

## **MT and LXX Differences in 1Samuel 17-18 regarding David's Key Role in Victory over the Philistines**

Regarding the episode in David's life when he was instrumental in bringing about victory over the Philistines, most LXX manuscripts differ from the MT text of 1Samuel 17-18. For example, 1Sam 17:12-31, 17:55-18:5, and 18:10-11 are missing from many Septuagint manuscripts. \* These "missing" verses describe David's family background and his initial introduction to Saul. I think it is more likely that these traditions were actually additions to the MT rather than omissions from the LXX. While the MT includes this interesting and significant contextual information, the resulting narrative raises questions from even just a cursory reading. For one example, why does Saul question who David is and require introduction to him in 1Sam 17:55-58, when David had already been introduced and played his lyre for Saul in 1Sam 16:14-24? In my opinion, the most likely answer is that 1Sam 17:55-58 was a good and true tradition added later to supplement 1Samuel. Below is a brief summary of the various differences between the LXX and MT text in this particular narrative. The lighter font shows what is included in the MT (and thus missing in the LXX). The outline is an edited version from David Dorsey (The Literary Structure of the Old Testament). Notice that the structure in the LXX is the same as the MT, except the LXX lacks a central "X" term.

### **A. Samuel leaves Ramah to anoint David (fearing Saul will kill him) 16:1-13**

### **B. Positive - David playing harp for Saul when evil spirits trouble him 16:14-23**

### **C. Cause - David's key role leading to victory over the Philistines 17:1-58**

17:1-11 Attack by the Philistines. Goliath suggests a duel with one of the Israelites.

17:12-31 David is sent to bring food, hears Goliath and asks what reward to kill him.

17:32-39 David volunteers with Saul to fight Goliath.

17:40-54 (except for 17: 41, 48b, 50) Account of the duel. Philistines flee afterward.

17:55-58 Saul asks who David is. David is introduced to Saul.

### **X David is loved and accepted by Jonathan as well as Saul's court 18:1-5**

18:1-5 The love of Jonathan and David and the court's approval of his promotion

### **C' Effect - Saul's jealousy over David's key role leading to victory 18:7-30**

18:6-9 Saul's jealousy of David.

18:10-11 Saul attempts to kill David with a spear.

18:12-16 David's successes

18:17-19 Saul offers David his *eldest* daughter, Merab, but gives her to another man.

18:20-29a Saul offers David his *younger* daughter, Michal.

Deal is for 100 Philistine foreskins - and David delivers 100 LXX (200 MT).

18:29b-30 Saul was David's enemy, but David had continued battle successes

### **B' Negative - David playing harp for Saul when evil spirits trouble him 19:1-17**

Saul attempts to kill David with a spear, then has assassins in waiting

### **A. David goes to Ramah and Samuel (fearing that Saul will kill him) 19:18-20:42**

The parting of Jonathan and David (1 Samuel 20).

David's exile (1 Samuel 20-24).

23:12 David asks if the men of Keilah will surrender him.

\* The Lucianic text (LXX-L) of the Septuagint is an exception. Along with the MT, this text type includes all the passages above.