet alive and well."[735]

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[732] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 4.

[733] See Gary N. Knoppers, "Rethinking the Relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History: The Case of Kings," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2001): 393-415. Kingship is restructured and limited from the Deuteronomistic History to the Book of Deuteronomy. "New contexts generate new meanings": even citing Deuteronomy, Samuel-Kings may introduce innovations (395). In Deuteronomy the role of the king is divided up, his role is reduced and optional (398); he is subordinate to the Torah (402-403). In Deuteronomy the king is not responsible for justice, the military, nor is he a "son of God," though David and Solomon retain aspects of "sacral kingship" (404-406). See also Levinson, "Reconceptualization," 511-534. Levinson views the subordination of the king in the Deuteronomistic History (especially Deut 17:14-20) as a reconceptualization by scribes. The king is stripped of power. An ideal ruler is imagined. Galvin comments: "The scribal class has constructed an ideal vision here in Deuteronomy . . . ," even if this scribal class is small, unrepresentative of a broader view in Israel, and attempting to explain crises after the time of many of the kings (Galvin, *David's Successors*, 6-8, also 146). First Samuel 12, like Deuteronomy 17, greatly restricts the power of the king but this is "the last of the maximalist expressions of restrictions on kingly power in the Deuteronomistic History." Only Josiah reflects closely the vision of Deuteronomy 17 (Galvin, *David's Successors*, 8). Josiah "perfectly embodies the hopes of the book of Deuteronomy." He is the opposite of Jeroboam (Galvin, *David's Successors*, 131). See also Joseph, *Portrait*, 155.

[734] Rose, "Deuteronomistic Ideology," 454.

[735] E.g., Jon D. Levenson, "The Last Four Verses in Kings," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, no. 3 (1984): 353-361, 357-358, 361. Rose also points out challenges in the deuteronomistic understanding. These do not undermine but rather temper the positive assessment. First, "[t]he idealogical concept was *too* simple" (Rose, "Deuteronomistic Ideology," 451). It did not resolve the problem. The description of an *ideal* time, for example, was too idealistic and not practical or realistic, e.g., the first half of Joshua, some periods of Judges, and the idealization of the time of David or Josiah. Second, Rose indicates that the *unity* imposed on material by the deuteronomistic editors was weak. In reality there was much diversity. The description of the history of Israel was *too* standardized. Under-represented were the priestly circles, something pointed out in this dissertation also. This deficit led to the development of other accounts such as the priestly (P) and Chronicler's history. This inspiring of other reflections or

Third, and more broadly, as Rose explains, deuteronomistic theology acted as a catalyst to other theologies in the Bible. Failure in responding adequately to election in the Deuteronomistic History led to further reflection on the unconditional blessing accompanying election, exemplified in the Abraham account in Genesis, presented by priestly editors (P). The deuteronomistic writers did not have the last word in the Hebrew Bible but their work and theology gave rise to other views. Brueggemann points out that biblical theology is always the *penultimate* word, never the last word.[736] Deuterononomistic Theology, it might be said, was the "penultimate" theology of the Hebrew Scriptures. Deuteronomistic theologians responded well to the needs of their times, as well as spurring later biblical reflection evidenced by some priestly texts (P) and by the New Testament. Rose, taking account the Christian canon, mentions the "theology of Jesus," which, he notes was "*prepared for* by the deuteronomistic theology of the fall of humans, *announced* in the Yahwist theology of grace, [and] has been *fulfilled* in its complete form through the *life* and the message of Jesus."[737] The New Testament begins taking up a deuteronomistic theme and transforming it. Matthew's gospel places Jesus, the New Moses, on the banks of the Jordan as in Deuteronomy, calling for return (repentance) and about to introduce the new law. Davidic promise and fulfilment is also important in the New Testament.

Fourth, the Deuteronomistic History continues to inspire and challenge. Veijola saw this context and theology of DtrN as applicable to future generations too, down to our own time. Concluding his *Das Königtum*, he throws down the theological gauntlet noting that the ethos of

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theologies is also a strength (see below). Third, the responses needed to be modified when the situation changed—there were successive redactional revisions. This too is a strength. Rose notes the initial shock response was inadequate for the new questions posed for later generations ("Deuteronomistic Ideology," 451-452). I agree, for instance, in that Josianic optimism had to be complemented by the stark realism of DtrN.

