



2  
Samuel

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Chapter 1 – David Learns of Saul’s Death**

David receives news of Saul and Jonathan’s deaths from an Amalekite, who falsely claims to have killed Saul. David mourns deeply and composes a lament, expressing his sorrow and honoring the fallen king and prince.

## **Chapter 2 – David Anointed King of Judah**

David is anointed king over Judah, while Saul's son Ish-bosheth is made king over Israel, setting the stage for conflict. A deadly battle between David's forces, led by Joab, and Ish-bosheth's forces, led by Abner, marks the beginning of a divided kingdom.

## **Chapter 3 – The Strengthening of David's House**

David's power grows as Ish-bosheth weakens. Abner defects to David but is later murdered by Joab in revenge for his brother's death. David condemns the act, distancing himself from Joab's treachery.

## **Chapter 4 – The Fall of Ish-bosheth**

Ish-bosheth is assassinated by his own men, who bring his head to David, expecting a reward. Instead, David condemns them and has them executed, showing his commitment to justice.

## **Chapter 5 – David Becomes King of All Israel**

The tribes of Israel unite under David, making him king. He conquers Jerusalem, establishing it as his capital, and defeats the Philistines, securing his reign.

## **Chapter 6 – Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem**

David brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem with great celebration. However, Uzzah is struck dead for touching the Ark improperly, and Michal, David's wife, despises his public dancing before the Lord.

## **Chapter 7 – God's Covenant with David**

David desires to build a temple for God, but God instead promises to establish David's dynasty forever, a covenant fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ.

## **Chapter 8 – David's Military Victories**

David expands his kingdom through victories over surrounding nations, demonstrating God's blessing and establishing justice and righteousness in his rule.

## **Chapter 9 – David's Kindness to Mephibosheth**

David shows kindness to Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth, fulfilling his covenant with Jonathan and demonstrating God's grace.

## **Chapter 10 – David's War with Ammon**

David sends envoys to comfort Hanun, king of Ammon, but they are humiliated. This leads to war, in which David's army, led by Joab, defeats the Ammonites and their Syrian allies.

## **Chapter 11 – David and Bathsheba**

David commits adultery with Bathsheba and arranges the murder of her husband, Uriah. This marks the beginning of serious troubles in David's reign.

## **Chapter 12 – Nathan Confronts David**

Nathan rebukes David through a parable, leading David to repentance. However, God decrees that his child with Bathsheba will die as a consequence of his sin.

## **Chapter 13 – Amnon and Tamar**

David's son Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar. Her brother Absalom kills Amnon in revenge and flees, setting the stage for future rebellion.

## **Chapter 14 – Absalom Returns**

Joab schemes to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem, but David refuses to fully reconcile with him, creating tension that will later erupt into open rebellion.

## **Chapter 15 – Absalom's Rebellion**

Absalom wins the people's hearts and declares himself king, forcing David to flee Jerusalem in sorrow.

## **Chapter 16 – David's Trial and Shimei's Curse**

David faces humiliation as he flees. Ziba deceives him regarding Mephibosheth, and Shimei curses him. Meanwhile, Absalom takes control in Jerusalem.

## **Chapter 17 – Ahithophel and Hushai's Counsel**

Ahithophel advises Absalom to attack David immediately, but Hushai, secretly loyal to David, convinces him to delay, buying David time to regroup.

## **Chapter 18 – Absalom's Death**

David's forces defeat Absalom's army. Joab kills Absalom despite David's command to spare him. David mourns deeply for his son.

## **Chapter 19 – David Restored as King**

David returns to Jerusalem, but political tensions remain. He reconciles with some but faces opposition from others, highlighting the fragility of his rule.

## **Chapter 20 – Sheba's Revolt**

A man named Sheba leads a rebellion, but Joab swiftly quells it. Joab reasserts his authority, continuing his ruthless role in David's administration.

## **Chapter 21 – Justice for the Gibeonites**

A famine prompts David to seek God's guidance. He learns that Saul's unfulfilled treaty with the Gibeonites must be atoned for, leading to a tragic resolution.

## **Chapter 22 – David's Song of Praise**

David composes a psalm celebrating God's deliverance throughout his life, similar to Psalm 18.

## **Chapter 23 – David's Last Words and Mighty Warriors**

David reflects on God's covenant and righteousness. The chapter also honors his mighty men, who played crucial roles in his victories.

## **Chapter 24 – David's Census and the Plague**

David orders a census, bringing God's judgment in the form of a plague. However, David intercedes, and God shows mercy, marking the site where the future temple will be built.

## **CHAPTER 1:**

### **Verse 1: "Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;"**

This verse sets the stage for the tragic events that follow. It establishes the temporal and geographical context. The death of Saul, the previous king, is the central point of reference, signaling the end of an era and the beginning of David's reign. David's return from the battle against the Amalekites, a nomadic people known for their attacks on Israel, shows that David was a warrior and a leader. He then rested for two days in Ziklag, the city given to him by the Philistine king, Achish, indicating a moment of rest and reflection after a period of intense activity. This pause before receiving the news creates a sense of calm before the storm.

**Verse 2:** "It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance."

The scene builds dramatic tension. The arrival of a messenger is the focal point, with the "third day" adding a sense of urgency and implying that the news travels with speed. The messenger's appearance is striking and symbolic: his torn clothes and earth on his head are traditional signs of mourning and deep distress. This visual imagery immediately communicates that the news is devastating. The messenger's humble posture of falling to the earth and making obeisance (bowing respectfully) emphasizes the importance of the news and the messenger's recognition of David's authority.

**Verse 3:** "And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped."

The dialogue begins, and David's question, "From whence comest thou?", is a straightforward inquiry that initiates the narrative. The messenger's immediate response, "Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped," begins to shape the narrative. This answer immediately establishes the connection to the Israelites, David's people, and emphasizes the man's escape, subtly suggesting a dire situation within the camp that he has fled.

**Verse 4:** "And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also."

David presses for details with the question, "How went the matter?", showing his concern for the state of Israel and his direct, urgent manner. The messenger's reply is a concise and devastating summary of events. He reports the defeat, the flight of the Israelite army, and the widespread casualties. The most shocking news, highlighted at the end of the sentence, is the death of Saul and Jonathan, the king and his heir, which concludes this part of the tragic report.

**Verse 5:** "And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?"

David's question reveals his skepticism and his need for confirmation. His query focuses specifically on the death of Saul and Jonathan. It demonstrates David's caution and his desire to verify the veracity of the terrible news before drawing conclusions or reacting. He might also be looking for clues as to how Saul and Jonathan died to better understand the situation.

**Verse 6:** "And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him."

The messenger begins his account of how he encountered Saul and describes the scene leading up to the king's death. His initial phrase, "As I happened by chance," suggests a degree of serendipity or divine providence. He was on Mount Gilboa, the site of the battle, where he witnessed the king's last moments. The mention of Saul leaning on his spear conveys both his exhaustion and his defiance in the face of defeat. The pursuing chariots and horsemen represent the enemy forces closing in on the king.

**Verse 7:** "And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I."

This verse tells of the moment Saul noticed the messenger. The messenger, who appears to be an Amalekite, identifies himself by responding to Saul's call. This sets the stage for what will follow, highlighting the direct interaction between the King and the messenger.

**Verse 8:** "And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite."

Saul, in a weakened state, inquires about the messenger's identity. The response "I am an Amalekite" is of significant meaning. It identifies the messenger as being of the people whom David had previously fought against, the Amalekites. This declaration takes on added significance considering Saul's desperate situation. The very fact an Amalekite is present in Saul's final moments foreshadows the complex moral and political implications to come.



**Verse 9:** "He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me."

Saul's plea is filled with a desperate request. He asks the messenger to end his life. The plea is fueled by the pain, shame and defeat. His statement that "anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me" reflects the agony of being mortally wounded but not dead, of knowing defeat and being unable to escape the situation, and is a desire to avoid further suffering and capture by the enemy.

**Verse 10:** "So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord."

The messenger describes his actions and justifications. He claims to have slain Saul based on the king's request and his own assessment of the king's condition. He explains that he was certain that Saul was going to die. The messenger then takes the crown and bracelet, items of royal significance, as evidence of his actions and brings them to David. This act is highly questionable, raising questions about the messenger's true motives.

**Verse 11:** "Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him:"

David reacts with profound grief. He tears his clothes, a conventional sign of mourning. All the men with him follow his example, indicating a shared sorrow and solidarity. This is a demonstration of respect for the dead Saul and a sense of loss for the nation.

**Verse 12:** "And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword."

This verse describes a deep and widespread period of mourning. The people "mourned, and wept, and fasted" to express sorrow. Their grief extended beyond Saul and Jonathan to encompass "the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel," signifying a national loss, a sense of the kingdom's vulnerability, and the death of a king who had been anointed by God. The cause of their mourning is explicitly stated: "because they were fallen by the sword," a direct result of the defeat.

**Verse 13:** "And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite."

David returns to questioning the messenger, possibly seeking to understand more of his background. He repeats his earlier question, "Whence art thou?". The messenger confirms his identity and the fact that he is an Amalekite, once again highlighting this detail, emphasizing the messenger's foreign origin.

**Verse 14:** "And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

David confronts the messenger for his actions. He questions the man's lack of fear. He asks if he was not afraid to kill the LORD's anointed (referring to Saul). This reveals that David understands Saul's status as a divinely appointed leader, and the killing of the king as a serious act, even if done at the king's request.

**Verse 15:** "And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died."

David commands that the messenger be executed. He orders one of his young men to kill the messenger, which shows the gravity of the situation. The messenger is killed immediately.

**Verse 16:** "And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed."

David pronounces a judgement upon the messenger. He declares, "Thy blood be upon thy head," which means the messenger is responsible for his own death. He gives the reason for the judgement: "for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed." The messenger's own words have condemned him. David is executing justice, based on the messenger's self-incriminating statement.

**Verse 17: And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: David, deeply moved by the tragic news of Saul and Jonathan's deaths, initiates a formal lament, a song or poem of grief. This signifies the profound respect and sorrow he feels for both men, particularly Jonathan, his beloved friend. The "lamentation" itself is a structured and public expression of mourning, a ritual intended to honor the deceased and provide solace to the community.**

**Verse 18:** (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.) David, recognizing the gravity of the loss and the need to memorialize the fallen, instructs that the lament be taught to the children of Judah, ensuring its preservation and widespread dissemination. He also references the "book of Jasher," an ancient collection of poems and historical accounts. This indicates the lament would be incorporated into existing literary tradition to ensure it would last for generations, providing a legacy of grief and remembrance.

**Verse 19:** The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! David begins the lament, focusing on the loss of Israel's glory and strength. He mourns the end of their king Saul and his son Jonathan, referring to them as the beauty of Israel and the mighty men who have fallen. The repetition of "how are the mighty fallen!" heightens the sorrow and emphasizes the suddenness and devastating impact of their deaths.

**Verse 20:** Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. David expresses a deep concern that the Philistines, Israel's enemies, not hear of Saul and Jonathan's demise. This is not just a concern for their own well-being, but also the preservation of the legacy of the fallen. He doesn't want the Philistines to revel in Israel's misfortune and feel victorious.

**Verse 21:** Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. David curses the mountains of Gilboa, the site of the battle where Saul and Jonathan died. He calls for drought and barrenness upon them, a symbolic act of mourning. He laments

the loss of Saul's shield and his sacred anointing as king, which are now cast away and treated as nothing.

**Verse 22:** From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. David speaks with admiration about Jonathan and Saul's strength in battle. The mention of their bravery underscores the tragedy of their deaths. He emphasizes the effectiveness of their weapons, highlighting their prowess as warriors. They did not back away and their swords never returned empty, they killed many enemies.

**Verse 23:** Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. David reflects on the close bond between Saul and Jonathan, portraying them as beloved and united, even in death. He uses vivid imagery, comparing them to eagles and lions, to emphasize their swiftness, strength, and overall might. Their unity in life and death is highlighted as an extraordinary bond.

