

## THE FIRST ENCOUNTER BETWEEN SAUL AND DAVID: ACCORDING TO JOSEPHUS

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1 Samuel 16:14-23 is a brief but important segment within the book of 1 Samuel; in it the two future antagonists, Saul and David, encounter one another for the first time.<sup>1</sup> In this essay, I shall examine the retelling of the Samuel passage by Josephus in his *Antiquitates judaicae* (hereafter *Ant.*) 6.166-169.<sup>2</sup> More particularly, my study will address three overarching questions concerning *Ant.* 6.166-169. First, does Josephus's version have particular affinities with one or the other of the various ancient text-forms of 1 Sam 16:14-23, i.e., MT (BHS),<sup>3</sup> Codex Vaticanus (hereafter B)<sup>4</sup> and the Antiochene or Lucianic (hereafter L) manuscripts<sup>5</sup> of the LXX and Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets (hereafter Tg.)?<sup>6</sup> Second, which rewriting techniques does Josephus use in the above passage and what distinctive features of his presentation there result from their use? Finally, how does Josephus's retelling compare with other scattered references to 1 Sam 16:14-23 that one finds in Jewish-Christian tradition?<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>On this passage, see, in addition to the commentaries: D. M. Howard Jr., "The Transfer of Power from Saul to David in 1 Samuel 16:13-14," *JETS* 32 (1989): 473-483; R. D. Bergin, "Evil Spirits and Eccentric Grammar: A Study of the Relationship between Text and Meaning in Hebrew Narrative," *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. R. D. Bergin (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 320-335; J. Piedad, "¿Dos traducciones en 1 Sam 16,14-23?," *Qol* 22 (2000): 59-91.

<sup>2</sup>For the text and translation of *Ant.* 6.166-169, I use R. Marcus, *Josephus V*, LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), 248-251. I have likewise consulted the older text of B. Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera II* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1954<sup>2</sup>), 40-41; and the more recent text and translation of E. Nodet, *Flavius Josephé III: Les Antiquités juives, livres VI et VII* (Paris: Cerf, 2001), 52-53\*.

<sup>3</sup>1 Sam 16:14-23 is not extant in the important Qumran manuscript 4QSam\*.

<sup>4</sup>For the B text of 1 Sam (1 Rgns) 16:14-23, I use A. E. Brooke, N. Maclean, and H. St. J. Thackeray, *1 and II Samuel, The Old Testament in Greek*, II:1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), 54-55. I have likewise consulted the translation of this passage in B. Grillet and M. Lestienne, *Premier Livre des Règnes* (La Bible d'Alexandrie 9,1; Paris: Cerf, 1997), 288-291.

<sup>5</sup>For the Antiochene/Lucianic text of 1 Sam (1 Rgns) 16:14-23, I use N. Fernández Marcos and J. R. Busto Saiz, *El texto antioqueno de la Biblia griega, 1, 1-2 Samuel*, Textos y estudios "Cardenal Cisneros" 50 (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1989), 47-48.

<sup>6</sup>For the targumic text of 1 Sam 16:14-23, I use A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic 2* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), 126; and for the translation D. J. Harrington and A. J. Saldarini, *Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets*, The Bible in Aramaic 10 (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1987), 132-133.

<sup>7</sup>Among these other references, the rendering of 1 Sam 16:14-23 in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (hereafter *L.A.B.*), 60, is of particular interest. For the text of this passage, see H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, AGJU 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 1:82; and for the translation, 187-188.

Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him. And Saul's servants said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is skilful in playing the lyre; and when the evil spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well." So Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me a man who can play well, and bring him to me." One of the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skilful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence; and the LORD is with him." Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me David your son, who is with the sheep." And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a skin of wine and a kid, and sent them by David his son to Saul. And David came to Saul, and entered his service. And Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight." And whenever the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand; so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him (1 Sam 16:14-23, RSV).

