

Notes on 1 Samuel

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1. A Nameless City

The account of Saul's anointment by Samuel in 1Sam 9,3-10,16 is an important, even crucial part of the narrative focused upon the figure of the first Israelite king on his way to power. The chronicler is at his best in this part of 1Sam; the story is rich with remarkable characters whose dialogues are scrupulously recorded and slightest moves registered. And yet, one indispensable detail is missing: the city where the ceremony of anointment takes place is not called by name and remains anonymous not unlike some heroes of the story, in fact, all of them except Samuel and Saul.

Since H. EWALD and J. WELLHAUSEN it has been invariably believed that the greater part of the action in 1Sam 9,3-10,16 is set in *Rāmā* mentioned in 1Sam 1,1.19 (first as *Rāmātayim-Šopim*) as Samuel's birthplace and in 7,17 as his permanent residence¹. However, it should not be taken for granted. In 9,12 girls drawing water at the city walls advise Saul and his companion: "Make haste now, for he [sc. Samuel] came today into the city; for the people are making sacrifice today in the high place". This seems to indicate that the prophet was only paying a short visit to the city in order to be present at a local festival². This, however, could not be the case if the city in question was *Rāmā*: finding Samuel in the city where he normally resided could not require any haste.

It may be argued that if Samuel wasn't a permanent resident of the city, Saul's servant could not be as sure of finding him there as he appears to be in 1Sam 9,6 where he confidently announces: "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God"³. For an ancient reader, it was just another miracle not much different from those occurring further in the text. In terms of *Sitz im Leben*, the fact that the servant is well acquainted with the Samuel's time table may only mean that Saul's meeting with the prophet has been arranged in advance. The whole undercover operation was designed not only to provide a king for Israel but also to conceal the event from the Philistines whose military presence in the very heart of the Israelite hill country is unequivocally attested to in 1Sam 10,5 and 13,3. The loss of asses was used as a pretext for Saul's journey and all the verbal exchanges concerning the asses' fate in 1Sam 9,20, 10,2 and 10,16 are nothing else than passwords.

Some scholars believe that the narrative of 1Sam 9,1-10,16 as it stands now is a result of superimposition of Samuel's image upon an earlier folk tale about Saul featuring an anonymous seer and set in an an-

¹For a comprehensive survey see D. EDELMAN, Saul's Journey Through Mt. Ephraim and Samuel's Ramah (1Sam 9,4-5; 10,2-5), ZDPV 104, 1988, 44-8.

²In 1Sam 9,26-27 Samuel seems to be leaving the city alongside with Saul but in a different direction. On the festival see *infra*.

³See S. GOLDMAN, Samuel, London, 1951, 45-6.

onymous city⁴. Wrong or correct⁵, it does not automatically lead to the conclusion that the author of the final version had *Rāmā* in mind. Not calling the site of Saul's anointment by its name (in contrast with the scene of asking for the king in 1Sam 8,4), he was either ignorant or, for some reason, unwilling to disclose it.

The only way to find out the name of the mysterious city is to analyze itineraries of Saul's journeys to and from it in 1Sam 9,4-5 and 10,1-5. Unfortunately, these itineraries abound in toponyms that are never mentioned again (*Šālīšā*, *Šā^{ca}līm*. *Ṣeṣṣah*, *Tābōr*, *Gīb^{at} hā^{te}lohīm*)⁶ and therefore may hardly be reliably identified. Some other sites appearing on the list may form a basis for a further research, as, for example, the land of *Šūp* in 1Sam 9,5 and the tomb of Rachel in 10,2. The former is most probably the territory of the clan of *Šūp*, Samuel's distant ancestor introduced in 1Sam 1,1 as *'Eprāīl*. Elsewhere this term stands both for the Ephraimites (cf. Jud 12,5; 1Kgs 11,26) and the inhabitants of a city or a region named *'Eprāt* or *'Eprāṭā* (cf. 1Sam 16,12; Ruth 1,2). As far as Samuel is not an Ephraimite but a Levite (cf. 1Chr 6,11-13.18-20 with certain minor contradictions), the land of *Šūp* must be somehow connected with *'Erāt(ā)*, most probably adjoining it. As to the location of *'Eprāṭā*, in Gen 35,19 and 48,7 as well as in Mica 5,1 it is identified with *Bēt-Leḥem*. Since the offsprings of the legendary matriarch *'Eprāṭā*, *Kāleb*'s wife (1Chr 2,19), lived not only in *Bēt-Leḥem* but also in *Qiryat-Y^{ec}ārim* (cf. 1Chr 2,50), it was argued that the latter could also be called *'Eprāṭā*⁷. However, virtually all biblical references to *'Eprāṭā* and Ephraimites are related to *Bēt-Leḥem* (if not used as an *alias* for the Ephraimites).

