



How was David overlooked?

1. Gd is "with him" Shemuel I 18:14

2. Talmud, Shabbat 56a

אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן: כל האומר דוד חטא - אינו אלא טועה, שנאמר ויהי דוד לכל דרכיו משכיל וד' עמו וגו', אפשר חטא בא לידו ושכינה עמו?

אלא מה אני מקיים "מדוע בזית את דבר ד' לעשות הרע"? שביקש לעשות ולא עשה.

"את אוריה החתי הכית בחרב"? שהיה לך לדונו בסנהדרין ולא דנת.

"ואת אשתו לקחת לך לאשה"? ליקוחין יש לך בה, דאמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן: כל היוצא למלחמת בית דוד כותב גט כריתות לאשתו...

"ואתו הרגת בחרב בני עמון"? מה חרב בני עמון אי אתה נענש עליו, אף אוריה החתי אי אתה נענש עליו. מאי טעמא? מורד במלכות הוה, דאמר ליה "ואדני יואב ועבדי אדני על פני השדה חנים."

Rabbi Shemuel bar Nachmeni cited Rabbi Yonatan: Anyone who says David sinned is only mistaken, as it says, "And David was insightful in all of his ways, and Gd was with him, etc." Can it be that sin came to his hand and the *Shechinah* was with him?

Rather, how do I explain, "Why did you degrade the word of Gd, to practice evil?" He tried to do it, and did not do it.

"You struck Uriah the Hittite by the sword"? You should have judged him in the Sanhedrin, and you did not.

"And you took his wife for your wife"? You have valid marriage with her, for Rabbi Shemuel bar Nachmeni cited Rabbi Yonatan: Anyone who went to the wars of David's house wrote a bill of divorce for his wife...

"And you killed him with the sword of Amon"? Just as you are not punished for those killed by Amon's sword, so you are not punished for Uriah the Hittite. Why? He rebelled against the throne, saying, "And my master Yoav and my master's servants are camped in the field."

3. David and Batsheva: Why Does Gd Love You?

<https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/940610/>

4. Ralbag to Shemuel II 1 Lesson 16

ישי לא חשב שיהיה ראוי למלוך בנו קטן, ולזה לא הביאו הביתה להעבירו לפני שמואל. והוא אשר בחרו ד' לבד. ולזה אמר "אבן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה."

Yishai did not think his young[est] son would be worthy of reigning, and therefore he did not bring him home to pass him before Shemuel. Thus Gd, alone, chose him. Therefore he said, "The stone rejected by the builders became the highest."

5. Ralbag to Shemuel II 1 Lesson 18

להודיע הרושם הנפלא שיקח האדם בהפך ענינו אל שיהיה מלך, כ"ש בהמשחו על יד נביא. הלא תראה כי שאול תכף שנמשח למלך נהפך לאיש אחר וכן הענין בדוד...

This shows the wondrous impact one receives when his nature is changed, to be king, and certainly when anointed by a prophet. You see that Shaul, immediately upon his anointing as king, became a different man, and so with David...

6. Radak to Shemuel I 16:13

וזאת רוח הגבורה העירה את דוד להרוג את הארי והדוב והפלשתי וכן רוח הקדש נולדה בו מהיום ההוא ומעלה ואמר השירים והמזמורים ברוח הקדש שנולדה בו כי בכלל "רוח ד'" רוח הקדש ורוח גבורה:

This spirit of might aroused David to kill the lion, bear and Philistine, and the sacred spirit was born in him from that day forward and he recited poems and songs with the sacred spirit born in him. For "spirit of Gd" includes the sacred spirit and the spirit of might.

7. Abarbanel to Shemot 30:22

העיקר הא' הוא בידיעת הצורך שיש במשיחה לכלי המקדש לכהנים ולמלכים... האחת כדי שתהיה אות הבחירה האלקית... והתכלית הב' הוא כדי להכין הנמשח לקבל השפעת האלקי שע"י אותה משיחה תדבק בו ההשגחה העליונה... כי הנה שאול מיד שנמשח צלחה עליו רוח ד' והתנבא ונהפך לאיש אחר והיה זה לסבת המשיחה, ובדוד נאמר (שמואל א ט"ז י"ג)...

The first principle is to identify the need for anointing the Temple vessels, kohanim and kings... First: As a sign of Divine selection... And the second purpose is to prepare the anointed one to receive Divine influence, for via the anointing, the Higher supervision will stick to him... For immediately after Shaul's anointing, the spirit of Gd was manifest upon him and he prophesied and he became a different person, due to the anointing. And of David it says (16:13)...

8. Malbim to Shemuel I 16:23

והנה בזה סיפר איך סבב ד' שיבא דוד אצל שאול, שזה היה הסבה הראשיית לכל קורותיו אח"כ עד הגיע אל המלכות המיועד לו.

It told with this how Gd caused David to come to Shaul, which was the first cause for all that happened to him until he became king, as was destined for him.