### *1 Samuel 16:14-23 and Ant. 6.166-169 Compared*

1 Samuel 16:14 clearly constitutes the start of a new unit within chapter 16: the protagonists of the preceding unit, vv. 1-13,<sup>8</sup> i.e., Samuel and David, (temporarily) disappear from the scene and attention reverts to King Saul, the dominant figure (along with Samuel) throughout 1 Sam 9-15. Josephus, on the other hand, conflates (and rearranges) elements of 1 Sam 16:13b and 16:14a at the opening of *Ant.* 6.166: "So, after these exhortations,<sup>9</sup> Samuel went his way,<sup>10</sup> and the Deity abandoned Saul,<sup>11</sup> went over to David,<sup>12</sup> who, when the divine spirit (τοῦ θείου πνεύματος) had removed to him,<sup>13</sup> began to prophesy (προφητεύειν)."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup>1 Sam 16:1-13 is the story of David's anointing by Samuel. On the Josephan and Pseudo-Philonian versions of this incident, see C. T. Begg, "Samuel's Anointing of David in Josephus and Pseudo-Philo," *Revista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 32 (1996): 492-526.

<sup>9</sup>With this phrase, Josephus alludes back to the admonitions—unparalleled in 1 Sam 16:1-13 itself—which Samuel addresses to the newly anointed David in *Ant.* 6.165. (I italicize elements of Josephus's presentation, such as the above, which lack a direct counterpart in the biblical text.)

<sup>10</sup>Cf. 1 Sam 16:13bβ: "And Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah." Josephus leaves aside the biblical precision concerning the prophet's destination.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. 1 Sam 16:14a: "Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul" (Tg.: "the spirit of power from before the Lord that was with Saul passed from him"). Here, as frequently, Josephus rewords/avoids biblical mentions of the (divine) "spirit" (Hebrew רוּחַ, Greek πνεῦμα); on the phenomenon, see E. Best, "The Use and Non-use of Pneuma by Josephus," *NovT* 3 (1958): 218-225; and J. R. Levison, "Josephus' Interpretation of the Divine Spirit," *JJS* 47 (1996): 234-255.

<sup>12</sup>This phrase, which highlights God's contrasting dealings with Saul and David, lacks a biblical counterpart. It does, however, serve as a lead-in to Josephus's delayed use of 1 Sam 16:13bα in what follows. See above.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. 1 Sam 16:13bα: "And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward." Here, exceptionally (see n. 11), Josephus does reproduce a biblical mention of the divine spirit. At the same time, however, he also modifies the Bible's presentation concerning the moment of David's reception of that spirit: in 16:13, the spirit comes upon David in conjunction with his anointing and prior to the departure of Samuel. Josephus, by contrast, depicts David's spirit-reception following Samuel's exit (see above) and in connection with the Deity's abandonment of Saul. The historian's

Saul's abandonment by the "Spirit of the Lord" (1 Sam 16:14a) results in the situation briefly portrayed in 16:14b: "an evil spirit from the Lord tormented<sup>15</sup> him." Josephus's (6.166b) rendering of this notice is reminiscent of the double reading of LXX L cited in n. 15: "But as for Saul, he was beset by strange disorders and evil spirits (πάθη . . . καὶ δαιμόνια)<sup>16</sup> which caused him such suffocation (πνιγμούς)<sup>17</sup> and strangling (στραγγάλας)."<sup>18</sup>

Saul's afflicted state prompts an intervention by the king's "servants," who first offer a diagnosis that reiterates what has already been reported by the narrator in 16:14b (v. 15) and then proceed to suggest that a lyre-player be sought, whose playing will relieve the king when the evil spirit comes upon him (v. 16). The historian (6.166c) uses a different designation for Saul's interlocutors and recasts their words in indirect address:<sup>19</sup> "that the physicians"<sup>20</sup>

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other uses of the above expression "divine spirit" are in *Ant.* 4.108, 118 (recipient: Balaam); 6.222 (// 1 Sam 19:21: the messengers sent by Saul to apprehend David); 8.354 (Micaiah); and 10.239 (Daniel).

