

OF KINGS AND PROPHETS

Written by

Adam Cooper & Bill Collage

Episode 001

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OF KINGS AND PROPHETS
CHARACTER GUIDE

Key Leads in Pilot and Series

DAVID (20s) – Starts out as shepherd to the family flock. Goes on to become a warrior and military strategist – but also a poet, musician, dancer and passionate lover (with many wives and concubines) – before being made second King of Israel in series. Ultimate protector of Israel and its borders. Fathers a bloodline extending to Jesus Christ.

SAUL (50-60) – First King of Israel. Suffering from (what would today be called) bi-polar disorder and PTSD. Paranoid. Violent. Husband to Ahinoam. Father to Jonathan, Ish-Boseth, Merav and Michal. Succumbs to David's quest for the throne and enemies of Israel. Dies in series.

AHINOAM (40s) – First Queen of Israel. Wife and top-advisor to Saul. Mother to Jonathan, Ish-Boseth, Merav and Michal. Seduces David and becomes one of his wives when Saul's power wanes in series. Becomes a key advisor to David and mother of David's first child.

MICHAL (22) – Youngest child of Saul and Ahinoam. Falls in love with David. Becomes David's first wife in series. Caught between her love for David and love for her father. Becomes jealous of her mother's affections for David and creates complications in series.

SAMUEL (70s) – Last of the Biblical judges. He alone hears and speaks for God. Anointed Saul first King in backstory, but then anoints David. Dies in series.

Secondary characters in Pilot who play large role in Series

JONATHAN (30s) – Eldest son of Saul and Ahinoam and heir to the throne. Betrays his father and becomes close friend of David in series. A "double agent" of sorts between Saul/David. Dies in series.

ISH-BOSETH (26) – Youngest warrior son of Saul and Ahinoam. Ambitious designs on Saul's throne. Inherits power in the wake of Saul's death, but also succumbs to David. Dies in series.

RIZPAH (30s) – Concubine to Saul and mother of two sons. Has an affair with Saul's general ABNER, leading to Saul's demise. Confronts David to no avail in series.

JOAB (20) – David's best friend and trusted warrior.

KING ACHISH (40s) – Philistine oligarch from Gath. Leads the Philistine army into battle with the Hebrews. Becomes an ally of David in series and then an adversary again. Dies in series.

Secondary characters in Pilot, who play minor role in Series

MERAV (22) – Eldest daughter of Saul and Ahinoam. Older sister to Michal. Poised to be married to Mattiyahu. Given to David, who refuses her in series. Ultimately has five children, who David takes.

NATHAN (30s) – A young minister and acolyte of Samuel. Becomes court prophet to David in series.

JESSE (60s) – Aging father to David and his brothers and sisters. Husband to Nitzevet. Village elder in Bethlehem. Has his life saved by David in series.

JONAH BEN HORAB (50s) – Regent from the tribe of Judah and father of Mattiyahu. Has strong trading ties with the Philistines.

MATTIYAHU (25) – Son of Jonah ben Horab. Betrothed to Merav. Serves as emissary on behalf of Saul to the Philistines. Killed by Goliath.

ABNER (late 40s) – Trusted general to Saul. Has an affair with Rizpah in series, leading to Saul's demise.

GOLIATH (30s) – Hulking general who serves King Achish. Killed by David in series.

LAMI (30s) – Goliath's twin brother and a general in Achish's army. Killed by David in series.

KING AGAG (50s) – Leader of the Amalekites. Killed by Samuel in pilot.

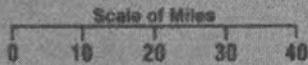
Additional Key Leads in Series (not introduced in Pilot)

ABIGAIL (25) – Wife of loathsome Nabal of Carmel, who has an affair with David and becomes his second wife.

URIAH (25) – David's friend and trusted warrior. Married to Bathsheba.

BATHSHEBA (25) – Wife of David's friend Uriah. Has affair with David, who kills Uriah so that he may be with her in series. Mother of **SOLOMON**, who becomes the third King of Israel and one of its wisest, greatest leaders of all time. An ancestor of Jesus Christ.

ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF KING SAUL



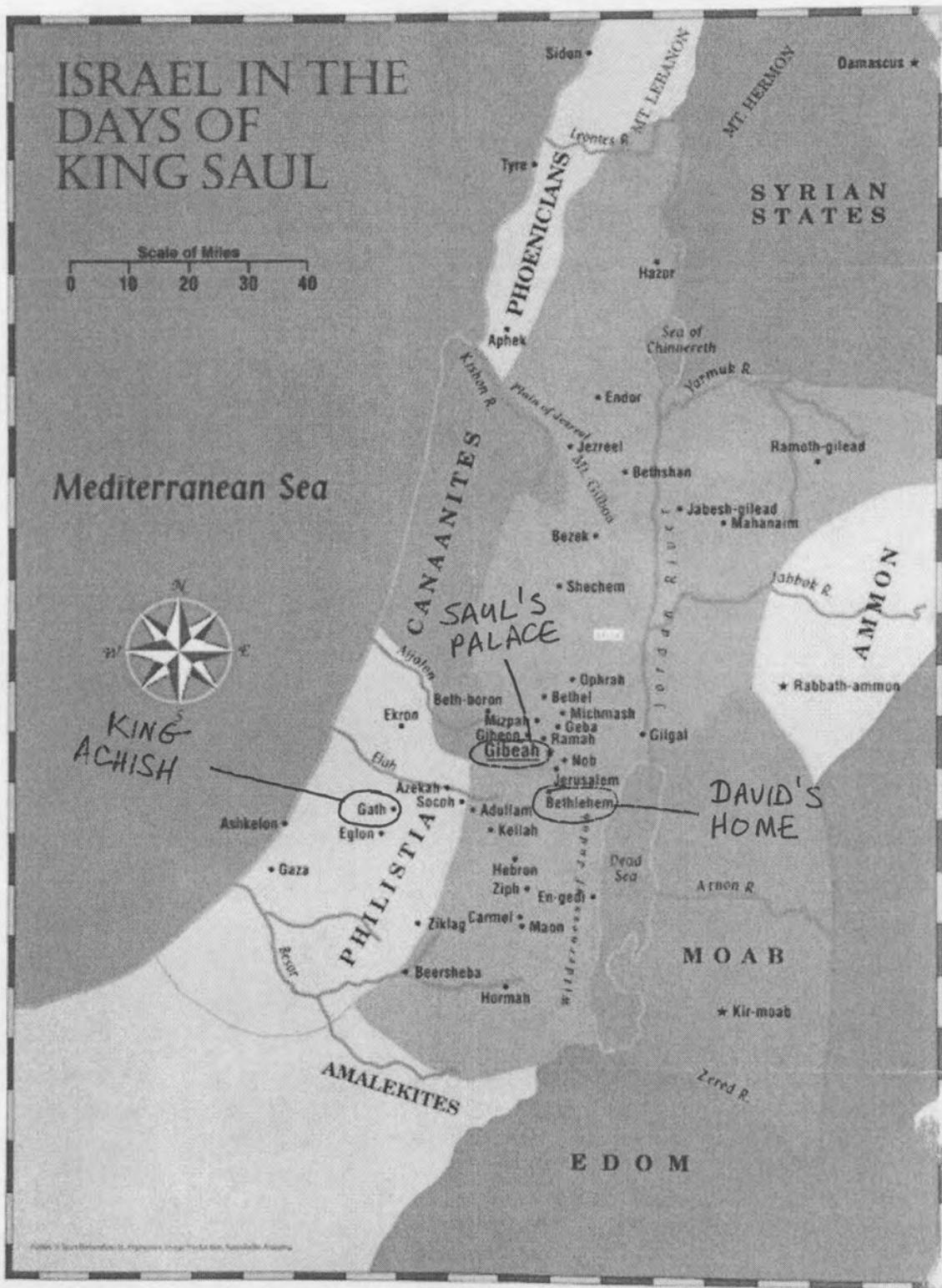
Mediterranean Sea



KING ACHISH

SAUL'S PALACE

DAVID'S HOME



Map of Israel in the days of King Saul, showing the location of King Achish, Saul's Palace, and David's Home.