[736] Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 82-83, 64.

[737] Rose, "Deuteronomistic Ideology," 454.

competing power, influence, and politics out of which DtrN reflection emerged is not unlike the one in which we too live. Veijola exhorts his reader: "Be challenged!"[738] He continues, for: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me" (Deut 5:6-7).

5.5 Conclusion

Chapter Five outlined key aspects of Deuteronomistic Theology, namely, the centrality of the YHWH-Israel covenant and the "totalizing claim"[739] of the written deuteronomic law expressive of the bond; the power of the divine prophetic word at work in history; and the importance of David. The chapter then compared the theological insights of earlier chapters (2, 3, and 4) with Deuteronomistic Theology. This exercise sharpened the focus of my research results. It indicated that the theology of the rejection of Saul presented in my research has much in common with Deuteronomistic Theology. Similarities include emphasis on obedience and covenant, the propensity of kings toward idolatry with the exception of David-like obedience, the prophetic word and prophet-king relationship, and the parallels between Saul's fall and that of the nation.

Differences also emerged and the classic articulation of Deuteronomistic Theology could be enriched by elements from my theological consideration of the rejection of Saul. Elements overlooked in classic Deuteronomistic Theology include, first, emphasis on trust in YHWH and its role in securing YHWH's intervention, as well as disposing to obedience and covenantal attentiveness. Second, in classic Deuteronomistic Theology the role of the cult has been

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[738] "Es ist gewiss das Ethos, mit dem wir auch im"; "Gebot konfrontiert warden" (Veijola, *Das Königtum*, 122).

[739] Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 141.

downplayed in favor of a more spiritual emphasis (Von Rad). This is understandable for DtrN, without temple or priesthood, but less so before the exile.[740] The Deuteronomistic History, including the accounts of the rejection of Saul, emphasizes the cult as an expression of obedience, covenantal attentiveness, and communion with YHWH. It is the measuring rod of royal, covenantal adherence. Third, the debt of Deuteronomism to prophecy is considerable and should be acknowledged. Von Rad does this. Noth does not. Often what is presented as deuteronomistic was prophetic before its deuteronomistic absorption. I offer two concrete examples in first, the prophetic concern with the divine (prophetic) word, and second, with repentance. The divine prophetic word shapes history through events, the choices of men and women, and even the workings of the human heart. The importance of repentance goes back to prophecy's strong emphasis on repentance and return to YHWH in expectation of YHWH relenting, delaying punishment, or even repenting. More important than acknowledging prophecy's contribution to the history is the realization that the prophetic voice continues to sound for the reader, something also overlooked by Noth. It changes how the history is viewed and transforms it from an account of the past to a persuasive appeal for the present and future.

Deuteronomistic Theology contributes immensely to biblical theology and theology in general. It introduces, depicts, supports, reinterprets, and in the end rejects a view of kingship in Israel.[741] Understanding evolves with the unfolding of events and accompanying reflection,

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[740] Even during the exile, praying toward the temple or the city from a foreign land indicates some hope of cultic restoration and resumption of worship involving temple and altar after repentance and return (1 Kgs 8:29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 38, 42, 44, 48). First Kings 8 highlights cult, repentance, return, within the overriding interest of Deuteronomistic Theology and the YHWH-Israel bond (1 Kgs 8:51, 53: "they are your people, and your heritage, which you brought out of Egypt" and "you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth . . ."). Yet, while highlighting temple, altar, and worship, prayer rather than sacrifice is emphasized. The altar is not prominent in the account (1 Kgs 8:64). These indicate exilic focus. Sacrifices and temple are emphasized later in Third Isaiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, etc.

[741] There are more positive, sacral models of kingship, e.g., Chronicles and Psalms (Galvin, *David's Successors*, 9-10).

especially the final, exilic conclusions of DtrN. Deuteronomistic Theology articulates a vision that acknowledges human weakness, explains disaster, offers meaning, and encourages return (*šûḇ*) to YHWH. Deuteronomistic Theology acted as catalyst to other biblical theologies arising in response to it. It continues to speak theologically to later times, even our own.