<sup>14</sup>1 Sam 16:13 does not mention such "prophesying" by David upon his reception of God's spirit at the moment of his anointing. (In *L.A.B.* 59.4, David responds to his anointing [which results in the Lord's being with him from that day, 59.3], with an extended song of praise, extolling God's choice of him.) One finds the same conjunction of the reception of the "divine spirit" and "prophesying" by the recipient(s) in *Ant.* 6.222 (see previous note). Elsewhere as well, Josephus interjects references to David's prophetic status; see *Ant.* 7.334; 8.109; and cf. L. H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 560-561. David is also designated a "prophet" in Acts 2:30.

<sup>15</sup>This is the RSV translation of the verb used by MT here and in v. 15, i.e., פָּגַע (piel). The LXX term for the action of the evil spirit upon Saul is more specific, i.e., ἐπνιγεν ("suffocated"). LXX L offers a double reading, i.e., συνείχευ . . . καὶ ἐπνιγεν ("oppressed and suffocated"). Cf. *L.A.B.* 60.1: "et prefocabat eum spiritus pessimus" ("and an evil spirit was terrifying him").

<sup>16</sup>This is Josephus's paraphrase of the biblical expression "an evil spirit from the Lord"; the paraphrase avoids attributing Saul's affliction to the Deity (cf. the rendering of *L.A.B.* 60.1, cited in n. 15). Josephus, in line with the tendency mentioned in n. 11, substitutes the phrase τὰ δαιμόνια for biblical mentions of a/the "spirit" twice elsewhere in 6.166-169: 6.166c (// 1 Sam 16:15), 168 (// 16:23); on the other hand, he does use the conflated expression "the evil spirit and the demons" (τοῦ πονηροῦ πνεύματος καὶ τῶν δαιμονίων) in *Ant.* 6.211 (no biblical parallel), where Jonathan refers to David's driving these beings out of Saul. On Josephus's "demonology" overall, see R. Deines, "Josephus, Salomo, und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen die Dämonen," in *Die Dämonen: Die Dämonologie der israelitischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt*, ed. A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger, und K. F. D. Römheld (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 365-394.

<sup>17</sup>This is the noun cognate of the verb πνίγω, used by LXX BL 1 Sam 16:14b to describe Saul's affliction; see n. 15. Josephus uses the noun only here; the verb appears in *Bellum Judaicum* (BJ) 2.327; 5.471; *Ant.* 10.121.

<sup>18</sup>Josephus uses the noun στραγγάλη twice elsewhere: *Ant.* 9.92; 16.394.

<sup>19</sup>Josephus does this frequently in his biblical paraphrase; on the phenomenon, see C. T. Begg, *Josephus' Account of the Early Divided Monarchy* (AJ 8.212-420), BETL 108 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993), 12-13, n. 38.

<sup>20</sup>Josephus makes the same substitution of "physicians" for a biblical mention of "servants" in *Ant.* 7.343 (// 1 Kgs 1:2), where the problem facing King David is also

could not devise other remedy save to order search be made<sup>21</sup> for one *with the power to charm away spirits* (ἐξάδειν)<sup>22</sup> and to play upon the harp (ψάλλειν ἐπὶ κινύρα),<sup>23</sup> and whensoever the evil spirits (τὰ δαιμόνια, see 6.166b, cf. n. 16) should assail and torment Saul,<sup>24</sup> to have him stand over the king<sup>25</sup> and strike the strings (ψάλλειν) and chant his songs (ὑμνους).<sup>26</sup>

Saul responds to the servants' proposal in 16:17 with the order "provide for me [one] who can play well, and bring him to me." Josephus (6.167a) compresses the wording of the king's directive, while prefacing it with a narrative notice on the attention he gives the physicians' suggested remedy: "Saul did not neglect this advice, but commanded that search be made (ζητεῖθαι προσέταξε)<sup>27</sup> for such a man."