**Verse 24:** Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. David calls upon the women of Israel to mourn for Saul, who provided them with luxury and adornment. He reminds them of the king's generosity and care, perhaps implying that his death is not just a loss for the men, but for the entire nation, including the women.

**Verse 25:** How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. David repeats the lamenting phrase, again emphasizing the sorrow felt in the face of Saul's death. He also directs his grief and focuses it on Jonathan specifically, remembering how Jonathan was slain on his high places, or in his time of glory, further intensifying the personal anguish of the loss.

**Verse 26:** I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. This is the most personal and emotionally charged verse, revealing David's deep love for Jonathan. He expresses profound distress, calling Jonathan his brother and emphasizing the wonderfulness of their friendship. David's praise for Jonathan's love, which surpasses even that of women, is an extreme expression of devotion and the highest form of human praise, making this verse a cornerstone of David's grief.

**Verse 27:** How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished! David concludes his lament, repeating the mournful cry and expanding the grief to include the loss of the weapons of war. He mourns the loss of the mighty and of the means by which they fought. The lament's conclusion is a lament, as the phrase is repeated again to highlight its lasting and devastating impact.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

**Verse 1:** And it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.

•Following the death of King Saul, David, having mourned appropriately, now seeks divine guidance. He does not act impulsively, but rather consults the LORD through an unspecified means (likely prayer

and perhaps a priest with the Urim and Thummim). David asks if he should relocate to any city within the territory of Judah, which is the tribe he belongs to. The LORD immediately directs David to "Go up," implying that the time is right for action. David further inquires as to the specific destination. The Lord then designates Hebron as his intended place of residence. This act signifies that the future of David's reign would be firmly planted in the land of Judah.

**Verse 2:** So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

- Obedient to God's command, David initiates his journey to Hebron. The verse also mentions his wives: Ahinoam, of Jezreel, and Abigail, the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. The presence of his wives indicates David's intention to establish a permanent home in Hebron, moving beyond the life of a fugitive. This also indicates that David is not solely focused on political maneuvering but also maintaining his personal relationships and family life.

**Verse 3:** And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.

- David doesn't go to Hebron alone but brings his loyal men, along with their families, representing a complete relocation and the foundation of a new community. This further cements David's leadership and suggests a degree of organization and support that would be essential for establishing his authority. The detail of "every man with his household" highlights the importance of family in the ancient world and the sense of community David cultivates. It underscores the idea that David's kingdom will be built on more than just military might; it will involve families and the everyday lives of his followers.

**Verse 4:** And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul.

- Upon arriving in Hebron, David is formally anointed as king by the men of Judah. This demonstrates the support of his own tribe, establishing his claim to rule over at least a portion of Israel. The anointing is a ritual act of consecration, signifying divine approval and the bestowal of authority. The second part of this verse provides information to David indicating that the men of Jabesh-gilead had buried Saul. This is both a respectful act of piety toward the fallen king and a signal to David. These men honored Saul, a tacit reminder to David that he is not the absolute ruler over the land of Israel and that he is still in the process of establishing his kingdom.

**Verse 5:** And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.

- David, demonstrating diplomacy and political acumen, sends messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead. He commends them for their act of burying Saul, showing his respect and gratitude for their kindness. David invokes the blessing of the LORD upon them, implying that their honorable action will be rewarded by God. This action serves to establish a positive relationship with a group that had shown loyalty to Saul, thereby securing their goodwill.

**Verse 6:** And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

- Continuing his message, David expresses a desire for God's continued kindness and truth to be bestowed upon the men of Jabesh-gilead, solidifying the impression that David values them. He also personally pledges to "requite" their kindness, promising to repay them for their honorable act. This indicates David's commitment to reciprocity and establishes his reputation as a just ruler who honors those who support him. This statement builds a bridge with those who might have initially been wary of David, given his prior relationship with Saul.

**Verse 7:** Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your lord Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

- David encourages the men of Jabesh-gilead to be strong and courageous, now that Saul is dead. He emphasizes that the political landscape has changed, and the time for action has come. He explicitly informs them that the tribe of Judah has anointed him as their king, establishing his claim to authority. The use of "therefore" connects their past act of kindness with their future choices. He is making a subtle offer to those who buried Saul, suggesting they now have the option to show loyalty to him.

**Verse 8:** But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim;

- The narrative shifts to the opposing camp. Abner, the son of Ner and the commander of Saul's army, takes Ish-bosheth, Saul's son (also spelled Ishbosheth or Eshbaal), and brings him to Mahanaim. Abner's actions indicate that he intends to preserve a semblance of Saul's lineage and perhaps establish Ish-bosheth as a rival king, particularly since Saul's other son, Jonathan, was already dead. Mahanaim is a location east of the Jordan River, in a more remote area.

**Verse 9:** And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.

- Abner proceeds to crown Ish-bosheth king, not just over the territory remaining to Saul, but over all Israel. This sets up a direct conflict with David's claim to the throne. It shows that Abner, in effect, is attempting to unite all the tribes under Ish-bosheth, therefore challenging the authority of David. This highlights the tensions that resulted from Saul's death and the resulting power vacuum. The regions listed represent a significant portion of the northern tribes, showing Abner's ambition to retain and extend Saul's dominion.

**Verse 10:** Ish-bosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

- The verse provides information about Ish-bosheth's reign, stating that he was forty years old when he began and that his reign lasted for two years. The statement also reiterates that the house of Judah remained loyal to David, setting the stage for conflict. This verse establishes a timeline and contrasts Ish-bosheth's limited rule with David's ongoing authority in Judah. This provides further context of the divide in the kingdom and offers additional insight to the story.

**Verse 11:** And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

- The verse concludes with the specific length of David's reign in Hebron, totaling seven years and six months. This marks the period of David's kingship over Judah before he becomes king over all of Israel. This time frame is offered to provide context for the duration of this conflict and allows the reader to track the sequence of events.

**2 Samuel 2:12:** And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

- This verse establishes the geographical setting and introduces the key players. Abner, a powerful military leader and cousin of Saul, leads the forces loyal to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, who currently reigns over a portion of Israel from the city of Mahanaim. Their movement towards Gibeon marks the beginning of a significant conflict. Gibeon, a city in Benjamin, becomes the location where their paths cross, setting the stage for the ensuing battle.

**2 Samuel 2:13:** And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met them by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

- David, who is anointed as king of Judah, sends his own forces, led by Joab, the son of Zeruiah, to Gibeon. The meeting between the two armies at the pool of Gibeon is described, implying that the intent may not have been originally hostile, and rather a meeting point. The strategic positioning of the two armies "on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool" suggests a degree of tension and a willingness to negotiate, while the very presence of both groups in the same area forebodes a confrontation.

**2 Samuel 2:14:** Then said Abner to Joab, Let the young men arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.

- Abner initiates the action. He proposes a kind of staged combat or "play" between selected young men from both sides. This may be seen as an attempt to settle the dispute without a full-scale war or a way to gauge the strength of their opponent. Joab responds in agreement to Abner's proposal which further emphasizes the desire, or perhaps the inevitability, of some kind of action.

**2 Samuel 2:15:** Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

- The selection process for the "game" or staged fight is described. Twelve men from Benjamin, which had been assigned to Saul's son Ish-bosheth, were to engage twelve of David's servants. This is a structured method, with an even number of men on each side, suggesting a sense of formality or ritual in the upcoming contest. The men of Benjamin are identified as the chosen representatives of Ish-bosheth's forces.

**2 Samuel 2:16:** And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.

- The "play" quickly turns brutal. Instead of a controlled display, the men engage in deadly combat, attacking each other with swords. They appear to seize one another "by the head," and thrust their

swords into their opponents, leaving all twenty-four combatants dead on the battlefield. This violent outcome demonstrates the inherent danger and the likely animosity between the factions. The place of this bloody event is named Helkath-hazzurim, a place that, according to tradition, means "the field of the strong men" or "the field of the enemies," which highlights the solemnity of the encounter and the carnage that ensued.

**2 Samuel 2:17:** And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

- The conflict escalates, and the "very sore battle" that was initially started by a small group soon involved both armies. David's forces, under the leadership of Joab, emerge victorious, with Abner and the men of Israel experiencing defeat. This outcome marks the beginning of a larger war and the increasing dominance of David's kingdom.

**2 Samuel 2:18:** And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe.

- The verse shifts to introducing key individuals on David's side, including Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, all sons of Zeruiah. Asahel is described as being exceptionally swift. This is a direct comparison to a "wild roe" or a gazelle, highlighting his speed and agility, which will play a part in the story.

**2 Samuel 2:19:** And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner.

- Asahel, driven by his desire to pursue and possibly capture or kill Abner, begins to chase Abner. Asahel's determination is reflected in his unwavering pursuit, refusing to deviate from the path even slightly.

**2 Samuel 2:20:** Then Abner looked behind him, and said, Art thou Asahel? And he answered, I am.

- Abner, having been pursued, turns his attention towards his pursuer. He stops and questions Asahel, revealing that he knows the individual who is chasing him. Asahel confirms his identity.

**2 Samuel 2:21:** And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.

- Abner attempts to dissuade Asahel from continuing the pursuit. Abner advises Asahel to go after one of the younger, less experienced soldiers in his troop, implying it would be easier to take their armour. This is a suggestion to pursue the glory of battle rather than to hunt down the leader. However, Asahel ignores this suggestion.

**2 Samuel 2:22:** And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? for how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?

- Abner issues a second warning to Asahel. He raises the stakes by acknowledging that he is willing to kill Asahel if he continues. Furthermore, he also refers to Asahel's relationship to Joab and expresses concern about the potential ramifications of harming Asahel. This indicates an understanding between the two groups, and an effort to prevent unnecessary violence.

**2 Samuel 2:23:** Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.

- Asahel ignores Abner's warnings and refuses to stop pursuing him. As a result, Abner is forced to defend himself. He uses the butt of his spear to strike Asahel, with a devastating result. Asahel dies on the spot. This action abruptly ends the pursuit and causes those who come to see the fallen Asahel to halt.

**2 Samuel 2:24:** Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

- Joab and Abishai, Asahel's brothers, take up the pursuit of Abner. The pursuit continues until nightfall, leading them to the hill of Ammah, near Giah and the wilderness of Gibeon. The setting sun emphasizes the passing of time and the extended nature of the conflict.

**2 Samuel 2:25:** And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.

- Abner's forces, the men of Benjamin, regroup and rally behind him. They take a defensive position on the top of a hill. This suggests that the situation is far from over and the two sides are preparing for another potential confrontation.

**2 Samuel 2:26:** Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?

- Abner calls out to Joab, challenging the endless bloodshed. He questions the purpose of the ongoing war and appeals to their shared humanity, suggesting that the conflict will only lead to bitterness. Abner urges Joab to stop the slaughter and order his men to retreat, and to cease pursuit of his men.

**2 Samuel 2:27:** And Joab said, As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother.

- Joab responds to Abner's plea, acknowledging that he would have ordered his men to halt the following morning. It serves as a sign that both sides are tired of the battle and that the conflict could potentially end.

**2 Samuel 2:28:** So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

- Joab signals a ceasefire by blowing a trumpet. As a result, the pursuit of Abner's forces, "Israel" (the term used to denote Ish-bosheth's army), ceases, ending the battle. This marks a crucial turning point in the conflict and suggests the possibility of peace.

**2 Samuel 2:29:** And Abner and his men went all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.



- Abner and his men retreat from the battlefield. They traveled through the night, crossing the Jordan River, and eventually reach Mahanaim. This signifies the retreat of the forces that support Ish-bosheth.

**2 Samuel 2:30:** And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

- Joab and his men return from the pursuit and take stock of their losses. They discover that nineteen soldiers of David's army are missing, in addition to Asahel who had already died. This indicates a heavy toll of this conflict.

**2 Samuel 2:31:** But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, three hundred and threescore men.

- The verse records the number of casualties on the side of the Benjaminites. David's forces killed 360 men from Benjamin and Abner's army. This is a significantly higher number of casualties compared to David's side.