In contrast with a negative view of deuteronomism as fossilizing, Deuteronomistic Theology is dynamic, a call to choose life through obedience (cf. Deut 30:15-20, especially 19-20).[742] Obedience is life. "Obeying his voice" (*lišmōaʿ bəqōlô*) is "loving (*lə'ahăḇāh*) the Lord your God . . . and clinging to him; for that means life to you" (*hû' ḥayyêḵā*) (Deut 30:20). The core of the law book, Deuteronomy, is the covenant with YHWH and the call to choose life through obedience to this law (Deut 4:1-14), a life that is not merely physical existence, but "also life in proximity to the Lord, whose very presence means security and *shalom*, 'peace.'"[743]

Yet the Deuteronomistic History insists on obedience. The only adequate response to election—to YHWH—is complete obedience, the deuteronomistic understanding of the wholehearted love for YHWH (Deut 6:5) that can be commanded because it can be chosen. Josiah is the model king since only his obedience fulfills *all three* aspects of the deuteronomistic love of YHWH his God (2 Kgs 23:25). Josiah "carried out the words of YHWH that were written in the book" found in the temple (*hāqîm 'ēṯ diḇrê hattôrāh hakkəṯūḇîm 'al- hassēp̄er*, 2 Kgs 23:24). Despite Saul's protestations to the contrary ("I have carried out," *hăqîmōṯî 'eṯ dəḇar YHWH*, 1 Sam 15:13), Saul did not (*wə'eṯ dəḇārāy lō' hēqîm*, 1 Sam 15:11). Deuteronomistic

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[742] Römer, *So-Called*, 2007, 4.

[743] Clifford, *Deuteronomy*, 33. See Judges 6:23-24.

Theology spells out the implications for the reader. Historical account is also existential appeal.[744]

5.6   General Conclusion: Methodological, Theological, Pastoral

This more general conclusion takes its point of departure from the three observations emerging from the comparison of my research with classic Deuteronomistic Theology. First, the observation that the prophetic voice echoes in the final deuteronomistic redaction is used to acknowledge the advantage of the synchronic-diachronic *methodology* employed and its contribution to uncovering the theology of Saul's rejection. Second, Yahwistic trust, and third, cultic-covenantal attentiveness, accentuate the relational aspect of the deuteronomistic covenant, leading to a final *theological* observation and *pastoral* reflection.

5.6.1   Methodological Gains

The synchronic-diachronic methodology proved fruitful, allowing fresh insights into the text, its evolution, and meaning. This dynamic accentuated the importance of listening to the various voices in the text. As shaper of the final form of the text, the view of the final redactor (DtrN) is important in establishing meaning. The Saul-Samuel-David texts are intended to be read in a particular way, in the light of the ideology of the final deuteronomistic redactors. For them, the primary concern is nomistic obedience. Other traditions and sources are mustered and pressed into service of this later, overarching, deuteronomistic vision. In the light of Adele Berlin's appeal for an appropriate biblical poetics, suitably applied, this remains an important consideration (Chapter Two). Yet my argument that the earlier, prophetic voice continues to speak through later Deuteronomistic redaction fits surprisingly well with the multi-voiced

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[744] "The biblical account . . . contains an existential appeal addressed to the reader" (Pontifical Biblical Commission, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, § I, B, 2, 46). The document deals here with theological reflection.

Bakhtinian approach, about which reservations were expressed in Chapter Two. Listening to the

other voices in the text is important and enriching, as indicated by Von Rad, Levenson, Bakhtin,

Polzin, Green, and others. Moreover, the integration of synchronic and diachronic methodologies

suggests such listening, a consideration expressed recently and convincingly by Rachelle

Gilmour: DtrN takes its stance only "in relation to the earlier voices which it has absorbed,

reused, but not silenced."[745] The integration of synchronic and diachronic methodologies—

listening to the final and earlier voices in the text—contributes greatly to uncovering meaning

and theology.