The servants' proposal of 16:16 and Saul's endorsement of this in 16:17 leaves open the question of where the suggested "player" may be found. This

a "medical" one, i.e., his inability to keep warm due to advanced age. Nodet (*ad loc.*) also calls attention to *Ant.* 1.208, where, in his retelling of Gen 20, Josephus inserts mention of the "physicians,"<sup>28</sup> having already despaired of the life of King Abimelech, whom God had stricken for his taking of Abraham's wife Sarah; see also *Ant.* 10.25, where, in his version of Hezekiah's near-fatal illness (// 2 Kgs 20:1-11// Isa 38), Josephus interjects an allusion to the king's "physicians" having given up any hope for his recovery. In all these instances, the Bible's mention of a (royal) character's serious medical condition inspires Josephus to make mention of the attending "physicians" and their response to the emergency—as would have been expected in the case of sick kings in his own time.

<sup>21</sup>From the biblical servants' opening words to Saul, Josephus omits their reiteration (1 Sam 16:15) of the diagnosis already given by the narrator in v. 14b, i.e., Saul is being "tormented by an evil spirit from God." He likewise recasts their proposal (v. 16aα) that Saul command them to seek out a man as an order given by the physicians themselves about such a search. Finally, his (interjected) allusion to the physicians' being unable to think of anything else to do than call in an outside specialist underscores the seriousness of Saul's affliction.

<sup>22</sup>Josephus uses the verb ἐξάδω a total of three times, i.e., *Ant.* 6.166, 68, and 214 (in each instance of the relieving of Saul's affliction by David). The above phrase is an amplification of the reference to the lyre player that the servants recommend be sought in 1 Sam 16:16aβ.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. LXX BL 1 Sam 16:16 εἰδότα ψάλλειν [LXX L + τῷ κυρίῳ] ἐν κινύρα. Like LXX, Josephus transliterates the Hebrew word (כנן) for "lyre."

<sup>24</sup>Cf. 1 Sam 16:16bα: "and when the evil spirit from God [LXX B lacks from God] is upon you."

<sup>25</sup>Josephus inserts this detail about where the lyre-player is to position himself when ministering to the king.

<sup>26</sup>In 1 Sam 16:16bβ, the servants' proposal is simply that Saul's musical therapist "play" (LXX ψαλει; MT adds with his hand; LXX BL on his lyre). Josephus appends a reference—here and in what follows—to the therapist's "chanting songs" as well, doing this under the influence of the wider biblical tradition (see, e.g., 2 Sam 23:1 [David, the "sweet psalmist of Israel"]); see Nodet, *ad loc.* Conversely, Josephus does not reproduce the servants' concluding assurances from 16:16, i.e., "and you will be well [LXX add 'and he will relieve you']," perhaps finding such an assurance on their part presumptuous, given the severity of the case.

<sup>27</sup>This phrase echoes the expression ἐκέλευσαν ζητήσαντας ("ordered that search be made") employed of the physicians in 6.166c. By employing a variant of the physicians' own "order," Saul makes clear that he has made their initiative his own.

question is resolved in 16:18, where “one of the young men” reports his having seen a son of Jesse who, he affirms, possesses no less than six desirable attributes. Josephus’s version of the speaker’s intervention both rearranges and abbreviates the catalogue of David’s qualities: “And one of those present<sup>28</sup> said that he had seen in the city of Bethlehem<sup>29</sup> a son of Jesse, a mere boy (παῖδα) in years,<sup>30</sup> but of pleasing and fair appearance<sup>31</sup> and in other ways worthy of regard,<sup>32</sup> who was moreover skilled in playing on the harp (ψάλλειν εἰδότα)<sup>33</sup> and in the singing of songs (ᾄδειν ὕμνους),<sup>34</sup> and an excellent soldier (πολεμιστὴν ἄκρον).<sup>35</sup> . . .”<sup>36</sup>

In response to the young man’s report in 16:18, Saul (16:19) dispatches messengers to Jesse with the directive “send me David your son who is with the flocks.” Josephus’s king (6.167c) appends a motivation to this command for Jesse: “Saul sent to Jesse and ordered him to take David from the flocks and

<sup>28</sup>Neither the Bible nor Josephus gives a name to the speaker. In *b. Sanh.* 93b, he is identified with Doeg, the future killer of the priests of Nob (see 1 Sam 21–22), whose praises of David in 16:18 are designed to incite Saul’s envy of him. One finds the same tradition in question 57 of the (ninth-century-A.D.) work *Questions on the Book of Samuel* of “Pseudo-Jerome” (A. Saltman, ed., *Pseudo-Jerome, Questions on the Book of Samuel*, STB 26 [Leiden: Brill, 1975], 90).

