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A Survey of Political Conditions in Ancient Israel
down to the Establishment of the Kingdom, Based
on a Study of Judges and Samuel.

Graduation Thesis

by
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Dedicated to the Memory

Of my Revered Teacher

Dr. Moses Mielziner

As a Token of Esteem and Regard.

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1. The Religion of Israel to the Exile, Budds.

Abbreviations.

Dr. J. B. Israelitische & Jüdische Geschichte, J. Wellhausen.

P. to J. W. Prolegomena to Jewish History. Wellhausen.

G. d. V. D. Geschichte des Volkes Israel. Stade

G. d. V. G. Geschichte des Volkes Israel. Geertz

R. H. z. G. T. Richter, Kommentar zum Alten Testament. Nowak

J. D. C. C. Judges, International Critical Commentary. Moore

S. H. z. G. T. Samuel, Kommentar zum Alten Testament. Budds

R. of I. & E. Religion of Israel to Exile. Budds.

Preface.

In the following pages, it has been my aim to present a systematic and unified account of the political conditions and movements in ancient Israel, from the time the tribes forced their way into Canaan, until they established a strong political organization, a national kingdom, sufficiently powerful to warrant security and to overawe the surrounding hostile neighbors.

In this task, it has been impossible for me to go into an exhaustive analysis of the historical documents, in Judges and Samuel, that form the basis of my work. Time and space and the scope of my subject do not permit of lengthy discussions as to the historical trustworthiness or untrustworthiness

of much of the material with which I have to deal.

In these conclusions, I have been guided by the critics.

In determining the original and secondary nature of the accounts of incidents and events, recorded in the Books of Judges and Samuel, I have been guided entirely by the Polychrome edition of the Books of Judges and Samuel, prepared by B. F. Moore and K. Buddel.

I wish to thank Prof. Battenwieser not only for the suggestion of this subject, but also for the advice, interest, and unfailing consideration, with which he has assisted, and encouraged me in my work.

max J. Merritt.

Chapter I

The Two Accounts of the Invasion, Conquest and Settlement of West Jordan Lands.

Since our attention will be centred upon the political conditions that obtained among the Israelite tribes and clans that found their way into West Jordan districts and with the growth and development among them of a desire for union, culminating finally in the establishment of the national kingdom, it will be necessary for us to determine, first of all, under what circumstances the entrance into this land and settlement there was made and what was the nature of the union among them at this time.

Two widely different accounts of the Israelitish invasion, conquest and settlement of West Jordan

territories have been handed down to us. We shall
 call these documents the Joshua and Judges accounts, ^{respectively}
 The Joshua account, in brief, describes how Joshua,
 the divinely appointed leader, crossed the Jordan at
 Jericho, at the head of a well-organized and warlike
 body, composed of the twelve tribes, captured Jericho,
 and in a series of battles completely overthrew the
 federated kings of Canaan. He completed the conquest,
 exterminating the inhabitants, or reducing them
 to a position of servitude and then parcelled out the
 conquered territory, by lot, to the victorious tribes
 (cf. Josh. ch. I - XIII).

Let us see how this account agrees with that
 preserved in the Book of Judges. The situation
 described in the first chapter of the Book of Judges,

the subsequent events that form the basis of the Books of Judges and Samuel, and the political conditions therein set forth, contradict in all essentials the Joshua account.

The first chapter of Judges is strangely silent with regard to that organized, and united coalition of the tribes, that forms the basis of the Joshua account.

It presents the invasion in an entirely different light. Here we see the tribes setting out in groups, on separate and distinct expeditions and wresting homes for themselves from an enemy equally disunited, but sufficiently well-equipped with warlike apparatus, to inspire the invaders with a wholesome respect. In the highlands the bold and hardy invaders seem to have

had their foes at a disadvantage, but the war-chariots of the natives turned the scale against the hill-men in the level stretches of the plain. (cf. Ch I v. 19).

Not only is there not the slightest reference to the united effort and complete organization, upon which the Joshua account is based, but there is not even the slightest intimation that these independent tribal struggles took place at the same time or from any central point of departure. On the contrary it is more than probable that the final settlement of Canaan was the result of a series of movements, rather than the result of a single concerted assault, as the Joshua account would portray it. History presents numerous analogies to such wave-like migratory movements.

It is only by such a hypothesis that we can explain the stubborn contests, by which the different groups and tribes finally came into possession of their respective seats. If we accept the Joshua account, which presents this same district, from Libanon in the north to Hebron in the south, as conquered and pacified, we are at a loss to explain the stubborn resistance exhibited by Canaanites, after the conquered territory has been allotted to the victorious tribes. We then are unable to explain their success in confining the victors to the highland districts.

which, however, is not the case. The account of the conquest of the Canaanites is not given in the same way as the account of the conquest of the Amorites. The account of the conquest of the Canaanites is given in the same way as the account of the conquest of the Amorites.

Without laying too much stress upon the fact that the name of Joshua is not mentioned in any of the struggles narrated in the first chapter,

of Judges, we come finally to the irreconcilable discrepancies exhibited by the two accounts in the enumeration and specification of the conquered cities. In Joshua, ch XII, there is a long list given, of the city-kingdoms that submitted to the conqueror. Among them we find Jerusalem, Bezer, Taanach, Megiddo and so on. The record set forth in the first chapter of Judges, a record confirmed by subsequent events in Jewish history, clearly contradicts this list. It enumerates these cities among many others that succeeded in maintaining their independence against the invaders. We know that Jerusalem was not conquered till the time of David, (II Sam ch V) that Bezer passed into the possession of Israel in the days of Solomon (I Kings IX v 16), that Taanach,

Megiddo and its formed part of the Canaanite group of cities that maintained their independence even after the defeat of Siera and did not become part of Israel till the time of David.

Add to this the analogies that history presents, of the migratory settlements of peoples, such as the long-continued migration of the desert nomads in earliest times, into the rich Euphrates district, and the gradual settlement and conquest of Britain by the Saxons, - and we are firmly convinced that an account that would make the conquest and settlement of West Jordan lands the final result of a series of movements extending over a protracted period of time, rather than the result of a concerted attack by a host, strongly well organized, has the

greater measure of historical trustworthiness. In short, at a time when union could only have been crude and ineffectual, it seems impossible that the concerted movements recorded in the Book of Joshua could have been so effectively and systematically carried into execution. We feel justified in our conclusion that the first chapter of the Book of Judges represents the trustworthy historical account of the entrance into and settlement of the Israelitish tribes in the West Jordan districts. (cf. Stade *Is. d. V. d. P.* 136).

The first chapter of the Book of Judges has been called "one of the most important documents in the history of Israel." It relates the struggles attendant upon the efforts of the different tribes to wrest homes for themselves from the inhabitants of the land they

had invaded, and also records in how far they were successful. It shows plainly that the Israelitish ^{tribes} came into Palestine singly and in groups, and singly or in federations, conquered their tribal seats or settled down peaceably by the side of the original inhabitants. The strong fortified cities, the fertile valleys and the sea-board remained for a long time in the possession of the Canaanites and for a long time the Israelites were masters only of the highlands of Central and Southern Palestine. (Cf. Moore J. D. C. p. 8)

As it is our purpose to treat this invasion in detail, we shall first deal with the ^{fortitude} of Judah, together with Simeon and some non-Israelitish, ^{note} Kenite, tribes who conquered homes for themselves in Southern Canaan. There is great difference of opinion as to the way in which

the Kenites, whose history is so closely bound up with that of Judah that their conquests are recorded with those of Judah (Ch. xviii. 1-16) probably belonged to an Edomite tribe of Kenaz and were later on

Juda came into its southern seat, and since this has an important bearing upon Juda's future political relations to the other tribes, we deem it necessary to discuss this question at length. Some critics, notably Wellhausen (cf. P. to J. II. p. 441-2), while they maintain that the migration of Juda must be considered distinct from those of other tribes, yet insist that it proceeded from the same quarter, that is the eastern side of the Jordan. Other critics, and among these Nowak and Stade, basing themselves upon reminiscences found in the Book of Numbers and upon the significant fact that Juda pursued its own course regardless of the fortunes of its kindred tribes and unheeded, too, by them, up to the time of David, have elaborated

through the efforts of David, brought into the tribe of Juda.

(cf. Stade B. V. S. 159)

17.
the theory that not only was the invasion of Juda
separate and distinct from that of the Josephite
tribes but proceeded also from an entirely different
quarter. (Cf. Nowak R.H.g.L.T. p. 40)

In Numbers (ch ~~XII~~ v 22.) we are told that the spies
sent by Moses to reconnoitre the land to be invaded,
entered the Negeb and penetrated as far north as
Hebron, - a reminiscence of the fact that an entrance
into Palestine was made from the south. In
Numbers (ch ~~XIV~~ v 30) we have a hint that the
Calebites, always closely related to Juda, had made
a settlement in Southern Canaan before Israel, and
Numbers ch ~~XXI~~ v 1 ff reiterates the reference to an
attempted Israelitish invasion from the south.
(Cf. Nowak R.H.g.L.T. n 2.)

It is probable that the Kenites wandered from Sinai over the southern border of Canaan and that the tribe of Judah accompanied them, (cf. Stade, *Is. d. V. d. J.* 131-33) and succeeded in conquering the highland territory extending up to the city-kingdom of Jerusalem, (Jds. ch. IV 19-22), while the non-Israelite clans possessed themselves independently of Judah's assistance, of Hebron and Hebron and their surrounding territories (Jds. ch. II 11-19).

While we incline to the theory that Judah made its entry into Canaan from the south, there can be little doubt that the fragmentary account of the Josephite invasion recorded in Jds. ch. I 22-29, represents an unaltered account of an older history paralleling the conquests of Judah, (cf. Moore, *J. S. C. C.* p. 90). It seems more than probable that we have here the

historical basis of the Joshua legend, and that a later author magnified this invasion of the Josephite tribes into the Joshua account of an organized assault of the united Israelite tribes, crossing from the eastern side of the Jordan.