The only difficult case is Ps 132,6. Yet, even if it is taken for granted that *Š^cdē yā^car* is a poetic name of *Qiryat-Y^{ec}ārim*, it is clearly opposed to *'Eprāṭā* or, at least, distinguished from it: "Lo, we heard it [sc. the Ark] in *'Eprāṭā*, we found it in *Š^cdē Yā^car*"⁸. It is sometimes supposed that this verse reflects the transfer of the Ark from *Qiryat-Y^{ec}ārim* to Jerusalem described in 2Sam 6,2ff.⁹. This verse may bring us back to *Bēt-Leḥem*: it is quite plausible that in this city "all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand" (2Sam 6,1) came

⁴Cf. H.-J. STOEBE, Noch einmal die Esclinnen des Kiš (1Sam IX), VT 7, 1957, 362-70; H. SEEBASS, Die Vorgeschichte der Königshebung Sauls, ZAW 79, 1967, 155-71; L. SCHMIDT, Menschlicher Erfolg und Jahwes Initiative: Studien zu Tradition, Interpretation und Historie in Überlieferungen von Gideon, Saul und David, WMANT 38, 1970, 58-102.

⁵In particular, it has been pointed out that the anonymity of Samuel in 1Sam 9,1-13 may be not a trace of the early narrative but rather a literary device adding suspense to the story. See B. BIRCH, The Development of the Tradition on the Anointment of Saul in 1Sam 9,1-10,16, JBL 90, 1971, 60; D. EDELMAN [n. 1], 54.

⁶*Bā^cal Šālīšā* is mentioned in 2Kgs 4,42 but it is equally impossible to locate the toponym there. *Šā^{ca}līm* has been identified with *Šā^calbm* of Jud. 1,35 and 1Kgs 4,9 (cf. J. WELLHAUSEN, Der Text der Bücher Samuelis, Göttingen, 1871, 26-27) and with *Šū^cal* of 1Sam 13,17, cf. W. F. ALBRIGHT, Excavations and Results at Tell el-Ful (Gibeah of Saul), AASOR IV, 1924, 116-7, 122.

⁷So F. M. CROSS, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel, Cambridge, 1973, 94-5, n. 16.

⁸Contra F. DELITZSCH, Biblischer Kommentar über die Psalmen, Leipzig, 1894, 763-65; M. TSEVET, Studies in the Book of Samuel, HUCA 33, 1962, 108-9.

⁹Cf. M. TSEVAT [n. 8], 110.

together to listen to the oracle: "We heard it in 'Eprātā" = "we heard of it in 'Eprātā"¹⁰. Note that the two battles with the Philistines immediately preceding the transfer of the Ark took place in the valley of R^cpā ḥm, i. e. somewhere between Jerusalem and Bēt-Leḥem¹¹.

Thus, the land of Šūp may be identified with the vicinities of Bēt-Leḥem. This conclusion forms a powerful counter-argument against the possibility of Saul's anointment in Rāmā. Since Rāmā is once called Rāmāṭayim-Šōpim, it is sometimes argued that the land of Šūp must be somehow connected with it¹². If so, 'Eprātā will be identified with Rāmā, but have not we seen that it is impossible? Another etymologies of Rāmāṭayim-Šōpim should be looked for¹³.