<sup>29</sup>Josephus substitutes a reference to the place (Bethlehem), where the speaker has seen Jesse’s son, for the mention of his having seen “a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite” in 16:18a.

<sup>30</sup>This reference to David’s age lacks a counterpart in 16:18. The allusion picks up on the mention of David as a “lad” (παῖς) in *Ant.* 6.164, and is itself echoed in David’s own reference to himself as “no older than a boy (παιδός)” in 6.180. As used here in 6.167, the phrase highlights the extraordinary character of David’s (adult-like) attributes that will be cited in what follows—he possesses these even as a boy.

<sup>31</sup>In the list of David’s attributes in 16:18, the corresponding item (“a man of good presence,” [RSV]) occurs only in fifth place. Josephus highlights David’s handsome appearance by mentioning it first; this characteristic of David will feature prominently in what follows.

<sup>32</sup>This designation for David has no clear-cut equivalent in the listing of his qualities in 16:18. Conceivably, however, it is inspired by the second phrase used of him in MT, i.e., נבון דל (RSV: “a man of valor”; cf. LXX BL, where the reference is to David’s being an “intelligent [συνετός] man”).

<sup>33</sup>Cf. 16:18’s phrase “who is skillful in playing” (LXX B εἰδότα ψαλμόν; LXX L ἐπιστάμενον ψάλλειν). In the Bible’s catalogue of David’s attributes, this item appears in first, rather than third, place, as in Josephus’s listing.

<sup>34</sup>This expansion of the biblical reference to David’s “playing” abilities echoes wording used previously by Josephus. Thus, in 6.166c, the physicians call for one with power “to charm away spirits” (ἐξάδειν) and conclude by referring to that one’s “chanting his songs (ὕμνους)” for the afflicted Saul. See n. 27.

<sup>35</sup>This phrase is Josephus’s equivalent to the expression that stands third in the list of David’s attributes in 16:18: “a man of war” (LXX B ὁ ἀνὴρ πολεμιστής; LXX L ὁ ἄνθρωπος πολεμιστής).

<sup>36</sup>Josephus’s speaker ascribes a total of four distinct qualities to David, as opposed to the biblical list of six. From the Bible’s list, he omits the fourth (David is “prudent in speech”) and sixth (“the Lord is with him”) component elements. Particularly, the latter item might seem a matter about which the speaker—who has simply “seen” David—might not be in a position to know.

send him to him;<sup>37</sup> *he wished, he said, to see the young man, having heard of his comeliness and valour* (τῆς εὐμορφίας καὶ τῆς ἀνδρείας).<sup>38</sup>

1 Samuel 16:20 highlights the gifts (bread, a skin of wine, and a kid) that Jesse sends<sup>39</sup> along with David to Saul. Josephus (6.168a) limits himself to a generalized allusion to Jesse's accompanying gifts, focusing attention rather on the dispatch of David himself: "So Jesse sent his son, also giving him presents to carry to Saul."<sup>40</sup>

1 Samuel 16:21 relates four moments in the initial encounter between the two protagonists of the story: David comes to Saul, whose service he enters and by whom he is "greatly loved,"<sup>41</sup> becoming his armor-bearer. Josephus's rendition concludes with an anticipation of the notice on David's ministrations to the afflicted king in 16:23, adducing these as the reason for the latter's favorable reception of the former: "When he came, Saul was delighted with (ἤσθη)<sup>42</sup> him, made him his armour-bearer (ὀπλοφόρον)<sup>43</sup> and held him in the highest honour,<sup>44</sup> for his illness was charmed away (ἐξήδετο)<sup>45</sup> by him; and against the trouble caused by the evil spirits (τῶν δαιμονίων; see [τὰ] δαιμόνια, 6.166 [bis]); whenever they assailed him, he had no other physician (ἰατρός) than David,<sup>46</sup>