We are able, thanks to the Book of Numbers, (ch. XXII); to trace the line of march, taken by the Israelite tribes from the desert, until we find them settled on the eastern side of the Jordan, in northern Moab. But northern Moab proved insufficient for these tribes, (cf. Well. *Deut.* II, 237) and the population increasing with the change from wandering to a semi-sedentary life, the means of subsistence became straitened, and probably new desert hordes crowding in their rear, made it imperatively

necessary to move on to newer and more extensive
(
seats (cf. Stade. B.T.S., p. 134)

The country across the Jordan, being broken up into
a number of small independent cities and kingdoms
afforded an easy entrance (Well. S. u. J. p. 37). The Jordan
was easily crossed by numerous fords. Probably
already small Israelitish clans, forced from their
seats on the eastern side of the Jordan by overcrowded
conditions, had crossed over and settled peaceably
among the Canaanite inhabitants (cf. Stade B.T.S., p. 138)

Everything contributed to the successful entry
of the Josephite tribes into the rich territory of West
Jordan Palestine. The passage of the Jordan was made,
the territory north of Judah seized, the invaders
take several cities and gain a decisive victory over

the Canaanites, united for a final stand, in the neighborhood of Lachish (cf. Well. S. u. J. B. p. 37). The invading Israelites became the masters of the middle Palestinian highland, the Canaanites retaining only a few of the strong fortified cities of their central district, among them Shechem and Tebez. The numerous clans that settled this conquered district gradually evolved into the three powerful tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin and their united territory stretched from the Plain of Jezreel in the north to the present Wadi bet Hanina in the south (cf. Well. S. u. J. B. p. 37).

The success of the Josephite tribes doubtless encouraged hundred clans to cross the Jordan in search of homes, and although the first chapter of Judges gives us only a meagre, fragmentary account of the

struggles of Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali, and is strangely silent with regard to Sasaechan, it gives us enough to warrant the conclusion that the conquests of these tribes that settled farther to the north, were far from complete and that the Canaanite population succeeded in retaining most of the stronger and larger cities (cf. Jer. ch I 30-33). So strong, in fact, was the position of the native population and so preponderant its influence, that the author speaks of Asher and Naphtali as "dwelling in the midst of the Canaanites". (v 32-33).

Of the fortunes of the small tribe of Dan, there has been preserved a full and interesting account. This tribe first tried to establish ^{itself} on the south-western slope of the territory of Ephraim. The native

inhabitants were strong enough to confine them
 to the highland, (Jds ch I v 34) and failing in their
 attempt to establish themselves in the plain, and
 being hard pressed or over-crowded in their
 highland seats, the Danites determined to migrate
 to a newer and more favorable quarter. They sent
 out spies to search for a place of settlement. These
 spies penetrated to the far north and fixed upon
 Laish, a city at the head waters of the Jordan, as a
 suitable place for settlement. The majority of the
 tribe, six hundred warriors with wives, families
 and possessions set out for the north, passed
 through the highlands of Ephraim, and falling
 suddenly upon the unprotected city of Laish, conquered
 it and established themselves there (9. Jds chs XVIII)

Not all of the Danites emigrated to the north. Some, probably the minor portion of the tribe, remained and later on we find them in Gosh, and Eshtarot, the first to feel the heavy hand of the expanding Philistine power (cf. Jds. chs. XIII - XIV). ^{note 1.}

Thus these meagre and fragmentary accounts, given in the first chapter of Judges, supplemented by the record of the Danite migration, give us, as incomplete but a adequate picture of the invasion and settlement of the Israelitish tribes. We see that the Canaanites managed to retain stretches of territory, into which the Israelites could not enter, also many cities within territory conquered by the tribes. In the interior, the Canaanites held the Jezreel Plain, many cities in the hillsidean highland, the whole coast south

note 1. Reuben and Issach remained in their old seats on the east side of the Jordan. Reuben rapidly declined in power and importance. Issach succeeded in maintaining itself against the attacks of

of Hebron, the stronghold of the Amorites, on the south-east of Ephraim, Shechem, and Tabor in Ephraim, and Jebus, an almost impregnable city, the centre of a ring of Canaanite cities in the south (cf. Kautsky, pp. 19). In the following chapter we shall set forth the situation and relation of the tribes, separated as they were by intervening Canaanite territory.

surrounding enemies, but up to the time of the kingdom, exerted no influence on political events in Israel.

Chapter II

Situation and Relation of the Tribes in Canaan in the
Light of the First Authentic Records.

When the tribes have at length secured themselves
in their tribal seats and territories, we find them
divided into three great groups by strips of territory
and chains of fortified cities still in possession of the
Canaanites. In the extreme south, Simeon and
Judah, are cut off from Ephraim and Benjamin
by a girdle of fortified Canaanite cities, among them
Beeroth, Kibson, Kephira, Kirjath-Jearim, Gijalon,
Shaalbim, Beth-Shean and Jerusalem (cf. Josh. 15: 61-62, 68, 69).
Similarly, the Josephite tribes in Central Palestine
are cut off from their northern brethren by a belt
of Canaanite cities and territory, stretching across

the Plain of Jezreel. Among these were Beth-shean, Jibleam, Taanach, Megiddo and Dor. These cities with their connected territory formed a barrier that effectively separated Asher, Zebulun, Issachar and Naphtali from the Josephite tribes.

Within these three great divisions, we shall briefly set forth the specific locations of the several tribes. Proceeding from the extreme north, we find the emigrant Issachar at the very head-waters of the Jordan. Asher has its seat back of the interior of the Phoenician coast. Zebulun had settled in the western part of the lower Galilee, Naphtali had secured itself in the eastern part of Upper Galilee, north of Zebulun and east of Asher. Issachar had secured a foothold in the district north of Menassee, having the Jordan

for its eastern boundary and stretching westward to the Jezreel Plain.

The Central Palestinian highland was divided between the three powerful tribes, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh. Manasseh occupied the territory stretching from the Plain of Jezreel to Shiloh, Ephraim from Shiloh to Bethel and Benjamin from Bethel to the belt of Canaanite cities that cut them off from the south. (cf. Well. Dujs. 2. 37)

Benjamin was the last of the tribes to become an independent tribe. Originally it formed with Ephraim and Manasseh, part of these two tribes. A number of clans, however, moved to the south and constant struggles with the inhabitants surrounding them gradually solidified these clans into the tribe of

Benjamin. Nowak is of the opinion that this solidifying was not complete till toward the end of the period of the Judges, for in the Song of Deborah (ch. 5 v. 15), Benjamin is mentioned in the muster of Ephraim (cf. Nowak, *RKZuT*, p. 50).

South of the dividing belt of the Canaanite cities lay the highland of Judah, an extensive territory, dividing itself into the Shefela and the Negeb, the Shefela stretching away toward the sea on the west, the Negeb extending southwards. (cf. Nowak, *RKZuT*, p. 5).

The entire sea-board, the Philistine lowlands, the plain of Sharon, as well as the Phoenician coast-land and the whole region of the Lebanon, remained in the hands of the Canaanites or alien peoples.

(cf. Moore, *Joc*, n. 80)

This, then, is the situation and location in

which we find the tribes, in the period succeeding the conquest. And yet separated and sundered as the two ^{northern} great groups were, by intervening Canaanitish territory, there were still a great many things that contributed to exert a strong unifying influence upon the tribes composing them; - a unifying influence strong enough to draw them together for the carrying out of enterprises that affected their common interests.

The memories of a former union and close relationship, before their settlement in their present homes must still have exerted a powerful unifying influence (cf. Well. Du Jo. p. 16.). Without this consciousness of a previous union, the union of the greater number of tribes, assumed to have existed in the song of

Deborah, could not have formed. This union cannot
 be wholly explained by a gradual growing together
 of the tribes. Neither could it have formed suddenly
 of itself, with no antecedent causes. The more one
 seeks to represent to himself the relations that existed
 at this time, between the tribes, the more he
 inclines to the assumption, that the victories of
 the invasion had given the tribes common
 interests, and had led them to enter into
 reciprocal relations and to recognize common
 obligations. (Cf. Well. du J. p. 60. but. Rev. 1. 5-10)

Without this recognition of common obligation,
 a part of the song of Deborah would be unintelligible.
 There would be no valid reason for the extravagant
 praise, with which the author lauds those

tribes, that had risen to meet their obligations,
 (cf. Josh. I v 14-16, 18) and the scorn and reproaches
 he directs at those, who failed to respond to the
 call of duty. (Ibid. v 16 + 17). If these reciprocal relations
 and mutual obligations did not exist between
 the tribes, what right would the struggling tribes
 have had to call upon those for assistance, to whom
 they were bound by no ties? What force or point
 would the taunts and reproaches of the singer
 have had, unless aimed at those, who were
 bound to render assistance by virtue of the strong
 bonds that united them?

And these bonds were not only bonds of a former
 closer union and relationship, of mutual
 obligation and common interest. The tie of blood,

the most primitive and strongest tie that obtains
 among Semitic peoples, fostered the feeling of
 relationship. The tie of a common language
 served to strengthen the consciousness of
 interdependence and homogeneity, and finally
 the powerful bond of religion, the consciousness
 that Yahveh was the God of Israel, and Israel
 the people of Yahveh" was the source of a
 constant and tenacious internal unity among
 these separated tribes. The wars against the
 Canaanites were Yahveh's wars and therefore
 sacred wars in which all the tribes as Yahveh's
 people were bound to participate. When the
 call of Yahveh went forth, every tribe and clan
 must send its valiant warriors to his support.

It was for this failure on the part of Merod to send its warriors to the aid of Jahweh, when his command had gone forth for war against the Canaanites, that the author of the Song of Deborah hurls his curse upon it (Jas ch II v 23). The consciousness that Jahweh was Israel's God, and Israel, Jahweh's people, that Jahweh's commands to take up arms against his enemies must be obeyed, or the delinquents call down on themselves curses, scorn and contempt, the belief that Jahweh fought with and for Israel, confounding the enemy from the heavens (Jas ch II v 20-21), that their victories were his victories and his victories were theirs, played by far the most important part in creating and internal

unity among the tribes long before it found expression in a political commonwealth. (cf. Well. Dugby p 31)

With the conditions set forth in this chapter, - the conditions that tended to separate, and break up the tribes and weaken their feeling of homogeneity and consciousness of unity and the forces that, on the other hand, nourished and fostered them, - it will be my task in the succeeding pages to set forth the series of movements towards union, at first weak and ineffective but finally culminating in the establishment of the national kingdom.

Earliest Unions: Tribal Chieftans.

In all early communities where a centralized authority has not yet developed or where the centralized authority has not yet acquired sufficient power and majesty to quell lawlessness within or give security from attacks that may come from without, there has been a tendency on the part of the weaker members, to invest with power some strong individual with aggressive attributes, and in return for the protection and security he gives them, they grant him service and obedience. We have a familiar example of this principle in the feudal lord of the Middle Ages, who in return for the protection and security he gave the peasantry, demanded of them military service.

and the lion's share of the fruits of the soil. (cf. Enc. Bib. 2, 35-7). And so from time to time in this formative period that was going on among the tribes, that had exchanged a wandering for a sedentary life, the unsettled social conditions and the incursions of Bedawin enemies and attacks of Canaanite foes within, brought to the fore men of strong and aggressive personality, under whose leadership the clans and tribes rallied, singly or in federations and beat back their enemies. It is well to keep in mind that the authority of such a leader, created by necessity, commonly extended only over his own clan or tribe and that his followers voluntarily submitted to his leadership and authority (cf. Stoll 3d ed p. 173).

