

## 2 Samuel 1, Chapter Introduction

**1:1-16;** On the third day after David returned to Ziklag with those he rescued from the Amalekites, word came to him of Saul's death. A man from Saul's camp had escaped and then coming to David he recounted the tragic events that had befallen the forces of Israel. Elements of his report, however, were fabricated; and especially significant was his false claim that Saul entreated him – an Amalekite – to slay the wounded King. Such a confession in the eyes of David sealed the man's death sentence, for David said to him, "*Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed'*" (2 Sam. 1:16; see also, Matt. 12:36f, "... *by your words you will condemned*").

**1:17-27;** In verses 19-27, David's lament for Saul and Jonathan is preserved in a beautiful lament poem, or song. "It is David's *public* expression of grief over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan" (BKC, Vol.1, p.458). The lament both opens and closes with the same refrain: "*How the mighty have fallen!*" (vv.19,27; note: the refrain also appears in v.25 as well). First, "David *warned* against telling of the tragedy in Philistia lest the Philistine maidens rejoice" (v.20; BKC). Next, he *rebuked* Mount Gilboa, the location where the shield of the mighty came to an end (v.21). In verses 22 through 25, David recounted the valiant lives both Saul and Jonathan lived; and the *benefits* they brought to the entire nation. David's final stanza is a personal, loving and concluding tribute to his dearly loved Jonathan (vv.25b-26). The lament then ends echoing the refrain: "*How the mighty are fallen.*" Indeed, the lament from the lips of David was one of great sorrow and high praise!

In David's lament and eulogy, he rehearsed only the glorious deeds of the King. He was noticeably silent on any of Saul's many and significant failures. Clearly this stands as personal testimony to God's refining and shaping of David's heart; now an exemplary heart divinely prepared to lead Israel, God's chosen people.

NOTE Concerning Saul: Consider Saul's many commendable qualities in this lament and in his deeds in 1 Samuel 9-14.

Saul's life perplexes many, especially in this most important way: was Saul a righteous man or was he not? That is, 'was Saul a true believer or not a believer at all'? Put yet another way: 'Will Saul be numbered with the saints, or will he not'?

Concerning Saul's true spiritual conditions: "Some Evangelical scholars consider Saul a believer, but one who became terribly backslidden and then mentally deranged. They argue that it is improbable that God would choose an unregenerate person to be the first king of His chosen people" (Wm. MacDonald, Commentary, p.321).