

392. Because Samuel's sons were taking bribes and perverting justice, the Israelites began to make light of Samuel's leadership, which troubled him and offended God. {#1Sa 8:6-8} The Israelites were disgusted by the excessive behaviour of Samuel's sons and requested that they should have a king, as other countries had. {#1Sa 8:4,5} In addition to this, the Philistines still had some garrisons in their land. Furthermore, Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had assembled men in preparation for war against them. This caused them great fear, so that they resolved no longer to rely on Samuel's wisdom or on the power of God, who had up to that time been their king and avenger. In spite of the fact that they had expelled the Philistines out of their land, they still expressed their desire to have a king. {#1Sa 12:12,17,19} Though God was angered by their request, he gave them a king {#Ho 13:10,11} whose name was Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul reigned for forty years. {#Ac 13:21} Saul's son Ishbosheth was forty years old when he succeeded his father to the kingdom. {#2Sa 2:10} Ishbosheth is said to have been born when Saul was anointed king. Saul was first anointed privately, and afterward publicly before all the people at Mizpah, by Samuel. It was twenty-one years since the death of Eli {#1Sa 7:2} and since Samuel had begun to judge Israel. {#1Sa 10:1,24,25} About

one month later, {#1Sa 12:12,16} (as the Septuagint and Josephus, {*Josephus, Antiq., l. 6. c. 5. s. 1. (68) 5:201} stated) Jabeshgilead was besieged by Nahash king of the Ammonites. This siege was lifted by Saul when he defeated the Ammonites. The whole congregation of Israel came together at Gilgal and Saul was again proclaimed king there. {#1Sa 11:14,15} [L49] Samuel, however, questioned Saul's sincerity in fulfilling his royal position and complained of the wrong that had been done to him. Samuel called upon God to send thunder and rain, which terrified the people. Then he comforted them with the promises of God's mercies. {#1Sa 12:17} This appears to have happened during their wheat harvest season, around the time of the feast of Pentecost in the beginning of the third month, twenty-one years after the ark arrived from the country of the Philistines. {#1Sam 6:13} It seems that a full twenty years passed between the return of the ark and the subduing of the Philistines. {#1Sa 7:2,13} One year had passed between the expelling of the Philistines from Israel and Saul's anointing as king, as is stated in the Hebrew: {#1Sa 13:1}

"Saul was the son of one year when he reigned; and he reigned two years over Israel."

393. Hence, Saul reigned for two years free from the subjection of the Philistines.

2911c AM, 3621 JP, 1093 BC

394. The Philistines attacked Israel and took them captive, but Saul shook off their yoke and recovered his kingdom again from their hands. {#1Sa 14:47} War with the Philistines continued for many years during Saul's reign. Since the war began eight years before David was born, it was before it ended that Samuel prophesied of David succeeding to the throne after Saul. The Lord hath sought him a man according to his own heart, and God hath commanded him to be ruler over his people. {#1Sa 13:14} The Philistines took from them all their smiths so they would have no weapons to fight with and no one to make any. Hence, when the day of battle came, only Saul and his son Jonathan had weapons. {#1Sa 13:19,22} [E34]

2941c AM, 3651 JP, 1063 BC

396. God had rejected Saul and his family from the kingdom. After mourning a long time about this, Samuel was sent by God to Bethlehem to anoint David as king. This occurred forty years before the rebellion of Absalom. {#1Sa 16:1 2Sa 15:7} David was a handsome-looking lad who was called away from shepherding his father's sheep. {#1Sa 16:11,12,18 2Sa 7:3 Ps 78:70,71} Because David was preferred over his older brothers and was being anointed in their presence,

{#1Sa 16:13} they were envious of him. {#1Sa 17:28} David's brothers were as envious of him as Joseph's brothers were of him. David was also made king over Judah at the same age that Joseph was made ruler over Egypt. {#Ge 41:46 2Sa 5:4} From the day of his anointing, the Spirit of God came upon him, giving him his courage and wisdom. {#1Sa 16:13,18 18:5,13,14,30 2Sa 5:2} As a result of this, while Saul lived, he was made general over all Israel and became a great warrior to fight the Lord's battles. {#1Sa 25:28} He became known as a prophet and the sweet Singer of Israel who, by his divine Psalms, would teach and instruct the people of God. {#Ac 2:30 2Sa 23:1,2} [L50]

2949c AM, 3659 JP, 1055 BC

401. King Achish planned to invade the Israelites with his Philistine army. He took David along with him. {#1Sa 28:1,2} While David was on the march with his six hundred men, he gathered a number of others from the tribe of Manasseh who joined him. {#1Ch 12:19} The Philistines were then encamped at Shunem and the Israelites were in Gilboa. {#1Sa 28:4}

402. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he became afraid and sought counsel from the Lord. Receiving no answer in a dream, or by Urim, or through his prophets, he

went to Endor by night to consult with a witch. When she conjured up a vision of Samuel, Saul received the dreadful message:

"God shall deliver Israel, together with thyself, into the hands of the Philistines; and tomorrow, thou and thy children shalt be with me." {#1Sa 28:5,6,19 1Ch 10:13,14}

404. When Saul returned that same night from the witch, the Israelites moved to the fountain of Jezreel and the Philistines went to Aphek. The princes of the Philistines became jealous of David, so he and his men left the Philistine army early the next morning and returned to Ziklag. The Philistines in the interim marched up to Jezreel to fight with the Israelites. {#1Sa 28:25 29:1,3,10,11} It seems that Saul and his sons were not killed on the day immediately following his communication with the apparition of Samuel (since all that day David was with the army of the Philistines) but Saul's death occurred some while after David's departure from them.