**2 Samuel 2:32:** And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron.

- The final act of this chapter is the burial of Asahel, which is also the last act of violence, or the "reconciliation". Asahel is buried in the sepulchre of his father in Bethlehem, a city in Judah. Joab and his men return to Hebron, David's capital, after a long night.

**Verse 1:** *Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.*

This verse sets the stage for the ongoing conflict between the remaining forces loyal to the house of Saul and the burgeoning kingdom of David. The "long war" signifies not just a period of time, but likely a series of skirmishes, battles, and political maneuvering. The contrast is stark: David's house, representing his growing influence and support, becomes increasingly powerful ("waxed stronger and stronger"), reflecting his military successes, political acumen, and the favor of the Lord. Conversely, the house of Saul, representing the descendants and followers of the former king, sees their power and influence diminish ("waxed weaker and weaker"). This decline likely stems from several factors: attrition of their forces, dwindling resources, a lack of charismatic leadership (after the deaths of Saul and Jonathan), and a shift in allegiance towards David, who was seen as the anointed successor. This escalating power dynamic lays the foundation for the subsequent events.

**Verse 2:** *And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;*

This verse introduces a significant aspect of David's life during this period of relative stability: the birth of his sons. The location, Hebron, is noted as David's primary base of operations and thus where his family resided. This verse mentions the firstborn, Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess. The mention of the firstborn is significant, as it established the line of succession and the future of David's royal dynasty. These births represent a blessing and a symbol of hope and continuation for

David's line, contrasting with the ongoing struggle for political dominance and the uncertainty of war. The verse hints at the establishment of a family life alongside the responsibilities of a king and warrior.

**Verse 3:** *And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom, the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;*

This verse continues the list of David's sons born in Hebron, detailing the second and third born and providing insights into the women who mothered them. Chileab, the second son, was born to Abigail, the former wife of Nabal the Carmelite, a woman of keen intellect and grace. The name of the mother, Abigail, is provided to denote the origin of Chileab. The third son, Absalom, was born to Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur. The fact that Absalom's mother was a foreign princess subtly introduces a potential element of political alliance or, at least, a deliberate connection with another kingdom. This detail also suggests David's expansive sphere of influence, and possibly, that he had been taking political steps to further secure his position.

**Verse 4:** *And the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;*

This verse continues the list of David's sons, noting the fourth and fifth born and their mothers. Adonijah, the fourth son, was the son of Haggith. Shephatiah, the fifth, was the son of Abital. The list continues to show David's significant family at Hebron during the years of war. This ongoing list emphasizes the growth of his family, which further establishes his power and his future dynasty. Each mother is listed to distinguish the offspring, further emphasizing his family line.

**Verse 5:** *And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.*

This verse concludes the list of David's sons born in Hebron, mentioning Ithream, the sixth son, born to Eglah, who is specifically identified as "David's wife." This clarification may indicate that Eglah was one of David's wives with a more significant status, perhaps the main wife or one of the earliest. The concluding statement, "These were born to David in Hebron," reinforces the location where these children were conceived, emphasizing that David was establishing a stable family life during this period. The end of the list suggests that the births of these children occurred in a relatively short time span.

**Verse 6:** *And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.*

This verse shifts the focus back to the ongoing conflict between the houses of Saul and David. It explicitly states that Abner, Saul's former captain and a powerful military figure, was actively taking steps to strengthen the house of Saul. The phrase "made himself strong" suggests that Abner was not merely passively holding things together but actively working to consolidate the power and position of Saul's remaining supporters. Abner's actions are critical because they underscore the strategic aspect of the conflict. His efforts to preserve and defend the house of Saul would undoubtedly pose challenges to David's growing influence.

**Verse 7:** *And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?*

This verse introduces a turning point in the narrative, a pivotal moment driven by a perceived transgression. It first mentions that Saul had a concubine named Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. This detail is necessary background information for understanding the following conflict. The core of the verse is the confrontation between Ish-bosheth, Saul's son and the current ruler, and Abner. Ish-bosheth accuses Abner of going in unto (having relations with) his father's concubine, Rizpah. The act of taking a dead king's concubine, especially one who was still alive, was seen as a sign of asserting dominion over the deceased king's kingdom, a claim to his authority and therefore a direct challenge to Ish-bosheth's power. This accusation and its implied meaning would set the stage for potential infighting and the weakening of the house of Saul.

**Verse 8:** *Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me this day with a fault concerning this woman?*

This verse reveals Abner's angry reaction to Ish-bosheth's accusation. Abner is described as being "very wroth," indicating his profound anger at Ish-bosheth's words. He frames his response with several rhetorical questions and indignant statements, highlighting his perspective. He asks if he is a "dog's head," a term of insult implying insignificance and worthlessness, suggesting he is being treated with a lack of respect. He claims to be showing kindness to the house of Saul by assisting them against Judah. He defends his actions, stating that he has not yet delivered Ish-bosheth into David's hand. This statement implicitly indicates that Abner has the power to do so, a further demonstration of his authority. He then asks why he is being accused of a crime regarding Rizpah, questioning Ish-bosheth's sense of justice and loyalty. The verse clearly conveys the deep resentment Abner feels towards Ish-bosheth's accusation. This resentment is a turning point in the story and will lead to a significant change in loyalties.

**Verse 9:** *So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;*

This verse contains a solemn oath by Abner, which is a significant turning point in the narrative. It is a conditional curse, where Abner calls upon God to punish him severely ("So do God to Abner, and more also") if he does not keep his word. The oath's context is his anger at Ish-bosheth and indicates that his anger has led him to consider a dramatic shift in his actions. He vows that he will act in accordance with God's previous oath to David. He references the Lord's promise to David, implying that he now believes in David's divinely ordained destiny. This is a critical moment, showing that Abner is willing to abandon the house of Saul, recognizing the certainty of David's eventual victory. This marks a pivotal point in Abner's loyalty.

**Verse 10:** *To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.*

This verse articulates what Abner now pledges to do, the concrete action he intends to take. It is a statement of his plan to actively work towards establishing David as the king of all Israel. He vows to "translate the kingdom from the house of Saul," meaning to remove the kingdom's authority and leadership from Ish-bosheth and his supporters. The goal is to set up "the throne of David over Israel

and over Judah." The mention of both Israel and Judah suggests Abner's intention to unify the entire nation under David's rule. The phrase "from Dan even to Beersheba" indicates the complete geographic scope of David's intended dominion, encompassing the entire land of Israel, from its northernmost to its southernmost borders. This demonstrates Abner's ambition to consolidate the kingdom.

**Verse 11:** *And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.*

This verse reveals the immediate consequence of Abner's declaration: Ish-bosheth's reaction. Ish-bosheth is described as being unable to respond. The specific reason for Ish-bosheth's inability to answer is his fear of Abner. This detail highlights Abner's military and political power, implying Ish-bosheth understood Abner was the most important component to their survival. Ish-bosheth's silence emphasizes his vulnerability and dependence on Abner. The lack of any reply, whether defensive or conciliatory, also points to a breakdown in the relationship between the two men. This failure to respond further illustrates the impending collapse of the house of Saul.

**Verse 12:** *And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.*

This verse reveals Abner's next strategic step: directly communicating with David. Abner "sent messengers to David," indicating a formal, deliberate communication. The message is conveyed "on his behalf," showing that Abner is taking the initiative. The message begins with a question: "Whose is the land?" This rhetorical question asserts that David should be the rightful ruler. The following statement is a proposal for an alliance: "Make thy league with me." This suggests that Abner wishes to establish a formal agreement with David, promising cooperation and mutual benefit. The next statement is a promise: "My hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee." Abner pledges his support, promising to use his influence to unite all Israel behind David. He is offering to transfer his military power to David.

**Verse 13:** *And David said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.*

This verse records David's immediate response to Abner's proposal. David's initial response, "Well; I will make a league with thee," is a clear acceptance of Abner's offer, indicating his willingness to form an alliance. However, David adds a crucial condition: "But one thing I require of thee..." David's condition is, "Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face." This condition is a specific demand related to a personal matter, demonstrating David's prudence and diplomatic strategy. David requires the return of Michal, his former wife, who was taken by Saul and given to another man. The request also serves as a test of Abner's sincerity. It is also an attempt to strengthen David's political claim, adding to his legitimacy and establishing his family ties to the previous royal line. This condition would serve as a test of Abner's allegiance to David.

**Verse 14:** *And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.*

This verse shows David taking the necessary steps to enforce the terms of the agreement with Abner. David "sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son," communicating directly with the man who currently holds the position of leadership within the house of Saul. David is demanding the return of Michal. He states that Michal is "my wife." He reminds Ish-bosheth of the price he paid for her, which was "an hundred foreskins of the Philistines," as a sign of his courage and victory. This demand serves to show the value of the agreement, as it would make the transition easier and further legitimize David's claim. The reference also serves as a reminder of David's military accomplishments and therefore strength.

**Verse 15:** *And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from Phaltiel the son of Laish.*

This verse describes the immediate action taken by Ish-bosheth in response to David's demand. Ish-bosheth "sent, and took her from her husband." Michal is forcibly taken away from her current husband, Phaltiel. This action demonstrates Ish-bosheth's willingness to comply with David's request. The fact that Ish-bosheth complies suggests he recognized that he could not defy David and, probably, Abner, and therefore was doing what was needed to survive. Ish-bosheth removing Michal from her husband indicates his own power is limited.

**Verse 16:** *And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.*

This verse adds a poignant detail to the story, highlighting the human cost and emotional impact of the political maneuvering. Her husband, Phaltiel, is described as going with Michal, "along weeping behind her." This detail emphasizes Phaltiel's grief and sorrow at losing his wife. The location, Bahurim, is noted. The narrative indicates that Phaltiel's grief is visible, showing a degree of respect for the man and how the forced separation affected him. Then, Abner intervenes. "Then said Abner unto him, Go, return." This direct command by Abner is a demonstration of his authority and influence. The verse concludes, "And he returned," showing that Phaltiel complied with Abner's command, likely recognizing the futility of defying the powerful military leader. This scene underscores the disruption of personal lives and relationships caused by the political conflict.

**Verse 17:** *And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you:*

This verse describes Abner's further actions to fulfill his promise to David. Abner is seen as actively working to bring about a change in allegiance towards David. Abner has "communication with the elders of Israel." This is a strategic move, as the elders represented the leadership of the various tribes and communities. Abner is reminding them of their previous desire to have David rule over them. He is essentially reminding them that they had wanted David to be king.

**Verse 18:** *Now then do it: for the LORD hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from the hand of all their enemies.*

This verse gives the reason why Abner is pushing the elders to support David. He is encouraging them to put their desire for David to action, saying "Now then do it." The verse gives Abner's reason as the word of the Lord. Abner cites the Lord's promise that David will save Israel. He references the Lord's prophecy that "By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel." He claims David would

save them from the Philistines and all their enemies. This religious justification strengthens Abner's argument. Abner is framing the move to David as God's will.

**Verse 19:** *And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.*

This verse highlights Abner's thoroughness in securing support for David. "And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin." He is seeking to win over the tribe of Benjamin. This is an important tribal group, as it was Saul's tribe, and would provide the legitimacy for David to rule. Abner then traveled to Hebron. He shared all the proposals of Israel and of Benjamin, showing that he has been working towards a peaceful transfer.

**Verse 20:** *So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him: and David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast.*

This verse describes the meeting between Abner and David. Abner "came to David to Hebron," confirming their meeting. He brought "twenty men with him," likely as an indication of his own status. The number suggests a certain level of military protection. David "made Abner and the men that were with him a feast," indicating that David accepted the new political arrangement with some degree of celebration. David's welcoming of Abner demonstrates his acceptance of the peace process.

**Verse 21:** *And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.*

This verse captures the final part of the meeting between Abner and David. Abner confirms his promise to gather all Israel. The purpose is to allow them "to make a league with thee," showing that all of Israel will be in agreement with David. The next part is "that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth," showing Abner's intentions. David "sent Abner away; and he went in peace," demonstrating the successful completion of this meeting. This indicates that David accepted Abner's proposal.