1 ON THE STAR-FILLED NIGHT SKY 1

An unforgettable WOMAN'S VOICE bleeds in. One for the ages.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Give thanks to God, for He is good.
And let the redeemed of the Lord
God tell the story.

2 The night sky RIPPLES. The field of stars but a *reflection* in 2
a shimmering RIVER BED. A liquid canvas for the hazy images
of BEDOUINS wandering the desert taking shape in the water...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

For years after the Great Flood,
the Hebrews wandered in wastelands.
Multiplying in numbers, but finding
no place to settle. Hungry and
thirsty...their lives ebbed away.

3 A TRIBE OF PEOPLE drop to their knees in prayer... 3

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

So they cried out to God in their
trouble, and He delivered them from
suffering, making a covenant that
someday, He would deliver them to
His Promised Land.

4 ...and an IMAGE OF THE REGION appears in the water. The place 4
we now call Israel -- glistening in verdant green and rich
umber hues -- it is a Land of Milk & Honey.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

But not all of His People proved
loyal, and rebelled against God's
commands. So He subjected the
Hebrews to centuries of bitter
labor; leaving them helpless
in their servitude.

5 Golden PYRAMIDS emerge; a dark-skinned PHARAOH stands at the 5
Window of Appearances; HEBREW SLAVES are whipped in the brick
pits of Pithom...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

But God did not forget them. And
after 400 years of slavery, He
broke away their chains...

6 The WATER TURNS BLOOD RED; images of SWARMS OF LOCUSTS 6
consume the pyramids; Pharaoh holds a DEAD BABY in his arms.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 ...and sent the prophet Moses
 to bring them out of darkness...

7 An EXODUS OF 400,000 HEBREWS trudges across the desert. 7

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 ...and lead them to Israel, the
 Land of Milk and Honey. So that
 He might renew His covenant.

8 HEBREW LETTERS chiseled into STONE TABLETS by an unseen 8
 force. VILLAGES crop up out of the land.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 In Israel, they lived for hundreds
 of years -- ruled by judges from
 the twelve tribes who maintained
 God's will and established order
 among His people.

9 TWELVE TRIBES amassed on various hilltops; an ominous black- 9
 hooded JUDGE stands before them, his breastplate adorned with
 the identifying colored GEMSTONE of his tribe...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 But despite common history and
 common enemies, the tribes of
 Israel fought amongst themselves --
 victims of their own greed.

10 The tribes now BATTLE AMONGST THEMSELVES; Hebrew fighting 10
 Hebrew against the backdrop of villages razed by FIRE...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 So the Hebrews called out to God
 to brings them a *king* to reunite
 the tribes into a great nation.

11 Smoke from the fires twists into the ominous image of 11
 another BLACK HOODED FIGURE. Face cloaked in shadow. A
 jasper gemstone around his neck...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 And God answered their prayer --
 instructing the prophet Samuel to
 anoint *Saul* as Israel's first king.

...and we now see handsome SAUL (30) kneels before the black-
 hooded figure as he pours ANOINTING OIL over Saul's head.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 Saul of the tribe of Benjamin. Who
 would lead Israel through 30 years
 of unending war with its enemies.

CLOSER, the oil being poured over Saul's head turns to BLOOD.
 Flowing thick over his face. Staining his clothes.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 Who though often victorious, was
 made weary and weak by battle.
 Leaving his reign vulnerable...

12 And now we PAN UP from the water to find DAVID (20s) sleeping 12
 beside the river bed. A muscular man with short-cropped hair.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 ...to the challenges of Kings and
 Prophets.

Somewhere, the SICKENING SCREAM of a DYING ANIMAL erupts.

David roughly awakens. Another SCREAM jolts him to standing.
 He grabs his STAFF. Ears tuning to the nauseating sound of an
 ANIMAL GURGLING on its own blood and the SNARL OF A PREDATOR.

13 **EXT. HIGH GRASSES - NIGHT**

13

David walks cautiously through the dark meadow, his torso
 awash in the bluish glow of the moon. His vision obscured
 by the swaying grasses. Sounds of DYING ANIMALS ahead.

A sense that something could jump out at him at any time...

His breath MISTS the night air as he enters a section of
 matted grass to see...

A SLAUGHTERED LAMB

Gored on the ground, a handful of other sheep lay dead
 nearby. Mangled just the same. Then, that PREDATORY SNARL
 once more. David turns to see...

THE HINDQUARTERS OF AN ASIATIC LION

All muscle. It walks with the slow swagger of the well-fed.
 Dragging one of the dead sheep off as it disappears into the
 high, misty grass.

David watches it go, then walks towards the slaughtered
 sheep. Kneels down beside one of them and regards...

THE LAMB'S DEAD EYES

A mixture of entreaty and astonishment in its glassy stare. For a moment, it's as if David communes with the animal's spirit. He *failed* these animals -- his flock -- and knows it.

He offers up a prayer so quiet, we barely see his lips move.

DAVID

*Adonai: do not rebuke me in your
anger or discipline me in your
wrath. Have mercy on me, for my
soul is in deep anguish.*

(standing)

*Among the dead no one proclaims
your name.*

The wind gusts a bit. David looks up: clouds roil across the starry heavens. The world seemingly ALIVE with some deep and menacing force. *God lives here...*

...and He seems to be asking something of David.

14

EXT. KING'S WAY - GIBEAH - DAY

14

KING SAUL (now 60) rides his GALLOPING WAR HORSE. A scar runs down his brow, along his eye and into his cheek. Years at war have made him appear deeply troubled. We see it in his eyes.

He rides up through this NARROW URBAN GULCH created by stone dwellings on both sides -- as CITIZENS cheer the return of King Saul and his horse-bound warrior son ISH-BOSETH (26).

WIDER: Saul's ARMY follows behind them. A hodgepodge of 20,000 HEBREW WARRIORS jogging up the narrow roadway that bisects the terraced hillside town.

12 TRIBES in all, they have 12 different uniforms and 12 kinds of armor and weapons. Hardly representative of the "order and rank" of Alexander, Hannibal or Caesar.

As the army trundles past, we notice that the CITIZENS we thought to be cheering, are in fact CRYING OUT -- POOR and HUNGRY, EMACIATED and LISTLESS: they're starving.

Saul tics an irritated glance to his top General ABNER -- then gestures to a SUPPLY CART pulled by three horses, prompting its DRIVER to turn it abruptly into...

14A

THE PLAZA

14A

The supply cart comes to a stop and SOLDIERS throw open the back: it's filled with sacks of grain, livestock and fruit. The crowd CRUSHES FORWARD. Soldiers pass out the supplies.

WIDER: the scene turns chaotic. VILLAGERS shake the carts; sacks of grain spill onto the grounds; hordes of people struggle to grab the food.

ON SAUL

Eyes weary, he's powerless to provide for his people's needs. He's doing the best he knows how...but somehow, it's not enough. LIGHTNING CLAPS the angry sky above.

FLASH CUT TO:

15

EXT. PLAZA - FRONT OF PALACE - LATER

15

HARD RAIN falls on BENJAMITE DANCERS who move across the floor to the DRUMMING and beating rain that underscores...

A NARRATIVE DANCE

Performed for Saul, he sits on a throne atop the PALACE STEPS. Ish-Boseth behind him. Queen AHINOAM (39) and daughters MERAV (22) & MICHAL (20) beside him under a dripping CANOPY -- after all, this is Saul's Israel, not Great Pharaoh's Egypt.

The dancers depict Saul's most recent VICTORY IN BATTLE. Hardly synchronized, it's thrashing and passionate expression of war mixes art with story -- replete with colorful costumes, head pieces and props.

Ahinoam SQUEEZES SAUL'S HAND, happy for him. Their's is a true love. Both watching as Saul's DANCER DOPPELGANGER "slays" an "ENEMY" DANCER during "combat."

It ushers in a climax where the surrounding "enemies" all bow in a grand gesture to the "King of Israel."

The audience ERUPTS in applause...

AHINOAM

Does it please you, my king?

