

Anger Therapy



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THE MAKING OF DAVID AND GOLIATH

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These slides are drawn from

Auld, A Graeme; Ho, Craig Y S. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* "The Making of David and Goliath", 56 Dec 1992, p 19-39.

The article presents literary connections between 1 Samuel 9-10 and 1 Samuel 17-18 as evidence that the longer version of the David and Goliath story found in the Hebrew MT is a better fit in the final form of the book than the shorter Greek LXX version.

"In this case of the David and Goliath story, as it happens, the MT pluses [the bits of text that exist in the MT but are missing in the LXX] can be mapped onto the corresponding parts of the story of Saul's emergence. In what follows, we argue for correspondences only if there exist between the two stories either clear formal resemblances in linguistic or stylistic aspects or clearly analogous motifs."

Introduction

Introduction to Saul: extraordinary

There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish. . . ; and he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he (1 Sam. 9.1-2).

Introduction to David: unexpected

Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. . . David was the youngest (1 Sam. 17.12-16).

Point of contrast: People look for a king like Saul, not like David.

The Errand - background

Background of Kish's errand for Saul

Now the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost (1 Sam. 9.3a).

Background of Jesse's errand for David

For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening (1 Sam. 17.16).

Point of contrast: trivial vs. national setting

- **Opportunities create heroes', goes a Chinese saying. The situation that changed Saul's fate is a rather trivial and uninteresting one: the loss of asses, dull animals. But it is David's brothers' involvement in battle with the enemy and the consequent dangers beckoning David that change both his own fate and that of his people. Again form and subject matter correspond.**

The Errand – catalyst for life change

An errand from Kish changed Saul's fate

So Kish said to Saul his son (וַיֹּאמֶר קִישׁ אֶל-שָׁאוּל בְּנוֹ), Take (קַח-נָא) one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the asses.' (1 Sam. 9.3b)

An errand from his father changed David's fate

And Jesse said to David his son (וַיֹּאמֶר יֵשׁוּעַ לְדָוִד בְּנוֹ), Take (קַח-נָא) for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain. .. See how your brothers fare, and bring some token from them' (1 Sam. 17.17-18).

Question

- While the task is quite a reasonable one for Saul, one would doubt the good sense of Jesse; how can he send his shepherd child to the battlefield just to see how his three eldest sons fare? Is not the youngest son dearest to him, as Benjamin is to Jacob? Why did he not send the fourth son, or at least one older than David?
- [but]... the story of the common text makes full sense. There David is Saul's armour-bearer (16.21).

The Errand – catalyst for life change

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An errand from his father changed David's fate

And Jesse said to David his son (וַיֹּאמֶר יֵשׁוּעַ לְדָוִד בְּנוֹ), Take (קַח-נָא) for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain. .. See how your brothers fare, and bring some token from them' (1 Sam. 17.17-18).

A minor point

- **There is another interesting point of correspondence: Jesse's instruction to David is very detailed compared to that of Kish. It even includes an instruction to give ten cheeses to the commander-of-a-thousand of his three eldest sons. These are probably a gift to the commander in return for a convenience permitted to David. Kish by contrast was not imaginative enough to have prepared anything extra for Saul in case he needed help from other people. 'But if we go, what can we bring the man?... What have we?' (9.7). David would not have to ask such a question!**

The Errand – outcome

Bad luck for Saul's errand

And they passed through the hill country of Ephraim. .. but did not find them (1 Sam. 9.4).

David fulfilled his errand

And David rose early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper. .. And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, and ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers (1 Sam. 17.20-23).

Minor contrast

- **Kish's lost asses are found, but not by his son Saul; whereas David accomplishes his task of seeing his brothers in a splendid manner. This is a very minor contrast.**

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Significant contrast

- ... we would expect a youth like David to hide himself among the baggage to view the battle from afar; but note the series of nine verbs in two verses describing how fearless David is about what is happening before his eyes and how quickly he accomplishes his errand: David rose, left, took, went, came, left, ran, went and greeted (17.20-22). We almost hear how breathless the story teller is as he tries to utter these two verses, giving clear staccato emphasis to each action David took to reach his brothers at the most dangerous moment of the episode when the armies of Israel and Philistia drew up for battle .

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Significant contrast

- **Is this not a sarcastic contrast to what the tallest and most handsome man in Israel had done when he was elected king of Israel? David left his things 'in charge of the keeper of the baggage (17.22) and went to see his brothers in the front line, whereas Saul hid himself so secretly that people had to inquire of the Lord about his whereabouts, only to find him 'hidden.. .among the baggage' (1 Sam. 10.22).**

Questions

Said's questions

Then Saul said to his servant (וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל לְנִעְרוֹ) (that was with him [אשר עמו] LXX^B), 'But if we go, what can we bring the man (מִה־נָּבִיא לְאִישׁ)? For (כי) the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What (מה) have we? (1 Sam. 9.7).

David's questions

And David said to the men who stood by him (וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הָעֹמְדִים) (עמו), 'What shall be done for the man (מִה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ) who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For (כי) who (מי) is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?' (1 Sam. 17.26).

Contrast

- The formal and stylistic similarity of these two passages is very clear. And we see what a brainless man Saul is from his passive questions. His passivity can be contrasted with David's active showing of initiative and even assertiveness

Whose Father?