Brief outline of Chapters 1-11

- Perakim 1-2 The miraculous birth of Shemuel to righteous Chanah and Elkanah in response to her prayers, and her song of gratitude, philosophy and prophecy
- Perakim 2-3 Eli's sons abuse the Mishkan for their own enrichment, while Shemuel grows properly. Eli receives warnings from Ish Elokim and Shemuel.
- Perakim 4-6 The disastrous decision to take the Aron to war against the Plishtim; it is lost. The curse begins, with the death of Chofni and Pinchas, Eli, and the wife of Pinchas. The Aron is held by the Plishtim, who suffer terribly (to save the Aron, or as punishment for treating the Aron as a trophy, or to demonstrate that Gd is greater than Avodah Zarah). In one read of this story, the Plishtim treated their broken idol and the Aron with more respect than the Jews treated the Aron. The Plishtim return the Aron in a way which proves Divine supervision.
- Perek 7 During or after a 20-year period, Shemuel holds a national gathering at which they reject idols and accept service of Gd. The Plishtim attack, and Gd defends us; we rout them, and have a period of utopian peace under Shemuel's leadership.
- Perek 8 The nation demands a king; Shemuel and Gd are unhappy, perhaps because the nation wants the king to be the arbiter of justice instead of Gd doing it. But Gd says to go along with it. Shemuel outlines what kings will do – whether by law or against the law.
- Perakim 9-10 Gd arranges for Shaul to meet Shemuel in pursuing lost donkeys; Shemuel convinces Shaul that he is a full prophet, anoints him as an act of dedicating him to service of Gd, and sets him on a journey to his formal revelation as king. But some people reject Shaul - either because they think he can't help them or because they see him as Gd's king - and he goes home.
- Perek 11 Shaul rallies the nation to defend Yavesh Gilad against cruel Nachash of Amon, and wins over those who didn't accept him as they see that Gd and Shaul will protect them. Shaul spares those who (still?) reject him, demonstrating his mercy and humility. Shemuel holds a new coronation ceremony, a visible sign that Shaul is now king.

Chapter 12

- Shemuel gives his valedictory speech of instruction, self-defense and rebuke
- Key message: Gd has always appointed the leaders you needed, even in chaotic times
- Shemuel summons a thunderstorm at the time of the harvest – Punishment, Rebuke and Education
- But Gd won't abandon you, and neither will I

Chapter 13

- Shaul has only a minimal standing army. Yehonatan attacks a Philistine outpost.
- Shaul rallies the nation – but when the Plishti mass their armies, Shaul's army scatters.

- Shaul is supposed to wait for Shemuel to bring korbanot before war, but he doesn't – out of fear or logic.
- Shemuel removes monarchy from Shaul's descendants; the leader is responsible to the community, and to follow Divine orders.
- The Philistines attack the weaponless Jews.

Chapter 14

- Yehonatan raids the Philistines without telling Shaul, perhaps pushed by Gd. He gains his aide's confidence with a sign, either as a practical tactic, psychological step, or an appeal for a Divine sign.
- Shaul finds out about Yehonatan's rout. He starts to consult the *urim v'tummim*, but decides he must attack. Gd enables their success.
- Shaul declares a fast, to spur the fight. Yehonatan, ignorant, eats some honey. He is told of the oath, and declares it a bad idea, militarily.
- Finished with the battle, the nation eats meat. They are in trouble, whether due to botched korbanot, the appearance of sorcery, or a kashrut issue – or because of eating before thanking Gd. In Shemuel's absence, Shaul acts to correct the wrong, and brings a korban.
- Shaul asks the *urim v'tummim* about pursuing the war, and isn't answered; this is a sign of trouble. He holds a public inquest with the *urim v'tummim* and determines that Yehonatan is guilty. Shaul is ready to demonstrate impartial leadership and execute Yehonatan, but the nation frees him – due to justice, or regardless of justice.
- Shaul continues to win wars.
- Our impression of Yehonatan: Very certain in his moral and spiritual compass, and Gd is with him.

Chapter 15

- Shaul is to fight a war of utter destruction against Amalek in the Negev – although this may not be a war to eliminate all of Amalek.
- Shaul sends a warning message to the Keini, who seem to be Yitro's nomadic descendants. Why are they beside Amalek, and not part of Shaul's effort, if they are Jewish?
- Shaul makes two mistakes:
 - He spares the animals - not out of mercy, but out of a calculation. He says the nation wanted them for korbanot, but it's not clear whether this happened or whether it was an excuse.
 - He brings Agag around the country, north and then east, in a post-war parade.
 - We think Shaul thought he had done right, but he failed both the message of the war and the vision of a Divinely led monarchy
- Gd tells Shemuel that Shaul is done; Shemuel grieves.
- Shemuel rebukes Shaul in stages as he learns what Shaul has done. Shaul interrupts to justify himself.
- Shaul finally apologizes, but it is too late. This is expressed when Shemuel's cloak – Chanah's gift and the source of royal power – is torn.
- Shemuel executes Agag personally, restoring the message that this is an act of righteous indignation and Divine justice.
- Shemuel and Shaul split; the Divine rejection is final

Chapter 16

- David's story
 - Yishai is a leader, but his youngest, David – the ruddy one – is not respected
 - Gd tells Shemuel to anoint David, perhaps due to his shepherd traits. This ushers in "Ruach Hashem".
 - David becomes musician for Shaul
- Shaul's story
 - When David is anointed, Shaul loses his "Ruach Hashem". He is driven into depression.
 - Shaul's servants suggest music, perhaps as an attempt to re-ignite his prophecy.
 - It is effective, to the extent of catalyzing a bond between David and Shaul

- To the greatest extent, this is Shemuel's story
 - Grieving for Shaul, Shemuel doesn't want to anoint a king – out of unlikely fear or general reluctance
 - The reluctance may be driven by the knowledge that this would destroy Shaul's Divine connection
 - Hashem forces Shemuel to do this ("go ahead and lie if you want"), and uses the selection and anointing process as a way to rebuke Shemuel for thinking he knows better.
 - Shemuel comes full circle – he began his career detonating Eli, and concluded it by detonating Shaul.
- A positive note: Chanah's horn