Saul's face tells the story: nothing pleases him anymore.

16

INT. SAUL'S BEDROOM - DAY

16

WINE is poured from a beaded skin into a goblet by Ahinoam. She hands it to Saul, who listlessly watches an AGING HARP PLAYER across the large room.

AHINOAM

You drove an army of 25,000 from our borders and shared the spoils of war with your people.

(MORE)

AHINOAM (Cont'd)

You deserve to drink the nectar of satisfaction on this day.

Saul takes the wine from her and drinks it. Far from a social drinker, Saul uses alcohol to self-medicate for what modern doctors would likely call bipolar disorder (and PTSD).

He hands the empty goblet back to Ahinoam, who maintains her buoyant demeanor, despite her awareness of his addiction.

SAUL

Where is Jonathan? A king should have his oldest son stand behind him in ceremonies.

AHINOAM

I'm sure he will ride through your gates soon enough. Jonathan had many men under his command and was much further north from your position in battle.

(off his scoff)

Besides, you've often asked that he make his presence known in our towns to the north. Perhaps he has taken a few extra days to fulfill your request.

SAUL

(to Harpist)

Your songs are weary. Be gone.

The Aging Harpist bows and quickly leaves. Ahinoam turns to the GUARD standing outside the door.

AHINOAM

Summon Ish-Boseth.

She crosses to Saul. Looks at him with sympathetic, loving eyes. They are a power couple for antiquity. Supportive.

SAUL

I sense there is more to Jonathan's absence than you expect.

AHINOAM

You're being paranoid.

SAUL

You do not know what ambitious men are capable of.

AHINOAM

I'd say I know well enough.

Ish-Boseth enters.

ISH-BOSETH
Your servant, mother.

AHINOAM
Send a detachment to all the
northern towns. Find your brother
and summon him to the palace. He
must stand with his father.

ISH-BOSETH
At once.

Ish-Boseth looks to his father, who nods with drunken eyes.

SAUL
You fought well in battle, my son,
and I'm proud of you. May God grant
your a large and beautiful family
now that we are home.

ISH-BOSETH
Thank you, father.

Ish-Boseth bows and exits. Saul turns and walks out onto...

16A

THE BALCONY

16A

Ahinoam joins him. His tortured face looking down over this city. She takes his face in her hands and looks into his troubled eyes. An affectionate and calming ritual of theirs...

AHINOAM
Close your eyes, my love. Quiet
your mind and see with your heart.
(as he closes his eyes)
Thirty years ago, your people asked
for a king. And you have succeeded
beyond all expectation. Who but you
could unite these twelve tribes?
Your sons and daughters love you as
much as you love them. And I love
you more than you will ever know.
(as he opens his eyes)
Lie with me.

He appreciates her loving offer. Takes her hand and gives it a loving squeeze. The look on his face apologetic -- he will not lie with her -- but he solemnly appreciates the invitation. He walks inside, leaving her alone.

NATHAN

What does God say, O prophet?

Samuel lowers his arms and slowly turns around to reveal that a TEAR OF BLOOD has emerged from his eye. His voice a register lower, filled with the Holy Spirit.

SAMUEL

He worries for his flock.

20

EXT. ALLEYWAY - BETHLEHEM - DAY

20

DOZENS OF SHEEP parade steadily ahead -- filling the tight space -- as SHEPHERDS usher them on. Among them, find David walking with his aging father, JESSE (60).

JESSE

Four last week, six this week. Your losses come at great expense, David...

DAVID

I know the tally, father -- what's worse is we do not suffer alone. The lion has taken to the flocks of our neighbors just the same.

JESSE

As Philistia expands their cities on the plains, the predators of the wild encroach closer to Israel.

DAVID

I will make reparations for our shortfall when we arrive to present our monthly contribution at the palace in Gibeah.

JESSE

I worry for you, David.

DAVID

Do not let your voice tremble, father: God will take care of us.

21

EXT. DESERT - DAY

21

Through the heat waves shimmering off the rocky desert floor, a LONE RIDER emerges.

ON THE HORSE: foam frothing its snout; hooves bleeding.

ON THE RIDER: Samuel in his bloodstained robes; wind in his wild hair; milky white eyes trained relentlessly ahead.

Olive trees rise up, dotting the rolling foothills.

MICHAL (PRE-LAP)

What if Mattiyahu is more than
the son of a governor? What if
he's a prophet?

UNDER A CANOPY: earthy beauty Merav changes into an engagement dress with the help of her more empirically-beautiful sister Michal.

MERAV

Just because a man hails from the
tribe of Judah, does not mean he
is destined to live a life of burnt
offerings and smoking entrails.

MICHAL

There's a line stretching back
generations. For all you know, you
could very well be in love with the
next man to speak with God.

MERAV

There's more to marriage than love,
Michal. Mother, would you tell her?

Ahinoam totals up the levies for each region of Israel, which is depicted on a piece of parchment -- a king's job, since Saul spends so much time at war, she's taken it over.

AHINOAM

Merav's marriage will help the
palace re-unite with the towns
of the south, and provide us a
convenient outpost to collect
levies and build up the national
stockpile.

MICHAL

How romantic.

AHINOAM

When the time comes, I expect your
marriage will do the same, Michal.

MICHAL

And what if I fall in love?

AHINOAM

So long as you fall in love with
someone of my choosing.

Michal forces a smile at that. Gestures towards her father Saul, sitting in a chair beside a small waterfall flowing from a little rock outcropping. A rare moment of peace.

MICHAL

Why is reconciling with the towns
to the south important to father?

Ahinoam shows Michal the map of Israel on the parchment. Israel in the center, surrounded on all sides by enemies.

AHINOAM

Living in the land of milk and
honey means wasps circle on all
sides. The palace exists to protect
our people from getting stung.
Especially from the south, where
Philistia endeavors to expand their
empire into our fertile territory --
and the parasites of Amalek raid
our farms and fields and steal from
our people.

(beat)

Your father has spent his life
fighting for this country. We need
Judah's support.

ON SAUL

He regards the pool of water at the waterfall's base. Sees his reflection...and that of Ish-Boseth coming up behind him.

ISH-BOSETH

I bring you news, dear father.

23

EXT. PLAINS OUTSIDE GIBEAH - DAY

23

David walks at the head of the flocks of sheep we saw previously. Another shepherd, JOAB (20s), walks beside him.

JOAB

A full day's walk away, but it
might as well be another world.

David looks up to see the TERRACED CITY OF GIBEAH -- inching up the foothills ahead, THE PALACE looms at the top.

JOAB (Cont'd)

Could you imagine living there?

DAVID

No.

24

EXT. COURTYARD GARDEN - SAUL'S PALACE - DAY

24

Saul's eldest son JONATHAN (30s) paces nervously, under the watch of a GUARD. Saul enters...

JONATHAN

Father...

He crosses to his father to embrace him...

SAUL

Jonathan the hero. I have been expecting you...

JONATHAN

It is good to see you again.

...but Saul quickly draws his sword. Takes Jonathan aback.

SAUL

Yours is the crooked tongue of the serpent.

25

EXT. KING'S WAY - GIBEAH - DAY

25

Samuel's eyes take in the narrow gulch between the buildings. People pointedly TURNING THEIR EYES FROM HIM. Scared.

He looks to Saul's terraced palace on the hilltop ahead, then pulls his horse to a stop in...

THE PLAZA

The same one as where the Benjamite dancers had previously been, Samuel climbs off the horse. Ties it to a post, when an IRATE BENJAMITE rushes over from his market cart.

IRATE BENJAMITE

You! Who do you think you are that you can place your beast among -- ?

But then he sees it's Samuel. Swallows his words in a panic.

IRATE BENJAMITE (Cont'd)

(bowing)

Prophet Samuel. I did not know.
May God forgive me.

With that, the man evaporates away. Samuel turns to a PEASANT BOY nearby. Hands him the reins to his horse and takes a swig from a WATER SKIN. Looks up at the palace again before he...

...removes an ENORMOUS SWORD from the scabbard strapped to the side of his horse...and walks towards the palace steps.

Saul has his sword trained on Jonathan.