In a period when the highest ideal of courage was bravery in battle and prowess in war, it was natural that the chief, who was famous for warlike deeds, should find it easier to gather round him a considerable following, in these clan and tribal struggles. The chief would issue the "Herr-bann" or summons to the freemen to go out to battle, and the number that responded to his call would be in proportion to the chief's warlike fame, the pressure of necessity and the urgency of the obligation, as for example a summons issued in the name of *gshrook g. jds ch 20-23*.

(*q. Stadi b. v. s. p. 173*). It is worthy of note that the initiative in these struggles always came from above, from the chiefs, princes, nobles and men

of standing in the community. In the song of Deborah,
it is the princes, nobles and chiefs who, are
extravagantly praised for the liberation of Israel.
(cf. Jds ch 5 v 9, 14 + 15).

The loose relation of the tribes and clans and
the fact that they found it possible, even in their
disunited state, to successfully defend themselves
from the nomads, who occasionally swept in from
the desert, made most of these early unions
purely local, confined to single clans and tribes.
But when the necessity was more urgent, when
more than a single tribe was threatened by the
enemy, then the consciousness of unity and
feeling of homogeneity, stimulated by the
imperilled common interests, was capable of

uniting several tribes in a defensive alliance (Juch);
 But even as the necessity was of the moment, so
 were these unions merely temporary and with the
 passing of the need, the clans and tribes found
 it easy and natural to fall back into their
 original state of loose relationship (cf. Stade ad Ysa p. 174).

The first account of the oppression of Israel by the
 Syrians and the union under Achish (Jedch. ix 7-11)
 is clearly unhistorical. It is hardly possible that
 the Syrians, from so distant a place on the Upper
 Euphrates as Assur should interfere with Israel
 at this time and still less possible, that Achish,
 a non-Israelite, from his seat in the extreme south,
 cut off from the northern districts by a Canaanite
 belt, should be the deliverer (cf. Moore & D.C. p. 84).

The first authentic record of a union against outside encroachment is to be found in the narrative of Ched. (cf. Jds ch ~~III~~ v 16-29). The Moabites, at this period, attempted to extend their territory and authority from the east to the west side of the Jordan. Our records tell us nothing of Moab's relation to Reuben, which had remained in its seat in the northern part of Moab, when the other tribes had crossed the river to seek new homes.

But from the very lack of data, with regard to Reuben, we may infer that it quickly declined and in order to extend its territory to the Jordan and to take possession of Jericho on the western side, (cf. Jds ch III v 12-14), we must conclude that Moab had first subdued Reuben. At any rate, we know

that Eglon, King of Moab, crossed the Jordan, captured Jericho and occupied the fertile plain surrounding it (cf. Moore JSCC 2, 90-91).

The narrative gives us no reason to conclude that any tribe but Benjamin was concerned in this struggle. It does not appear that the Moabite authority extended even into the mountains of Ephraim. The rising led by Ehud seems to be purely a tribal affair and Ehud with his tribal followers shows himself fully capable of dealing with the situation.

The political situation that culminated in the deliverance by Ehud, was as follows. The Moabites had crossed from the eastern side of the Jordan, captured Jericho and the surrounding plain, and

levied an annual tribute on the conquered Benjamite territory. Chud, of the Benjamite clan of Kera, heads the embassy that bears the annual tribute to Eglon, to his capital city, across the Jordan. By a clever ruse he secures a private audience with the king, stabs him, makes his escape and summoning his tribesmen from the hills, captures the fords of the Jordan, cuts off the Moabites on the west side and destroys at a stroke the Moabite superpower, (Jud ch III v 6 ff). There is absolutely no evidence in the narrative proper, that more than one tribe participated in this struggle. But the Deuteronomie author has seen fit to magnify this purely local event into the liberation of entire Israel. (Jud ch III v 30).

From this contest, concerned with the fortunes

of a single tribe, we turn to a far more momentous struggle, a struggle in which common interests and common dangers awakened the dormant consciousness of homogeneity, and stimulated the tribes to a wider and more effective union.

This struggle, its causes, success, and consequences, has been reserved in chapters IV and V of the Book of Judges. Chapter IV records in prose what chapter V has set forth in poetry. There can be no doubt that the poetic version, the Song of Deborah, is a much older account, on which the prose narrative depends. The poetic version breathes a fire and fervor and presents a richness of circumstances and detail, that marks it as the work of one contemporary with, or writing shortly after, the

great struggle.

Moore (cf. ICC p 60) attributes the discrepancies between the two versions, partly to a misunderstanding of the poem, by the author of chapter IX, partly to a confusion of narratives. Nowak (cf. RHy 2 p 33+34) lays great stress upon the fact that chapter IX represents a composite of two separate and distinct incidents, recorded originally in two separate and distinct narratives. He insists that the struggle with Jabin, King of Hazor was entirely independent of the Deborah-Benei contest, but that a confusion of names and places finally led to the composite story recorded in chapter IX.

The Song of Deborah, as chapter IX is most commonly called, is one of the oldest and most important documents concerned with the early

history of Israel. It sets forth clearly and graphically the political and social conditions that obtained among the tribes of Israel at that time, It represents the tribes more firmly established in their conquered territories. The Joseph tribes have spread out and occupied the entire highland. The prominent part in the struggle, taken by the three tribes Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar would argue that they had secured a firmer hold upon their territories, than the account in chapter I would justify.

(cf. Moore). SOC p 133).

doubtless the isolated condition of their Canaanite enemies and the fact that they remained split up into a number of petty city-kingdoms, favored the Israelitish occupation and peaceful expansion in

their conquered territories. But if the disunited condition of the Canaanites had favored peaceful expansion, it had also led to a decrease in the warlike spirit of the invaders. The transition from a wandering to a settled, agricultural life, had weakened the warlike spirit that had given the tribes their advantage over the Canaanites and the condition of affairs that now existed may be admirably represented by the fact that there was a deplorable scarcity of arms throughout Israel (cf. Judges 8:25).

The Canaanite princes were still undisputed masters of the rich Plain of Jezreel. Their fortified cities gave them ample security. Their war-chariots kept the Israelite footmen in awe (Judges 15:13).

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of the

The steady encroachments of the Israelites probably began to give alarm and led to an alliance of the city-kingdoms of the Eggeel Plain under the leadership of Sisera (ch I v 19). The Canaanites determined with this strong league, to assume the offensive.

The situation became a most serious one for the tribes surrounding the Plain of Eggeel. The Canaanites, by virtue of the fact that they occupied the fortified cities, guarding the passes and high-ways, into the highlands, were able to interdict trade and commerce (ch I v 6.). Their armed bands made forays into the Israelitish districts and laid waste the unfortified cities. (ch I v 7). The peasantry, terrorized by these raids, were unable to defend themselves because of the

scarcity of arms (ch. v. 8)

Such was the demoralized and deplorable condition of affairs, when the call for concerted action went forth from Sisachar. Sisachar, by virtue of its possessions in the plain of Jezreel was particularly exposed to Canaanite attacks and was sorely distressed. (cf. Well. Sm. K. 239), but the interests of all the tribes on both sides of the Plain were imperilled by this aggressive movement of the Canaanites.

It was plain that the single tribes, in their separate and disunited condition, must in the long run, succumb to this powerful league. Unde deterred by the continued aggression of the Canaanites, inspired by Deborah and spurred on

by the call of Jahweh, the tribes gathered for the conflict, under the leadership of their various chiefs and selected as their commander-in-chief, Barak, a chief of Issachar.

The list of the tribes that participated in this momentous struggle and those that held aloof at this critical time, gives us an admirable picture of the political situation. Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh, by virtue of their unimpaired strength and the extensive stretch of territory, occupied by them, form the bulwarks of this union against the common enemy. Zebulun and Issachar, having suffered severely from their position, exposed to the operations of the Canaanites, entered heart and soul into this struggle, to rid themselves

of future oppression. Naphtali, though farther to the north, was still in close union with its brethren, and was prepared to respond to the "Ker-bann" proclaimed in the name of the common deity.

The appeal, however, was not confined to the tribes west of the Jordan. This was to be a national movement. The command of Yahweh went forth to their kinsmen on the east side of the Jordan, too. But they were not equally prepared to answer the call. Internal dissensions kept Reuben vacillating till the struggle was over (cf. Jos. ch. 2 v. 15 & 16). May we not read between the lines, too, that Reuben had its own difficulties and struggles with which to concern itself? Having to constantly contend

with the Moabites on the south, Reuben would scarcely wish to weaken its position, by sending aid to their struggling brethren in the west. Even as it was, Reuben gradually succumbed to the assaults of its enemies and early disappears from the stage of history.

Seiad, too, refused to join the federation. Seiad is the name given to the country extending from the River Yarmuk to the borders of Ammon, settled by the tribe of Sead. This tribe, too, had to ceaselessly contend with surrounding hostile foes and Bedawin raiders from the desert and probably had fully as much as it could do, to maintain its position and independence.

But the "hem-bann" was coequal with the

borders of Israel and the obligation to respond to
 Gilead's call, was incumbent on the tribes that
 settled in the far north as well as on those settled
 on the eastern side of the Jordan. But Dan and
 Asher, too, held aloof from their brethren at this
 critical period. It remains for us to determine,
 as well as we can from the scanty references to these
 two tribes, in what political and social relations
 they stood to their kinsmen and to the surrounding
 peoples. They were ^{not} engaged in a struggle for
 existence, as were Reuben and Issachar. We must
 seek some other explanation for their refusal to
 participate in this national movement.

The author's mention of Dan in connection
 with ships (Jud. 5:17) gives us a possible clue to

its political position. Settled at the head-waters of the
 Jordan, on the site of the former city of Laish, their
 only outlet to the sea was through the Phoenician
 settlements on the coast and just as the former
 inhabitants of Laish had been dependent on the
 Phoenicians (cf. Jds ch ~~XVIII~~ v 8 & 28), so did the Danites
 probably accept this position of dependency and so
 find an outlet to the sea. This new relationship
 gradually weakened their feeling of homogeneity
 with their Israelitish kinsmen and they greeted
 the summons to the struggle with coldness and
 indifference (cf. Nowak Rkz G.T. p. 52.). Similarly, Asher,
 settled in the interior of the Phoenician coast,
 found it to its interest to relate itself closely to
 its non-Israelitish neighbors and not being a

numerous and powerful tribe, was in danger of losing its identity. They succeeded in estranging themselves, to such an extent, from their Israelitish kinsmen, as to be no more willing than Dan to respond to Gilead's call.

A study of the situation of the tribes, at this period, on the basis of the Song of Deborah, would be incomplete, without a reference to the southern tribes. One of the most significant things in the Song of Deborah is the absolute silence it maintains with regard to the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Levi. They are not mentioned as subject to the appeal for participation. Levi early lost its identity and became dispersed among the tribes. Simeon joined with Judah in its search for a home (Josh I vs.).