Rachel's tomb is mentioned three times, in Gen 35,19-20, 48,7 and in 1Sam 10,2. In the Book of Genesis, it is located somewhere near 'Eprātā, north of the city: according to Gen 35, Rachel died on her journey to the South, from Bēt-El to Hebrōn as her family was about to reach 'Eprātā. In 1Sam 10,2, her tomb is placed in Šeṣaḥ of which nothing definite is known. Those who tie the Saul's anointment to Rāmā, combine this reference with Jer 31,14 ("A voice is heard in Rāmā... Rachel weeping for her children") as representing an alternative "northern" tradition according to which the tomb of Rachel was not near 'Eprātā ~ Bēt-Leḥem, i. e. not in Judah, but somewhere between Rāmā and Gib^cā, in Benjamin or Ephraim¹⁴. However, Rāmā in Jer 31,14 may be not a toponym but rather a usual word for a hill or elevation¹⁵. Therefore, we may safely assume that Gen 35,19-20 and 48,7 reflect the single Biblical tradition tying the tomb to 'Eprātā.

As far as we have already identified 'Eprātā with Bēt-Leḥem, the Rachel's tomb is to be localized north of it. But how could she be buried in the territory of Judah, one of Leah's descendants? However, in 1Sam 10,2 Samuel places the site bi-g^cbūl Būnyāmin, on or within the border of Benjamin. This border, according to Josh 18,16, was just south of Jerusalem - Jebus, only a few miles north of Bēt-Leḥem¹⁶. One more geographical detail should be added. In Gen 35,21 after Rachel's death Jacob retires to a place "beyond Migdal ^cEder". Migdal ^cEder appears once more in Mica 4,8 where it is mentioned between the stronghold

¹⁰This suggestion is in partial agreement with T. FRETHEIM, Psalm 132: A form critical study, JBL 86, 1967, 296-7. 2Sam 23,13-17 and 1Chr 11,15-19 seem to imply that David's operations against the Philistines before the transfer of the Ark included a commando raid on their garrison in Bēt-Leḥem, see infra.

¹¹So Y. AHARONI, The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography, London, 1979, 110. Cf. also Josh 18,16.

¹²So P. McCARTER, 1 Samuel, New York, 1980, 175.

¹³We could interpret Rāmāṭayim-Šōpim as Rāmāṭayim of Supites, the Šūp's descendants, of even presume a pattern similar to the later geographical names with -Šōpim as a second element.

¹⁴So R. KLEIN, 1 Samuel, Waco, 1983, 91. Gib^cā, Saul's native city and later his royal capital, was long thought to be situated on the modern Tell et-Ful, a few miles north of Jerusalem, cf., e. g., W. F. ALBRIGHT [n. 6]. Recently P. ARNOLD, Gibeath: The Search for a Biblical City, JSOT.S 79, 1990, has proved that the city is to be looked for further to the north, somewhere near the village Jeba. For Rāmā, more locations have been proposed, almost all of them in Ephraim or Benjamin.

¹⁵For linguistic and historical considerations against understanding Jer 31,14 as a reference to Rachel's tomb see M. TSEVET [n. 8], 108-9.

¹⁶Could Rachel's tomb be once a border mark between Benjamin and Judah, i. e. between the sons of Rachel and the sons of Leah? M. TSEVET [n. 8], 110-16) tries to identify Šeṣaḥ with Ba^cā, another name of Qiryat-Y^cārm which is known to be a Judahite city.

of Zion, i. e. Jerusalem, and *Bēt-Leḥem* *Eprāṭā* (!). Moreover, vv. 8-9, addressed to *Migdal* *Eder* compare "the daughter of Zion", i. e. the people of Israel, to a woman in travail - a clear allusion to the Rachel's fate¹⁷.

Thus, in search for his father's asses, Saul comes up to the gates of *Bēt-Leḥem*. On his way back home to *Gīb^cā* he finds himself near the Rachel's tomb situated between *Bēt-Leḥem* and Jerusalem. The problem now is whether these statements are in good correspondence with the rest of his travel.

The first point of his itinerary was Mount Ephraim. As far as *Gīb^cā* was located outside of this area (see Jud 19,16)¹⁸, Saul went northward. Since Mount Ephraim was soon left behind, we might assume that the future king only crossed its south-eastern corner by heading north-east first and then turning east and south-east. As a result, he came back to the land of Benjamin and, once he was there, he entered the land of *Šālīšā*, somewhere west or north-west of Jericho according to D. EDELMAN ([n. 1] p. 50-53).

