

## THE BOOK OF II SHMUEL

Rav Amnon Bazak

### LECTURE #103: CHAPTER 21 (PART I)

#### DAVID AND THE GIV'ONITES

#### I. THE APPENDICES TO THE BOOK OF SHMUEL

As we noted at the end of the previous *shiur*, the verses at the end chapter 20 conclude the chapters in the book of *Shmuel* that constitute a single continuum. The remaining four chapters of the book are made up of six "appendices" which are not directly related to each other and which exhibit no chronological or textual continuity whatsoever. The six appendices are:

1. 21:1-14: The story of David and the Giv'onites.
2. 21:15-22: The wars with the giants of the Pelishtim.
3. 22: The song of David.
4. 23:1-7: David's last words.
5. 23:8-39: David's warriors.
6. 24: The story of the census.

The appendices are arranged in chiastic order. In the middle, we find passages of poetry (3-4). These are surrounded by the stories of the wars waged by David's warriors (2, 5), and by an external frame (1, 6), two stories dealing with some calamity in the land – famine or plague – both of which conclude in similar fashion: "And God was entreated for the land" (21:14); "So the Lord was entreated for the land" (24:25).

We shall now begin to analyze these "appendices" and try to understand their significance and importance for appreciating the person of David and the structure of the book of *Shmuel* as a whole. This *shiur* will deal with the first appendix – the story of David and the Giv'onites. It will be a little longer than usual, so that we can cover the entire story in one *shiur*.

## II. THE FAMINE

Our chapter opens with a description of the grave situation in the land of Israel and a spiritual explanation for what is happening:

(1) And there was a famine in the days of David<sup>1</sup>[1] three years, year after year; and David sought the face of the Lord. And the Lord said, "It is for Shaul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Giv'onites." (2) And the king called the Giv'onites, and said to them - now the Giv'onites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn to them; and Shaul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Yehuda.

David understood from the duration of the famine that it was a spiritual phenomenon,<sup>2</sup>[2] and therefore sought a response from God. God's response is somewhat surprising: We hear now for the first time that Shaul had put Giv'onites to death. Verse 2 interrupts the account of the events taking place in our chapter and goes back to explain what had happened to the Giv'onites and the assault upon them by Shaul, but the matter remains unclear.

Without a doubt, the background to our story is the story of Yehoshua and the Giv'onites (*Yehoshua* 9). As may be recalled, the Giv'onites acted deceitfully, disguised themselves as having come from a long way off, and

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1 [1] The words "in the days of David" indicate that the story is not part of a continuous narrative, like the previous chapters, but rather stands on its own. The previous stories, which constituted a continuous narrative, usually open with the words: "And after that it came to pass" (see 8:1; 10:1; 13:1; 15:1).

2 [2] In other places as well, we find that a three-year famine is a calamity coming from God, as in the days of Eliyahu (see I *Melakhim* 18:1) and in the days of Elisha (II *Melakhim* 8:1).

thus succeeded to be spared the fate of the rest of the nations of Canaan: "Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the princes of the congregation swore to them" (*Yehoshua* 9:15). When their true identity became known, the people of Israel were very angry with the tribal princes, and it seems that they wished to strike at the Giv'onites and kill them, but the princes refused to nullify their oath:

And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had **sworn** unto them by the Lord, the God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes. But all the princes said to all the congregation, "**We have sworn** to them by the Lord, the God of Israel; now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them, and let them live; lest wrath be upon us, because of the **oath** which we **swore** to them."

The term "swearing" repeats itself in this passage over and over again, and the princes explicitly say that annulling the vow would bring wrath upon Israel. For this reason, Yehoshua and the tribal princes decide that the Giv'onites will be allowed to live, but they will serve as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God.

It now becomes clear that several generations later, Shaul annulled the oath and struck at the Giv'onites. When did Shaul do this and in what context?

Rashi cites two viewpoints in *Chazal*. The *gemara* in *Yevamot* (78b) states:

Where do we find that Shaul "put to death the Giv'onites"? The truth is that since he killed the inhabitants of Nov, the city of the priests who were supplying them with water and food, Scripture regards it as if he himself had killed them.