SAUL

Ish-Boseth tells me you undertook further battles in the north after I returned to the palace.

JONATHAN

I know you ordered me home, Father, but we had the enemy on the run. I only did what seemed strategic.

SAUL

It is strategic if your aim is to show your courage as the next king.

JONATHAN

You misunderstand --

SAUL

Did you really think I wouldn't find out?

Saul pushes the blade roughly against his neck.

JONATHAN

I thought you'd be proud. Father, I saw an opportunity to defeat our enemy and I took it --

SAUL

And then feasted in celebration to further engender their loyalty.

JONATHAN

The men fought hard. They were hungry. I was only doing what I thought that you would do --

SAUL

But you are not me! I still sit on the throne.

JONATHAN

And all glory be to you, father. Please. If God demand your blade be bathed in the blood of your oldest child, then let it be, but please, father, know my heart is true.

Saul's eyes well with tears of anger, despair and confusion. His muscles tensing to do the impossible, when...

ISH-BOSETH (O.S.)

Father.

Saul turns to see Ish-Boseth enter. He stares at the sight of his father holding a sword to his brother's neck.

ISH-BOSETH (Cont'd)

The prophet Samuel has come.

The Prophet. The man who speaks to God. The timing of the intrusion visibly shakes Saul, who was poised to murder his child. Jonathan shuddering as Saul lowers his sword.

SAUL

As God spared Isaac from the hand of his father Abraham, so have you been spared this day. But that does not mean you are safe. Should I suspect that you, or anyone else, endeavor for my throne, I promise you, my blade will be swift and sharp.

27

INT. THRONE ROOM - PALACE - DAY

27

Samuel sits on Saul's throne. Rests his hand atop his enormous sword, stretching to the floor like a cane. He quite simply couldn't look more menacing if he tried.

Saul enters. Hollow-faced and bloodshot eyes, he stops at the sight of Samuel sitting on his throne.

SAUL

It has been many moons, Samuel.

No answer. Saul turns up his palms in a hopeful gesture...

SAUL (Cont'd)

Our land stands in peace. I pray God has spoken to you with pleasure about our recent victories?

SAMUEL

No.

(rising)

There is still more to be done.

An immediate sense of dread befalls Saul. *More war.*

SAUL

What more? I have not yielded an inch of God's Promised Land to our invaders.

(MORE)

SAUL (Cont'd)

I have given them the lash with every turn and provided for my people as God commanded.

SAMUEL

Some humility would suit you.

SAUL

Modesty died with the time of Judges. My people asked for a king.

Samuel takes the subtle insult. Raises his enormous sword to point to Saul.

SAMUEL

Were it up to me, people would not turn their attention from their God to their soup pots...or to their King.

SAUL

But it is not up to you. So lower your sword and tell me what more God asks. Speak His words for only you can hear His voice.

SAMUEL

You will lead a mighty army on the oldest of our foes: Amalek. You will destroy their men. You will destroy their women. You will destroy their children.

SAUL

This is madness.

SAMUEL

You will even destroy every single animal they possess. You will erase their presence from God's world.

SAUL

You speak of *genocide*...

SAMUEL

God speaks of *retribution* as Amalek stood against Moses when he led our people out of Egypt. They killed the weak, the young and now God commands you -- *King* -- to smite them in His name.

SAUL

Please. Do not ask this of me.

SAMUEL

Fail Him on this, Saul, and He will
erase *you* from the throne.

Samuel walks out, leaving Saul to grapple with the enormity
of what's been asked of him.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

28

EXT. CAMPSITE - OUTSIDE GIBEAH - NIGHT

28

Firelight. A crude SKETCH OF A LION on a piece of leather, it's drawn by the hand of David.

JESSE (O.S.)

The hour is late, my son.

David looks to his father, who emerges from the shadows with some wood for their fire.

JESSE (Cont'd)

You should sleep. You will need your wits about you with the queen.

David looks up the hill at the city of Gibeah, now alight with torches. The palace aglow in moonlight at the top.

DAVID

Soon, father.

Jesse steps closer, regards the picture with curiosity.

JESSE

On what do you reflect?

DAVID

Samson killed a lion with his bare hands. He tore him apart, bit by bit. It's hard to believe, having seen these beasts.

JESSE

How do you think the lion killed your sheep?

DAVID

He is bigger. Stronger.

JESSE

And who is bigger or stronger than a man who walks with God?

DAVID

No one.

JESSE

Samson knew this. You must trust in God He has given you what you need.

29

EXT. PLAZA - FRONT OF PALACE - MORNING

29

Monthly tax day. COLLECTORS accept sacks of grain, baskets of produce and livestock from CITIZENS OF ISRAEL who have made the trip to Gibeah to present their respective bounties.

AHINOAM (PRE-LAP)

The king's general tells me your seven brothers have enlisted. Why are you not among them?

Ahinoam sits on a throne before a line of MEN from villages all over Israel who wait to pay tribute. David, at the front, passes a tithe slip to MORANA, Ahinoam's chief-of-staff.

DAVID

I manage my family's affairs now that my father's age prevents such things.

Ahinoam glances over to Morana, who looks at the tithe slip in her hand, shakes her head.

AHINOAM

Your father is a longtime man of honor in Bethlehem and has served his king well. Be that as it may, your pledge of livestock is short this month. You must make up for the deficiency some other way.

DAVID

I stand as your servant, my queen.

Given David's virility, there's something about the comment that sparks with the queen.

30

INT. PALACE - DAY

30

David and Joab walk among SERVANTS being led down the hall by Morana.

JOAB

Such aplomb I have never heard. I expected we'd be making bricks in the mud pits like our forefathers.

DAVID

I did what I could to get us reprieve from sun and dust.

JOAB

Not to mention, it's not everyday
you get to see the princess of
Israel.

31 **EXT. PALACE COURTYARD - DAY**

31

Princess Merav watches as Saul is carried into the space atop
his throne by David, Joab and FOUR OTHER MEN.

They move through the WEALTHY GUESTS and place him down next
to Ahinoam, who sits on her throne on a small stage.

David catches Ahinoam's eye, bows slightly in thanks.

31A **EXT. PALACE COURTYARD - LATER**

31A

Merav mingles with WEALTHY GUESTS. She's the belle of the
ball. Practiced and glowing. At the edge of the room, David
and Joab stand at attention with the other servants.

DAVID

Is she everything you hoped for?

JOAB

And more.

DAVID

You say that as though God will
grace you with her attention.

JOAB

God works in mysterious ways.

DAVID

You know my brother Nethanel was
to be her suitor. Before God, my
witness. My brothers ahead of him
are already with family, so the job
of marrying well fell to Nethanel.

JOAB

What happened?

DAVID

My father met with the Queen...

He nods to Ahinoam, who introduces Merav to JONAH BEN HORAB
(50s) -- adorned in lavish robes and beads of Persia.

DAVID (Cont'd)

...but she found a better option
in Jonah ben Horab of Hebron.

JOAB

They say Jonah of Hebron smuggles
iron from Philistia -- now his son
stands in line to the throne?

He nods towards MATTIYAHU (25), who Jonah introduces to Merav
and Ahinoam.

DAVID

That is none of my concern.

CLOSER: ON MERAV AND AHINOAM

MERAV

It is a pleasure to meet you,
Mattiyahu ben Jonah.

MATTIYAHU

The finest orators of Hebron have
spoken tales of your beauty, my
lady -- yet not a word holds weight
to your presence.

Merav likes that. Ahinoam looks to Jonah -- *this is good* --
when Saul drifts up.

SAUL

Has the meeting been completed?

ALL

(bowing)
My king.

AHINOAM

(politely, re: his tone)
Mattiyahu and Merav have but just
been acquainted with each other, my
king. We should let them walk.

SAUL

(to Jonah and Mattiyahu)
We must have words.

It's unusual, but no one refuses the King.

JONAH

Your servant.

They both bow, then follow Saul as he steps into another
room. Leaves Ahinoam masking her discontent.

32

INT. KITCHEN - PALACE - MOMENTS LATER

32

A CHICKEN is gutted by a COOK. Saul, Jonah and Mattiyahu speak quietly amidst the bustle of food preparation.