What this means concretely is that the final deuteronomistic form of the text (DtrN)

presents the primacy of obedience, yet the prophetic voice continues to call the reader to

repentance and return. This is seen especially in 1 Samuel 15 with its prophetic focus on

returning and repentance (*šûḇ*) in the context of Israel's first king. It is also seen in Judah's last

significant king, Josiah, who is praised, not for loving (*'hb*), but for *turning back* (*šûḇ*) to YHWH

with all his heart, soul, and might (2 Kgs 23:25; cf. Deut 6:5).[746] A strong Saul-Josiah contrast

emerges, one often overlooked in scholarship. This contrast accentuates the double message of

the story of Saul and of the Deuteronomistic History as a whole—the call to obedience and

repentance/return. While Saul *turned away* from YHWH and did *not* carry out YHWH's words

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[745] See Rachelle Gilmour, "Reading Jeremiah 19:1-13: Integrating Diachronic and Synchronic Methodologies," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* no. 17 (2017), Article 5, https://doi.org/10.5508/jhs.2017.v17.a5, 1-27, 24. Here I am applying to DtrN Gilmour's general point about hearing earlier and various voices. As for prophecy and deuteronomism, this goes also for other "tensions" or voices perceptible in the text, e.g., pro-monarchy and anti-monarchy; pro-Saul and anti-Saul; pro-David, etc. In my view, Gilmour makes responsible use of Bakhtin's multi-voiced theory to serve an overall understanding of the biblical text, rather than forcing the text to fit a particular literary system. The "message to the audience of the final form" (monologic) is balanced by awareness of "a conversation of voices" in a text (dialogic) and this "dialogism" can be advantageous "for drawing theology out of composite and diverse texts of the Hebrew Bible" (Gilmour, "Reading Jeremiah 19:1-13," 1-3).

[746] Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him,'" 425. Knoppers sees this and the other incomparability formulae as *exilic*, though building on the earlier Deuteronomistic History (413).

(*šāḇ mē'aḥăray wə'eṯ dəḇārāy lō' hēqîm*, 1 Sam 15:11), Josiah *turned back* to YHWH (*šāḇ 'el YHWH*, 2 Kgs 23:25) and *did* carry out YHWH's words (*hāqîm 'ēṯ diḇrê hattôrāh hakkəṯūḇîm 'al- hassēp̄er*, 2 Kgs 23:24). This twin theme frames the royal history, the verdict forming an *inclusio* around the history of kings from Saul to Josiah. Fittingly, Huldah's related prophetic oracle (2 Kgs 22:15-20) is the last trace of the prophetic voice both synchronically and diachronically in the Deuteronomistic History. This fading prophetic voice presents Josiah's *šûḇ* as the reason for delaying Judah's punishment, in conformity with the prophetic penitence-deliverance pattern already noted. Yet the focus of the history has already shifted from prophecy to law book. Josiah's turning is "according to all the Torah of Moses" (2 Kgs 23:25). Prophetically exhorted penitence (*šûḇ*) and the possibility of forgiveness (cf. 1 Kgs 8:46-53, especially 8:47-48 [*šûḇ* 2x]) do not diminish the call to obedience, the overriding concern of the text's final, exilic, deuteronomistic form (cf. Deut 30:2).[747] Rather, the 587 exile "vindicated the precepts of Torah" and what was dear to DtrN.[748] While prophecy offered a path of return, the gravity of exile underscored the importance of nomistic obedience and the seriousness of infidelity.

5.6.2   Theological Import: The Relational Aspect of the Covenant

My research and classic Deuteronomistic Theology agree that various deuteronomistic concerns or aspects find their meaning only in the YHWH-Israel Horeb covenant.[749] Alter is

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[747] First Kings 8:46-53 is viewed as exilic by most (Campbell, *Unfolding*, 356). Cross saw 1 Kings 8:46-53 and Deut 30:1-20 as exilic (Dtr²) (Cross, "Themes of the Book of Kings," 278). See also Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him,'" 425-426: Deut 30:2 enjoins repentance (*šûḇ*) *and* obedience to all the commands.