According to this position, Shaul did not actually kill the Giv'onites, but rather hurt them indirectly. According to the *Yerushalmi* (*Kiddushin* 4:1), the Giv'onites suffered attack at the time that the priests of Nov were killed, but that source maintains that the strike was direct: "For he killed seven people: two hewers of wood, two drawers of water, a *chazan*, a scribe, and a *shamash*."

According to the plain sense of the text, these explanations are difficult, for Scripture implies that Shaul actually killed Giv'onites, and that he did this in order to hurt them: "And Shaul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Yehuda." Indeed, Rashi himself explains in accordance with the plain meaning of the text: "When he put his heart to clean and purify Israel and to provide their needs, he sought to slay them." He adds: "And this zealotry was for the good."

In the text itself, it is difficult to find an explicit explanation for Shaul's action – what was the specific reason for which he acted zealously for the people of Israel and Yehuda and slew the Giv'onites?<sup>3[3]</sup> At the same time, it is precisely according to this explanation, which seems to be more in keeping with the plain sense of the text, that the question arises: If "this zealotry was for the good," why were they punished for it?

It stands to reason that Shaul's motivations were indeed good, but nevertheless, what he did involved a violation of the oath to the Giv'onites. Even if Shaul wished to prevent a situation in which the Giv'onites would have a negative influence on the people of Israel, this does not justify his violating Israel's explicit oath to the Giv'onites, which had been kept for many

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3 [3] It is possible that this is connected to another act of zealotry on the part of Shaul, to which Scripture explicitly attests – the removal of the mediums and the wizards: "And Shaul had put away the mediums and the wizards" (I *Shmuel* 28:3). Since this is the only political-religious action known to us from the days of Shaul, there is room to connect it to Shaul's zealotry regarding the Giv'onites. This suggestion may be supported by the emphasis: "Now the Giv'onites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites." The term "Amorites" is used here as a general term for the nations of Cana'an (see, for example, *Bereishit* 15:16). It is possible that this emphasis alludes to the wording found in the section prohibiting all forms of sorcery: "When you are come to the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to do **after the abominations of those nations**. There must not be found among you anyone that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire... or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer... For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominations, the Lord your God drives **them** out from before you... For **these nations**, which you shall dispossess, hearken to soothsayers and to diviners" (*Devarim* 18:9-12). The natives were known for their sorcery and magic, and it is possible that when Shaul removed the mediums and wizard, he also killed of the Giv'onites, who participated in these abominations like the rest of the nations living in the land.

generations. It was for this sin that the people of Israel had to pay the price with three years of famine.

### III. SEVEN (*SHIV'A*) – OATH (*SHEVU'A*)

David understands that the only way to end the famine is by appeasing the Giv'onites:

(3) And David said to the Giv'onites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless the inheritance of the Lord?" (4) And the Giv'onites said to him, "It is no matter of silver or gold between us and Shaul, or his house; neither is it for us to put any man to death in Israel." And he said, "What say you that I should do for you?"

At first, the Giv'onites refuse the proposal of appeasement. Even though David had not yet made any concrete proposal, the Giv'onites already negate two possible proposals: the payment of silver and gold<sup>4</sup>[4] and the killing of people of Israel. David therefore turns once again to the Giv'onites, and hears from them what they truly desire:

(5) And they said to the king, "The man that consumed us and that devised against us,<sup>5</sup>[5] so that we have been destroyed from remaining in any of the borders of Israel, (6) let seven men of his sons

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4 [4] It seems that this possibility is connected to the word "*akhaper*" used by David. One form of *kapara* in Scripture is the payment of a ransom (see, for example, *Shemot* 21:30), and therefore the Giv'onites assume that this possibility was under consideration.

