

## 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27<sup>iii</sup>

After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. (He ordered that The Song of the Bow be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jashar.) He said: *"Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places! How the mighty have fallen! Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon; or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised will exult. You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor bounteous fields! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no more. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, nor the sword of Saul return empty. Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you with crimson, in luxury, who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan lies slain upon your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"*

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### <sup>iii</sup> About 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27

This reading contains an elegy (from the Greek, mournful poem) that laments the deaths of Saul and his eldest son (and David's best childhood friend—"my brother") Jonathan.

David urges that the news of their deaths not be spread since such news would certainly make their enemies rejoice and reveal the vulnerability of the nation when great leaders die. But

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although David the new king will ensure that Israel remains strong and united, nevertheless courageous warriors like Saul and Jonathan will be sorely missed. Their example serves as an encouragement for the living, for though these mighty men have fallen and their bow and sword are now silenced, David hopes that others will come forward to take their place.