The omission of Judah in the song of Deborah leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the singer did not include it among the tribes of Israel, settled in the extreme south, separated from the northern Israelites by a Canaanite belt of territory, the tribe of Judah was originally of small importance, and only in a much later period, in the time of Saul did it come to take any part in the history of Israel. And only when David had succeeded in uniting it with several southern clans, did Judah attain to its preeminent position among the tribes (Moore, loc. cit. 134).

This, then, was the condition of affairs when King Sisera, the commander-in-chief of the united Canaanite forces, marched to meet the federated Israelite forces, gathered under Barak, and

Deborah, Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh, Issachar, Naphtali and Zebulun had responded to the call. Reuben, Gad, Dan and Asher held aloof, absorbed in their own private concerns, or grown so indifferent that not even the sense of kinship, and the command of Yahweh, their common deity, could rouse them to action. Judah was not even thought of as a possible participant.

Barak, at the head of the federated knights of the Jezreel Plain (Jds. ch. iv, 9) joined battle with the federated tribes under Barak somewhere between Taanach and Meggido. The story of the battle is told by the author of the Song of Deborah in a few brief, pregnant sentences. Naphtali and Zebulun distinguished themselves by the reckless bravery

they exhibited in this fierce battle on the banks of the Kishon. The Canaanite kings were utterly overthrown and Sisera, the commander-in-chief, fled towards Harosheth Hagoyim, a city in the western part of the Kishon plain. Wearied with the efforts of battle and flight, he came to the tent of a nomad Kenite, and asked Jael, the wife, for a drink to quench his thirst. She gave him a bowl of milk and while he was drinking, seized a tent-pin and struck him down, crushing his skull (Judges 4:17-22).

It is worthy of note that Jael was not an Israelite, but a member of a Kenite clan, in close and friendly relations with the Israelites.

The defeat of the Canaanite host and the death of Sisera seems to have paralyzed the league,

formed by the Canaanite cities and put an end to the
 contest. But the results of the conflict were not as
 sweeping as the victory seems to have warranted.
 One great result, however, was attained. The
 aggressive power of the Canaanites was broken.
 The Israelite tribes were never again put upon
 the defensive by the Canaanite inhabitants of the
 land. But though their power was shattered, the
 Canaanites still retained possession of the strong
 fortified cities in the plain, and held them up
 to the days of King David. ^{Note} From the tenor of verses
 twenty-eight to thirty of the Song, we must
 conclude that Sisera's palace was not endangered
 by this defeat, and that, though the Canaanites
 were henceforth on the defensive their walled

^{Note}. In no other way can we explain the easy advance of the
 Philistines into the heart of the Israelite territory, in the

towns remained unmolested. (cf. Well. Eng. Is. p. 40)

It cannot be doubted, too, that this struggle served to strengthen and solidify the racial and religious feeling among these kindred tribes (cf. Moore JDC p. 135.) But this feeling was not yet strong enough to hold the tribes together for anything but the accomplishment of a merely temporary purpose and as this union so rich in possibilities had no sooner warded off the immediate danger that threatened the several members, than it fell naturally apart and each tribe became once more absorbed in its own petty interests (cf. Well. Eng. Is. p. 40). They had combined to protect their common interests; they had paid their racial and religious obligations and now nothing remained for them but to fall back into

last campaign with Saul. We find Beth-shean in close alliance with the Philistines in this last struggle (cf. I Sam XXXI v. 10).

the position, they had severally occupied before the struggle.

We have seen how effectively the Israelites on the west side of the Jordan resisted the Canaanite attempt to win back its power and prestige. Let us now turn our attention to the eastern side of the Jordan, where the Israelite settlers are, too, forced to take up arms because of the encroachment of their hostile neighbors. It was in Gilead, the territory stretching from the River Yarmouk to the border of Moab, now that Kenan had reached the last stage of decline, that the danger threatened. Hard pressed by their enemies, the Gileadites looked about for a leader, whose fame as a leader and warrior would inspire the fading spirits of the peasantry with renewed courage. Then

found him in Jephthah, a Gileadite outlaw, who had gathered about him a band of reckless fellows and was living the life of a freebooter in the district of Tob, a strip of land just south of the River Jarmuk, with the Jordan as its western boundary. At this period of extreme peril, Jephthah was recalled from outlawry, invested with the highest authority and leading the Gileadite forces against the Suteans, he signally defeated them and relieved his countrymen of further danger (cf. Jds ch x).

That the Jephthah narrative is not a unit, is most palpably evident. It is clear that ^{we} are here dealing with a narrative, consisting of two separate accounts, that have been welded into one by a later hand. The narrative commences with an account of the

Ammonites and the preparations made to withstand them (Jds II v 17 + 18 to III v 12). Then in the midst of the narrative, (Jds ch III v 12-28) we have a long and circumstantial account of an embassy sent ostensibly to the king of ammon to dissuade him from continuing the war, but the address is so worded as to seem to be directed not to the king of ammon but to the king of Moab. The address is directed to the people, who acknowledge Chemosh as god and the Moabites are the traditional people of Chemosh (Jch II v 24). The cities, too, that are mentioned in verse twenty-six are Moabite and not ammonite cities. (cf Moore JSCC p 283)

After the account of the futile efforts of the embassy, the narrative again returns to relations with Ammon and recounts their complete defeat at the

hands of Jephthah (Jelch ~~II~~ 29-34).

The composite character of the narrative has been the source of much discussion among the critics and many possible explanations have been put forth. Nowak (GRK 47 p. 101) follows Holzinger's hypothesis of two separate and distinct campaigns, one directed against Ammon and the other against Moab, in both of which the hero, Jephthah, is successful. In the original narrative of the Moabite war, Jephthah lives in Mizgiah and when the Moabites begin to encroach, he argues with them as to the justice of their cause and being unsuccessful in dissuading them from their attack, he prepares for the struggle, makes a vow to sacrifice to Yahweh the first to greet him on his return home, defeats the enemy and fulfills

his vow. In the second narrative restored, Jephthah is the hero of the Ammonite war. The Ammonites attack on behalf lead the elders to recall him from outlawry in Tob to lead the Israelites in battle. He fails to get assistance from his kinsmen across the Jordan, (cf. Jds ch. 11 v. 2); defeats the enemy without assistance, drives them out of the disputed territory, and gives the quarrelsome tribe of Ephraim, jealous for its prestige, a salutary lesson. (cf. Novak RKGAT, p. 101).

These two accounts probably became welded together in the course of time producing the confused narrative that has come down to us.

Despite the attempts of critics to cast suspicion upon the historicity of Jephthah's struggle, there seems to be little doubt that the encroachment

of Moab and Ammon forced Seiead into a war, in which a Seieadite hero inflicted a decisive defeat upon the enemy. (cf Moore) JCC p 284). There seems to be more room for doubt with regard to the part played by Ephraim in these events and the punishment meted out to them by Jephthah (Jde II v 1-7). This seems to be a struggle in which Seiead stands alone (Jde II v 2). Moore strongly doubts the whole story of Ephraim's quarrelsome interference and defeat (cf Moore) JCC p 306).

Thus, both on the east and west sides of the Jordan, we find the Israelitish tribes firmly established and able to defend themselves from the hostile attacks of surrounding neighbors. We come now to an account of one of these attacks by hostile Bedawins, in which the successful outcome

leads to significant political consequences. In short,
we have reached the period, in which mere tribal
chieftainship becomes transformed, by the natural
process of events, into the hereditary tribal kingdom.

Chapter 12

The Tribal Kingdom.

We find the Israelitish Tribes giving themselves up more and more to agricultural pursuits and becoming less and less able to resist the incursions of nomadic desert tribes. The Israelitish settlers are still in a process of formation (cf. Well. *Die Jb.* 2, 43 & 44).

The individual peasants are absorbed in themselves, eager only to protect their own possessions and caring little what becomes of the possessions of their neighbor. Mere encroachment seems useless and less able to arouse the tillers of the soil to a defense of their common country. It was now only an extraordinary injury to the members of a clan or tribe, that could draw them

together in common defense.

The desert tribes were quick to take advantage of this disintegration, to raid the fertile districts of the cultivated territory. Among the desert peoples, that at this time, became a constant and persistent scourge, were the Midianites, a nomadic people ranging from the Sinaitic peninsula to the Syrian desert in the far north. They were neither sheep-herders nor cattle-raisers but restless robber nomads, who made raids upon the settled cultivated districts, plundered and robbed and in case of danger or pursuit made use of their swift camels to retreat hastily into the desert.

We find them coming out of the desert, at

the harvest seasons and making their way into the most fertile districts, settled by the Israelitish tribes. From the desert, they came down the Jabbok, crossed the Jordan by the fords situated at the mouth of the Jabbok, swept through the valley of Beth-shean into the Jezreel Plain and spread out southward in the direction of Dothan. They seized the harvests of the Israelitish peasants and became the scourge and pest of the population settled in the rich and fertile Plain of Jezreel and the lands bordering on the north and south. (cf. Well. Doth. p. 42, 43)

It seems strange that the tribes that had shown themselves patriotic and powerful enough to unite and defeat so strong a coalition as that presented by the city-kingdoms of the Jezreel Plain in the days

of Barak, should now allow their territories to be raided and their harvests to be appropriated by these wandering hordes of nomads. It is possible to explain this condition of affairs by the fact that fewer tribes were exposed to these depredations and more especially by the fact a disintegration and loosening of clan and tribal bonds had set in, owing to the absorption of the Israelites' peasantry in agricultural pursuits.

It was during one of these Bedawin raids, that a striking figure comes to the front. By a signal defeat inflicted on these Bedawin enemies, he succeeds for the first ^{time} (as far as we know from the historical documents we have) in establishing a hereditary royal authority. But here as elsewhere, we have

radically different accounts of Isidon-Jerubaal's career |
and we are forced to fix upon the most natural and
authentic account, the account most in keeping
with the facts of history, before going into a discussion
of the political import and significance of Isidon-
Jerubaal's career.