From *Šālīšā* Saul went to the land *Ša^calim*, probably identical with *Šū^cal* mentioned in 1Sam 13,17 as a destination of one of Philistine raiding parties leaving the camp in *Mikmās*. As two other such parties were heading west-south-west (to *Bēt-Hōrōn*) and, probably, north-east, to the northern border of Benjamin ("to the way of the border that looked over the valley of *Š^cbo^cim* towards the wilderness"; cf. Josh 18,1 where a wilderness is also mentioned), it would be logical to suppose that the third detachment took the south-eastern direction¹⁹. But if *Ša^calim* is thus placed in the south-eastern sector of the Benjaminitic territory, it means that Saul left Mount Ephraim, passed the land of *Šālīšā* and then turned south. His arrival to the southern border of Benjamin is registered in the text: "And he passed through the land of the *Y^cnūni*", the latter being an archaic name of Benjaminites, cf. Jud 19,16; 1Sam 9²⁰. Having left the land of Benjamin, Saul came to the north-eastern part of Judah.

We suppose that the first Saul's meeting with Samuel as well as his anointment took place in *Bēt-Leḥem*. The reason for Saul's roundabout journey is explained by Samuel in 1Sam 10,5, the main road was dangerous because of Philistine checkpoints²¹ stationed near *Gīb^cat hā²e^clohīm*, a sanctuary not far from *Gīb^cā* according to P. ARNOLD ([n. 11] p. 56-7)²². Saul could not use the same excuse of looking for the asses twice and so he had to risk the highway on his way back. Willing to provide security for him, Samuel advised Saul to join a band of prophets before approaching the checkpoint.

Even though *Bēt-Leḥem* is not mentioned in 1Sam 7,16-17, in the list of sites that Samuel used to visit, it

¹⁷It is also possible that *Migdal* *Eder* (lit. "a tower of the flock") is not a toponym at all.

¹⁸In this verse, an anonymous old man is introduced as being "from Mount Ephraim, but living in *Gīb^cā*".

¹⁹Contra W. F. ALBRIGHT [n. 6].

²⁰D. EDELMAN ([n. 1], 48-9) suggests a reading *Yimna^c* (one of the Asherite tribesmen mentioned in 1Chr 7,35). P. McCARTER's emendations ([n. 2], 174-5) are even more farfetched.

²¹Hbr *n^cšib* is often translated as "governor" or "prefect". That seems reasonable in 1 Kgs 4,19 but how to explain plural in 1Sam 10,5 then? Our translation, "garrisons" or "checkpoints" is tentative. Cf. also *mašāb* in 1Sam 13,23.

²²J. BLENKINSOPP, Gibeon and Israel: The Role of Gibeon and the Gibeonites in the Political and Religious History of Early Israel, MSSOTS 2, 1972, 59, identifies *Gīb^cat hā²e^clohīm* with *bāmā*, the high place of *Gīb^cōn* mentioned in 1 Kgs 3,4. Other details of the Saul's journey make it improbable.

is chosen for Saul's anointment. However, the list itself dates back to the first days of Samuel's political activity, at least, ten years earlier. It was a decade of dramatic changes in the Central Canaan: a shaky military balance between Israel and the Philistines described in 1Sam 7,12-14²³ was replaced by the direct Philistine occupation in the very heart of the Israelite hill country. Hence, it was natural for Samuel to shift the sphere of his religious and legal influence further south, to *Bēt-Leḥem*. In any case, it was a safer ceremony site than *Rāmā*. One more reason for Samuel's presence in *Bēt-Leḥem* might be relevant. If *zebaḥ ha-yāmim*, a yearly sacrifice, is conjectured in 1Sam 9,12 (instead of *zebaḥ ha-yōm* "sacrifice today" and in accordance to the Biblical usage elsewhere) then it would mean that the prophet came to *Bēt-Leḥem* in order to celebrate his family's yearly festival. As we know from 1Sam 1,21, Samuel's father *Elqānā* used to do it in *Šiloh*. After the fall of *Šiloh* it could be transferred to a local shrine as in the case of David's family (1Sam 20,6) bringing its yearly sacrifice in their native city, *Bēt-Leḥem*²⁴.