**Verse 22:** *And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.*

This verse introduces an unforeseen development and creates a sense of tension. David's servants are returning from battle. "And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them." Joab leads the soldiers of David. The verse makes it a point that Abner was not present in Hebron. "But Abner was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace." This absence will serve to add intrigue.

**Verse 23:** *When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.*

This verse describes Joab's reaction. It details how Joab learns about Abner's visit and departure. Joab "and all the host that was with him" are informed about Abner's visit. They tell Joab that Abner "came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace." This information is delivered to Joab in a way that implies some concern.

**Verse 24:** *Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?*

This verse conveys Joab's immediate reaction to the news. Joab "came to the king, and said, What hast thou done?" This is a bold question, one that questions David's judgement. Joab seems displeased with the situation. He repeats the question, "Why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?" Joab's concern is a turning point in the story.

**Verse 25:** *Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.*

This verse outlines Joab's accusation against Abner and expresses his suspicions of treachery. Joab starts with a direct accusation. "Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee." This suggests Joab does not trust Abner's motives. He suggests that Abner came to gain intelligence. "and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest." This accusation paints Abner as a spy and a threat. Joab's distrust is presented as the driving force.

**Verse 26:** *And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not.*

This verse describes the immediate actions taken by Joab to counter Abner's departure. Joab, after his conversation with David, "sent messengers after Abner," showing that he did not take the situation lightly. The messengers "brought him again from the well of Sirah." David "knew it not," implying that Joab acted without David's knowledge or permission.

**Verse 27:** *And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.*

This verse reveals the tragic and shocking culmination of Joab's actions. Abner, upon his return to Hebron, is met by Joab. "Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly." This sets the scene for a supposedly private conversation. Then, Joab "smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died." This sudden killing marks a betrayal of the agreement between David and Abner. The stated reason, "for the blood of Asahel his brother," shows that this was in revenge for the death of Asahel. This killing will lead to a conflict of David and Joab.

**Verse 28:** *And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner.*

This verse details David's reaction to the murder. David "heard it," implying the news reached him quickly. He states, "I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner." David claims innocence, asserting he had no involvement in Abner's death and therefore is free from responsibility. He is seeking to separate himself from the act, emphasizing his integrity and justice. This is meant to show the Lord the purity of David's actions.

**Verse 29:** *Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.*

This verse reveals David's curse upon Joab and his family. David is placing the blame directly on Joab. He calls for a curse on Joab and his family. He calls that those in Joab's family would lack several things, highlighting various ways of suffering. This curse is meant to show God that Joab is guilty.

**Verse 30:** *So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.*

This verse summarizes the motivation behind Joab and his brother Abishai's actions, reiterating the reason. Joab and Abishai are the ones who "slew Abner." The stated reason, "because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle" is a revenge killing. This act highlights the cycle of violence and retribution.

**Verse 31:** *And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier.*

This verse portrays David's public mourning and his attempts to demonstrate respect for Abner despite Joab's actions. David is issuing commands. David instructs them to show deep grief. "Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." This is standard mourning ritual. David, as the king, also participates. "And king David himself followed the bier." His participation is a show of respect and an attempt to establish his innocence.

**Verse 32:** *And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.*

This verse describes the burial and the widespread display of grief. Abner is "buried in Hebron." This is significant, as Hebron is David's city, showing that he is giving Abner the honor that he is due. David "lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner." The king is openly weeping, showing how deeply he regrets Abner's death. "And all the people wept." This shows that the community also mourns Abner. This public display attempts to soothe any suspicion.

**Verse 33:** *And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth?*

This verse captures a lament spoken by David, expressing his sorrow and shock over Abner's death. The king "lamented over Abner." He is delivering an emotional tribute. The question "Died Abner as a fool dieth?" expresses his sense of outrage and bewilderment. He is asking why a man of Abner's stature and abilities should die in such a way.

**Verse 34:** *Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him.*

This verse continues David's lament, expressing the injustice and unexpected nature of Abner's death. David is speaking about how Abner was killed. "Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters." This detail highlights that Abner was not a prisoner or a captive. David is pointing out the unexpected and undeserved nature of Abner's death. He is also saying that he was killed by his peers. "As a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou." This is a reference to how Abner was murdered, by wicked men. "And all the people wept again over him." This further shows the depth of feeling about Abner's death.



**Verse 35:** *And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat, that David sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or aught else, till the sun be down.*

This verse describes David's continued display of grief, denying himself food and drink as a sign of mourning. The verse begins "And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat," suggesting that David's servants and supporters were trying to comfort him. David "sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also." This is an oath, using a curse upon himself. He will not eat until the evening. "if I taste bread, or aught else, till the sun be down." This is a sign of mourning.

**Verse 36:** *And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.*

This verse describes the people's reaction to David's actions, portraying their general satisfaction with the king's conduct. The verse begins "And all the people took notice of it." The people were aware of David's actions. This emphasizes that David's performance was for all to see. The reason why it was pleasing, as explained is "as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people." David, at this point, has the people on his side.

**Verse 37:** *For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.*

This verse states that the people had come to believe in David's innocence. The people, "And all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner." The people were convinced that David was not behind the murder. This indicates that David succeeded in demonstrating his innocence.

**Verse 38:** *And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?*

This verse reflects on the impact and significance of Abner's death. David is sharing his own understanding of the magnitude of the event. David is talking to his servants. He is asking "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" The loss of Abner has a significant impact on the kingdom.

**Verse 39:** *And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.*

This verse conveys David's sense of helplessness and his acknowledgment of the challenge posed by Joab and his family. "And I am this day weak, though anointed king," shows that even though David is king, he is not in control. "And these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me." He is talking about Joab and his brothers. The verse ends with "the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness." David leaves justice to God.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

**Verse 1:** **And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. The news of Abner's death had a profound impact on Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, as it left him weakened and**

**disillusioned. Abner, the former captain of Saul's army, had been a powerful and influential figure in Israel, and his death created a sense of uncertainty and chaos among the Israelites. The fact that Ishbosheth's "hands were feeble" suggests that he felt powerless and unable to lead or defend his people in the face of this new threat. Furthermore, the Israelites were "troubled" by the news, indicating a sense of fear, anxiety, and instability that gripped the nation. As a result, the Israelites were likely looking for a new leader who could provide strength, guidance, and protection, and Ishbosheth's weakness made him an unlikely candidate to fill this role.**

**Verse 2:** And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin. This verse provides more information about Ishbosheth's situation, highlighting his limited military resources and support. The fact that he had only two captains of bands, Baanah and Rechab, suggests that his army was relatively small and weak. Additionally, the fact that these two men were brothers and came from the city of Beeroth, which was part of the tribe of Benjamin, may indicate that Ishbosheth's support was largely limited to his own tribe. The mention of Benjamin is significant, as it was the tribe to which Saul and his family belonged, and it may suggest that Ishbosheth's power base was restricted to his own tribal affiliations. Overall, this verse reinforces the idea that Ishbosheth was in a precarious position, with limited resources and a narrow base of support.

**Verse 3:** And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day. This verse provides a brief aside, explaining the fate of the inhabitants of Beeroth, the city from which Baanah and Rechab came. The fact that the Beerothites "fled to Gittaim" suggests that they were forced to abandon their homes, possibly due to the turbulence and instability of the time. The city of Gittaim is not well-known, but it may have been a place of refuge or exile for the Beerothites. The phrase "until this day" indicates that the Beerothites remained in Gittaim for an extended period, possibly even permanently, and that this event was still remembered and recorded at the time the book of 2 Samuel was written. This verse provides a glimpse into the broader social and historical context of the time, highlighting the displacement and migration of people that often accompanied periods of conflict and upheaval.

**Verse 4:** And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet: and his name was Mephibosheth; and he was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. This verse introduces a new character, Mephibosheth, who was the son of Jonathan and the grandson of Saul. The fact that Mephibosheth was "lame of his feet" is significant, as it made him vulnerable and dependent on others for support. The story of how Mephibosheth became lame is also provided, highlighting the chaos and panic that accompanied the death of Saul and Jonathan. The image of Mephibosheth's nurse fleeing with him and accidentally dropping him, resulting in his injury, is a poignant one, and it underscores the human cost of war and conflict. The repetition of Mephibosheth's name at the end of the verse may serve to emphasize his

importance as a character, and to highlight the significance of his story in the broader narrative of 2 Samuel.

**Verse 5:** And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who lay on a bed at noon. This verse sets the scene for the events that are about to unfold, describing the arrival of Rechab and Baanah at the house of Ishbosheth. The fact that they came "about the heat of the day" suggests that they arrived during the hottest part of the day, when Ishbosheth was likely to be resting or sleeping. The image of Ishbosheth "laying on a bed at noon" creates a sense of vulnerability and relaxation, highlighting his lack of vigilance or preparedness for the danger that is about to strike. The use of the word "heat" to describe the time of day may also serve to create a sense of tension or foreboding, as it often does in biblical narrative. Overall, this verse sets the stage for the violent and unexpected events that are about to occur.

**Verse 6:** And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. This verse describes the brutal and treacherous murder of Ishbosheth by Rechab and Baanah. The fact that they came "into the midst of the house" and pretended to be fetching wheat suggests that they were able to gain access to Ishbosheth's private chambers by deceit, highlighting the lack of security or protection that surrounded him. The image of Ishbosheth being struck "under the fifth rib" is a graphic and violent one, emphasizing the brutality and cruelty of the act. The fact that Rechab and Baanah were able to "escape" after committing the murder suggests that they were able to carry out their plan without being detected or apprehended, at least initially. Overall, this verse paints a vivid picture of the violent and lawless world of ancient Israel, where even the most powerful leaders could be vulnerable to attack and assassination.

**Verse 7:** For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night. This verse provides more details about the murder of Ishbosheth, emphasizing the brutality and ruthlessness of the act. The fact that Ishbosheth was killed in his own "bedchamber" highlights the intimate and private nature of the setting, making the violence all the more shocking and disturbing. The image of Rechab and Baanah beheading Ishbosheth and taking his head as a trophy is a particularly gruesome one, emphasizing the savage and bloodthirsty nature of their actions. The fact that they were able to escape "through the plain all night" suggests that they were able to move undetected and unapprehended, at least for the time being. Overall, this verse creates a sense of shock and horror, highlighting the violent and lawless world of ancient Israel and the ruthless ambitions of those who sought to gain power and control.

**Verse 8:** And they brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Shall not the head of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, thine enemy, be given unto thee to day, who sought thy life? and the king said unto them, How is it that ye are innocent, seeing ye have slain a righteous man in his own house upon his bed? This verse describes the aftermath of Ishbosheth's murder, as Rechab and Baanah bring his head to David in Hebron. The fact that they present the head as a gift, suggesting that David should be pleased and grateful for their actions, highlights their own ruthless and opportunistic nature. However, David's response is one of outrage and condemnation, as he denounces Rechab and Baanah for their actions. The fact that David describes Ishbosheth as a "righteous man" suggests that he viewed

him as an innocent victim, rather than a threat or an enemy. David's question, "How is it that ye are innocent, seeing ye have slain a righteous man in his own house upon his bed?" emphasizes the moral and ethical implications of their actions, highlighting the fact that they had committed a heinous and unjustified crime.

**Verse 9:** And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, and said unto them, As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings; how much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand? This verse continues David's condemnation of Rechab and Baanah, as he emphasizes the gravity of their crime and the fact that they will be held accountable for their actions. The fact that David references his own past experiences, including the death of Saul, serves to underscore his commitment to justice and righteousness. The image of David taking hold of the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul and slaying him in Ziklag creates a sense of irony and contrast, highlighting the fact that David had previously punished someone for claiming to have killed his enemy, while Rechab and Baanah had actually committed the crime. David's statement, "how much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand?" emphasizes his determination to see justice done and to punish those who have committed such a heinous crime.

**Verse 10:** And when one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: This verse is a repetition of a statement made in the previous verse, emphasizing David's past actions and his commitment to justice. The fact that David slew the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul in Ziklag serves to underscore his determination to punish those who commit evil deeds, even if they claim to have done so in his name or on his behalf. The image of David taking hold of the Amalekite and slaying him creates a sense of intensity and resolve, highlighting David's commitment to upholding the law and protecting the innocent. This verse serves to reinforce David's condemnation of Rechab and Baanah, emphasizing the fact that he will not tolerate or reward evil actions, even if they appear to benefit him personally.