There seems to be little doubt that in the record
of events leading up to attack upon the Midianite
host, and the account of the struggle and pursuit, two
separate narratives have been welded together (Jach ~~or~~ ~~or~~)
One narrative bears the marks of theocratic treatment
and is attributed to the Deuteronomic author, who
always sought to give his facts a religious coloring.
According to this account an angel of Yahweh appears
to Isidon-Jerubaal, a member of one of the most obscure

of the Manassite clan and commands him to deliver Israel from the oppressor, Midian. (Jud ch VII v 11-17). After satisfying himself as to the genuineness of the divine messenger (ibid v 16-24), he summons Menasseh, Issachar, Zebulun and Naphtali to the conflict. (ibid v 35). After receiving unmistakable proofs of Jahweh's favor and assistance in this divinely commanded expedition, he marches with his large army to meet the enemy and encamps near En-harod, probably in the Plain of Jezreel, over against the Midianite camp at Beber-hamoth. (Jud ch VII v 36 - ch VIII v 2). But here the Deuteronomist author is met by a difficulty. He has before him the tradition that the victory was gained by the Gileadite clan and since he has already brought the levy of the four tribes to the scene, he is called upon

to reconcile the accounts of the numbers engaged. He does this by relating how the thirty-two thousand men of the levy are reduced to three hundred fighting men (Judg VII 2-9). Then by a clever stratagem and divine aid, the enemy are defeated, pursued to the Jordan, the fords of which are seized by Ephraim and two Midianite chiefs are captured. The quarrel with Ephraim being composed by Gideon-Jerubbaal's tact, they return home while he continues the pursuit (Judg ch VII v 16 - ch VIII v 4.) (G. Stade *BdV D* p 181-188).

The other narrative is far more reliable. It is a purely natural account, providing natural causes and motives for the events recorded and excluding the religious elements characteristic of the Deuteronomist's author. This narrative reads like

the song of Deborah and the combats of Israel's heroes with the Philistines (cf II Sam ch ~~XXI~~ ~~XXII~~). The localities, too, Mt. Tabor, near Shechem, (cf Joshua Rtg. 2 p. 79) is more in harmony with the general situation than the places mentioned in the other narrative (cf Stade *DRS* 2, 190).

According to this account, Gideon Jerubael has a surely private motive for his attack upon the Midianites. He was impelled by the desire to satisfy the holiest and weightiest demand of ancient Semitic society, the law of blood-revenge. It appears that on one of their raids, two Midianite chiefs killed some distinguished men at Mt. Tabor (Jud. ch ~~VII~~ ~~VIII~~ v 18-20). The slain men belonged to the clan of Abiezer, of the tribe of Manasseh. Abiezer had its central point at Ephra in the south of the Plain. (cf Well. *Dr* 1 p. 43). It was incumbent on

every member of the clan to take upon himself the cause of the slain Samson and to endeavor to kill the slayer or some of his Samsonites. (cf. Smith's Refs. n 32 + 72).

Gideon-Jerubaal, the brother of the slain men, summons his clansmen, the three hundred Abiezrites to avenge their death. According to Nowak, no decisive engagement takes place on the west side of the Jordan. On the contrary, Gideon-Jerubaal follows the nomads across the river and the engagement described in ch. VIII v 16-21, takes place on the east side. Passing Succoth and Peniel, two Israelites ^{either} on the east side of the Jordan, Gideon asks for provisions for his wearied followers (Jsa VIII v 5-9). He receives only tamarites in return and these tamarites would have no profit were the Midianites already defeated on the west side of the Jordan and their chiefs

captured. (Jds ch III). Passing these two cities, he continued
 the pursuit, falls upon the unsuspecting nomads
 at night, near Nobah and Jogbehah and here the
 decisive engagement takes place. The Midianites are
 routed and the two chiefs, who had slain his brothers
 are captured. (cf. Numbers Rk 2, p. 76). This was the object of
 the pursuit and with this object attained, the pursuit
 was abandoned. Returning by way of Succoth and
 Peniel, Gideon revenged himself upon the inhabitants
 of these towns for their unpatriotic behavior, at the
 same time exhibiting the two chiefs, concerning whom
 the inhabitants of Succoth and Peniel had taunted
 him (Jds ch XII v 6-7). Having satisfied himself by punishing
 these two cities, he put the two captured chiefs to
 death with his own hand (Jds ch XIII v 21; + Well. Du. Jb. p. 43).

Although Gideon-Jerubaal had undertaken this expedition from purely private motives, his victory brought about unexpected results. His signal success must have brought him into general notice. His fame as a warrior grew and spread. He came to be regarded as the saviour of the peasantry and their protector from the incursions of hostile nomads. His authority spread from the clan of iabizim and probably came to extend over entire Manasseh and even Ephraim (cf. Well. In Jos. p. 44-45). He was not only the saviour and protector of the Israelite cities and districts but also of the Canaanite cities that still retained their independence, in these harassed districts. Prominent among these cities was Shechem, and Jerubaal having entered into an alliance with it, by marrying into one

of the prominent Shechemite families, came to exercise a royal authority over it also. (Jds ch IX v 1-2) For, (although Sideon Jera baal, under the influence of an eternomic bias and prejudice towards the kingdom, is made to refuse the offer of royal authority, (Jds ch VII v 32-33) there can be little doubt that the conqueror of the Midianites converted his clan chief tanship into a royal authority, extending over Menasseh, Ephraim and several Canaanite cities, that he was looked upon as king, that he had a royal sanctuary with an Ephod at Ophrah, the capital of his kingdom, and most important of all, his royal authority was regarded as hereditary. (cf. Jds ch IX v 2. Stade *BZVS* p 191).

With the death of Sideon, his authority passed to his seventh son, and this brings us to one of the most

rest on chosen
parties

interesting incidents in the early political history of Israel and throws a clear light on the relations that existed between the Israelites and the older population among whom they had settled. It will be remembered (of ch. I p 19) that the original conquest of the land was not complete and that the Canaanites, here and there, throughout the land, retained possession of strongholds, sufficiently formidable to preserve for their inhabitants their independence. Some of these cities maintained their hostility to Israel till their capture and absorption, in the time of David, for example Beth-shean (cf. Sam. xxi. 10). Others entered into friendly relations with the invaders. Among the latter was the city of Shechem. Shechem had remained essentially Canaanite, but entered into friendly relations with the surrounding

Israelites, (cf. Joshua RKGAT p 84). They were as much indebted, as the neighboring Israelites, for the relief that followed the defeat of the Midianites. This strengthened the former friendly relations and when Gideon married into a Shechemite family, he found means to stretch his growing authority over this formerly independent city.

After Gideon, Jerubbaal's death, Abimelech, the son of this Shechemite marital alliance, conspired to get possession of his father's authority alone. An oligarchy was evidently distasteful to the Shechemites (Jdg ch XX v 2). Abimelech took advantage of this feeling and of his blood-relationship to gain their favor and assistance in his schemes and with their cooperation, he was enabled to make away

with his brothers, Jerubaal's sons, and to seize the
 sceptre (Judg 8 v 2-6). That his authority extended not
 only over Shechem but over other territory in
 Central Palestine is evidenced by the fact that
 Abimelech's residence was not in Shechem.
 His subjects were both Israelite and Canaanite
 (Judg ch 8 v 30-5). How extensive was his
 authority over Israelites is unknown. It is
 interesting and important to note, however,
 that though Abimelech was half-Canaanite
 by blood and was indebted to them for his
 advancement to the throne, yet he considers
 himself an Israelite, and in the ensuing
 struggle with the revolting Canaanite cities,
 he is as ruthless in his cruelty to his Canaanite

kinemen, as if he were dealing with an alien people.
 It was because Abimelech felt himself an Israelite
 that his Shechemite kinemen distrusted him, and
 soon this feeling of mistrust deepened into hostility.
 (cf. Well. *Suppl.* 10, 245). This hostility broke out in open
 defiance when Ismael-ben-Ismael, with his clan,
 came to sojourn in Shechem and stirred the
 inhabitants to revolt. (Jud. ch. IX v 26-30). To quell
 this Canaanite movement, Abimelech raises
 an army of Israelites, (Jud. ch. IX v 55) and again the
 Israelites and Canaanites are arrayed against
 each other. Shechem is taken and destroyed, and
 in the attempt to destroy Tebez, another Canaanite
 stronghold, Abimelech is killed. (Jud. ch. IX v 42-55)
 The short-lived king dom of Abimelech has

great importance for the future. By many, and especially by Stade, it is looked upon as the prelude of the kingdom of Saul. It is looked upon as an effort for more effective union and more stable form of government. (cf. Moore, J. S. C. p. 239). But whether or not the significance of this short-lived kingdom has been exaggerated, the one important result of Abimelech's reign was that he strengthened and unified the power of Israel in Central Palestine and utterly shattered the power and importance of the Canaanite cities that lay in the midst of Israel. (cf. Wellh. Die J. p. 47. *Israel's History*, p. 90).

But there was no one strong enough to take Abimelech's place. Neither were those who acknowledged his authority sufficiently aware

of the advantages of this superior and more stable form of government. And so just, as after the elaborati. Barak struggle, the tribes quickly went asunder and became again absorbed in their own particular interests, so the kingdom established by the successful policy of Isidore and strengthened, and solidified by Abimelech quickly went to pieces.

Chapter V

The Mission of Samuel.

After the dissolution of Abimelech's kingdom, the only political power of which we have any record until the appearance of Saul, is that exercised by the priests, by virtue of their position as guardians of the ark at Shilo. The ark probably drew to Shilo pilgrims like Elkanah, from the entire hill-country of Ephraim and Central Palestine, and this formed, without doubt the basis of Eli's power and prestige.

But the authority of priestly rule formed but a poor substitute for the authority and centralizing power of the kingdom and subsequent political events began to show that only the unity and organization of the kingdom could maintain

Israelite superiority in Palestine.

The appearance and encroachment of a new and formidable enemy in Palestine, fostered this conviction. The Philistines, a foreign people, proved by the fact that unlike the other Semitic peoples of Palestine, they were uncircumcised, came very probably from Asia Minor and had now established themselves on the coast of Palestine, south of Carmel. (cf. Budge R. of D. & C. p. 88). After establishing themselves in these seats they began to expand and first came into contact with the Israelite settlements on the south-western slopes of Ephraim, the Danite settlements of Zorah and Eshtaol. This contact probably forms the foundation of the Sampson legends (Judges ^{XIII} - ^{XV}) and the implication

of Philistine suzerainty over Judah. (Jud. ch. I v 9-11). It is difficult however to base any certain conclusions upon these folk-lore stories. All that we can infer from them is that the Philistines actually came into conflict with the outlying Israelite settlements. (cf. Nowak, R. H. & G. T. p. 138-139).

It is certain however that the Philistines began to move to the north, forced their way into the Plain of Sharon, and finding their way further north disputed by the Phoenicians, they turned eastward at Ashdod into the Plain of Jezreel, and came face to face with the Israelites in the Ephraimitic highlands (cf. Well. & G. T. p. 135).