Bēt-Leḥem was not a *terra incognita* of the early Hebrew chronicles. One of the main protagonists of Jud 17 - 18 is a Levite from *Bēt-Leḥem*. Another Levite got into trouble in *Gīb'ā* while travelling with his concubine from *Bēt-Leḥem*. King David himself was born and anointed there. Was it the main reason that induced the author of the Saul's chronicle to suppress the name of the city? He could not be eager to describe his hero's anointment in the native city of his foe.

The political and cultic role of *Bēt-Leḥem* in the days of Samuel, Saul and David must be re-evaluated. *Bēt-Leḥem* was so important that, on its *bāmā*, Saul was symbolically consecrated (cf. 1Sam 9,24 where Saul is served a shoulder, i. e. a part of sacrifice earmarked for priests, see Ex 29,27-28)²⁵. Ps 132,6 may also hint that there was an oracle of *Yhwh* in *Bēt-Leḥem*. Quite probably, *Bēt-Leḥem* was chosen as a place for David's anointment in 1Sam 16 not as his native city but also as a site of the previous Saul's enthronement. Even much later Mica, when predicting the future deliverance of the people of Israel, expected the Messiah to come from *Bēt-Leḥem*, the mysterious city where the first Israelite kings had been anointed (Mica 5,1-3).

2. Late Supper in En-Dor

The final part of this story, Saul's visit to a medium²⁶ in En-Dor (1Sam 28,20-25), is usually skipped by

²³Contra J. WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, Edinburgh, 1885, 248-9, and many others after him regarding 1Sam 7,10-14 as a piece of prophetic pro-Samuel propaganda. What may prevent us from supposing that a victory was really won by the Israelites under Samuel and that only some years later fortunes changed?

²⁴The cultic role of *Bēt-Leḥem* may have facilitated this shift from *Šiloh*. See next note.

²⁵The famous story of David's warriors fetching water for the king from a well near the gate of the Philistine occupied *Bēt-Leḥem* may also contain a hint of the city's cultic significance. The action could be a religious ceremony for, as 2Sam 23,16 and 1Chr 11,18 indicate, the water was finally poured out "to *Yhwh*". In this context, it is worth to remind the reader of a weird rite in *Mispā* described in 1Sam 7,6 and consisting of drawing water, pouring it to *Yhwh* and fasting. Cf. also a scene at a well situated near the gate of the unnamed city in 1Sam 9,11-13.

²⁶The text uses *b'et ʿwb*, literally, "mistress of ʿwb", "woman possessing ʿwb". As to *wb*, it denotes either a spirit or a tool used to communicated with the latter, see Is 8,19; 29,4; Jos 32,18-19. Cf. also J. LUST, *On Wizards and Prophets. Studies in Prophecy*, VTS 26, 1974, 136-139.

a modern reader²⁷ or declared to have no hidden meaning at all²⁸. Full of seemingly irrelevant details, it lacks expressivity, particularly if compared to the preceding somber scene where the Samuel's spirit is prophesying to the dispirited king. Yet, these six verses, a third of the whole story (1Sam 28,8-25), make a detailed picture quite unusual for the 1 Book of Samuel where the events are normally only registered but not minutely described. Thus, the narrative ignores relevant details of how the spirit of Samuel appeared to the medium and then disappeared but, for some reason, insistently supplies us with information on the king's meal. Why?

It is sometimes claimed²⁹ that the *raison d'être* of whole passage is to show to the reader that, in the end of his days, Saul left the God of Israel and fell into paganism. The meal, then, is a symbolic act confirming his covenant with the medium of En-Dor and the host of evil spirits in a futile attempt to change his fate. As to the rejection of food preceding the meal, it is seen as one more sign of Saul's inconsistency and lack of will similar to the earlier episodes in 1Sam 14 and 15³⁰.