**Verse 11:** How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand? This verse is also a repetition of a statement made in the previous verse, emphasizing David's determination to see justice done and to punish those who have committed evil deeds. The fact that David describes Ishbosheth as a "righteous person" serves to underscore his innocence and vulnerability, highlighting the fact that he was slain in his own home and bed. The image of David "requiring his blood at your hand" creates a sense of intensity and resolve, emphasizing his commitment to upholding the law and protecting the innocent. This verse serves to reinforce David's condemnation of Rechab and Baanah, emphasizing the fact that they will be held accountable for their actions and that justice will be served.

**Verse 12:** And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron. This verse describes the punishment meted out to Rechab and Baanah, as David commands his young men to slay them and mutilate their bodies. The fact that their hands and feet were cut off and their bodies hung up over the pool in Hebron serves to emphasize the

brutality and severity of their punishment, highlighting the fact that they had committed a heinous and unjustified crime. The image of their bodies being displayed in this way creates a sense of shock and horror, underscoring the gravity of their actions and the consequences of their crimes. The fact that Ishbosheth's head was buried in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron serves to underscore the respect and dignity that David showed to his enemy, even in death. Overall, this verse creates a sense of closure and justice, highlighting the fact that those who commit evil deeds will be held accountable and punished accordingly.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

**Verse 1:** *Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.*

**In a significant act of national unity and recognition, the entirety of Israel's tribes converged upon Hebron, seeking out David. This gathering signifies a pivotal shift in leadership, as the people collectively acknowledged David's inherent connection to them – declaring him to be "bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh." This phrase indicates a deep familial and tribal bond, asserting their shared heritage and destiny, further signifying their desire for him to become their ruler, as he is one of them.**

**Verse 2:** *Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.*

The tribes reminded David of his past leadership and capabilities, as they acknowledged his actions during Saul's reign. They recognized his proven competence in leading the people out to battle and bringing them back in safety. They then added the Lord's own words concerning David, recalling the divine mandate that designated him to "feed" (shepherd and care for) Israel and to be a "captain" (military leader) over them. This verse connects David's past performance and God's declared purpose for David, solidifying the case for David's kingship in the eyes of Israel.

**Verse 3:** *So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel.*

The elders of Israel, representing the tribal leadership, came to Hebron to finalize their agreement with David. This act signifies the formal transfer of authority. A solemn covenant was made between David and the elders "before the Lord" (in a sacred context of trust and faithfulness), solidifying David's kingship. This covenant would have involved promises of loyalty and responsibility on both sides. Furthermore, the anointing with oil, a traditional ritual, was the official ceremony to anoint David as king over the entire nation of Israel.

**Verse 4:** *David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.*

This verse provides chronological context for David's reign. It establishes that David was thirty years old when he ascended to the throne, marking the beginning of his kingship. It also informs the reader

that he would reign for a total of forty years, providing a baseline timeframe for the events that will unfold in the following chapters.

**Verse 5:** *In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.*

This verse clarifies the duration and location of David's reign. David reigned in Hebron, over the tribe of Judah, for seven years and six months. This period was the first stage of his kingship. Then, he moved his capital to Jerusalem, where he reigned over all Israel (including both Israel and Judah) for thirty-three years. This establishes the total forty-year period of his reign, as mentioned in the previous verse, and provides the important details of the consolidation of his kingdom.

**Verse 6:** *And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.*

This verse introduces David's attempt to capture Jerusalem, the stronghold of the Jebusites. Both David and his men marched toward Jerusalem, the Jebusite stronghold. The inhabitants, confident in their city's defenses, taunted David, claiming that he would not be able to enter, unless he first removed the "blind and the lame." The Jebusites seem to be referring to a specific part of their defense.

**Verse 7:** *Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.*

Despite the Jebusites' mocking challenge and the city's defenses, David successfully captured the stronghold of Zion. This victory marks a turning point. Zion, which becomes known as the City of David, becomes the central place of his kingdom.

**Verse 8:** *And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.*

In response to the Jebusite's taunt, David issued a challenge and offered a reward to any of his men who could breach the city's defenses and defeat the Jebusites (including the "lame and the blind" the Jebusites were so smug about). David's strong response, and his declaration that his soul hated the "lame and blind" Jebusites, suggests that this event was used as an example of how God uses those perceived as weak to strengthen his Kingdom. The final statement became a proverb, prohibiting the blind and the lame from entering the house (temple), reflecting David's disdain for the taunt and possibly, the pagan practices that might have occurred within Jerusalem before David's conquest.

**Verse 9:** *So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.*

Having captured Zion, David took up residence in the fortified stronghold, and renamed it "the city of David". Additionally, David began to fortify and expand the city, constructing defenses around Millo (a construction or fill) and extending inward (toward the city center). This highlights David's actions to consolidate his power base and begin the building of Jerusalem as a city of great strength and importance.

**Verse 10:** *And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.*

David's power and influence continued to expand after the capture of Jerusalem. He grew in stature and

authority, and the verse emphasizes that the Lord God of hosts was with him. This reinforces the idea of God's ongoing favor and blessing on David's endeavors, contributing to his success.

**Verse 11:** *And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house.*

This verse describes a significant event that solidified David's international relationships. Hiram, the King of Tyre, recognized David's rising power and sent messengers to David along with gifts of cedar trees, skilled carpenters, and masons. This indicates that Hiram acknowledged David's kingship, and offered to help build David's palace. This alliance with Tyre, a powerful Phoenician city, provided valuable resources and craftsmanship for building David's house.

**Verse 12:** *And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.*

With the continued success of the kingdom and the help from Hiram, David came to a profound realization. He understood that his success, and the establishment of his kingship, was a result of God's divine plan. He recognized that the Lord had placed him on the throne and elevated his kingdom to benefit the people of Israel. This verse reveals David's understanding of his role as God's chosen leader and the true source of his power and authority.

**Verse 13:** *And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.*

After establishing his capital in Jerusalem, David increased his household. He took more concubines and wives. This expansion of David's family and household is recorded. Furthermore, it is noted that sons and daughters were born to David, establishing his lineage and creating a potential line of succession.

**Verse 14:** *And these be the names of them that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,*

This verse lists the names of four of David's sons who were born to him in Jerusalem.

**Verse 15:** *Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

This verse continues the list of David's sons, further indicating the expansion of his family after establishing his capital in Jerusalem.

**Verse 16:** *And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.*

This verse completes the list of David's sons born to him in Jerusalem, signifying the growth and development of his family and dynasty.

**Verse 17: And when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.**

When the Philistines, a long-standing enemy of Israel, learned of David's coronation as king over the entire nation, they saw this as an opportunity to challenge his authority and potentially regain control over Israelite territories. Their response was immediate: they gathered their forces, indicating a deliberate act of aggression. David, aware of the Philistines' impending attack, chose the strategic advantage of a fortified place, the "hold,"

likely a mountainous stronghold. This action shows David's awareness of the military threat and his initial focus on defense.

**Verse 18:** The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

This verse provides a crucial detail regarding the Philistines' military movement. They "spread themselves" strategically in the valley of Rephaim, a fertile and open area suitable for deploying a significant army and preparing for battle. This action signifies their intention to engage in a large-scale confrontation, aiming to bring David and Israel into a decisive battle. The valley's location was probably chosen due to its proximity to Jerusalem and its suitability as a staging area.

**Verse 19:** And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

Confronted with the looming threat of the Philistine army, David demonstrates his deep faith and dependence on God. He actively seeks divine guidance through prayer, asking the crucial question: "Shall I go up to the Philistines?" David inquires if he is to engage in battle, acknowledging that the outcome is not solely dependent on his own military prowess, but on God's intervention. The Lord responds with explicit encouragement: "Go up," providing divine approval and assuring David of victory with the promise that the Philistines will be delivered into his hand. This establishes the central role of faith and divine will.

**Verse 20:** And David came to Baalperazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baalperazim.

Obedient to the Lord's command, David advances to a location which he then names Baalperazim. David's military action, executed under divine guidance, resulted in a decisive victory over the Philistines. The description of the battle suggests an overwhelming defeat, like water breaking through a dam, a sudden and irresistible flood. David attributes this victory to God's intervention, declaring that the Lord "hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me." This highlights David's faith, he credits the Lord with the decisive act of breaking the enemy, a metaphorical representation of a sudden and overwhelming victory. The name "Baalperazim" meaning "Lord of the breaking forth" signifies a place where God demonstrated overwhelming power.

**Verse 21:** And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them.

This verse is a consequence of David's victory, the defeated Philistines left their idols behind in their hasty retreat. These images, representing the pagan gods of the Philistines, were considered an abomination to the Lord. Following his victory, David and his men carried out an act of religious cleansing: they burned the images. This action demonstrates David's commitment to the worship of the one true God, showing the Israelites' rejection of idolatry and their dedication to the Lord.

**Verse 22:** And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.



The Philistines, despite their initial defeat, are unwilling to accept David's kingship and Israel's dominance. This verse shows their persistent hostility and their strategic behavior as they returned. They regrouped and again "spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim," the same location as before, demonstrating a pattern in their military strategy. Their return reveals their ambition and the ongoing state of conflict between the Israelites and Philistines.

**Verse 23:** And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

Recognizing the recurrence of the Philistine threat, David again seeks divine guidance. However, the Lord provides new instructions, indicating a change in strategy. He is instructed not to engage the enemy in a direct assault, but to use a flanking maneuver, "fetch a compass behind them." The Lord also specifies the location for the attack: "over against the mulberry trees," a strategic location where the Philistines are vulnerable.

**Verse 24:** And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

The Lord provides David with a unique sign for the timing of the attack, it is a clear indication of God's involvement and a promise of victory. The sound of "a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," is a sign of the Lord's presence and his imminent action. This audible cue provides David with the precise moment to "bestir thyself," signifying a call to action. The Lord promises to take the initiative in the battle, "the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines."

**Verse 25:** And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.

David demonstrates obedience to the Lord's instructions, a core element of his character as a godly leader. Following the command, David waits for the signal from the mulberry trees and executes the flanking maneuver. The result is another resounding victory over the Philistines, as indicated by the extensive reach of the slaughter, from "Geba until thou come to Gazer," signifying an extensive defeat. This second victory solidifies David's reign and strengthens Israel's position against the Philistines

## **CHAPTER 6:**

**Verse 1:** "Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand."

**This verse sets the stage for a significant event. David, now firmly established as king, demonstrates his leadership and his commitment to the religious life of Israel. He doesn't just gather a small group, but rather assembles a sizable force—"thirty thousand"—the chosen men of Israel. This suggests a carefully planned and potentially elaborate undertaking, emphasizing the importance of what is about to**

**transpire. The gathering itself showcases David's power and his ability to command the respect of his people. This assembling indicates a strong sense of national unity and purpose, as David seeks to bring the Ark of God into his capital city.**

**Verse 2:** "And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims upon it."

This verse reveals the primary purpose of the gathering: to retrieve the Ark of God. David personally leads the procession, demonstrating both his humility and his reverence for the Ark. The starting point, "Baale of Judah," indicates the Ark's temporary location, and the journey highlights the importance of bringing it to Jerusalem. The phrase "whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts" emphasizes the power, authority, and holiness associated with the Ark, referring to the God of the armies of Israel. This act of retrieving the Ark symbolizes David's desire to centralize the religious life of Israel in Jerusalem, uniting the people spiritually and politically. The mention of the cherubim underlines the Ark's sacred nature and symbolizes the presence of God.