Chapter. II v 1 - ch. VII v 1, gives us information of the further results of Philistine encroachment. We then

these chapters, we would be at a loss to understand
 the Philistine suzerainty over Israel, presupposed
 by ch. ~~II~~ 2 ff. and the career of Saul. These chapters
 recount the failure of the Ephraimitic tribes to
 stem the advance of the Philistines at Gophu's. In
 the first encounter with the enemy, the Israelites
 are defeated (I Sam II v 2). They bethink themselves of
 their palladium, the ark of Jahweh and with this
 in their midst and confident of success, now that
 their god was fighting with them, they again join
 battle. They suffer a second and disastrous defeat,
 and most depressing of all, the ark falls into the
 enemies hands (I Sam IV v 3-12). This was the decisive
 battle and as a result the Philistines succeeded
 in extending their suzerainty over the Ephraimitic

highland, and as far south as Benjamin, where they had a prefect. (cf. Well. En. p. 55 & I Sam I v 5, ~~III~~ v 4).

According to the meagre account set forth in these chapters (~~IV~~ v 1 - ~~IV~~ v 1), it would seem that the Philistines were satisfied with the establishment of their suzerainty and left the Israelites in complete possession of their territory. But the later accounts of the liberation and the significant fact that Shilo, the city of the sanctuary, disappears from view and when next we meet the priestly descendants of Eli, it is at Nob, (I Sam ~~XXI~~ v 1) would lead to far other conclusions. We may infer from these facts that the Philistines took care to secure the possession of the conquered territory and not satisfied with the taking of the Ark, probably

destroyed the priestly city of Shilo. (cf. Budd, *846* p. 30).

The accounts of these disasters have all disappeared - and probably this account, too would not have come down to posterity, had it not fit in so well with the Deuteronomistic trend of thought, as indicative of Jahweh's power to free himself from the enemy (Budd, *846* p. 30).

Such was the political situation and such the need and distress of Israel, when Samuel comes to the front. The mass of stories, narratives and legends that have gathered around this remarkable figure, evidence the importance of his mission and the significance of his work for the history of Israel.

These accounts resolve themselves into two interpretations of his character and activity. As

in the case of Sidon-Jrubaal, we may call these the theocratic and natural accounts. The role of Samuel as the theocratic judge, is foreshadowed in chapters one to three, but his activity in this role commences only in ch. ~~III~~ v 2., where he calls the oppressed people to repentance, defeats the Philistines, who advance to attack the Israelites, at Eben-Haezer, restores Israel to its old position, and takes upon himself the duties of judge, that is the settlement of all questions, judicial and religious that arose, - questions that naturally fell to the theocratic leader, now that the people had again returned to Jahweh. (Buddé *Sighe* T p. 49). This theocratic account of the activity of Samuel finds its continuation in chs. ~~VII~~, ~~IX~~ v 17-20, ~~XII~~ and ~~XV~~ and is throughout hostile to

the kingdom. For according to the theocratic author, Israel's repentance has led to the overthrow of the oppressor by the Yahweh-mahired Samuel. Israel again enjoys the fullest freedom and independence under the guidance and judgeship of a leader appointed by Yahweh. Under these circumstances, a king is unnecessary, indeed an affront to Yahweh, who alone is king and since the fact of the establishment of the kingdom cannot be disputed, the theocratic author, under the idealized conditions that he has created, cannot but look upon it, as established contrary to Yahweh's will.

The other and natural account of the activity of Samuel is recorded in chs. I v 1 - I v 16. There cannot be a moment's doubt, as the superior trustworthiness

of this account. The theocratic account is dominated by the theological idea. It idealizes events and personages and in ch. III, by attributing to the theocratic judge the victories of Saul and David, renders their activity and the whole rest of the tradition recorded in the succeeding chapter, superfluous. For in the history that follows we find that the suzerainty of the Philistines is by no means ended by Samuel. Quite the contrary to ch. III v. 13. וַיִּכְנַע הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּסְפוּ יָדָם לָבוֹא בְּגִבּוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל, they invade Israel's territory several times in Samuel's lifetime; indeed they are in possession of the major portion of the land and one of their governors lives at Gibeath, in the territory of Benjamin. (cf. Well. P. to J. H., p. 248). There can be no doubt that the natural account is

historically more trustworthy. We get a clearer view of conditions, events, and personages, the religious ideas are more primitive, the stories bear the stamp of great age that place them beside the Song of Deborah and the Lideon Jerubael documents (cf Smith & D.C.C. Intro p. 17 + 15).

The natural account represents Samuel, not as the powerful man of God, who calls the oppressed people to repentance, defeats the Philistines and judges his people in peace, but merely as a priest and distinguished man in the city of Rama, - a man whose office as seer gave him a certain prestige and authority among the people. It appears that this Samuel was a man of deep patriotic impulses, that he grieved because of the subjection of his people to the Philistine power, and eagerly awaited

The appearance of a man who might rouse the people from their apathy and indifference and break the yoke that galled them (cf. Mel. Ser. Ep 33 & Luke 12, 48).

This man he believed he saw in the well-known Benjamite warrior, Saul ben Kish of Gibeah. ^{note,} He met Saul, treated him with distinguished courtesy, probably spoke to him in secret, communicating to him the word of Yahveh, by virtue of his position as seer, confirming it by the anointment, through which Yahveh appointed him king over Israel with the commission to free it from Philistine domination.

(cf. Stade, B. V. S. p. 213 & Luke, B. V. S. p. 24).

In direct contrast to the theocratic account which would make Samuel the opposer of the kingdom, this natural account makes the

^{note.} The story of Saul and the lost asses (1 Sam. ch. 10) is not entirely trustworthy. This story presents Saul as a youth, while at the

establishment of the kingdom the very mission of
 Samuel and the cause of his importance in the
 history of Israel. (cf. bute B&V D. P 24) It was Samuel,
 who was far-sighted enough to see that in the
 kingdom lay the salvation of Israel, who was
 a statesman enough to realize that all former means
 of union, the power of Gilead's command, the
 "Herr-bann" formerly so efficient, the temporary
 tribal unions, could not hope to stand before
 so strong a system as the Philistine's political
 organization appeared to be. The strong centralized
 authority of the national kingdom was the only
 hope of Israel for independence and Samuel took
 the bold step of creating Saul king, in the name of
 Yehweh. Contrary to seeing in it the rejection of

him of his coronation, shortly after, we see that he is the father
 of a full-grown warrior. (cf. Black B&V D p 213).

Yahweh, he considered it a blessing of Yahweh. Before the kingdom there was unquiet and unrest, after it security and peace. Before it, Israel was a prey to the surrounding hostile peoples; after it, under Saul and especially under David, it brought to Israel power, prestige and peace.

It will be well for us at this point, to turn aside for a moment and to examine the beginnings of a religio-political movement, that now for the first time made its appearance in Israel. This was inaugurated by the so-called ד' א' א' , bands of ecstatics, who passed through the country and sought to inculcate a new spirit among the people. The relation of Samuel to these wandering bands of ecstatics is unfortunately obscure and while

Samuel is nowhere mentioned as belonging to them; this does not exclude the possibility of his exerting an influence over them and directing them in the cause to which he was devoted, namely the liberation of Israel from Philistine domination.

It would seem that Israel groaned in spirit at this foreign suzerainty. The shame of their defeat began to stir again the feeling of homogeneity that existed between the tribes. The capture of the ark (I Sam ch II v 11) was an especially sore trial for the followers of Jahweh, but Jahweh's success in fighting himself free from the enemy (for Jahweh had come to be intimately associated with the ark), and his return to Israelitish territory, must have brought renewed hope and courage

to the hearts of patriots and zealous worshippers.

(cf. Budd's Refl. to L. 292 & 93).

This religio-political movement, fostered by renewed hope and the burning desire to throw off the Philistine yoke, first expressed itself in the movements of ecstatic bands of D's'23, who travelled about the country and under the cover of religious frenzy, sought to arouse the patriotism of the people (cf. Budd's S. & J. p. 68). That the movement was a new one, to which the people had not yet grown accustomed and was therefore regarded with suspicion and mistrust, may be inferred from the bystander's remarks when Saul unites himself to them and joins in their ecstatic frenzy, ^{note 1.} (cf. 1 Sam. ch. 18 v. 10-12). The bystanders

note 1. The very fact that Samuel foretells this meeting between

Saul and the D's'23 would lead us to suspect some

allusion to the

seem to be astonished at Saul's action in joining himself to this band of irresponsible enthusiasts.

One of the bystanders voices their low position in the social scale when he asks, contemptuously, מיהם הם, 'who is their father?' (1 Sam ch II v 12). No one knows to whom they belong; they have neither name nor pedigree and this ample cause for surprise that Saul, the scion of a respectable and well-known family, should unite himself to a band of wandering enthusiasts (Ch. Budds R. of S. to E., p. 96.).

Such was the humble beginning of the so-called prophetic movement. It had its causes undoubtedly in the deep misery and distress occasioned by Philistine domination. Under the cloak and protection of religious ecstasies, these raving bands

Such was the humble beginning of the so-called prophetic movement. It had its causes undoubtedly in the deep misery and distress occasioned by Philistine domination. Under the cloak and protection of religious ecstasies, these raving bands

marched through the country, gradually arousing a new spirit of religious and patriotic enthusiasm, gradually attracting to their ranks reputable and distinguished men, and silently preparing for the struggle that was to come. Wellhausen puts it aptly, when he says, their religion was patriotism. (*J. E. S. p. 55*). In fact religion and patriotism were with them, synonymous. (*J. E. S. p. 55*). P. to J. H. n. 449).

Everything was now ready for the struggle with the Philistines. Samuel had announced to the Benjaminites his high calling and inspired him with patriotic fervor, the $\square'x'z$ had prepared the heart of the people for a patriotic outburst. It needed only the impetus to set the avalanche

in movement, a spark to set the tinder aflame.

This was provided by the incident of Gabesh-Isleah. The Ammonites, inhabiting the eastern Be'laa, a poor and sterile country, were always quick to take advantage of an opportunity to raid the rich district on the other side of the Jabbar (cf. Budde & K. i. p. 74). The blow that had brought the West Jordan districts under Philistine domination had its influence, too, on the eastern side of the Jordan, and Isleah had also declined (cf. G. i. p. 17 & 18).

This afforded a good opportunity to the Ammonites, and the Ammonite king beset the city of Gabesh-Isleah. (I Sam. xvi). The Gabesh-Isleahites aware of their inability to contend with the Ammonites sought honorable terms of surrender. But Nabuch, the

Ammonite king, probably as a taunt to the weakness
 of Israel, declared that the lives of the besieged would
 only be spared on condition of their consent to have
 their right eyes put out. And further to mock the
 weakness of Israel, he allowed the besieged a
 week's respite to seek succour from their brethren
 (I Sam II v 2-3). In the course of their appeal for aid,
 the messengers of the beleaguered city came to
 Bebreak, Saul's house. They had met with nothing
 but pity and commiseration until Saul, hearing
 the sad plight of their brethren across the Jordan,
 and stirred by the patriotic impulse that had been
 burning in his heart, summoned the tribes, by
 means of the "her-bans", to march to the rescue.
 He attacked the Ammonites suddenly and

unexpectedly, and their defeat was complete and decisive (I Sam ch 4-11). Saul's courage, patriotism and ability as a leader were proven and by unanimous consent, he was elevated to the kingship at Hebron, a city near Jericho, in the Jordan valley.