<sup>37</sup>In *L.A.B.* 60.1. Saul, terrified by an evil spirit (// 1 Sam 16:14), acting on his own initiative, immediately sends and brings David (// 16:19), doing this, moreover, without any reference to David's father Jesse (who is nowhere mentioned in *L.A.B.* 60). Thus, in Pseudo-Philo's presentation, the intervening three-way conversation of 16:15-18, to which Josephus has a parallel in 6.166b-167b, disappears.

<sup>38</sup>The above motivation for Saul's command concerning David picks up on the first and last of the qualities attributed to the latter by the courtier in 6.167b: "of pleasing (εὐπρεπῆ) and good appearance[,] . . . and an excellent soldier," while, strikingly, saying nothing about the youth's musical abilities, which were the focus of the foregoing discussion about Saul's state. On "courage" as an key component of Josephus's portrayal of David, see Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 544-550.

<sup>39</sup>On the text-critical problem of the opening words of 1 Sam 16:20—where MT reads literally "(Jesse took) an ass, bread," LXX B has "(Jesse took) an homer (γόμορ) of bread(s)," and LXX L offers the conflated reading "(Jesse took) an ass and placed on it a homer (γόμορ) of bread(s)," see the commentaries and D.T. Tsumura, "*hamor lehem* (1 Samuel xvi 20)," *VT* 42 (1992): 412-414.

<sup>40</sup>As with LXX B 1 Sam 16:20, and in contrast to MT and LXX L (see n. 39), Josephus's formulation makes no reference to an "ass" as the bearer of Jesse's gifts.

<sup>41</sup>The verb "loved" in 1 Sam 16:21b $\alpha$  is without an explicit subject in MT and LXX B, leaving it ambiguous whether that subject is Saul (so RSV) or rather David. LXX L clarifies by specifying Saul as the subject.

<sup>42</sup>This is Josephus's equivalent for the verb "loved" (LXX ἠγάπησεν) of 1 Sam 16:21b $\alpha$ ; as with MT and LXX B, Josephus does not explicitly identify the subject (Marcus supplies this [Saul] in the above translation); see previous note.

<sup>43</sup>This is the same Greek word for "armor-bearer" used by Symmachus in his translation of 1 Sam 16:21b $\beta$ . LXX BL have αἰρων τὰ σκευή αὐτοῦ. See Nodet, *ad loc.*

<sup>44</sup>This phrase, expatiating on the reference to David's becoming Saul's armor-bearer with which 1 Sam 16:21 ends, echoes (and represents the fulfillment of) the courtier's declaration (6.167) about David's being "worthy of regard."

<sup>45</sup>This verb echoes the forms ἐξάδειν and ᾄδειν of 6.166 and 6.167, respectively.

<sup>46</sup>This phrase echoes Josephus's mention of the "physicians" (ἰατροί) in 6.166. Those "physicians"—despite their numbers—are unable to do anything themselves for

who, *by singing his songs* (ὕμνουσ)⁴⁷ and playing on the harp (ψάλλων ἐν τῇ κινύρᾳ; see ψάλλειν ἐπὶ κινύρα, 6.166), restored him to himself.”⁴⁸

In the biblical presentation, the concluding notice of 1 Sam 16:23 concerning David’s ministrations to Saul and their effects (see n. 49) is preceded by mention (16:22) of the king’s enjoining Jesse to permit David’s continued attendance upon himself, given “the favor” David has “found in his sight.” Reversing this sequence, Josephus (6.169) makes the royal request the conclusion of his version,⁴⁹ likewise filling in the source *lacuna* concerning Jesse’s response to this: “He accordingly sent to Jesse, *the lad’s father*, desiring him to leave David with him, since the sight of the boy and his presence gave him pleasure (ἡδεσθαι⁵⁰). *Jesse would not gainsay Saul, but permitted him to keep David.*”⁵¹