**Verse 3:** "And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart."

Here, the narrative details the method of transport for the Ark. The decision to use a "new cart" is noteworthy and implies a symbolic act, perhaps signifying the need to handle the Ark with care and respect, but the use of an animal drawn cart rather than carrying it according to Mosaic law demonstrates a clear disregard for religious instruction. The Ark, which was supposed to be carried by Levites with poles, is placed on a cart, and driven by the sons of Abinadab. This is a critical point, a subtle detail with dire consequences, showing a misunderstanding of how the Ark was to be moved. The cart's newness might suggest special preparation, but also perhaps a lack of reverence, as the proper method, according to the law, was to use poles and have designated Levites carry it.

**Verse 4:** "And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark."

This verse continues to describe the procession. The location of the departure, "the house of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah," reiterates the Ark's temporary dwelling and its importance in the journey to Jerusalem. The action of "accompanying the ark of God" highlights the communal nature of the event, with many people involved in the procession. The fact that Ahio went before the Ark emphasizes the leader's role in guiding the procession, creating a sense of anticipation for the move.

**Verse 5:** "And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals."

This verse shifts the focus to the celebration accompanying the Ark's transportation. David and the entire house of Israel are described as joyfully playing various instruments. The use of "all manner of instruments" shows the exuberance and festivity of the occasion. Instruments like harps, psalteries, timbrels, cornets, and cymbals are described, indicating a diverse and elaborate musical display, intended to honor and celebrate the presence of God. The inclusion of the phrase "before the LORD" clarifies the audience of this joyful music.

**Verse 6:** "And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it."

This verse introduces a turning point in the narrative. The procession arrives at Nachon's threshingfloor, where a critical incident occurs. The oxen, pulling the cart carrying the Ark, stumble, causing the Ark to shake. Uzzah, one of the men driving the cart, reaches out to steady the Ark, a seemingly instinctual act to prevent it from falling.

**Verse 7:** "And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God."

This verse details the tragic consequences of Uzzah's actions. Despite Uzzah's intentions, the Lord's anger is ignited against him. God strikes him down for his "error." The consequences of his actions were immediate and severe; Uzzah dies instantly near the Ark. The verse emphasizes that it was a direct judgment from God.

**Verse 8:** "And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day."

This verse describes David's reaction to the sudden death of Uzzah. David is "displeased," indicating his emotional turmoil and shock at the event. The reason for David's dismay is that the Lord "made a breach upon Uzzah," highlighting David's understanding that the event was a divine judgment. David names the location "Perezuzzah," which means "the breach of Uzzah," preserving the memory of the event and its significance.

**Verse 9:** "And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?"

This verse reveals the profound impact of Uzzah's death on David. Overwhelmed by fear of the Lord, David is shaken by the incident, realizing the holiness and power of God. The question, "How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?" is a crucial expression of David's fear. He now questions whether he is worthy of the ark's presence, showing a shift from eagerness to apprehension. This fear leads him to reconsider the entire undertaking, demonstrating a renewed sense of reverence for the Ark.

**Verse 10:** "So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite."

As a result of his fear, David makes a significant change of plans. He decides against taking the Ark directly to Jerusalem, "the city of David." Instead, he redirects the Ark and places it in the house of Obededom the Gittite, an unexpected decision, probably made out of fear. This is a significant departure from David's original intent, but the outcome shows God's influence.

**Verse 11:** "And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household."

This verse highlights the positive consequences of the Ark's presence in Obededom's house. The Ark remains there for three months, and the Lord blesses Obededom and his entire household. The blessings of the Ark included prosperity and general well-being, demonstrating that God's presence brought tangible benefits.

**Verse 12:** "And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God

from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness."

News of the blessings bestowed upon Obededom reaches David. This report, that the Lord is blessing Obededom and his household, changes David's perspective and motivates him to resume the original plan, suggesting that it was God's intention to have the ark in Jerusalem. Filled with joy, David now decides to transport the Ark from the house of Obededom to Jerusalem. The decision is made "with gladness," indicating a renewed sense of purpose and joy.

**Verse 13:** "And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings."

This verse details David's renewed commitment to the process. The verse indicates that after only taking six steps, David, realizing that he had been overzealous, makes a sacrifice. This verse signifies the shift in David's perspective, emphasizing that he now understands the importance of following the proper protocols when it came to the Ark, and perhaps, the proper respect and reverence toward God.

**Verse 14:** "And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod."

This verse describes David's enthusiastic display of worship and joy during the procession. David is now more intimately involved, expressing his joy through dance, "with all his might,". He also wore a linen ephod, a garment worn by priests, indicating that he was involved in the worship. David's actions highlight his humility and his sincere devotion to God.

**Verse 15:** "So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet."

This verse describes the jubilant atmosphere that characterized the final part of the procession. David and all of Israel celebrate the arrival of the Ark, accompanied by joyful sounds. The celebration of bringing the Ark is emphasized by shouts of joy and the sound of trumpets. The joy of the people underscores the importance of bringing the Ark to Jerusalem and the unity of the nation in their worship.

**Verse 16:** "And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart."

This verse introduces a conflict and provides a critical perspective of the situation. Michal, David's wife and daughter of Saul, observes the procession from a window. She sees David's enthusiastic worship, "leaping and dancing." However, rather than sharing in David's joy, Michal "despised him in her heart." This is a pivotal moment, revealing the different perspectives on worship and the clash between David's humble devotion and Michal's more reserved, perhaps haughty, attitude.

**Verse 17:** "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD."

This verse describes the Ark's arrival and the rituals that follow. They placed the Ark in its designated location, which David had prepared for it. David then offers burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. The act of offering sacrifices is important, showing the act of reconciliation with God and a dedication of worship.

**Verse 18:** "And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts."

This verse describes David's actions after the sacrifices. Having completed the offerings, David turns to bless the people in the name of the Lord. David's blessing is significant; he acknowledges God's authority and expresses his favor over the people.

**Verse 19:** "And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house."

David further expresses his generosity by sharing with the people. He distributes food and drink among the entire multitude of Israel, including both men and women. He gave them a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a flagon of wine. This act of generosity demonstrates David's care for the people, unifying them, and symbolizes a shared celebration and fellowship.

**Verse 20:** "Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!"

This verse describes the encounter between David and Michal upon his return home. Michal confronts David with her criticism. She sarcastically comments on his conduct. Michal's words reveal her disdain for his exuberant worship and her concern for his public image. She criticizes him for "uncovering himself," which reflects a concern for decorum and proper behavior, perhaps according to her more reserved ways.

**Verse 21:** "And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD."

David defends his actions to Michal, explaining his motivations. He says he did what he did for the Lord, who chose him over her father and her household. He reminds Michal of his divine appointment as ruler of Israel. David declares that his celebration was for the Lord and that he would continue to worship him, showing a deep commitment to his faith and ignoring the concerns of his wife.

**Verse 22:** "And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour."

This verse reveals David's response to Michal's criticisms. He states he will be even more humble and base in his own sight. He prioritizes his relationship with God over his standing in Michal's eyes. David does not care what the maidservants, whom Michal refers to, think about him because he knows the Lord is above them.

**Verse 23:** "Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death."

This verse concludes the chapter by detailing the consequences of Michal's actions. Michal is cursed and has no children for the remainder of her life. This is an indication of God's displeasure with Michal's heart.

## CHAPTER 7:

**Verse 1: And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies,**

This verse sets the scene, establishing a time of peace and prosperity for King David. He is settled in his palace, a sign of security and stability. The phrase "the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies" highlights the divine favor bestowed upon David. It underscores that his military victories and resulting tranquility were not solely due to his own prowess but were a gift from God. This context is crucial because it signifies that David is now in a position to consider more than just survival and territorial expansion; he can turn his attention to matters of faith and the worship of God, prompted by the comfort and prosperity he now enjoys. This moment of rest is the genesis of the following pivotal conversation with the prophet Nathan.

**Verse 2: That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.**

David, now contemplating his lavish accommodations and his growing kingdom, feels a sense of disparity. He observes that he resides in a magnificent palace built of cedar wood, a symbol of wealth and permanence. In stark contrast, the Ark of the Covenant, representing God's presence, resides in a simple tent, a temporary dwelling. This contrast burdens David, as the Ark of God served as a dwelling place for the presence of the Lord. This statement expresses David's sense of unworthiness or perhaps a desire to show greater reverence and honor to God. It reveals a heart that is sensitive to God's glory and desires to express his gratitude and devotion in a tangible way. This is the starting point of David's contemplation of building a permanent temple.

**Verse 3: And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.**

Nathan, the prophet, initially responds favorably to David's proposal. His words, "Go, do all that is in thine heart," seem to endorse the king's plan. He essentially gives David the green light, suggesting that the project has divine approval, because the Lord is with him. This initial response underscores Nathan's understanding of David's devotion and his desire to do what is pleasing to God. It conveys the impression that the Lord values David's intention to honor Him with a permanent dwelling place. However, this initial approval is based on a limited understanding of God's will, as will be revealed in the verses to follow.

**Verse 4: And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,**

This verse marks a turning point. While Nathan initially seemed to support David's plan, the divine perspective is about to be revealed. The phrase "the word of the LORD came unto Nathan" emphasizes the crucial importance of divine communication. This indicates that God directly intervenes and provides additional instructions to Nathan, thereby modifying the initial encouragement given to David. This sets the stage for a revelation concerning God's true desires and intentions, signaling a pivotal moment for both David and Israel's future. This moment reminds us that our best intentions are not always in alignment with God's will, and that we must seek His guidance in all things.

**Verse 5: Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?**

God's message is delivered to Nathan and instructs him to deliver it to David. The Lord begins with a direct question that challenges David's assumption. "Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" is a rhetorical question, that is the Lord is communicating that David will *not* be the one to build the temple. It is a question that demands reflection and a deeper understanding of God's history with Israel. God subtly asserts His sovereignty and reminds David that the initiative to build a temple comes from God, not man. This question sets the tone for a more profound revelation about God's relationship with Israel.

**Verse 6: Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.**

This verse offers the divine justification for not wanting David to build the temple. The Lord reminds David of the history of Israel, specifically beginning with their exodus from Egypt. He highlights that since that time, He has not had a permanent dwelling place. Instead, God has been content to "walk in a tent and in a tabernacle." This statement conveys that God is not limited by physical structures, nor does He need a permanent dwelling place to maintain His presence or care for His people. God points out that he has been mobile with His people throughout the history of their journey. God reminds David that His relationship with Israel, and thus the location where His presence has resided, is about His initiative and their relationship with Him, not the construction of a building.

**Verse 7: In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?**

God continues to establish that He does not want a temple, by pointing out that He has never, in all their travels, asked the tribes of Israel to build a temple. He questions whether the leaders of the tribes were ever instructed to build a cedar house for Him. This is a rhetorical question used to further demonstrate that the idea to construct a temple did not come from Him, but from David, the king. This verse reinforces the idea that the temple is not God's priority. He emphasizes His lack of any formal request or command to build a permanent structure for Himself throughout the period of the wilderness wanderings and settlement in Canaan. This is not a request to build a temple.

**Verse 8: Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the shepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:**

God now conveys a message that acknowledges and validates David's position and purpose. The Lord instructs Nathan to convey a specific message to David. He begins by reminding David of his humble origins. The Lord recounts how he was taken "from the shepcote, from following the sheep." This sets the foundation for a declaration of divine favor and appointment. God then reiterates that he chose David to be the ruler over His people, Israel. The phrase "LORD of hosts" underscores God's power and authority. This is not just about building a temple, but about acknowledging God's power and how He orchestrates all things in His plan. God's message is not simply a rebuke; it is a reminder of how He has blessed David.

**Verse 9: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.**

God continues to enumerate the blessings He has bestowed on David, highlighting His constant presence and support. The phrase "I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest" is repeated. This emphasizes that God has been with David throughout his journey. God also says He has "cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight," referring to the military victories and the peace that David now enjoys. God adds that He has "made thee a great name," comparing David to other great leaders. God clearly and explicitly states his intimate and direct involvement in David's rise to power and success. This emphasis on God's active involvement further strengthens the argument that the temple proposal is not in line with God's existing plan.

