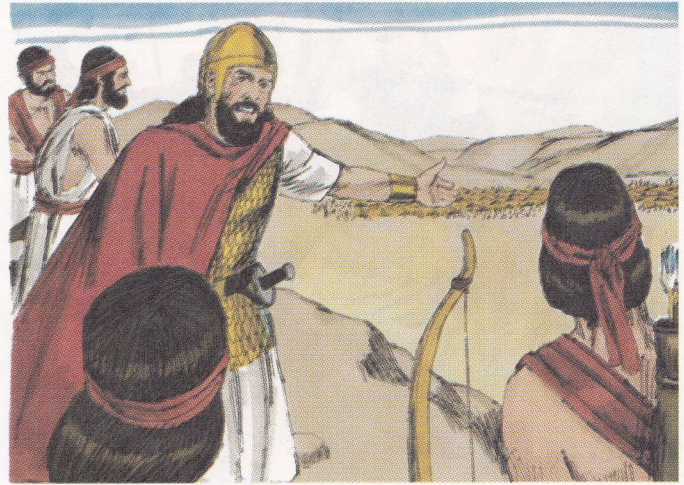


The Last Days of Saul



1 Samuel the prophet died in his old age and was buried in his hometown, Ramah. Some time after that, the Philistines again made war on Israel.



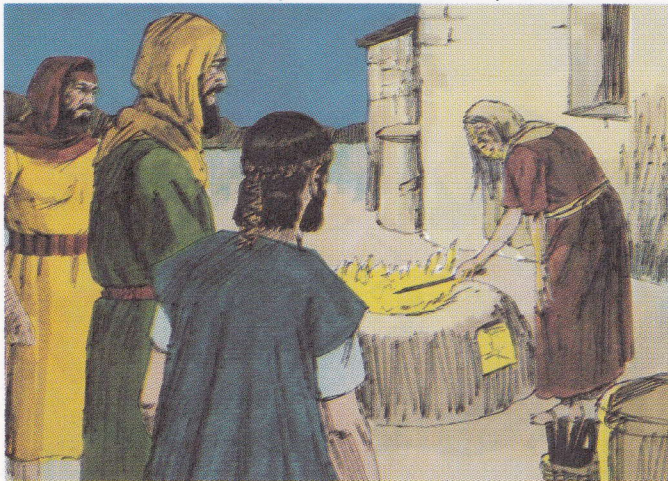
2 The Philistines brought their army to a place near Shunem. Saul and his soldiers went out to defend their country. They camped on Mount Gilboa. But when Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid.



3 Saul tried to find out what the Lord wanted him to do. But the Lord gave Saul no answer. So Saul decided to visit a medium (a person who claims he can speak to the spirits of the dead).



4 Now Saul had already outlawed all mediums from the land of Israel. But his servants knew that there was a woman living at Endor who was a medium. Saul put on a disguise and went to see her.



5 He said to her, "Speak to the spirits and call up the one I tell you." But the woman was suspicious, fearing it was a trap. "Surely you know that King Saul has forbidden anyone to do that," she said.



6 Saul promised her she would be safe. Then he asked her to call back the spirit of the prophet Samuel. When Saul heard Samuel's voice, he said, "I am in great trouble, Samuel. Tell me what I must do,"



7 Samuel replied, "Because you have disobeyed the Lord, he is giving your kingdom to David. The Philistines will defeat you, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me." Saul was terrified.



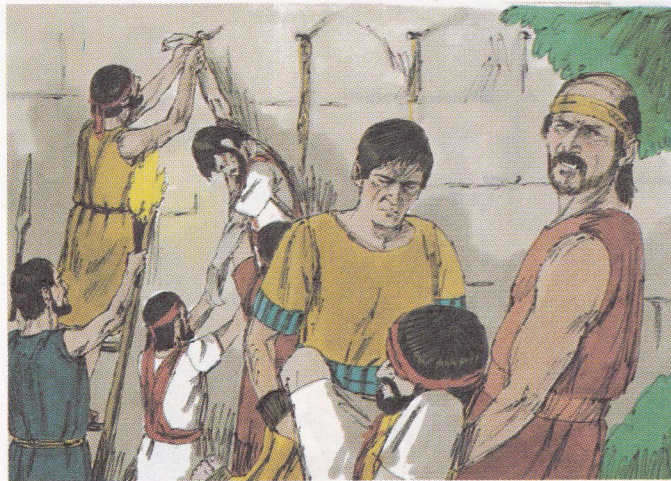
8 Just as Samuel said, the Philistines defeated the Israelites the next day. Many Israelites were killed, and the rest fled. The enemy captured Saul's sons, including Jonathan, and killed them.



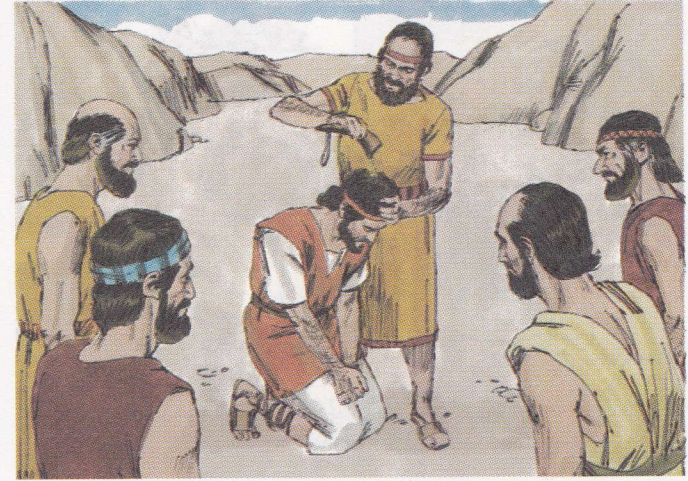
9 Saul had been badly wounded by an arrow. Not wanting to be captured, he asked his armor bearer to kill him. But the armor bearer would not do that. So Saul killed himself by falling on his own sword.



10 The next day the Philistines found the bodies of Saul and his sons. They cut off Saul's head, and they nailed his body and his sons' bodies to the wall of the city of Beth-shan.



11 When the Israelites who lived in Jabesh heard about this, some of their bravest men went to Beth-shan and took down the bodies. They buried Saul and his sons near a great tree in Jabesh.



12 After David mourned Saul and Jonathan, he moved to Hebron. The people of Judah came to him there and anointed him their king. Later he was anointed as king over the remainder of Israel.