The aim of Samuel and the D'x'z was now accomplished and they might retire into the background. ^{note} The people had come to realize with Samuel that all former bonds of union, the heritance, Yahweh belief and a common culture, were insufficient, in the emergency that now confronted them. They realized with the seer, that in the national being down lay Israel's only hope of salvation and national independence. For only

Samuel's further connection with Saul as guide of the kingdom and viceroy of Yahweh is a purely theocratic conception.

through the national kingdom could the tribes be
 brought together in a real bond of unity, to work
 for a common aim and purpose, - the breaking of
 the Philistine yoke and the freeing of their land from
 foreign domination. (cf. Luke 24: 25). This was the
 purpose of Saul's coronation at Hebron. His coronation
 is to be looked upon in the light of a challenge
 to the Philistine power. The people, by this act,
 fixed upon Saul the duty of beginning the struggle
 to free them from the hated yoke of the foreign
 oppressor. Of this mission of the national kingdom
 and Saul's unsuccessful attempt to realize it, our
 next chapter will treat in detail.

Chapter VI

The National Kingdom and its Purpose.

The purpose of the national kingdom was to free the land from the foreign yoke and to make it completely Israelitish. The Philistines must be driven out and the Canaanite cities and territories that still maintained their independence must be absorbed. Israel must be in complete and undisputed possession of its territory.

The crowning of Saul was the signal of uprising against the Philistines and so Saul understood it. It must be remembered that the means at Saul's command at this time were meagre and insufficient. For at first he was king over Israel only in the narrower sense. His kingdom

probably included the tribes and territories of Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, together with the Saramites, whom he had rescued from the Ammonites, on the east side of the Jordan. (cf. Ruth. 1:13-16).

This probably explains the confused passage in chapter XIII v 2-7^a, where we are told that the presumably large levy, returning from Jabesh-gilead is reduced, for no apparent reason to three thousand men, augmented again after Jonathan's attack upon the Philistines, and finally reduced again to six hundred warriors. (I Sam XIII v 15.) Three thousand men probably constituted Saul's entire available fighting force, in this infant period of the kingdom. (cf. Ruth. 1:13-16). With this fighting force of three thousand men, Saul marched from the

coronation city, Gilgal, and climbing the highlands took up a strong position at Micmash, with the main body, and pushed forward the van-guard to the brow of Bethel, putting one third of his force under Jonathan, to cover his left flank towards the Benjamite southern section of the highland of Ephraim.

(Cf. Budd's *8. 32* p 83).

Jonathan, Saul's heroic son, had already given the Philistines good cause for attack, by the overthrow of their prefect at Beba (*1 Sam. xiii v 3*). The Philistines, accepting Saul's defiance, now came up against him in overpowering numbers and took up a weak position on the hill opposite Saul's position. They placed their confidence in superior numbers and in the fear that the Philistines' supremacy had

inspired among the subject tribes. Confident of the security of their position, they sent out strong parties of raiders to harass and terrorize the surrounding country (I Sam ch XIII ~ 17). The great odds of the Philistines did, indeed, strike terror to the hearts of Saul's followers and he soon found his forces reduced to six hundred warriors; probably Benjaminites, who had determined to cast their fortunes with their kinsman.

The struggle commences with an act of heroic daring. While the Philistines are scattered over the country on raiding expeditions, Jonathan and his armor-bearer make an attack on the weak post, at the pass of Michmash. After the first onset, in which the astonished Philistines were thrown

into confusion and many slain, the rest gave way, thinking that the daring couple must be strongly supported. Saul, from his position, saw the confusion in the enemies' camp, and finding that Jonathan was absent, hastened to attack, without even going through the regular formula of consulting the oracle. The attack was successful, but the defeat was far from decisive, the enemy retiring along the road to Beth-aven, practically unmolested by the exhausted victors. (I Sam Ch XIV).

This battle indecisive though it was, helped materially to strengthen the young king's cause. Following close upon the success at Jabesh-Gilead, it filled the hearts of the people with hope, and without doubt, fighting men began to flock to

Saul's victorious standard, but it cannot be doubted that the nucleus of his kingdom was still the tribe of Benjamin. In tribeah of Benjamin, he placed his capital and in a crisis he could always count on his tribesmen (cf. Well. Du. I. 2 p. 57). In ch. XXXIV, Saul speaks to his court as composed of Benjaminites. The shortness of the existence of his kingdom was probably responsible for the fact that he was unable to rely equally upon all his subjects and was therefore compelled to conduct the royal affairs too much on a tribal basis and to Benjamin's great advantage (cf. Budd. SKZ. I. p. 153).

Wellhausen, (Du. I. 2 p. 58), says that it is not without reason that Benjamin should assume the leadership in this national struggle. The centre of gravity had

moved gradually southward. First Manasseh had
 held the hegemony under its strong tribal king,
 Aidcon Jerubaal. Then it had passed to Ephraim,
 under the guidance of the priests, but at Ephraim,
 Ephraim's power was shattered and during the
 following period of Philistine domination, it cannot
 be doubted that many patriots, following the
 example of the Shilohite priests, who sought refuge
 at Nob (I Sam ~~XXI~~ 12), fled into the south and now
 at this period, augmented the forces of Benjamin.
 Benjamin formed as it were a link between
 Ephraim and Judah. It does not appear that
 Philistine authority in Benjamin was so strong
 as in the northern highlands. We may infer this
 from the comparative ease with which Jonathan

overthrew their prefect at Asbeah. (I Sam VIII v 3). In
 Judah proper, the Philistine authority must have
 been merely nominal. Judah was protected from
 invasion by strong natural barriers, on the east
 by the Dead Sea and a desert waste, on the south
 by a desert, on the west by mountains and on
 the north by a Canaanite belt of territory. The
 ground itself, was uneven and stony and the
 hardy mountaineers were well able to defend
 themselves. (C. G. L. b. v. c. p. 29). And yet, though Judah
 was separated from their northern brethren by these
 barriers and had not, heretofore, taken any part
 in the struggles of their kinsmen, now that the
 centre of gravity had shifted to the south, and
 stirring events were being enacted close to their

borders, it is not to be supposed that they remained entirely unmoved by them.

We are now in the presence of one of the most important episodes in the history of the national kingdom, namely the entry of Juda into the national bond and its future active participation in all movements that affect the Israelitish polity. How this union was effected, we are not told in so many words. The fragmentary and meagre character of the documents, dealing with this important event, forces us to make our inferences on the basis of a few scattered statements and narratives, which when put together, give us adequate causes and reasons for this important junction.

We are told (I Sam. XII v. 2) that although Saul

was victorious in the battle of Micmash, yet the struggle was far from ended. In fact, he was forced to be always on his guard against this powerful and aggressive enemy and was continually engaged with them in border skirmishes. This being the situation, it was natural that Saul should seek to strengthen his resources and look about for new means to buttress his power in this interminable struggle with the Philistines.

In the south was the tribe of Juda, its resources unimpaired by any conflicts with a really formidable foe and it was natural that Saul should look in this direction for a chance to augment the resources of his kingdom. It appears from I Sam. ch. XX, that the tribe of Juda was especially harassed

by the Amalekites, desert nomads and hereditary
 foes of Israel. These Amalekites would sweep down
 upon unprotected Judaite settlements, and harass
 and plunder them, making off into the desert
 before they could be pursued. No overture of Saul
 could be more acceptable than a powerful expedition
 undertaken by him to punish these enemies of
 Juda (cf Budde SKZ I. p. 107). Smith (cf DDCC p. 130) questions
 the historicity of this expedition against the
 Amalekites (1 Sam 8 v. 9) but it seems to me that
 in this incident we have an authentic historical
 link in the history of Israelitish union. Saul
 might easily have undertaken this expedition
 in the first phase of the Philistine war, and by
 a severe chastisement, inflicted on the Amalekites,

bound the tribe of Juda to him by ties of interest and gratitude. (cf. Well. Eng. 5 p. 5-8).

That Saul was successful in this purpose is proven by the appearance in Saul's army of the young Judaite warrior, David b. Jesse of Bethlehem. It was Saul's desire to collect about him all the heroes he could induce to join his service, to form the nucleus and fighting centre of his army (I Sam. XIV v. 2), and David formed one of this band.

Many legends came to cluster round this favorite figure and, as in the case of Saul, there are several different accounts of how he came to the royal court. We shall give very briefly the conclusions of the critics with regard to these accounts. The theocratic account, (ch. XVII v. 1-14) has no historical basis whatever. ^{note}

^{note}: The theocratic author having before him the undeniable fact that Saul's descendants did not succeed him, utilized

The Goliath account, (I Sam ~~XXI~~ v 14-54), has been shown to be of late origin, this combat being originally attributed to one of David's heroes in a later war. (Cf. II Sam ~~XXI~~ v 9).

There can be no doubt that ch. ~~XXI~~ v 14-23, represents the original and authentic account of the appearance of the young Judaean warrior at Saul's court. It is very probable that his skill on the harp brought him into very close relations with the king, and having gained his favor, he became his armor-bearer, the trusted friend of Jonathan and finally the son-in-law of the king and idol of the people. This rapid rise to popularity, aroused the jealousy of Saul, who, at this time, when the king was expected to be the foremost and most popular man in the kingdom, could not afford to be outdone

this to give David's succession a theocratic coloring.

by David. He tried to kill David, but he succeeded in escaping into the wastes of Judah and gathered about him a band of outlaws, among whom were, Gittites and Philistines and his kinsmen of Bethlehem, who threw in their fortunes with him. He had also in his band a priest, Ahimelech b. Ahitub b. Phineas b. Eli, who had escaped the massacre of the priests at Nob, ordered by Saul because of a suspected conspiracy with David. This priest brought with him the Ephod to David and thus enabled him to consult the sacred oracle. (cf. I Sam. XXII v 11-23 & Well. Dugl. p. 58-59).

In the wastes of Judah, and among its not unfriendly clans of the Kenites, Jerahmeelites and Jezreelites, David succeeded for some time in maintaining himself, despite the efforts of Saul to compass his

destruction. David may even have sought to set up a little principality on the borders of Israel, by securing the favor and gratitude of Keilah, by protecting it from Philistine invasions, but Saul frustrated whatever plans he may have had in that direction (I Sam. ~~XXII~~ XXIII v 1-14).