5 [5] This expression is difficult, and several explanations have been offered for it. Rashi and the *Metzudot* write that this means: "He thought to destroy us," as in the verse: "They intended [*dimu*] to have me slain, and my concubine they forced and she died" (*Shofetim* 20:5). But this explanation is difficult, for it says here: *dima lanu*, and not *dima le-horgeinu*, as it says there. Others understand that *dima* means "cut off," as in the verse: "As for Shomeron, her king is cut off (*nidmeh*) like the foam on the surface of water" (*Hoshea* 10:7, and see Radak).

be delivered to us, and we will hang them up<sup>6[6]</sup> to the Lord in Giv'a of Shaul, the chosen of the Lord...<sup>7[7]</sup>

Through their words and demands, the Giv'onites clearly express their personal animosity towards Shaul<sup>8[8]</sup> and their desire for symbolic revenge: the killing of seven (*shiv'a*) of Shaul's descendants corresponding to the breaking of the oath (*shevu'a*) mentioned in v.2.9<sup>9[9]</sup>

David must still decide how to fulfill the Giv'onites' demand:

(7) But the king spared Mefiboshet, the son of Yonatan the son of Shaul,<sup>10[10]</sup> because of the Lord's **oath** that was between them,

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6 [6] This term is found in another story with similar circumstances – the story of Ba'al Pe'or. There too, atonement was needed in order to placate anger: "Take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the burning anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel" (*Bamidbar* 25:4).

7 [7] It is not clear why the Giv'onites note God's selection of Shaul (see I *Shmuel* 9:2; 10:24). *Chazal* understood that this expression is not part of the words of the Giv'onites, but rather Scripture's testimony (*bat kol*), which mentions Shaul in a favorable light (see Rashi and Radak). According to the plain sense of the text, however, these are the words of the Giv'onites; perhaps they wished to take revenge against "the chosen of the Lord," because the oath taken in the days of Yehoshua was taken in the name of God (see *Yehoshua* 9:18-19).

8 [8] Earlier, in chapter 4, we saw another expression of the Giv'onites' hatred of Shaul.

9 [9] The connection between an oath (*shevu'a*) and the number seven (*sheva*) finds expression in other places as well, as in the covenant between Avraham and Avimelekh: "And Avraham set **seven** ewe-lambs of the flock by themselves. And Avimelekh said to Avraham, 'What mean these **seven** ewe-lambs which you have set by themselves?' And he said, 'Verily, these **seven** ewe-lambs shall you take of my hand, that it may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.' Therefore that place was called Be'er-**Sheva**; **because there they swore** both of them" (*Bereishit* 21:28-31).

10 [10] The mention of Mefiboshet narrows the period during which the story could possibly have taken place, for it is clear from here that it could not have occurred prior to the first meeting between David and Mefiboshet (above, chap. 9). It is, however, possible that it took place prior to Avshalom's

between David and Yonatan the son of Shaul. (8) But the king took the two sons of Ritzpa the daughter of Aya, whom she bore unto Shaul, Armoni and Mefiboshet; and the five sons of Mikhal the daughter of Shaul, whom she bore to Adriel the son of Barzilai the Meholatite; 11[11] (9) and he delivered them into the hands of the Giv'onites, and they hanged them in the mountain before the Lord, and

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rebellion, and that it is one of the grounds for Shim'i ben Gera's slanderous words to David at the time of his flight from Jerusalem: "Begone, begone, you man of blood, and base fellow; the Lord has returned upon you all the blood of the house of Shaul, in whose stead you have reigned..." (16:7-8). As we noted there, it is possible that Shim'i was also referring to the killing of the seven descendants of Shaul.

11 [11] This verse is exceedingly difficult. First, above 6:23, it says: "And Mikhal the daughter of Shaul had no child until the day of her death." Second, at some point Mikhal married another man, but as may be recalled, this man was Palti the son of Layish (see I *Shmuel* 25:44 and II *Shmuel* 3:15, and our *shiurim* there), whereas Adriel the son of Barzilai the Meholatite was married to her sister Meirav (I *Shmuel* 18:19)! Most of the commentators followed in the footsteps of *Chazal* (*Sanhedrin* 19b) that we are dealing here with children who were born to Meirav, but were raised by Mikhal, and so they are called after her.