### Conclusion

Here at the conclusion of my essay, I wish to briefly return to the three questions I posed at the beginning concerning *Ant.* 6.166-169. Given the brevity of the passage and Josephus’s paraphrastic tendency, it is not surprising that our investigation yielded rather meager results concerning my first question, i.e., the text-form(s) of 1 Sam 16:14-23 used by him. We did, however, note the historian’s reference, in accordance with the LXX B(L) reading in 1 Sam 16:14b, to Saul’s suffering “suffocation” at the hand of the spirit(s), whereas MT uses a more general term (“tormented”) to speak of the evil spirit’s effect upon the king; see n. 17. We likewise pointed out the negative agreement between Josephus (6.168a) and LXX B 1 Sam 16:20, i.e., neither of

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Saul. David, by contrast, is a single individual; yet, he can cure Saul on his own, thereby showing himself to be the only physician whom the king needs.

⁴⁷This addition to the reference to David’s playing the lyre of 1 Sam 16:23 recalls Josephus’s previous insertions on David as (also) a singer of “songs” (ὕμνουσ; see 6.166, 167 and cf. nn. 26 and 34. It likewise has parallel in *L.A.B.* 60.2-3, where Pseudo-Philo, in his expanded version of 16:23, cites a wording of the exorcistic song that David addresses to the evil spirit that has taken possession of Saul. According to Nodet (*Flavius Josèphe III*, 52\*, n. 6), the “only thing” Philo (see *De confusione linguarum* 149) knows about David is precisely his status as “God’s psalmist” (τοῦ τὸν θεὸν ὑμνήσαντος).

⁴⁸With the above notice on David’s efficacious ministrations to Saul, cf. 1 Sam 16:23: “And whenever the evil (so LXX BL; MT lacks the term) spirit from God (so MT LXX L, > LXX B) was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand (LXX BL τὴν κινύραν . . . ἔψαλλεν); so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.” As will be noted, Josephus’s version compresses the Bible’s three-part indication concerning the effects of David’s endeavors into a single one (“[he] restored Saul to himself”).

⁴⁹The historian’s rearrangement seems intended to improve on the Bible’s movement of thought: Saul would naturally first wish to ascertain that David could indeed perform the cure for which he had been summoned in the first place (see 16:23), before asking that David be left with him on a long-term basis (see 16:22).

⁵⁰This is a form of the same verb, ἡδομαι, used in 6.168 in reference to Saul’s “being delighted with” (ἡσθη) David.

⁵¹In both the biblical and the Josephan sequence, what follows next is the story of David’s victory over Goliath, 1 Sam 17// *Ant.* 6.170-192. On the latter passage, see C. T. Begg, “The David and Goliath Story according to Josephus,” *Le Muséon* 112 (1999): 1-14.

them mentions the “ass” to which MT and LXX L refer in connection with Jesse’s sending gifts to David (see nn. 40-41).<sup>52</sup>

My second opening question dealt with the rewriting techniques employed by Josephus in 6.166-169 and the distinctive features of his version these generate. The historian’s retelling of 1 Sam 16:14-23 is marked, first, by a variety of additions to and expansions of source items, e.g., David’s “prophesying” under the influence of God’s spirit (6.166a; cf. 16:13), the elaboration of the attendants’ proposal (6.166c; cf. 16:15-16), Saul’s motivation in summoning David (6.167c; cf. 16:19), the fuller form of the description of David’s ministrations in 6.168c vis-à-vis 16:23, and the appended notice on Jesse’s response to Saul’s (second) request of him (6.169b; cf. 16:22). Conversely, Josephus omits or compresses biblical elements that might seem repetitious or unessential. Instances of this phenomenon include his nonreproduction of the verbatim reiteration of the narrator’s diagnosis of Saul’s condition (16:14b) by the servants in 16:15, those servants’ assurance about Saul’s getting well at the end of 16:16; two of the six attributes of David listed in 16:18 (see n. 36), the three-member enumeration of Jesse’s gifts for Saul of 16:20, and the sequence on the effects of David’s ministrations in 16:23b (see n. 49).