[748] Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him,'" 431. Knoppers refers, not to DtrN, but to his "exilic deuteronomist."

[749] This is clear in exilic texts like 1 Kings 8:46-53 emphasizing Israel as YHWH's people and heritage, separation from other nations, exodus from Egypt, and Moses (cf. especially 1 Kgs 8:50-53).

correct when he observes that literary means are used to serve covenantal ends.[750] While the calls

to obedience and return are already expressions of this, the aspects of trust and cultic-covenantal

attentiveness identified in my research emphasize anew the *relationality* of the Horeb covenant.

Deuteronomistic-relational aspects emerge as Saul is contrasted with other figures in narrative

analogy.[751] Saul does not have a relationship with YHWH comparable to that of Gideon,

Hannah, Samuel, Jonathan, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, or Josiah. Saul's disobedience begins

deeper, in a fracture or deficit in his own relationship with YHWH, striking at the heart of that

relationship's form and expression in the covenant. The legal traditions, especially the

deuteronomic law, were expressive of relationship with the living God. Blenkinsopp, writing of

the Pentateuch, makes this point in another way: the legal traditions of Israel were "brought into

relation with certain events in which the *presence and action* of God were discerned."[752] The

meshing of legal and narrative texts in the Pentateuch indicates this. The Deuteronomistic

History, in particular, indicates this as narrative continually returns to foundations in the

presence and action of YHWH at Horeb, seeing this as defining and life-giving. My emphasis on

trust and cultic-covenantal attentiveness and Blenkinsopp's emphasis on the link between law

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[750] Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read," 116.

[751] Saul does not trust, but YHWH vindicates those who trust in him—Gideon, Jonathan, David, and Hezekiah. Saul disregards cultic expectations (13:9), giving YHWH only what is contemptible in the cultic *ḥērem* (15:9), while Solomon and Josiah give the best in temple building and Passover celebration. Saul does not interact personally with YHWH. Stephen Chapman argues that Saul does not address YHWH in the second person singular, i.e., Saul does not pray: "there is no direct discourse between Saul and God." See Chapman, *1 Samuel as Christian Scripture*, 57. I would modify this, observing that Saul does address YHWH but he has to be reminded by the priest to do so and it is only in the formal setting of pre-battle inquiry (14:36-42). Saul is unlike good kings David, Solomon, and Hezekiah who are provided with "royal prayers" (Knoppers, "'There Was None Like Him,'" 421).

[752] Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 225, emphasis added. Noth viewed the legal tradition in Israel coming to a dead end after the exile with the law becoming *eine absolute Grösse* ("an absolute entity"). Blenkinsopp explains that Noth's concern was "an inauthentic reliance on law detached from its ancient foundations in covenant faith." Blenkinsopp notes that Noth failed to take account of passages positive about the law. Blenkinsopp proceeds to situate the law in the more positive context of the presence and action of YHWH.

and the presence and action of God offer a more relational view of the law and its purpose.[753] It

mediated, safeguarded, and expressed the YHWH-Israel relationship. Failure to carry out

YHWH's words (1 Sam 15:1, 11, 13) is to turn away (*šûḇ*), not just from the law, but from

YHWH (1 Sam 15:11). The fracture is relational. The foundations of faith and life lie in the

YHWH-Israel bond. Assessing Saul's fall apart from or in opposition to the deuteronomistic-

covenantal relationship leads only to partial understandings or truncated explanations, examples

of which were glimpsed in Chapters Two and Three.

5.6.3   Pastoral Implications

The accounts of the fall of Saul and broader Deuteronomistic Theology achieved a

sophisticated balance between the expectations of YHWH in the incomparable YHWH-Israel

relationship and the insight that YHWH awaits his people and contrives to have them return to

him for life. The rejection of Saul accounts and Deuteronomistic Theology present the delicate

dynamic between the claims of YHWH and human struggles, between theological demands and

inevitable failure ("If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin . . ." [1 Kgs

8:46]). The Deuteronomistic theologians, adapting and reconceptualizing, were perhaps the first

to offer a model of *accompaniment* in the human struggle to respond to the call of YHWH.[754]

This openness to accompaniment emerges from the kind of history this is—one forged in

suffering, and born out of the profound reflection that seeks to understand human life as lived

before God. This makes the story of Saul's failure and the Deuteronomistic History particularly

appealing, subtle, and realistic. The uncompromising demands of YHWH in the covenant are

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[753] A "more basic explanation of the covenant relationship that the treaty analogy" (Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 225).