An exceptional explanation was proposed by one of the outstanding eleventh century grammarians living in Spain, R. Yona Ibn Janach. Ibn Janach brings (*Sefer ha-Rikma*, chap. 28) a list of dozens of places in Scripture where one word was replaced by another word owing to the similarity between them. In that list, he refers to our verse as well; according to him, the reference is to Meirav, but the name was switched to Mikhal, because "she is her sister." This approach is very puzzling, and it earned for Ibn Janach the sharp criticism of R. Avraham Ibn Ezra: "There was an important commentator in Spain, who explained the books [of Scripture] with precision, and he said that it is 'Tzidkiyahu' instead of 'Yehoyakim' (see *Daniyel* 1:1); and similarly he said 'he had not inclined after Avshalom' (I *Melakhim* 2:28) is 'Shelomo'... and similarly many words, approximately two hundred. All of them are carried away by the wind, for how it is possible in human speech that a person should say one word and mean a different word? Whoever says such a thing is considered crazy. I have already explained all of them, and it would have been better had he said: 'I do not know,' rather than change the words of the living God."

It is, however, possible, that in our case we can accept the words of Ibn Janach, although they should be explained in a completely different manner. It seems clear that the verse should have read "Meirav." But Scripture wished to emphasize that David fulfilled his obligation towards the Giv'onites with no personal interests, and even had we been dealing with the children of Mikhal, i.e., with his own children, he would not have refrained from handing them over to the Giv'onites.

they fell all **seven** together; and they were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, at the beginning of barley harvest.

David is presented here as Shaul's antithesis. Shaul broke the oath to the Giv'onites, whereas David remembers his oath to Yonatan,<sup>12[12]</sup> and for that reason does not hand over Mefiboshet the son of Yonatan to the Giv'onites.<sup>13[13]</sup>

The mention made of Yonatan the son of Shaul provides the story with another dimension. As may be recalled, under different circumstances, Shaul was most exacting about an oath. After he adjured the people not to eat anything until the end of the battle with the Pelishtim (I *Shmuel* 14:24, 26), and after Yonatan, who had not heard the oath, unwittingly broke it, Shaul resolutely declared: "You shall surely die, Yonatan" (v. 27). We see, then, that he who was ready to put his son to death after unwittingly breaking an oath is required now to pay with the lives of his descendants for having himself broken an oath.

Indeed, when it did not fit in with what he wanted, Shaul was not always careful with his oaths. After Yonatan expressed his astonishment to Shaul about the latter's pursuit of David, it says: "Shaul hearkened unto the voice of Yonatan, and Shaul swore, '**As the Lord lives, he shall not be put to death**'" (I *Shmuel* 19:6). But several verses later it is related how Shaul broke his own oath: "And Shaul sought to smite David even to the wall with the spear; but he slipped away out of Shaul's presence, and he smote the spear into the wall; and David fled, and escaped that night. And Shaul sent messengers to David's house, to watch him, and **to slay him** in the morning" (vv. 10-11)!

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12 [12] This oath is mentioned twice in I *Shmuel* 20: "And Yonatan caused David to swear again, for the love that he had to him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul" (v. 18); "And Yonatan said to David, 'Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my seed and your seed, for ever'" (v. 42 – here it says that the oath was taken in God's name, as is stated in our chapter).

13 [13] And also not his younger son Mikha, who was already mentioned above in 9:12 (and see I *Divrei Ha-Yamim* 8:34).

David, on the other hand, was consistent in keeping his promises. We recently saw an example of this: David kept his oath to Shim'i ben Gera that he would not die (19:24), and only on his deathbed did he instruct Shelomo to find a way to make Shim'i once again liable for the death penalty (see I *Melakhim* 2:8-9, 36-46). In *Tehillim*, David frequently returns to the importance of keeping one's promises. For example, "A Psalm of David. Lord, who shall sojourn in Your tabernacle? Who shall dwell upon Your holy mountain?... he that swears to his own hurt, and changes not" (*Tehillim* 15:1, 4); "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place? He that has clean hands, and a pure heart; who has not taken My name in vain, and has not sworn deceitfully" (ibid. 24:3-4).