David did, however, strengthen his friendly relations with the Calebite and Gephreite clans in the south by marriage, (I Sam. ~~XXV~~ XXV v 42+43) and thus laid the foundation for a future consolidation of these southern tribes and clans.

Neither does there seem to be any good reason to doubt the historicity of the fact that David, finding it impossible to maintain himself against Saul, allied himself with the national enemy, Achish, King of the Philistines, and received from him

the border city of Gibeon, in the far north, as a place of residence, where he continued his old life as an independent prince, subject only to the obligation of rendering military service to the Philistines. (cf. I Sam. XXVII & P. to §. 14 p. 402.).

But the desperate struggle with the Philistines, to which the continued skirmishes throughout Saul's brief reign were merely preliminary, was now at hand. Another formidable Philistine invasion took place and Saul gathered all his resources to meet it. He did not wait for the enemy at Bezek, the capital and centre of his kingdom, but marched northward and took up his position on the northern slope of Mt. Gilboa. That the Philistines were enabled to reach

this battle-ground, in the very heart of Israelitish territory, without any opposition from the independent Canaanite cities, guarding the roads and passes, would lead us to believe that they had entered into an alliance with these cities against the common enemy, Saul; (cf. Budd's Skt. T. p. 189). This conclusion is supported by the fact, related by Beth-Shean after the battle. (cf. I Sam. XXXI v. 10).

In the disastrous battle that followed the mustering of the opposing forces at Mt. Gilboa, the Israelitish army was utterly defeated, Saul and his three sons slain and the results that he had gained, with so much labor, during his brief reign, were swept away at a single stroke (I Sam. XXXI v. 1-10). It is worthy of note, however, that

although the victors aimed at the occupation of the entire highland district, they were not sufficiently numerous and had to content themselves with the occupation of the Israelitish cities of the Jezreel Plain and those bordering on the Jordan. (2 Sam ~~XXV~~ ^{XXVI} v. 7 + 2 Sam. ~~XXVI~~ ^{XXVII} 17-28).

But all Saul's struggles with the Philistines had proven fruitless. One defeat had nullified all the successes gained in his brief and troubled reign. Again the Philistines asserted their supremacy over all Israel and the situation again became not unlike that existing at the time of Saul's appearance. The difference and the great difference was that the national kingdom had awakened the dormant spirit of the disunited tribes and

and stimulated them with the ardent desire for stronger union and the hope of freedom and independence.

But this disastrous defeat of Saul gave a temporary set-back to the realization of these desires and hopes. The political outlook was dark. The Philistines occupied the Jezreel Plain, the strategic centre of the land, able to make incursions upon any part of the country that became restless. David, in the extreme south, had a headstrong ingratiated himself with the powerful Gileadite, Ephraimite, Jezreelite and Judahite clans in the south (I Sam. XXVII 1-31), and thus paved the way to a return to his kinsmen and eventually to royal authority. For soon after Saul's death, David took up his residence at Hebron, and the Judahites, probably moved to take the

initiative by ties of blood and interest, and looking upon David's veterans, as their natural defenders from the desert nomads that harassed them, came to offer David their tribal kingship. It is worthy of note, however, that David took up his residence at Hebron, showing that his power was centred among the Calebites and Jerahmeelites rather than in Juda. (C. Well. Eng. p. 60, But from the vantage ground of the tribal kingdom, David reached out for larger things. He enlarged the territory of Juda proper, by two-thirds, by uniting the scattered clans of Gales Jerahmeel and Gizeel together with Juda, into the one powerful tribe of Juda and also skillfully took advantage of Abishai's faithfulness to Sam? to trust to win them to his cause (II Sam II 5-7).

In the mean time, Abner, the captain of Saul's host had not been idle. He became the ^{prop} and ^{support} of Saul's house. He assembled the scattered remnant of the defeated army at Machanaim, on the east side of the Jordan and there proclaimed Ishbaal, a son of Saul and a weak and indecisive man, king of Israel. In view of the complete victory of the Philistines at Hebron, the statement that Ishbaal still ruled over Gilead, Issachar, the Jezreel Plain, Ephraim and Benjamin, leads us to infer that Ishbaal either acknowledged the suzerainty of the Philistines or that his claim was merely nominal. - (2 Sam II 589).

The Philistines were naturally not unfavorable to David's rising power in the south. Any means by which they could weaken Israel was acceptable to

them and they must have looked upon these rival powers in Israel with perfect equanimity, for as long as they turned their swords against each other, the Philistines only could be the gainers.

Without doubt these rival powers soon came to blows, and although we have only a single narrative (I Sam II v 13-31) of the civil war that ensued, there is every reason to believe that this was only an incident in the bitter struggle that took place. And this incident has found a place, probably because of the important consequences that flowed from it. This incident relates that in a skirmish near Gibeon, in which Ishbaid's forces under Abner were defeated, the brother of Joab, the leader of David's forces, was killed by Abner. And it is because of the blood-feud between

Joab and Abner, that their death caused and its
 momentous consequences that came of it, that it has
 been preserved for us. But the fortunes of Ishbaal waned,
 while those of David rose (II Sam. III v 1). Finally Abner
 attempted to betray Ishbaal and failed only because of
 Joab's revenge (II Sam. III v 22-27). But the power of Ishbaal
 was undermined and his assassination only hastened
 the inevitable. (II Sam. III v 7). And now the whole nation
 turned to David as the natural saviour of Israel,
 as the natural champion, who was to take up Saul's
 mission against the national enemy. And in accepting
 the crown, David like Saul, pledged himself to take
 up the task of breaking the Philistine yoke and to
 carry out the mission of the national kingdom. How
 successful David was in the fulfillment of this mission,

our next and concluding chapter, will set forth in detail.

Chapter VII

King David: The Fulfillment of the Purpose of the National Kingdom.

We have seen that David had consolidated his power in the territory of Judah. It remained for him to unite this consolidated district territorially, as well as in spirit, to the Israel that now sought him as king. For the belt of Canaanite cities mentioned in Chapter II. (p. 20), still separated the territory of Judah from that of their northern brethren. This belt had included the cities of Beeroth, Gibeah, Hebron, Kirjath-jearim, Lijalon, Shaalbim and Beth-shemesh. Some of these had since become half-Israelitish in population, for example Kirjath-jearim. (cf. Jos. II. vi); some had been incorporated in the body of Israelitish possession, for example Beeroth

and Bebeon (cf II Sam IV v 2 & II v 12). But the cordón was still effective and the almost impregnable fortress of Jerusalem, at the eastern end of the belt, made the barrier between the divided sections of Israel especially effective. (cf Budd: S. 83 ii 7, p. 19). It is even possible that these hostile cities were in league with the Philistines much the same as the cities of the northern Canaanite belt were allied with these enemies of Israel (cf ch. VI p. 117). It was, therefore, imperatively necessary for David to fill out this hostile lacuna, to overwhelm this enemy in the very heart of his kingdom, before taking up his larger tasks.

Buddle, however, questions whether the events mentioned in Chapter V, namely the coronation of David by the representatives of united Israel, the capture of

Jerusalem and the invasion of the Philistines, took place in the order named. And since the order of events have an important bearing on the political conditions that existed in Israel before and after David's advancement to the kingship of united Israel, it will be well to give the three possible arrangements of the order of events, worked out by Budd.

First: After Ishbaal's death, Israel carried out Abner's plan with regard to uniting the kingdom under David. The united armies succeeded in a great exploit, the capture of Jerusalem. They then threw off their allegiance to the Philistines and plunged into their war. Second: After David became king over united Israel, the Philistines declared war. After this war had been decided in David's favor, the united forces

return and take the city of Jerusalem. Third: After Ishbaal's death, the negotiations for unity lagged. David with his Judaeans succeed in capturing Jerusalem. This gives the Philistines a casus belli, they being probably in alliance with this fortress. They attack David, who meets and defeats them and immediately after this victory, he becomes king over united Israel. (cf. Budd & Hyatt, p. 218).

Guth (cf. RVB p. 31), seems to think that the conquest of Jerusalem was accomplished while David was still king of Juda. For David could not hope for a thorough union with the northern tribes, until he had removed the most effective barrier to this union and at the same time given signal proof of his commanding ability as a leader. With this

accomplished, the representatives of the nation hastened to offer him the national crown (II Sam IV 1-5). The Philistines, who had looked upon Israelitish internal affairs with complacency and indifference, as long as David was merely a tribal king, now took alarm and mustered their forces again for a great struggle.

Unlike Saul, David waited for the enemy, in the very heart of his kingdom, among the highlands of Juda, a country with which he was thoroughly familiar and therefore had his enemies at a disadvantage. He met them at Baal-Perazim and inflicted upon them a severe defeat, the Philistines beating so precipitate a retreat, that they abandoned their gods to the victor, with the rest of the spoil.

(II Sam V 19-21). But this appears not to have been

a decisive conflict and in the next campaign, the Philistines are again the aggressors, proving that their strength was but little impaired. Again they forced their way into the very heart of the country, in the vicinity of Jerusalem (2 Sam 8:5-7), and at the forest of Baal, David again defeated the invaders and drove them in retreat from Bealon to Gazer (2 Sam 8:6-14).

With the exception of two fragmentary accounts in 2 Samuel, namely 2 Sam. XXI v 15-22 and XXII v 8ff., we have no further authentic documents regarding the progress of this important struggle. These two fragments, however, would seem to convince us, that the struggle was fought out in a number of small combats, rather than in great, and decisive battles and that it was a bitter and protracted struggle.

The impression that we get from these two lists of heroes and the records of the combats that made them famous, is that they are only fragments selected out of a great mass of similar material and preserved as the most important, and suitable for the purpose of writing a history of the struggle. None of these heroic exploits seem to point to great and decisive battles and we are led to conclude that David continually asserted his supremacy by a number of these small victories, in which his heroes showed themselves to be the better men in hand to hand conflicts (cf. *Isaiah 54:17*). Stubborn and protracted as the contest may have been, the supremacy of David was an assured fact and the Philistines sank to a subordinate position and

probably assumed the same tributary position, formerly
 occupied by the Israelitish tribes. With the defeat
 and subordination of the Philistines, David had
 fulfilled the mission of the national kingdom and
 might now turn his attention to making the
 Israelite occupation of the land complete, by reducing
 the still independent cities in the south and north,
 filling in the hostile lacunae and making the
 Canaanite enclaves Israelitish. From a defensive
 position, David might now assume the offensive,
 and with growing strength and increasing resources
 and firmer consolidation of the means at his
 command, he might assume an aggressive attitude
 toward the hostile but less formidable enemies,
 that surrounded Israel. With liberty secured,

independence asserted, the Philistines humbled and
its forces and resources united, we leave the
national kingdom, as it is prepared to enter upon
the short and glorious career of military and
commercial supremacy that preceded the fatal
division into the northern and southern kingdoms.