This view was criticized, somewhat too fiercely, by J. P. FOKKELMAN³¹. It has been justly pointed out that W. A. M. BEUKEN's hypothesis is based on a prejudice against necromancy and death in general. In its own turn, this prejudice goes back to the Christian *Weltanschauung* influenced by certain Old Testament commandments: "A man also or a woman that is a medium or a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them" (Lev 20,27); "There must not be found among you anyone ... that uses divination, a soothsayer, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination to Yhwh" (Deut 18,10-12). It is impossible to prove that the author of 1Sam 28,20-25 knew these rules or that he obeyed them. His attitude is not expressed in the text³².

J. P. FOKKELMAN himself believes the author to be friendly to the medium and willing to show her touching attitude to the king, bereft of his power, rejected by Yhwh and doomed to death. But is this worth six verses³³? For the same reason, we cannot agree that the story of the meal is told in order to divert the

²⁷Including, to some extent, even the best commentators, cf. H. P. SMITH. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*. Edinburgh, 1899, 242; H. W. HERTZBERG, *I and II Samuel*, London, 1964, 220; P. K. McCARTER, *I Samuel*. New York, 1980, 421; R. W. KLEIN, *I Samuel*, Waco, 1983, 272-273; J. G. FRAZER, *Folklore in the Old Testament*, Vol. II, London, 1919, 522-554; T. H. GASTER, *Legend and Custom in the Old Testament*, New York, 1969 passim. While all the above adduce numerous examples of necromancy in various cultural traditions, no parallels are drawn to the Saul's meal of the finale.

²⁸See R. POLZIN, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History*. Part 2. *ISamuel*, New York, 1989, 229. It is difficult to accept R. POLZIN's idea of the Saul's meal being a symbol of dinners that Jehoiachin held before the king of Babylon, see 2Kings 25,29.

²⁹Cf. W. A. M. BEUKEN, *I Samuel 28. The Prophet as 'Hammer of Witches'*, JSOT 6, 1978, 3-17, and also R. W. KLEIN, op. cit., 272-273.

³⁰And also in the beginning of chapter 28 when the king breaks his own ban on mediums.

³¹See J. P. FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel*, Vol 2, Assen-Dover, 1986, 619.

³²Irony perceived by R. W. KLEIN in the text is, no doubt, completely derived from our modern notion of comical and has nothing to do with the original meaning of the ancient text.

³³According to J. P. FOKKELMAN (Loc. cit.), these verses form a separate and more or less autonomous narrative.

reader from the king's spiritual failure and to give it a physical or even a physiological explanation³⁴.

The above hypotheses are based on a literal understanding of the hunger theme. With the single exception of W. A. M. BEUKEN, the possible symbolic meaning of the meal is not taken into account. Yet, while hunger is an important Biblical theme, in 1Sam 28, strictly speaking, we are dealing with something different: not with *hunger* proper, but with *deliberate refusal of food* attested in the Books of Samuel as a ritually motivated behavior. Thus, in 1Sam 1,7-8 Hannah avoids a ritual meal during the annual sacrifice, *zbt hymym*. In 1Sam 7,6 the fast is a symbol of return to Yhwh. In 1Sam 14,24 Saul forbids his warriors "to eat any food until evening" for the sake of a complete victory over the Philistines. In 2Sam 12,16-17 David is fasting and eating no bread, like Saul, in order to save his first son from the Yhwh's wrath. It seems proper to add 1Sam 28,20-25 to this list. A detailed account of irrelevant trifles is, in fact, a description of an important ritual³⁵.

The ritual, as described in the text, consists of the following stages:

1. *Refusal of bread*³⁶
2. *Night supper including*
 - *roasted meat of a fattened calf*³⁷;
 - *unleavened bread*.

A basically similar ritual is well known within the cultural and religious tradition of the sons of Israel as the Passover: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: you shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats: and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it towards evening ... And they shall eat the meat in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor boiled at all in water, but roast with fire ... and you shall eat it in haste ..." (Ex 11,5-7.8-9.11).