JONAH

What you're asking is highly unusual, my king.

SAUL

(re: his turquoise beads)

I see you adorn yourself in *pirouzeh* stones from the east. Perhaps from the mines in Sinai, yes? Perhaps you even procure them through *trade*. Yet I wonder what a governor of Hebron has to offer them in return for such precious gems?

(beat)

It is best you respond honestly.

JONAH

I trade them iron from the Philistia cartel. My son as well. We have an honest and fruitful relationship with King Achish of Gath who controls the monopoly on this robust commodity.

SAUL

I would like your son to speak with King Achish on my behalf -- to procure weapons of iron for my campaign against Amalek. With opposing numbers so great, I can ill afford arming my men with lesser metals.

MATTIYAHU

Yes, yes, of course. I am honored to be of service to my new family.

33

INT. SERVICE AREA OFF COURTYARD - PALACE - DAY

33

Michal warms WAX in a pestle. David emerges from inside without seeing her. Gets a water pitcher.

MICHAL

Excuse me, could you help me with this stamp? I can't seem to manage with just two hands.

DAVID

Of course.

David crosses, holds the pestle as she pulls out a small bronze STAMP and seals a ribbon around a HAND WOVEN BLANKET.

MICHAL

My engagement gift for the princess.

DAVID

It's beautiful. Did you weave it yourself?

MICHAL

Indeed I did, thank you.

DAVID

We don't have women of such skill where I am from in Bethlehem. Are you in service here at the palace?

Michal realizes he doesn't know she is a princess as well.

MICHAL

Oh, yes. I'm the royal seamstress. Sadly, though, while my affections for the princess run deep, words have never come easily.

David sees a WINE JUG on the table. Coyly smiles at her.

DAVID

Here. Maybe water isn't what you should be drinking.

MICHAL

That's the royal wine.

DAVID

Then we'll imagine I am the king...

He pours two cups. Places one in her hand.

DAVID (Cont'd)

...and you my queen.

She likes his confidence. Their eyes sparking on each other's.

MICHAL

You are bold.

DAVID

Or maybe just thirsty like you.

She drinks, then...

MICHAL

Le-hayyim tovim u-le-shalom. Ad me'ah shanah. Natreih Rahamana u-varkhei.

DAVID

Good life and peace to you until a hundred years. May God guard and bless you.

MICHAL

Something like that?

DAVID

It seems you've found inspiration.

Joab enters the space, prompting.

JOAB

They need us.

DAVID

(bows playfully)
The throne calls me, my queen.

His easy charms bring a smile to her face as he exits.

34 **EXT. COURTYARD - PALACE - DAY**

34

Saul and Ahinoam sit on thrones -- being carried out by David, Joab and the other strong men. Everyone CLAPPING.

AHINOAM (PRE-LAP)

Iron weapons or not, you have never mounted an attack of this size.

35 **INT. ROYAL WASH AREA - NIGHT**

35

Ahinoam removes her formal clothes for evening attire. Saul is WASHED by a HANDMAIDEN.

AHINOAM

Not to mention, moving that many men that far south will empty our grain reserves and cattle pens. People will starve.

SAUL

I must answer God's call.

AHINOAM

Is it God's call or that of Samuel?

Saul turns and looks pointedly at her. A thought he's asked himself before but never dared articulate.

AHINOAM (Cont'd)

God gave plagues and parted seas for Moses. He caused the walls of Jericho to fall at the sound of horns and made the sun stop in the sky for Joshua. How has he fought for King Saul? Or do you expect this will be the battle where He decides to finally do so? And what about food for our people back in our cities? Will we be eating manna from the sky while your army is off fighting?

Something in her rhetoric sparks deep inside Saul. Morana emerges from behind a curtain...

MORANA

(discretely to Ahinoam)

The king's concubine is ripe for the extension of the royal bloodline, my Queen.

Ahinoam regards a FEMALE FORM on the bed behind the curtain. Nods. Saul approaches her. Grips Ahinoam's hand for a moment. And then moves beyond the curtain.

36

INT. SERVICE AREA - PALACE - DAY

36

David changes out of his servant garb into his normal attire.

AHINOAM (O.S.)

Tell me something, David.

David turns to her. Bows.

DAVID

Your servant, my queen.

AHINOAM

In your time in the wilderness, I gather you play the harp. That is true of most shepherds, is it not?

DAVID

Yes, my queen. There are many hours spent with nothing to do.

AHINOAM

The court harpist is old and without passion.

(MORE)

AHINOAM (Cont'd)

You will next visit the palace when my husband marches south. At that time, you will make up for the tithe your family owes as court harpist while he is away.

She steps closer to his, holding his eyes, the prurient nature of her invitation clear.

DAVID

What of my king?

AHINOAM

He and I understand the rules of our reign and it suits us both. Yours is not to question.

DAVID

As you command, my queen.

37

EXT. KING'S WAY - GIBEAH - DAY

37

Joab and David walk down the road from the palace above.

JOAB

Did she say she needed *two* players?

DAVID

Stop.

JOAB

Because two harps can make you feel things in a way that one harp --

DAVID

Joab.

Joab smiles. As they continue to walk...

JOAB

You know what the best part of this is? The king and his tribal militias will probably never even return from the South, David. You very well may find yourself living in the palace in his stead.

David rolls his eyes.

38

EXT. GATH, PHILISTIA - ESTABLISHING - DAY

38

A sprawling city on the plains, BLACK SMOKE and SPARKS OF FIRE rise up from foundries. Caravans of IRON WEAPONS come and go. This is a city of industry. A booming city.

MATTIYAHU (PRE-LAP)

Thank you for seeing me...

39

INT. PALACE OF ACHISH - GATH - DAY

39

Mattiyahu stands before imposing KING ACHISH OF GATH (40s), who picks the meat off a RABBIT with his fingers. Twin Philistine generals GOLIATH and LAMI behind. They're huge.

MATTIYAHU

...I would not petition you unless it be an urgent matter. King Saul of Israel marches on the Amalekites. He humbly petitions that you authorize an immediate end to the embargo on the sale of Philistine iron to our nation so we may purchase swords from your foundries.

KING ACHISH

Saul does nothing humbly. What is he prepared to pay for my swords?

MATTIYAHU

He will pay double the asking price of your merchants. Further, as incentive, he offers a moratorium on combat between our nations for five seasons, unless one should encroach on his land. He is willing to meet on the border at Ziklag to sign such a treaty.

King Achish looks to Goliath and Lami.

KING ACHISH

Thank you, Mattiyahu ben Jonah. We have enjoyed many fruitful seasons of commerce together. Please be a guest in my palace until I reach a decision.

Mattiyahu bows. Is shown out of the room by Guards.

KING ACHISH (Cont'd)

What do you think, General Goliath?

GOLIATH

It's a Hebrew trick. What is to say that we don't supply them with the weapons and they march on us?

LAMI

We outnumber them five to one,
brother. And that's before their
ranks are diminished through battle
with the bottom-feeders of Amalek.
Let these armies destroy each
other, so we can then attack Israel
for her fertile ground and gentle
climate. Capturing their land is
the only way to expand our borders.

King Achish looks at his two twin generals, considering.

40

EXT. GUEST QUARTERS - PALACE AT GATH - EVENING

40

Mattiyahu has sex with a PHILISTINE WOMAN in a bathtub. A sudden KNOCK at the door, Mattiyahu's annoyed.

The woman climbs out of the tub and wraps a robe around herself. Opens the door to reveal Goliath.

GOLIATH

Leave us.

The Philistine Woman leaves and Mattiyahu puts on a robe.

MATTIYAHU

Not the most opportune timing,
Goliath, my old friend.

GOLIATH

I bring good news. King Achish has
ruled in your favor. There will be
iron given to Israel.

MATTIYAHU

Saul will be pleased. What numbers
may I provide?

GOLIATH

You will get one iron sword for
one Hebrew man.

Huh? Mattiyahu furrows his brow, when Goliath UNSHEATHES HIS
IRON SWORD and RAMS IT THROUGH MATTIYAHU'S STOMACH.