The father of the future king?

you will meet a band of prophets. .. and you shall. .. be turned into another man. . .(1 Sam. 10.5-6).

a band of prophets met (לְקַרְאָתוֹ) him. .. And when all who knew him before came, and saw (וַיִּרְאוּ) and behold, he was in the midst of the prophets; and the people said everyone to his neighbour (וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָעָם אִישׁ אֶל־יְרֵעֵהוּ), 'What is this (מַה־זֶּה) that has happened to the son (בֶּן) of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?' And one of them answered, 'and who (וּמִי) is his (LXX) father?' (1 Sam. 10.10, 11-12).

The father of the future king?

When Saul saw (וַיִּבְרָאֹת) David go forth against (לְקַרְאָת) the Philistine, he said to Abner (אֶל־אַבְנֵר), the commander of the army, 'Abner, whose son is this (בֶּן־מִי־זֶה) youth?'. . .And Saul said to him, 'Whose son are you (בֶּן־מִי אַתָּה), young man?' And David answered, 'I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite' (1 Sam. 17.55-58).

Whose Father?

The question of parentage in both cases is a slighting one. It is lost in the Masoretic text of 1 Sam. 10.12, where וּמִי אֲבֵיהֶם ('and who is their father?') asks about the leadership of the prophetic group. Saul's question is not just for information; it betrays his worry. Seeing what David had done, Saul was as bewildered as had been the onlookers when they saw what he himself was doing among the prophets. Saul suddenly appeared as a stranger—'another man'—to those 'who knew him before'. Their disbelief turned into a belittling question. Two questions were being asked about Saul by his neighbours like the two questions Saul asked about David. It was as if David too had become a stranger to Saul; his first military achievement may have reminded Saul of Samuel's prediction of his fall and the rise of a new king.

Kingly stuff

Samuel's offer of kingship:

Samuel answered Saul, '. . .And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father's house?' (1 Sam. 9.20b).

Saul's offer of royal status: being the king's son-in-law:

Then Saul said to David, 'Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you for a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the Lord's battles'. .. But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife (1 Sam. 18.17, 19).

Similarity

- **Samuel's offering of kingship, a sincere act commissioned by God, contrasts nicely to Saul's offer to David of his daughters.**
- **The offer of the elder is meant to be an insult to David, that of the second daughter is meant to be a trap. Interestingly again, 1 Sam. 18.17-19 (about the first offer) is lacking from the LXX, together with an premature explanation of the 'snare' that Michal constitutes. The clarification in v. 21b that Michal is Saul's second offer is also a plus!**

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Whose battles?

- **One could further elaborate that Saul is offered kingship to save the people of the Lord (9.16); however, he gave up his calling to David, asking him to 'fight the Lord's battles' (18.17, a plus), and thus deserved losing confidence among his own men (10.27). Saul was king, but he surrendered his royal and divine vocation to the man who was destined to supplant him, very much like Esau's giving up of his birthright to Jacob. David took up this challenge, won the battles, outshone 'all the servants of Saul'.**
- **See also** George, Mark K. *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, "Yhwh's own heart" 64 no 3 Jul 2002, p 442-459.

Covenants

Samuel's covenant meal for Saul: the portion for the king:

Then Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited. .. (1 Sam. 9.22). And Samuel said to the cook, 'Bring the portion I gave you, of which I said to you, "Put it aside"'. So the cook took up the leg and the upper portion and set them before Saul. .. (9.23-24).

Jonathan's covenant with David: Jonathan's offer of the prince's robe and weapons:

Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul (1 Sam. 18.3). And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his armour, and even his sword and his bow and his girdle' (18.4).

The Spirit

The coming of the spirit upon Saul:

... and the spirit of God came mightily upon him (וַתֵּצֵחַ עָלָיו רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים) (1 Sam. 10.10).

The departing of the spirit from Saul:

And on the morrow an evil spirit from God rushed (וַתֵּצֵחַ רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים רָעָה) upon Saul (אֶל-שָׂאוּל). . .Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him [David] but had departed from Saul (1 Sam. 18.10-12).

LXX difference

- What is intriguing about the plus in 18.10-12 is that while 1 Sam. 18.12a, 'Saul was afraid of David', is in both the Greek and the Hebrew, the reason (v. 12b) following—'because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul'—is found only in the MT. And, as well as 1 Sam. 18.12b, vv. 10-11 too are lacking from the LXX.

Praise of the people

First response to the newly elected Saul from the people:

But some worthless fellows said, 'How can this man save us?' And they despised him' (10.27).

David's success and popularity:

Then the princes of the Philistines came out to battle, and as often as they came out David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly esteemed (18.30).

LXX difference

- **1 Sam. 18.29b-30 is lacking from the LXX. An editor might have left the remark about the hostile relationship between Saul and David for some reason unknown to us, but who would have left the remarks about David's popularity?**

Praise of the people

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Contrast

- **We usually know who is the real protagonist of the drama at the very first appearance on the stage. Here a young shepherd accomplishes his father's errand magnificently in a most extraordinary situation, and with incredible bravery. There the most extraordinary man was unable even to spot his father's asses; and his shyness (or cowardice?) was made public when elected as king. And one can expect only the worst response from his new subjects. Does this plus not contrast beautifully the respective infamy and popularity of the two protagonists at their debuts in the drama of their antagonism?**