The Biblical text also seems to support the view of the medium as a Canaanite priestess. "And Manasseh had ... the inhabitants of Dor and its hamlets, and the inhabitants of En-Dor and its hamlets ... Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land" (Josh 17,11-12)³⁸. In other words, even after the *Landnahme* En-Dor remained Canaanite and so did, doubtlessly, the hospitable medium. At the same time, we may now solve an obvious

³⁴See D. M. GUNN, "The Fate of King Saul: An Interpretation of a Biblical Story", JSOT.S 14, 1980, 109.

³⁵This scene has been analyzed as a description of a Canaanite ritual including necromancy by W. CASPARI, *Die Samuelbücher*, Leipzig, 1926, 363-364 and S. REINACH, *Le souper chez la sorcière*, RHR 42, 1926, 45-50. However, as W. A. M. BEUKEN has pointed out (*Op. cit.*, p. 11), this analysis is based exclusively on the data outside the Scriptures.

³⁶Pace D. M. GUNN, *Op. cit.*, 109, that is not a fast before a battle (cf. Jud 20,26; 1Sam 14,24). Remarkably, it is limited only to *bread*, beginning with "a morsel of bread", *pt llym* in V. 22. Cf. also R. W. KLEIN, *Op. cit.*, 272.

³⁷*gl mrbq*, terminus technicus implying a certain manner of keeping and feeding the animal in order to get fat meat, cf. Jer 46,21; Amos 6,4; Mal 3,20.

³⁸The ethnic situation in En-Dor did not change after Saul. In Josh 17,13 it is stated that "... when the sons of Israel became strong, they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out". According to T. C. BUTLER (*Joshua*, Waco, 1983, 191-192), this verse is related to the times of the united kingdom, cf. 2Sam 20,24; 1Kings 5,27; 9,15 using the same word *ms* "tribute, labor conscription".

contradiction between V. 3 where Saul puts away "the mediums and the wizards, out of the land" and V. 7 he wants to get help from one of them³⁹. Sorcery was forbidden to the sons of Israel but not to the Canaanites. Perhaps, for the same reason, Saul put on *other* (Canaanite?) clothes (V. 8)⁴⁰. However, the medium immediately looked through his disguise and got angry: "... why ... layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?"

A Canaanite rite similar with the Jewish Passover calls for a deeper analysis of the latter. From our point of view, two main variants of the ritual are responsible for numerous discrepancies in the Biblical descriptions⁴¹. In Lev 23,5-8 and Num 28,16-25 (*variant A*), the holiday consists of two separate parts: *sacrifice* (burnt offerings), and *hg hmšwt* "the feast of unleavened bread". This holiday does not imply a night meal although Lev 23,5 places the Passover *byn h'rbym* "towards evening hours". There is no strict prohibition of the leaven. *Variant B* as described in Ex 12,1-20; Num 9,1-14 and Deut 16,1-8 orders not to burn but to eat the whole sacrificial animal ("Eat ... its head with its legs, and with its entrails", Ex 12,9) *together* with the unleavened bread on the first night⁴². The ban on the leaven is absolute and ideologically motivated ("whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel", Ex 12,15b). A special *hg hmšwt* is not even mentioned.

The Passover as a historical fact is described in Ex 12,21-28; Josh 5,10-11; 2Kings 23,21-23 (duplicated in 2Chr 35,1-19); 2Chr 30,1-22 and Ez 6,19-22. As far as Ex 12,21-28 is derived from the preceding summary of the variant *B* in Ex 12,1-20, this leaves us with three basic descriptions: The Passover rite in Gilgal (*variant A*) and mass celebrations of the Passover in Jerusalem at the time of Josiah and Hezekiah. Those are close to each other⁴³ and belong to the variant *B*. The Passover meal is given much attention while *hg hmšwt* "the feast of unleavened bread" is only mentioned as another name of the Passover or, at least, as its integral part. Some elements of the variant *A* are also present (the burnt offerings are mentioned).

How did the Passover change during the five centuries between the holiday in Gilgal and the celebrations in Jerusalem? The only source of knowledge in this case is the episode of 1Sam 28,20-25. This is, undoubtedly, a rite belonging to the variant *B*. Yet, there is one important element shared by this narrative and the *A*-Passover of Gilgal. As to this rite, the main aim of Joshua is believed to be a preparation for the war in Canaan⁴⁴. Similarly, Saul goes to En-Dor before the decisive battle against the Philistines.