GOLIATH (Cont'd)

Goodbye, my old friend.

He TWISTS the sword and RIPS IT UP towards Mattiyahu's chest.

END OF ACT II

As she prays, Saul looks out the tent flap, as if concerned. Then to another flap. His paranoia unnerving to witness.

SAUL

You will not leave my sight until we know for certain that you are with child. Then you and our boys can return to your home.

RIZPAH

They'd like to watch you in battle.

SAUL

They are too young to see the horrors of war.

She watches him looking out the flap. Worried about him.

RIZPAH

Your camp is secure, my love. Come sleep.

The notion sounds quaint and foreign. He turns from the flap and comes back to her side of the bed. Sad and exhausted.

SAUL

What do you see when you sleep? Our children's faces? God's sunbeams as the clouds part? I see the faces of the men I've torn apart. The women I've given to my soldiers for use as vessels to build our numbers. The children I've murdered...all so I might meet the unending demands of a God who I can neither see or hear.

RIZPAH

God is revealed as you seek Him. I have spoken to your wife about this and she is right: you must try and quiet your mind.

He regards the candle on the bedside with drunken eyes.

SAUL

How can a king's mind be quiet when his people moan with every rise and set of the sun? Samuel tells me to attend to the problems he and the judges before could not surmount -- and then objects when I do not carry out their solutions in a way he approves.

(MORE)

SAUL (Cont'd)

He dares to sit on my throne and mock my rule, but what was our lot when *he* governed the land? Were we a nation or tribes? Were our borders secure? Did people eat meat more often than grain? The tribes cried to God for a king and *God chose me*. Through Samuel, yes. But it was *I* who was picked without question or quarrel. *I* was anointed *Saul: the one who is asked for*. And now the jealous old man requests I commit atrocities not known since the time of Pharaoh.

(beat)

Is that how I am to be remembered?
As Saul The Butcher?

RIZPAH

If you carry out God's command,
then you are Saul The Deliverer.

Her words warm the ice in his heart enough to spark something akin to hope in his eyes. But the tent flap opens: Abner.

ABNER

A rider approaches.

51

EXT. SAUL'S WAR TENT - NIGHT

51

Saul stands beside Ish-Boseth and Abner, looking out into the foggy night. Jonathan sidles up next to Saul, who casts a sideways glance to his eldest son...

...then returns his glance to A RIDER who approaches up the dirt road atop a horse. It comes to a stop before them. Abner grabs the reins. Mattiyahu. His dead body tied to a splint atop the horse to keep him propped up.

ISH-BOSETH

The Philistines have given their
answer...

JONATHAN

And our sister shall be without her
husband from Judah.

More problems.

SAUL

Cut him down.

A BRONZE SWORD swung by Jonathon cracks when it strikes against LEATHER BODY ARMOR, which is strapped to a tree. Jonathan turns to Saul and Ish-Boseth.

JONATHAN

Our weapons do not hold up against the seasoned leather that the warriors of Amalek wear.

ISH-BOSETH

May wear. Jonathan knows not of what he speaks. Only rumor.

Saul considers that a moment.

JONATHAN

What will you do, father? Perhaps we should turn back until we are better armed.

ISH-BOSETH

And waste the cost of our passage? You've emptied the granaries of Israel to bring us here. Should you return without trophy, the people will sour beyond repair.

JONATHAN

Father, listen to me: Samuel did not say when you must destroy the Amalekites -- only that God said you *should*. Let us wait til spring. We'll be better provisioned. Morale among the men will have bloomed.

JONATHAN

We can negotiate for weapons with Ammon perhaps or...

ISH-BOSETH

You've lost sight of reality, brother...

SAUL

No.

Jonathan and Ish-Boseth turn to their haunted father, who picks up the broken bronze sword from the ground. Regards it.

SAUL (Cont'd)

The serpents of Amalek struck Moses's flock when they were exhausted and weak. They did not engage them in battle so much as murder them in cold blood. We will do the same.

(MORE)

SAUL (Cont'd)
 (to Ish-Boseth)
 Tell the men that tomorrow night
 we march. And God willing, we will
 kill the Amalekites as they sleep.

ISH-BOSETH
 Your servant, father.

He bows and walks into the fog. Jonathan regards his father,
 who never takes his eyes off the broken sword.

53

EXT. VALLEY - NIGHT

53

David sleeps...

...and then, a GROWL. David opens his eyes.

Silence. David sits up. Sees nothing in the surrounding mist.
 But then, ANOTHER LOW GROWL. It prompts him to turn to see...

AN ASIATIC LION

Perched on the rock outcropping behind. Looking down on him.

David slowly stands. Squares his body to the face of death
 glaring at him. Another GROWL. The lion begins to pace down
 the rock -- a signal of sorts: *you don't have to be involved.*

But David moves in concert. Walking in the dark valley to
 block the lion's path towards its prey...keeping himself
 between his flock and the lion on the rock. Eyes always on
 the beast. And so the lion stops. Turns to David and bares
 its teeth with a low GROWL. As if saying: *bad choice.*

Every muscle in David's body goes taut.

DAVID
 (almost inaudible prayer)
*Away from me, all you who do evil,
 for Adonai has heard my weeping...*

He slowly crouches down...eyes trained on the lion as he
 drops his hand to the ground and picks up a ROCK...

DAVID (Cont'd)
 (getting louder)
*He has heard my cry for mercy; He
 accepts my prayer...*

...and places it in his sling as he stands up. Emboldened.

DAVID (Cont'd)
*All my enemies will turn back or be
 put to shame.*

The lion senses the crescendo of David's courage and...

LUNGES AT DAVID

Who takes a powerful step forward and simultaneously SLINGS THE ROCK -- striking the Lion in the head. Sends it landing off-balance, momentarily jarred. David quickly grabs his staff as the lion spins to attack -- and JABS THE LION upside its head with the staff.

But the beast isn't going to go quietly. It LUNGES again at David, who unsheathes his DAGGER and PLUNGES IT IN THE LION'S THROAT -- driving the blade in, BLOOD sprays out over him.

David doesn't recoil though, holding the beast atop him. Looking him in the eye, we feel a sense of communion between these two beings. As if the lion is as impressed as he is confused by what has just transpired.

Finally, the lion's body goes limp. David breathes hard. Removes the knife. Glances at his flock BLEATING in fear, then stands tall. Dagger in hand...

...and looks up to the night sky. Thick, ominous clouds roil in the heavens.

The wind whips: *God fights for David.*

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

54

EXT. HILLTOP - SOMEWHERE IN AMALEK - NIGHT

54

TRIBAL DRUMMING welcomes SILHOUETTES of THOUSANDS OF HEBREW SOLDIERS as they crest the long stretch of earth overlooking the misty valley below.

Ominous spectres in the glow of the moon.

CLOSER: Saul rides on his horse...Jonathan at his side... Ish-Boseth at his other side. Looking down into the misty valley from where the drumming and chanting originates.

JONATHAN

There is no sleep tonight for
Amalek, father.

DOWN BELOW

A MASSIVE TENT VILLAGE spread out BENEATH THE CANOPY OF TREES in this foggy valley. TORCHES cast shadows of DANCERS engaged in some kind of impassioned ritual.

ISH-BOSETH

They are in ceremony.

Saul regards the situation, calculating his next move.

55

EXT. AMALEK TENT VILLAGE - NIGHT

55

FOG fills this dismal gully where an Amalekite ritual takes place. Torches illuminate an AMALEKITE PROPHET -- who barks a prayer into the night.

Around him, AMALEKITE PRIESTS howl, accentuating an eerie dirge chanted by the FAITHFUL. AMALEKITE SORCERESSES shriek in tongues to god Moloch as WOMEN undulate in rapture.

Amalekite KING AGAG watches from atop a THRONE carried by SIX HANDLERS. Pierced. Tattooed. He wears an elaborate taxidermy headdress with TWO SERPENTS on it. His black eyes regarding...