**Verse 10: Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before,**

This verse transitions from David's individual blessings to God's promises to Israel. God declares that He will "appoint a place" for Israel, implying a secure and permanent homeland. This is a promise of stability and a settled existence. He pledges to "plant them" in their own place, signifying that He will establish them firmly. He promises that they "move no more," assuring them of lasting security. This verse underscores the fulfillment of God's covenant with the Israelites. He also says that the children of wickedness shall no longer afflict them as before. It promises an end to their suffering. It underscores God's faithfulness in establishing Israel as a nation, and it shifts the focus to the nation's stability and protection.

**Verse 11: And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will build thee an house.**

This verse reinforces the theme of God's past faithfulness while introducing a pivotal promise. God contrasts the period of the judges with the present reign of David, stating, "and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies". This highlights God's role in establishing peace and order. This sets the stage for a divine announcement: "the LORD telleth thee that he will build thee an house". It is not David who will build a "house" for God, but rather, God will build a "house" for David. The shift in meaning here is important. It doesn't refer to a physical structure, but rather, to a dynasty, a lineage, a lasting kingdom that will extend through David's descendants.

**Verse 12: And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.**

This verse continues the promise of an enduring lineage for David. God states that when David dies, He will "set up thy seed after thee." The promise is not just about a single descendant, but about a continuation of David's line. God emphasizes that this descendant will "proceed out of thy bowels," confirming the direct familial connection. This assurance is significant because it promises a future that is a direct continuation of David's legacy. God then declares, "and I will establish his kingdom." This



clarifies that this lineage will become a kingdom and that God himself will be responsible for establishing it.

**Verse 13: He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.**

This verse clarifies the role of David's future descendant. God states that this descendant "shall build an house for my name," here the word "house" is a temple. It is through David's lineage that the construction of a permanent temple will happen. This fulfills David's desire, but the project will fall to a descendant. God then promises, "I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever." This guarantees that David's lineage will be secure, and that the dynasty will endure permanently. This promise is central to God's covenant with David, guaranteeing an enduring kingdom for his descendants, a kingdom that will ultimately point to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

**Verse 14: I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:**

God solidifies the relationship between Himself and the future descendant. He declares, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." This expression establishes a close, familial bond, a special relationship. The covenant relationship is characterized by love and loyalty, and also discipline. The verse acknowledges that the descendant, like all humans, will be susceptible to sin. The statement, "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him," acknowledges that there will be consequences. God will use earthly means of discipline, symbolized by "the rod of men." This highlights the importance of obedience and accountability within the covenant relationship.

**Verse 15: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.**

This verse emphasizes the enduring nature of God's covenant with David's lineage. God states, "But my mercy shall not depart away from him." This is in contrast to the situation with Saul. This highlights the commitment to maintaining a relationship with David's descendants, even in the face of their shortcomings. This is a statement of unwavering grace, assuring that the covenant will not be broken. God provides a direct contrast between the treatment of Saul and the treatment of David's descendants.

**Verse 16: And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.**

This verse reiterates and confirms the promise of an eternal dynasty for David. God declares, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee." This is a guarantee of lasting power and influence for David's lineage. God states that the throne will be established forever. This emphasizes the everlasting nature of David's dynasty. This is a promise of perpetuity, assuring that David's throne will endure throughout all generations, which foreshadows the kingdom of the Messiah. This is the culmination of God's covenant with David.

**Verse 17: According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.**

This concluding verse affirms that Nathan delivered God's complete message to David. This emphasizes the authority and authenticity of the prophecy. The phrase "According to all these words, and according to all this vision" highlights the entirety of God's communication. Nathan did not omit anything from God's message. This verse establishes that the prophecy is reliable, confirming the truth and accuracy of God's promises. It also sets the stage for David's response.

**Verse 18:** Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

*David, overwhelmed by God's promises, enters the sanctuary, perhaps the Tabernacle, and takes a posture of humble reverence. He is not standing or kneeling, but sitting, a gesture implying contemplation and reflection. He addresses the Lord God directly, using the formal appellation "Lord God" to emphasize his awe. The core of his question is one of profound unworthiness. He questions, "Who am I?" acknowledging his own insignificance. He then extends this humility to his house, his lineage, and his personal domain, asking, "and what is my house?" He recognizes that his elevation to kingship and the blessings bestowed upon him are entirely a result of God's grace, questioning how God could have chosen him and favored his household with such remarkable benevolence.*

**Verse 19:** And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord GOD; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD?

*David continues to express his sense of wonder. He perceives that God's current blessings are almost insignificant in comparison to the future promises. He recognizes that what he has experienced thus far is but a small taste of the grand covenant God intends to establish with his lineage. The phrase "a great while to come" speaks to the eternal nature of God's covenant. The repetition of "O Lord God" emphasizes his awe. The final rhetorical question, "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" is less a literal query and more an expression of utter disbelief and wonder. He is marveling at the extraordinary and almost incomprehensible character of God's actions. The implication is that such expansive grace and generosity are far beyond human comprehension, underscoring the divine nature of the promise.*

**Verse 20:** And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord GOD, knowest thy servant.

*David reaches the limits of his ability to express himself. He is rendered speechless by the magnitude of God's revelation. The question, "And what can David say more unto thee?" signifies a point of emotional and intellectual exhaustion, where mere words seem insufficient to capture the depth of his feelings. He accepts that God's omniscience needs no further elaboration. The phrase "for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant" is a declaration of faith and trust. He recognizes God knows his heart, his limitations, and his deepest desires. This knowledge surpasses any words of praise or gratitude David might offer. It underscores the intimate relationship between God and his chosen servant.*

**Verse 21:** For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, to make thy servant know it.

*David attributes all the blessings and promises not to his own merit, but entirely to God's word and his own character. He declares that God acted "for thy word's sake," meaning that God is faithful to His promises and covenants. He also asserts that God's actions are "according to thine own heart," indicating God's motivation is rooted in His own nature: his love, grace, and sovereign will. The purpose of these grand acts, David asserts, is "to make thy servant know it." It is a revelation designed to make David, as a representative of humanity, fully aware of God's benevolent power, love and grace. The emphasis is not simply on knowledge but on experiential awareness of God's profound character.*

**Verse 22:** Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

*David breaks into a hymn of praise, affirming God's unparalleled greatness. He directly states, "Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God," recognizing that the covenant and blessings are evidence of God's supreme position. He uses the epithet "LORD God" to show reverence and awe. He then declares God's uniqueness. The phrase "for there is none like thee" highlights the incomparability of God, stressing that he is utterly distinct from any other being. His statement "neither is there any God beside thee" firmly asserts the monotheistic nature of God's being. He is not simply the greatest among many gods; he is the only God. The concluding phrase "according to all that we have heard with our ears" emphasizes that the Israelites' belief in God's uniqueness is rooted in their historical experience and their ongoing relationship with Him.*

**Verse 23:** And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?

*David celebrates the unique status of Israel among all nations, again emphasizing that this privileged position is entirely the result of God's sovereign actions. He opens with a rhetorical question, "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel?" The question is phrased to elicit an emphatic negative response. There is no other nation like Israel, according to David. He then attributes the greatness of Israel directly to God's intervention. He proclaims God "went to redeem for a people to himself," referring to the Exodus from Egypt. God chose Israel as his own people, and acted to make them unique. The purpose of God's actions, according to David, include "to make him a name," signifying that God desires to be glorified among the nations through the example of Israel. The phrase "to do for you great things and terrible" points to both God's power and his capacity to evoke awe and fear. God's powerful acts are intended to demonstrate his supremacy. David acknowledges the role of God in liberating Israel from Egypt. The final phrase "from the nations and their gods" emphasizes that God delivered Israel from the dominance of other nations and their false idols, establishing Israel as a free nation, worshipping the one true God.*

**Verse 24:** For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.

*David reinforces the idea of God's covenant with Israel, highlighting the perpetual nature of this relationship. The key phrase here is "For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever." This statement emphasizes that God has solidified his commitment to Israel, establishing a bond that endures indefinitely. The covenant is not temporary or subject to change. It is a lasting agreement. The phrase "and thou, LORD, art become their God" highlights the covenant relationship. God has chosen to be Israel's God. He has bound himself to protect, guide, and bless them. This covenant establishes a reciprocal relationship; Israel is God's people, and God is their God. The emphasis is on the permanence of God's relationship with his people.*

**Verse 25:** And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said.

*David transitions from praise and reflection to making a specific request to God. He focuses on the promises God made concerning his David and his descendants. He acknowledges the divine origin of God's pronouncements, and uses the phrase "the word that thou hast spoken" to denote his reverence for divine pronouncements. He then asks God to "establish it for ever," he wants God to make the promises a reality that will endure permanently. He requests God to make good on his own word, asking God to "do as thou hast said." It is a prayer of faith, based on his certainty that God is trustworthy and faithful, and will keep his promises. This verse reflects David's unwavering trust in God's ability to fulfill His word.*

**Verse 26:** And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

*David offers another prayer. He includes a request that God's reputation will be elevated and honored throughout history. He asks, "And let thy name be magnified for ever." David wants God's name to be revered and respected throughout the ages. The phrase "The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel" is a declaration of faith and worship. "LORD of hosts" highlights God's supreme power. David is asking that God's name be associated with His powerful and divine protection over Israel. The request "let the house of thy servant David be established before thee" is a direct reference to the promise of an enduring dynasty. David is requesting that his lineage be maintained. He wants his descendants to rule, to serve, and to find favor with God. He seeks not only his own personal blessing, but also the prosperity and continuation of his family and the fulfillment of God's long-term plan for his house.*

**Verse 27:** For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

*David explains the basis of his prayer. The prayer is a direct result of a divine revelation, the promise that God would build him a "house", a royal dynasty. The phrase "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel" serves as a reminder of who is receiving the prayer: the all-powerful God who is intimately involved with his chosen people. The revelation, "I will build thee an house," is the foundation for David's prayer. Because God has spoken and promised a kingdom for his descendants, David now feels compelled to ask God for its fulfillment. This underlines the principle that prayer is often a response to divine initiative. It underscores the deep sense of gratitude David has for God's promise and his trust in God's faithfulness.*

**Verse 28:** And now, O Lord GOD, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

*David again expresses faith. He reaffirms his belief that God is who He says He is and that His words are reliable. David uses the formal address "O Lord God". He affirms his faith. The core of his statement is "thou art that God," confirming that he believes in God. He is not merely affirming the existence of God, but also acknowledging God's character and attributes as revealed to him through his experiences. The affirmation, "and thy words be true," is a testament to his confidence in God's faithfulness. David believes that everything God says is reliable and trustworthy. The phrase "and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant" is a reminder that God has initiated the relationship through his promises. David emphasizes that God is not just a God of power, but also a God of goodness, who extends favors and blessings to those who serve him. This statement serves as a confirmation of the divine covenant.*

**Verse 29:** Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord GOD, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

*David concludes his prayer with a final petition and a reaffirmation of his faith in God's promises. David desires a continued blessing upon his lineage. He begins with the humble request: "Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant." He humbly submits himself to God's will. The phrase "that it may continue for ever before thee" reveals his desire for an enduring dynasty, one that will continue to serve and honor God. The prayer is grounded in the assurance that God Himself has promised these blessings. The phrase "for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it" emphasizes that God has initiated these promises. David is not asking for something he invented. His faith in God's word is absolute. The final petition, "and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever," seeks for the continual bestowal of God's grace on his family. It is a plea for ongoing divine favor and protection, so that his descendants might thrive in their service to God. The verse underscores David's trust in God's faithfulness and the enduring nature of the covenant.*

## **CHAPTER 8:**

### **Verse 1**

**In the second year of David's reign over Israel, he proceeded to carry out the Lord's instructions by making David's kingdom secure. He then launched a campaign to conquer and subdue the neighboring kingdoms and territories that had previously posed a threat to his rule. This was a vital move to solidify David's position as the undisputed king and to protect his subjects from the dangers of foreign invasion. By taking decisive action against the forces of Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the kings of the Philistines, David demonstrated his commitment to establishing a strong and stable kingdom that would provide peace and security for the people of Israel. This strategic campaign marked an important milestone in**

## **David's reign, as he successfully expanded his dominion and asserted his authority over the surrounding regions.**

### **Verse 2**

David then defeated the Moabites, and they became subject to him. The Moabites, being an ancient and powerful nation, had long been a thorn in the side of the Israelites. However, under David's leadership, the tables were turned, and the Moabites were forced to acknowledge Israel's supremacy. By conquering the Moabites, David further consolidated his power and expanded his kingdom, demonstrating his military prowess and strategic thinking. The Moabites' defeat also marked an important turning point in the history of the region, as it paved the way for Israel's emergence as a dominant force in the Middle East. David's victory over the Moabites served as a testament to the power and might of the God of Israel, who was fighting on David's behalf.