³⁹On this contradiction see H. W. HERTZBERG. Op. cit., p. 218.

⁴⁰Thus, at least this disguise is rooted in the reality, pace R. COGGINS, On Kings and Disguises, JSOT 50, 1991, 62.

⁴¹A comprehensive account of such discrepancies see in: J. WELLHAUSEN, Prolegomena to the History of Israel, Edinburgh, 1885, 83-87, 99-108.

⁴²Note that Deut 15,2 speaks of *š n wbyr* "herd and flock" apparently including calves.

⁴³2Chr 30,1-22 may be an account of a holiday celebrated under Josiah and mistakenly placed in the description of the Hezekiah's reign. The call addressed to the northern tribes (vv. 6-10) would be more appropriate at the times of Josiah whose influence stretched to a considerable part of the former kingdom of Israel after the fall of Assyria in 620-610 B.C.E.

⁴⁴See R. G. BOLING, Joshua, New York, 1982, 194. Cf. also Gideon's preparations for the war against Midianites when he sacrifices unleavened bread and a kid (Jud 6,17-21).

We may now suggest a very schematic approximation for the evolution of the Passover⁴⁵.

It was originally based on a pastoral rite devised to defend the herds. Children of Israel had practiced it before they came to Canaan⁴⁶. The rite consisted of an animal sacrifice and combined calendar functions with a farewell bid to those who were leaving for new pastures in spring. During the *Landnahme*, new elements of the holiday were received from the Canaanites, namely, an agricultural "feast of the unleavened bread". Thus, variant *A* came into being, a purely seasonal rite described in Josh 5,10-11 with its "double" holiday of sacrifice and unleavened bread.

Meanwhile, the cultural influence worked in two directions as 1Sam 28 shows. Canaanites borrowed the Passover sacrifice, a rite not quite appropriate in a region where distant pasturing is not practiced. It merged with *hg hmšwt* and was transformed in a farewell ceremony for those preparing for a war or a journey. It also included a dialogue with the dead asked for advice or help.

The Canaanite ceremony was shared by the sons of Israel. Saul had to recur to a very serious legal pressure in order to oppose it (1Sam 28,3). On the other hand, the king himself was well acquainted with the rite⁴⁷. It was this *B*-Passover that became a ritual norm at the times of the last Judean kings. The change could not be and was not immediate. In 2Kings 23,22 it is stressed that before the reforms of Josiah "surely there no *sach* passover was held from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah". A different dating in a similar formula in 2Chr 35,18 ("And there was no passover like that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the Prophet") even relate this change to the times and personality of Samuel. In any case, the initial stage of the process is registered in Ex 12,11 where the farewell *motif* is obvious: "And thus shall you eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste; it is the Yhwh's passover". The formula of Deut 16,1-8 is much less close to the Canaanite original and at the same time much more sacrifice-friendly. It was accepted by Josiah in conformity with *spr hbryt* "the book of covenant" (2Kings 23,21) usually identified with Deuteronomy⁴⁸. The resulting ritual was, basically, what the present writers celebrate as Passover today.

⁴⁵On the existing theories see J. A. SOGGIN, *Gilgal, Passah und Landnahme: Eine neue Untersuchung des kultischen Zusammenhangs der Kap. III-VI des Josuabuches*. VT.S 15, 1966, 263-277; T. C. BUTLER, op. cit., 53-54.

⁴⁶See R. de VAUX, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, London, 1965, 489-490.

⁴⁷Numerous refusals of the king and continuous persuasion of the medium seem to form a verbal part of the ceremony.

⁴⁸See S. R. DRIVER, *Deuteronomy*, Edinburgh, 1960, XLIV-XLV; M. COGAN, H. TADMOR, *II Kings*, New York, 1988, 294. Naturally, at that stage it was important to suppress all similarities between the Passover and its pagan prototypes. Hence Josiah's energy in the destruction of mediums and wizards (2Kings 23,24).