A TEENAGE BOY

Shirtless, eyes glazed over, he's probably been drugged. Led in rope bindings by ACOLYTES OF MOLOCH towards an ALTAR OF FIRE -- billowing noxious black smoke into this dark night, the Sorceresses dance around it as the Acolytes guide the Teenage Boy THROUGH THE FLAMES. He SCREAMS in pain.

56 **EXT. HILLTOP - RESUME**

56

That same scream ECHOES in the night. Saul stares with haunted eyes, chilled by what he's hearing.

JONATHAN

Shall we retreat to camp, father?

Saul doesn't answer. Just continues to stare at the fires below. Focusing on the area of the scream's origin.

57 **EXT. AMALEK TENT VILLAGE - RESUME**

57

King Agag watches The Acolytes now guide the smoldering Teenage Boy to a PILE OF ROCKS. His burned body in shock. He pants, head lolling.

As the Amalekite Prophet lowers his head, we see his eyes have NO IRISES. He pulls a KNIFE from some hot coals. Turns to King Agag as the drums stop.

AMALEKITE PROPHET

The God Ba'al Moloch awaits your call to sacrifice.

All eyes on King Agag, he looks at the faces of his people.

KING AGAG

Obsession with the family stands in the way of one's progress on the upward path. Do not turn your eyes upward or to family for love or help. Moloch lies within you. Serve yourself at all times.

He nods towards a hideous wooden IDOL of a WINGED DEITY.

KING AGAG (Cont'd)

In sacrifice, we rid ourselves of the flies that scourge our world -- and embolden the self.

ALL

Praised be Ba'al Moloch.

King Agag nods to The Prophet. At that, the DRUMS RESUME and the Prophet approaches the Teenager with the glowing knife.

58 **INT. HILLTOP - RESUME**

58

JONATHAN

Father, what are your orders...?

Suddenly, his SWORD BREAKS on leather armor (just as Jonathan predicted), allowing another AMALEKITE SOLDIER to spear his horse --

-- which collapses, throwing Saul to the ground.

He turns to see the shadow of a SWORD poised to strike him down, when the attacker's CHEST GUSHES BLOOD -- a spear protruding through it from the back. The Amalekite Soldier falls to the ground to reveal Jonathan atop his horse.

JONATHAN

Father!

Saul furrows his brow, surprised that he's alive. Saved by his Jonathan. Who extends a hand to his father.

JONATHAN (Cont'd)

I stand by you always, my king.

The moment is not lost on Saul, who takes his hand and is hoisted up into the saddle behind Jonathan as the battle rages on all around them.

62 **INT. MOUTH OF A CAVE - NIGHT**

62

A DAGGER comes down into thick flesh. But it's not part of the battle. It's held by David -- awash in the moonlight -- who eviscerates the lion's carcass.

He pauses, out of breath. Winces at the brutal smell. Looks to his full flock -- grazing nearby -- then back to the lion as he proudly continues his work.

63 **INT. BATTLE OF AMALEK - LATER THAT NIGHT**

63

The Amalekite Warriors shuttle Agag through the dense forest. Slashing Hebrew Warriors. Shielding him as best they can...

...but they are over-run. Swarmed from all side. PILES of bodies laying in waste...

...when Agag stumbles and falls into the mud.

KING AGAG

Wait...!

But the few remaining Guards don't hear him. Fighting. Dying in the violent embrace of close contact combat.

Panic befalls Agag. He looks at the battle raging all around him. Closing in...

He stands. Looks up at SHADOWS FIGHTING SHADOWS. Fight-or-flight taking hold. He grabs a SWORD from a FALLEN HEBREW and SLASHES ANOTHER HEBREW...then...

RUNS INTO THE FOGGY TREES

Fleeing through SILHOUETTES CLASHING WITH SILHOUETTES. He zigzags through DEAD BODIES on the ground. His men.

His Women...

His Children...

Agag stops in his tracks -- as he sees the shadow of a HEBREW warrior SLAYING AN OX. Turns to see ANOTHER HEBREW slaying a goat. He stares confused at this act of utter destruction -- *what is happening?* -- when a *SSSHING* rings out.

Agag spins but a HEBREW WARRIOR slashes Agag's HAMSTRING. Buckles him to the mud in pain.

The Hebrew Warrior swings around to strike him down...

KING AGAG (Cont'd)

Please --

...when he sees King Agag's headdress: this is in fact the king. He turns and calls over his shoulder.

HEBREW WARRIOR

Prince of Israel! Anyone come forth!

An instant later, Ish-Boseth emerges on his horse from the fog of war. Dismounts. Steps closer, slowing as he sees who is kneeling on the ground before him.

KING AGAG

Stay your blade. I am their king.

64 **EXT. DESERT - NIGHT**

64

In the moonlight, David drags the dead lion alongside his flock with a rope. The fires of Gibeah in the distance.

65 **EXT. BATTLE OF AMALEK - LATER**

65

Ish-Boseth stands before the kneeling King Agag. In the same place we last saw him, only now encircled by HEBREW WARRIORS who stare at him with muddy and bloodied faces.

Agag's eyes shifts to see a HORSE emerge from the mist. Jonathan. He lets his rider to the ground: *Saul*.

He takes a few steps towards Agag. Accepts Ish-Boseth's sword and lowers his hood.

ISH-BOSETH

It is my honor for you to kill him
with my sword, father.

Saul takes the sword. Regards the sum total of death surrounding him. The incredible loss of life. An aura of resentment crossing his face: he was made to do this.

KING AGAG

Great Saul of Israel: such ferocity
in battle I have never seen.

Saul looks to Agag.

KING AGAG (Cont'd)

You've taken my people and my
children and for this, I surrender.

(hands up, head bowed)

I petition you for mercy. You have
punished us in vengeance, the likes
of which I have never seen. But
while you have killed many animals,
I must tell you: we have valleys
full of livestock. They graze on
tall grass and numbers in the
thousands.

Jonathan leans in.

JONATHAN

He speaks the truth, father. I saw
them myself.

KING AGAG

Take them. Let it be a tribute to
your prowess in battle, Great Saul:
feed your people on the bounty of
Amalek. Flaunt me as your prisoner,
I do not care. But spare my life as
a courtesy between monarchs.

Saul stares at Agag's face...

JONATHAN

Agag's enslavement would unify the
nation as nothing before. The final
vindication of the prophet Moses.
It would show that our king is to
be feared, but he is also merciful.

Saul considers his son's counsel...

SAUL

Samuel said every man, woman, child
and animal. But today *I* am the one
who speaks...

...his hand tightens on the hilt of his sword. With surging
anger, he raises it up and...

...SLAMS IT INTO THE GROUND NEXT TO AGAG.

It surprises everyone.

SAUL (Cont'd)

Agag of Amalek shall be paraded
throughout the land before my
people as they feast upon his
creatures.

(beat)

Saul of Israel commands it.

END OF ACT IV

DAVID

My body held no fear. It was as
if someone else was fighting in
my stead. As if...

JESSE

What?

David's eyes notice the clouds. The sky above alive somehow.

DAVID

God is with me. In my heart. I feel
Him as surely as it beats.

(to his father)

Your words were true, father: It
was God who gave me strength.

70

EXT. THE VALLEY OF THE BATTLE - DAY

70

BLACK SMOKE fills the air over acres and acres of burning
dead bodies. Men, women, children, livestock.

The horrors of war that remind us why we strive for peace.

Then, the sound of HOOFBEATS as a horse appears through the
smoke. Walking through the mud among the bodies. The prophet
Samuel in the saddle, a black scarf over his face. He looks
at the genocide around him.

71

EXT. TOWN OF CARMEL - DAY

71

Samuel rides into this small crossroads town on the plain.
Climbs off his horse before a water trough. Takes a scoop of
the cold, clear liquid with his hands, when his ears prick
up to the sound of a CELEBRATION coming from...

THE OTHER END OF TOWN

Where dozens of HEBREW WARRIORS feast on carcasses roasted
over open fires by the WOMEN of the town. Some dance to music
around the burnt idol of Ba'al Moloch. A trophy of war.

Samuel watches as a COUPLE passes him from the festivities.
Happy, well-fed and full of wine, they're incognizant of
Samuel's identity.