[754] "Accompaniment" has become an important pastoral model articulated frequently by Pope Francis. The Deuteronomistic writers offer a biblical foundation for this theological model.

balanced with the acknowledgment of human weakness and sin. There is no compromise in the call to obedience, but in failure return is possible. This dynamic appears from the very beginning of the history as Joshua issues his undiluted call to fidelity, while at the same time acknowledging that the people did and would fail: "You will not be able to serve YHWH, for he is a holy God . . ." (Josh 24:19). It is hardly surprising, then, that Saul became an important figure and the focus of serious theological reflection. This insight explains why, though in the shadow of David, almost an entire book of the Deuteronomistic History is devoted to Saul.

This General Conclusion is being written as the world continues to suffer the scourge of the COVID-19 global pandemic. In the United States and beyond, unrest seeks to respond to injustice. Contemporary challenges recall how, in even more difficult times, significant literature emerged from contexts of faith, even as God seemed to remain silent. YHWH did not answer Saul; YHWH seemed silent for much of the exile; YHWH seemed silent during the Second World War. In the exile of 587, the accounts of Saul's rejection took on new meaning, were redacted, and placed in their current context. The exile also saw the completion of the master theological work that is the Deuteronomistic History. It was during the Second World War that Martin Noth rediscovered this work and penned his classic *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (1943), the significance of which has been fruitfully unpacked and continues to challenge and accompany. The other work of 1943, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, explicitly refers to its sorrowful times.[755] Yet out of that countext Pius XII urged return to Scripture, giving new urgency to biblical studies, even in hard times, especially in hard times.

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[755] Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, § 56: "the sorrowful times, when almost all peoples and nations are plunged in a sea of calamites, when a cruel war heaps ruins upon ruins and slaughter upon slaughter . . . owing to the most bitter hatred stirred up among the nations . . ."

Return to the word(s) of God is also the call of the rejection of Saul accounts. In the midst of crisis there is much that must and can be done and, like Saul, the inclination is to act, to do something (1 Sam 13:7b-15). The Saul texts convey a sense of the limits of pragmatism or activism unaccompanied by a listening to the voice or words of YHWH (1 Sam 15:1).[756] For the Deuteronomistic Historians fruitful acting is to be located within the YHWH-Israel covenant with all the empowerment (YHWH fights for his people) and limits (the parameters of obedience) implied. This marks the difference between the activity of Saul on the one hand, and of David, Hezekiah and Josiah, on the other. First Samuel 13:7b-15 and 15:1-35 propose trust, waiting, listening, attentiveness, and fidelity. The lesson of Saul's rejection was placed before the exiles whose task it was to turn back (*šûḇ*) to YHWH. These rich texts, serving covenantal ends, are as much about the election of Israel as they are about the rejection of Saul. Election endures, the promises persist, and God continues to speak.[757] The texts appeal for return to the word of YHWH and faithful relationality in the YHWH-Israel covenant: "Obey the words of YHWH!" (*šəmaʿ ləqôl diḇrê YHWH*, 1 Sam 15:1).

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[756] See Galvin, "First Samuel," 259, on pragmatism before the holy.

[757] Joel S. Kaminsky is helpful here. Inspite of disobedience, God's promises of special favor toward Israel persist and "can be fully reactualized after God's judgment and Israel's repentance." He writes: "One need only look at the framework of Judges or the larger Deuteronomistic History to see that Israel's disobedience does not negate her divine election." See Joel S. Kaminsky, "Can Election be Forfeited?" in *The Call of Abraham: Essays on the Election of Israel in Honor of Jon D. Levenson*, ed. Gary A. Anderson and Joel S. Kaminsky (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 44-66, 54.

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