With all the difficulty that it involved, David's action seems to have been absolutely necessary. The value of an oath stood behind the difficult famine, and saving the people of Israel required this painful act. It would seem that Scripture justifies the deed: It is God who tells David that the famine came because of the violation of the oath, and it would seem that the killing of Shaul's descendants was a necessary condition for bringing the famine to an end. On the one hand, we learn from here how great the punishment for violating an oath can be, and on the other hand, we see from here another contrast between David and Shaul with respect to their respective commitment and responsibility to oaths.

#### **IV. THE INCIDENT INVOLVING RITZPA THE DAUGHTER OF AYA**

After the hanging of the five sons of Meirav and the two sons of Ritzpa the daughter of Aya, Shaul's concubine, Ritzpa performs an exceptional action:

**(10)** And Ritzpa the daughter of Aya took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water was poured upon them from heaven; and she suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

What is the significance of this action? It seems that it can be understood in light of what is stated in the book of *Yechezkel*: "For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the bare rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; that it might cause fury to come up, that vengeance might be taken, I have set her blood upon the bare rock, that it should not be covered" (*Yechezkel* 24:7-8). Blood that is not buried or

covered with dust cries out to heaven and demands vengeance.<sup>14</sup>[14] By refusing to bury them, Ritzpa bat Aya cried out on behalf of her sons who had paid the price for their father's sin.

It seems, however, that this deed has another meaning, which can only be understood after we read the story to the end:

(11) And it was told David what Ritzpa the daughter of Aya, the concubine of Shaul, had done. (12) And David went and took the bones of Shaul and the bones of Yonatan his son from the men of Yavesh-Gil'ad, who had stolen them from the broad place of Beit-Sha'an, where the Pelishtim had hanged them,<sup>15</sup>[15] in the day that the Pelishtim slew Shaul in Gilboa;<sup>16</sup>[16] (13) and he brought up from there the bones of Shaul and the bones of Yonatan his son;<sup>17</sup>[17] and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. (14) And they buried the bones of Shaul and Yonatan his son in the country of Binyamin in Tzela,<sup>18</sup>[18] in the sepulcher of Kish his father; and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was entreated for the land.

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14 [14] And as Iyov cries out: "O earth, cover not you my blood, and let my cry have no resting-place" (*Iyov* 16:18). This idea also underlies the verse: "No expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it" (*Bamidbar* 35:33) – the land cannot be cleansed from the sin of murder until the murderer is brought to punishment.

15 [15] The difference between the way the word is written and the way it is read relates to the way that the letters are split up between the words. We already dealt with this and similar phenomena in chapter 5.

16 [16] The verse refers to what is related in I *Shmuel* 31:8-13: The Pelishtim hung the corpses of Shaul and his sons on the walls of Beit-Sha'an, and the people of Yavesh-Gil'ad, at great danger to themselves, took the corpses down at night and buried them in Yavesh-Gil'ad.

17 [17] In I *Shmuel* 31:12 it says: "And they took the body of Shaul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beit-Sha'an; and they came to Yavesh, **and burnt them there**" – implying that the bodies were burnt. But in the next verse it says: "And they took their bones, and buried them under the tamarisk-tree in Yavesh," and so the difficulty is already there. We brought several approaches to resolving the contradiction in our *shiur* there.

18 [18] Tzela is a city in the tribal territory of Binyamin (see *Yehoshua* 18:28).