DRUNK MAN

Come brother and drink of wine not
water! King Saul has defeated the
Amalekites. He parades their
slave king throughout our land.
Come eat their beasts as spoils.

The Drunk Man puts his hand on Samuel's shoulder. But in doing so, realizes who he has just been talking to...

DRUNK MAN (Cont'd)
 Prophet Samuel...
 (quickly bowing)
 I beg your forgiveness for speaking
 to you. Spare me from God's wrath.

Samuel stares at the man a moment...then walks off past him.

72

EXT. CLIFF SIDE - DAY

72

King Achish stands with Goliath, looking at something in the valley below. Lami walks over to them.

LAMI
 News from the South, my brother:
 Saul's army defeats the Amalekites
 at great cost to his own men. Their
 morale is high, but their numbers
 have been diminished.

GOLIATH
 This is what we'd hoped for.

King Achish doesn't shift his gaze from whatever he's looking at in the valley below the cliff.

KING ACHISH
 Send word to the men that we march
 on Israel. The Hebrews' land is
 ripe for the taking.

GOLIATH
 At your will.

Goliath and Lami bow, walk away from Achish. And it's only now that we see he looks out over...

AN ARMY OF 100,000

Filling the valley floor below, it's an invasion force for the ages -- armored INFANTRY with IRON SWORDS; CALVARY on WAR HORSES; ARCHERS on CHARIOTS; CATAPULTS and SIEGE TOWERS.

73

INT. ROOM - PALACE - DAY

73

Merav softly weeps over Mattiyahu's dead body, laid out on a slab of stone.

Ahinoam enters. Crosses to her daughter and pulls her into a warm hug. Absorbs Merav's pain into her own body in a way that only mother's can do...

AHINOAM
 (just a whisper)
 Cry this night, sweet daughter.
 But let your eyes take in brighter
 views come the morning.

Merav pulls back from Ahinoam a bit. Stares squarely into her beautiful, strong, wise face.

AHINOAM (Cont'd)
 A woman need not be defined by the
 man she marries. Know this and you
 will never cry again.

Merav's face registers true appreciation for this bold and progressive wisdom.

74 **EXT. PALACE STEPS - MAGIC HOUR** 74

David walks up the wide entrance to this imposing structure.

75 **INT. SERVICE ROOM - PALACE - MAGIC HOUR** 75

David changes into his servant's clothes. He leaves the room, bumping headlong into Michal.

DAVID
 Hello.

MICHAL
 Isn't this a fair surprise...

DAVID
 It seems I'll be sharing the palace
 with you for a while, my queen.

She smiles at the replayed joke. An electric current runs through both of them, when...

AHINOAM (O.S.)
 Michal, have you --

...Ahinoam rounds the corner behind her daughter. Catching them both off guard.

MICHAL
 Mother...

Mother? David fights to keep his cover as he realizes that the actual queen is this girl's mother.

DAVID
 (bows)
 My queen.

MICHAL
We met at Merav's party, I was --

AHINOAM
(to David)
The harp is in the king's court.
You will go and find it. Now.

There's no doubt who is in charge here. David bows again.

DAVID
Yes, my queen.
(to Michael)
Princess.

He backs away. Ahinoam grins at Michal -- *stay away* -- then moves on down the hall.

76

EXT. MYSTIC CIRCLE OF STONES - GIGAL - NIGHT

76

An imposing group of standing stones. FIRES rage in braziers on the outskirts. King Saul wears ceremonial robes. Receives bows of congratulations from those assembled. Turns to see...

SAMUEL

Standing in the center of the circle now. Backlit by fires. Surrounded by the clergy and generals of Israel.

SAUL
Great Prophet...welcome. And
blessed be you to God, as I have
done all that you asked of me.

SAMUEL
What then is this bleating of sheep
and lowing of oxen in my ears?

SAUL
The men have brought them from the
Amalekites.

SAMUEL
Have they?

SAUL
Indeed. They spared the best of the
sheep and oxen to sacrifice to the
Lord our God. The rest we have
devoted to destruction.

SAMUEL

You sully your name with lies.
God spoke and said go and devote
your men to the destruction of
the Amalekites. Fight against
them until *all* are consumed.

SAUL

And I have.

SAMUEL

Then why did you pounce on the
spoils and do what is evil in the
sight of God?

This isn't going to go well for Saul, and he knows it. A certain desperation immediately takes hold of him.

SAUL

It was the for the people. They
want to sacrifice to God here in
Gilgal and feast in His name. You
will join us, of course. We are to
make a burnt offering this very
minute.

SAMUEL

Does God delight in burnt offerings
or one who obeys Him? Your petty
rebellion is the sin of divination.

Saul reverently lowers to one knee before Samuel.

SAUL

(a pleading whisper)

Samuel, you have been a leader
as I am. A judge over all people.
You know the demands of being their
shepherd. I admit, I have sinned.
It was my decision. It is because I
fear the people and abided by their
voice. But this is not a crime,
having regard for one's people. So
pardon me. Pardon my sin and return
to me, O Prophet, that I may bow
before God.

Samuel looks down on Saul.

SAMUEL

I will not return to you. For you
have rejected the word of God --
and so God rejects you from being
king over Israel.

SAUL

What?

Samuel walks away.

SAUL (Cont'd)

Samuel...

From his knee, Saul desperately lunges after Samuel to grab his arm -- and inadvertently tears the prophet's robe.

Samuel wheels on him in a blinding rage. His voice a full register lower, the blood vessels in his eyes bulging behind the veil of cataracts.

SAMUEL

God tears the kingdom of Israel
from you this day and shall give
it to someone better than you.

He turns to Jonathan.

SAMUEL (Cont'd)

Bring me Agag.

Jonathan hesitates at the commandment...

SAMUEL (Cont'd)

Now.

The tone chills Jonathan, who moves into the shadows.

Saul clocks Samuel's request to Jonathan, his heir.

SAUL

Samuel, stop -- you are wrong...

SAMUEL

God is never wrong.

Jonathan emerges from the shadows and leads Agag into the circle. Hands and feet bound.

SAUL

This cannot be.

SAMUEL

Put him here. Before me.

Samuel draws his enormous sword.

KING AGAG

Prophet, wait: Surely the
bitterness of death has past.

SAMUEL

*As your sword has made women
childless, so shall your mother
be childless among women.*

And Samuel STRIKES DOWN on Agag's shoulder with the sword,
practically splitting him lengthwise.

People GASP at the surprising power of the blow.

Samuel STRIKES HIM AGAIN...and again...according to the
Bible, "hacking him to pieces."

Saul falls to his knees. Sobbing in madness.

SAUL

No...

The prophets and seers stare stunned at the sight of Samuel
chopping at Agag's fallen body.

Jonathan, Ish-Boseth, the soldiers...all are shocked by the
power of God's prophet.

Saul weeps at the horror. As finally, Samuel stops swinging
the sword and turns to him, offering Saul a full glimpse of
his bloody face and clothes. Sword in hand.

CLOSER: a teardrop of blood blossoms the corner of Samuel's
eye -- as it did when we saw him petition God earlier.

SAMUEL

(a low growl)

*God regrets that He has made you
King. And He will anoint another
in your place.*

With that, Samuel turns and walks into the shadows. Leaving
Saul shuddering in the wake of the prophecy.

77

INT. THRONE ROOM - PALACE - MAGIC HOUR

77

David enters the shadowy space. A cold, dead feel about it.
Ghosts of history linger in the weight of the dusty air.

He walks towards a LYRE sitting on table. Places his fingers
on it. Strums it, evoking its harmonic chord...

...and then the shadows begin to shift and crawl across the
floor, causing David to turn.

The clouds outside are parting. The crimson and golden light
of sunset bleeding through the large windows, washing over...

THE EMPTY THRONE

With colors so arresting, it's as if it's painted by God Himself. The seat of power.

David regards it with a mix of awe, envy and respect.

It calls to him.

He looks around -- no one's there. He takes a series of slow, careful steps towards the hulking furniture. Bathed in the reddish hues of blood and the yellow tones of hope...

...and David sits in the throne.

BLACK OUT.