Josephus likewise rearranges the biblical sequence, both at the beginning and end of his own presentation (see 6.166a and cf. 1 Sam 16:13-14a; 6.168c-169a and compare 16:22-23). Finally, in addition to the above three rewriting techniques, Josephus’s version evidences still other kinds of modifications of biblical data. Stylistically, he consistently recasts source direct as indirect discourse (see n. 19). Terminologically, he introduces a number of *Leitworte* that are peculiar to his own presentation, e.g., δαίμονία (6.166 [bis], 168), ἐξάδω/ῥῥῶ (6.166, 167, 168); ὑμους (6.166, 167, 168), and ἥδομαι (6.168, 169). By contrast, he avoids—with a single exception (6.166b)—the “spirit terminology” that permeates 16:14-23 (see n. 11), just as he calls Saul’s interlocutors “physicians” rather than “servants” (cf. 6.166c and 16:15). These figures, moreover, themselves “order a search” for a musical therapist, rather than suggesting such a search to Saul, as their counterparts do in 16:16.

What now is distinctive about Josephus’s version that results from the application of the above rewriting techniques? The narrative “gaps” concerning Saul’s reason for wanting David sent to him (see 6.167c; cf. 16:19) and Jesse’s response to Saul’s request that David stay with him (see 6.169b; cf. 16:22) both get filled in. Saul himself makes that request at a seemingly more appropriate point, i.e., only after he has experienced David’s healing capacities (6.168c-169a), rather than prior to this (16:22-23) (see n. 50). The Josephan David assumes additional roles in 6.166-169; he prophesies (6.166a), not only plays, but also “sings songs” (see nn. 26, 34, 48), and ends up as Saul’s only “physician” (6.168c). Theologically, Josephus takes care not to ascribe a divine origin to the supernatural entity that afflicts Saul—as 1 Sam 16:14-23 does repeatedly. Similarly, the theological claim made by the speaker in 16:18 (the Lord is with David) is omitted in Josephus’s parallel 6.167b as something—we have suggested (see n. 36)—the speaker would not have been in a position to know.

In my final opening question, I asked about similarities and differences between Josephus’s rewriting of 1 Sam 16:14-23 and other allusions to this

<sup>52</sup>For more on the text of Samuel used by Josephus, see E. C. Ulrich, “Josephus’ Biblical Text for the Books of Samuel,” *Josephus, the Bible and History*, ed. L. H. Feldman and G. Hata (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 81-96.

passage in Jewish-Christian tradition. The summary rendition of the Samuel text in *L.A.B.* 60 proved of particular interest for such comparative purposes. In common with Pseudo-Philo, Josephus, we pointed out (see n. 48), goes beyond the Bible itself in highlighting David's role as one who not only "plays," but also "sings" for Saul. In addition, both authors dispose of the theological difficulty posed by the biblical emphasis on the divine origin of the "evil spirit" that assails Saul by leaving that connection aside. On the other hand, however, Pseudo-Philo goes much further than Josephus, both in what he eliminates from the biblical story (i.e., the entire sequence of 16:15-18 and all reference to Jesse's role; see n. 37) and what he adds to this (i.e., the words of David's exorcistic song in 60.2-3). With regard to this final question, I likewise recall the fact, mentioned in n. 38, that, whereas various Jewish-Christian writings give a name ("Doeg") to the anonymous speaker of 1 Sam 16:18, Josephus, who elsewhere does occasionally supply names for anonymous biblical figures,<sup>53</sup> leaves him nameless as well.

The four paragraphs making up *Ant.* 6.166-169 constitute a minuscule portion of Josephus's twenty-book *Antiquitates judaicae*. Nevertheless, as I have aimed to show in this essay, a close reading of even so short a passage can reveal much about the historian's various ways of dealing with his biblical source material.

<sup>53</sup>See, e.g., the nameless "man of God" from Judah of 1 Kgs 13, whom Josephus, in accordance with Rabbinic tradition, calls *Jadōn* in *Ant.* 8.231.