There seems to be a contradiction between what is stated in verse 10 – "until water was poured upon them from heaven" – and what is stated in verse 14 – "And after that God was entreated for the land." When did the rain fall? Was it in the wake of Ritzpa bat Aya's action, or only after the burial at the order of David? The Radak writes: "That which it says: 'until water was poured upon them' – a small amount of rain fell in order to tell them to bury them, and after they buried them God was entreated for the land, and abundant rain began to fall." The difficulty is that the word "*nitakh*" generally denotes a great amount, and not "a small amount of rain."<sup>19</sup>[19] Furthermore, verses 9-10 emphasize three times that this story took place in the harvest season – a period when rainfall is considered a calamity, as it was liable to destroy the limited yield that grew during the year of drought.<sup>20</sup>[20]

It seems, then, that the first rain was not a sign of God's entreaty to the land, but on the contrary, an additional punishment.<sup>21</sup>[21] For what was the punishment? Because after the awful episode (as necessary as it may have been) of handing over Shaul's descendants to the Giv'onites, David did not intervene in the fate of those who had been hung and arrange for their burial. What is more, Scripture emphasizes that this was not a one-time event, for David had acted in similar fashion with respect to the bones of Shaul and Yonatan themselves: Their bodies were buried on the east bank of the Jordan, in Yavesh-Gil'ad, and were not brought back to their ancestral grave. Ritzpa bat Aya's conduct stood in contrast to David's disregard of the fate of her sons.

From this we can understand why the punishment of famine for the sin committed by Shaul was administered during the reign of David. It turns out

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19 [19] For example: "And the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured (*nitakh*) upon the earth" (*Shemot* 9:33); "As My anger and My fury has been poured forth (*nitakh*) upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so shall My fury be poured forth upon you, when you shall enter into Egypt" (*Yirmiyahu* 42:18). See also *Nachum* 1:6; *Iyov* 3:24.

20 [20] So is it explicitly stated in I *Shmuel* 12:17: "Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto the Lord, that He may send thunder and rain; and you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord." See also *Ta'anit* 2a.

21 [21] This story may be the background of the story of Choni ha-Me'agel (*Ta'anit* 23a), for there too: "The rain then began to come down with great force, every drop being as big as the opening of a barrel and the Sages estimated that no one drop was less than a *log*. His disciples then said to him: Master, we look to you to save us from death; we believe that the rain came down to destroy the world."

that not only did Shaul sin when he broke the oath, but also David sinned (on an entirely different level) when he did not fully keep his promise to Yonatan. David should have remained loyal to Yonatan even after his death and brought him to his ancestral grave. David's attitude toward the sons of Shaul who had been hanged expresses his attitude toward the burial of the members of the house of Shaul in general.

This idea is stated explicitly in the *gemara*: "And the Lord said, It is for Shaul and his bloody house, because he put to death the Giv'onites.' 'For Shaul' - because he was not mourned for in a proper manner; 'and his bloody house' - because he put to death the Giv'onites" (*Yevamot* 78b). It is noted at greater length in the *midrash* (*Bamidbar Rabba* 8:4):

"For Shaul" – because you did not act with kindness toward him and he was not mourned for in a proper manner. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: David, is he not Shaul who was anointed with the anointing oil? Is he not Shaul, in whose days there was no idolatry in Israel? Is he not Shaul, whose lot is with the prophet Shmuel? **And you are in the land of Israel, and he is outside the land!**

As we have seen several times in the past, David excelled in his penitence. Here too, David understands what he had to do, and he brings the bones of Shaul and his sons – those who fell with him and those who were hanged by the Giv'onites – to burial in the ancestral graves. Then, and only then, did this unfortunate episode come to an end. "And after that God was entreated for the land." As the *midrash* expands upon the matter:

He immediately rose and gathered all the elders and leaders of Israel, and they crossed the Jordan and came to Yavesh-Gil'ad, and they found the bones of Shaul and his son Yonatan, over which no worm had power, and they took them, placed them in a coffin, and crossed the Jordan, as it is stated: "And they buried the bones of Shaul and Yonatan his son... and they performed all that the king commanded." What did the king command? He commanded that they should pass Shaul's coffin through the territory of each and every tribe. And the tribe into whose territory Shaul's coffin entered went out - the men, their sons and daughters, and their wives – and they acted with lovingkindness toward Shaul and his sons. [He did this] so that all of Israel should fulfill their obligation. When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that they had acted with lovingkindness, He immediately filled with mercy and showered rain on the land, as it is stated: "And after that God was entreated for the land." (*Yalkut Shimoni II Shmuel* 154)

(Translated by David Strauss)