### **Verse 3**

Adad, the king of the Philistines, had sent his son to Gath to strengthen and fortify the city, which was situated in the Philistine territory. However, when David heard about Adad's plan, he marched against Gath and besieged it. The Philistines, who had long been a nemesis of the Israelites, were caught off guard by David's sudden attack, and their defenses were breached. The city of Gath was captured, and the Philistines suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of David's troops. This victory marked a significant blow to the Philistine kingdom, which had long been a thorn in the side of the Israelites. By defeating the Philistines, David further expanded his dominion and asserted his authority over the surrounding regions.

### **Verse 4**

David also defeated the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, and they became subject to him. The Edomites, who were a powerful and ancient nation, had long been a thorn in the side of the Israelites. However, under David's leadership, the Edomites were forced to acknowledge Israel's supremacy. By conquering the Edomites, David further consolidated his power and expanded his kingdom, demonstrating his military prowess and strategic thinking. The Edomites' defeat also marked an important turning point in the history of the region, as it paved the way for Israel's emergence as a dominant force in the Middle East. David's victory over the Edomites served as a testament to the power and might of the God of Israel, who was fighting on David's behalf.

### **Verse 5**

When the Arameans of Damascus came to help the Edomites after they had been subdued, David slew 22,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt. This victory marked a significant blow to the Arameans, who had long been a thorn in the side of the Israelites. The Valley of Salt, also known as the Salt Valley, became a site of great significance, as it was here that the Arameans suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of David's troops. The number of casualties on the Aramean side was staggering, with 22,000 soldiers killed in one day. This victory served as a testament to the power and might of the God of Israel, who was fighting on David's behalf. By defeating the Arameans, David further expanded his dominion and asserted his authority over the surrounding regions.

### **Verse 6**

Then David put garrisons in Syria, and the Syrians became his servants. This marked the beginning of a

new era of peace and cooperation between Israel and Syria. By placing garrisons in Syria, David was able to exert his influence over the region and ensure that the Syrians remained loyal to Israel. The Syrians, who had long been a thorn in the side of the Israelites, were forced to become David's servants, acknowledging his supremacy and paying a price for their submission. This marked a significant turning point in the history of the region, as it paved the way for Israel's emergence as a dominant force in the Middle East. By conquering the Syrians, David demonstrated his military prowess and strategic thinking, further solidifying his position as the undisputed king of Israel.

## **2 Samuel 8:7**

**And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.**

**This verse marks a significant moment of conquest and accumulation of wealth. King David, following his victory over Hadadezer, seized the shields of gold that were carried by the Aramean king's servants. These shields were not merely decorative items; they were symbols of power, wealth, and military prestige. By taking them, David not only stripped Hadadezer of a sign of his status, but also secured valuable resources that he subsequently brought to Jerusalem. The act of bringing these treasures to Jerusalem is a clear indication of David's ambition to enrich and strengthen his kingdom and establish Jerusalem as the central hub of Israel. The golden shields were not simply possessions; they were trophies of war and served to display David's triumph to his people and to the world.**

## **2 Samuel 8:8**

And from Bethah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass. The text continues to enumerate the spoils of David's victory, specifically mentioning the collection of an "exceeding much brass" from the cities of Bethah and Berothai, which were also under Hadadezer's control. Unlike the golden shields, brass, or bronze, was a practical and functional material in ancient times, used for crafting weapons, tools, and other essential items. This verse reveals the scale of David's campaign and its success in acquiring resources. The phrase "exceeding much brass" suggests that David had a large amount of brass, which could be repurposed to create more weaponry and other equipment. It shows the pragmatism of David, who was not only concerned with prestige but also with fortifying his kingdom. It is likely that the acquired brass was used to craft weaponry, allowing the Israelite army to be well-equipped.

## **2 Samuel 8:9**

When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, This verse introduces Toi, the king of Hamath, and his reaction to David's defeat of Hadadezer's army. The news of David's military success had spread rapidly, and it reached the ears of Toi. The phrase, "had smitten all the host of Hadadezer," indicates that the battle was decisive and resulted in a complete rout of the Aramean forces. This suggests that David's reputation was quickly established, with word of his successes spreading amongst his neighbors. The implications of this verse is that David's victories

had a widespread impact beyond the immediate theater of war, as surrounding kingdoms were paying attention to the rising power of Israel and the military prowess of David.

### **2 Samuel 8:10**

Then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi.

Toi's response to David's victory is further detailed: he sent his son Joram to David. This delegation was not simply a courtesy call; it was designed to express goodwill, acknowledge David's achievement, and cement a relationship. The purposes of the visit are clearly laid out: to greet or salute David (an expression of respect), and to bless him (a declaration of approval and support). The reason for this friendly gesture is explicitly stated: Toi and Hadadezer were enemies. David's victory over Hadadezer was therefore seen as a positive development. This diplomatic exchange reveals how strategic alliances were formed in the ancient world. Toi recognized an opportunity to secure a new ally, a powerful king who could act as a counterweight to his own enemies, in this case, Hadadezer.

### **2 Samuel 8:11**

And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:

Joram's arrival was not empty-handed. He brought gifts for King David. These gifts are listed as vessels of silver, gold, and brass. These were likely not mere decorative items, but were symbolic of the wealth and power of the king of Hamath. They demonstrate Toi's willingness to enter into a mutually beneficial relationship with David. The use of precious metals—silver and gold—further signifies the importance of the alliance to Toi. They are a tangible gesture of goodwill and a declaration of alliance, likely intended to demonstrate his wealth. The quantity of these gifts indicates that Toi was eager to solidify his relationship with the victorious king.

### **2 Samuel 8:12**

Which also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

David, in turn, dedicates the gifts received from Toi, and the silver and gold from other subdued nations, to the Lord. This act of dedication highlights David's piety and his belief in God's role in his victories. He acknowledges that his successes come from God. The phrase "dedicate unto the LORD" signifies that he was giving these treasures to the service of the tabernacle in Jerusalem, or at least, in acknowledgment of God's authority. This act also underscores the central role that religious devotion played in David's life and kingship, and it may have also provided the religious legitimacy for his rule. The implication is that David saw himself as a steward of God's kingdom.

### **2 Samuel 8:13**

And David gat him a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, being eighteen thousand men.

This verse recounts a significant battle in which David gained even greater renown, with the slaughter of 18,000 Syrians in the "valley of salt". This valley is believed to have been near the Dead Sea. This victory further solidified David's reputation as a skilled military commander, one who could defeat large armies and secure his kingdom's borders. The reference to the valley of salt also highlights the geographical extent of David's kingdom. This victory gave David even greater fame and ensured that his name would be remembered.



## **2 Samuel 8:14**

And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

The expansion of David's dominion continues. He establishes garrisons, or military outposts, throughout Edom. This action indicates a complete subjugation of the Edomites, a neighboring people to the south of Israel. Edom became David's servants, meaning they were under his authority. The verse ends with a statement of divine favor. The phrase, "And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went," reinforces the theme of God's continual protection of David.

## **2 Samuel 8:15**

And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

This verse summarizes David's role as king and his commitment to governing his people with fairness. His reign extended over the entire nation of Israel, establishing him as the undisputed ruler. Beyond military conquest, he is portrayed as a just and righteous ruler, one who upheld law and order for all the people. His actions as a king were marked by justice and fairness. This emphasis on judgment and justice provides the foundation for a well-ordered society.

## **2 Samuel 8:16**

And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder;

This verse begins listing the key officials in David's government. Joab, the son of Zeruiah, remained in command of the army, and continued to be a crucial figure in David's military success. Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was appointed the recorder, or a chronicler, who kept records of the kingdom. The mention of specific names highlights the importance of these figures in maintaining the military and administrative functions of the kingdom.

## **2 Samuel 8:17**

And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe;

The verse details the religious and administrative offices of the time. Zadok and Ahimelech were appointed as priests, providing for the religious function. Seraiah was the scribe, responsible for writing and record-keeping, which was critical to administration. This indicates the importance of these officials in maintaining the religious and administrative functions of the kingdom.

## **2 Samuel 8:18**

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.

The concluding verse of the chapter lists more members of David's administration. Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, commanded the Cherethites and the Pelethites. These were likely foreign mercenary guards. Finally, it notes that David's own sons held positions of chief rulers or officials. The fact that his sons were in positions of power ensures the continuation of the dynasty. This verse illustrates the structure of the Davidic court, highlighting the key players in the kingdom's power structure, and emphasizes David's strong leadership.

## CHAPTER 9:

**Verse 1: And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? David, now firmly established as king, initiates a search for any surviving members of the house of Saul, his former rival. The driving force behind this inquiry isn't political expediency, but a deep desire to fulfill a covenant of loyalty and kindness he had made with Jonathan, Saul's son, during their friendship. This verse sets the stage for the narrative, highlighting David's faithfulness and the enduring power of his commitment. He is not seeking enemies, but potential beneficiaries of his goodwill. This demonstrates a magnanimous spirit and a desire to honour his past commitments, even to those who might be considered enemies.**

**Verse 2:** And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, David said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. This verse introduces Ziba, a servant of the house of Saul, and details his summons to David's presence. Ziba's name is given, underscoring his significance to the events that follow. His immediate affirmation, "Thy servant is he," is a sign of his recognition of David's authority and his willingness to comply. This dialogue sets up Ziba as a potential informant and a key player in what is about to unfold, and gives David the opportunity to make his intentions clear, building anticipation.

**Verse 3:** And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame of his feet. David, now firmly asking about the lineage of Saul, demonstrates that his intention is not just a matter of human kindness, but of demonstrating the "kindness of God," signifying a profound and divinely-ordained act of grace. Ziba's response reveals the existence of a descendant of Jonathan, indicating a chance to fully keep his promise. The description of Jonathan's son as "lame of his feet" provides a crucial detail: it suggests vulnerability, and potentially removes the threat of rebellion, increasing the likelihood of David's compassion.

**Verse 4:** And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. David immediately presses Ziba for the location of Jonathan's son. His direct question emphasizes his urgency and determination to act. Ziba's reply specifies that Mephibosheth (as he will later be revealed) is residing in the house of Machir in Lo-debar. The inclusion of this information is significant. The name of the place Lo-debar is relevant to the unfolding story. Lo-debar translates to "no pasture," a place of barrenness and isolation. It paints a picture of Mephibosheth living in obscurity and hardship, deepening the impact of David's act of redemption.

**Verse 5:** Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. David immediately acts on the information, sending messengers to retrieve Mephibosheth. This demonstrates decisiveness and commitment. He does not delay. The repetition of the details of Mephibosheth's location – "the house of Machir... from Lo-debar" – emphasizes the journey and the

removal of Mephibosheth from a place of desolation. The word "fetched" shows the king's agency in bringing Mephibosheth into a different life.

**Verse 6:** Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! Mephibosheth's arrival at the king's presence is described, highlighting his humility and respect. His posture of falling "on his face, and did reverence" demonstrates his perception of David's power and authority, reflecting the protocol of the time. David addresses him by name, and Mephibosheth responds with humble acknowledgement, calling himself David's servant. This reinforces their contrasting positions and also shows the immediate bond of trust.

**Verse 7:** And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. David immediately reassures Mephibosheth and offers him an extraordinary act of grace. He removes Mephibosheth's fear, explicitly stating that he is acting out of loyalty to Jonathan. He promises to restore Mephibosheth to his father's land and assures him of a permanent place at the royal table. This promise signifies a complete transformation of status, from an outcast to a member of the king's household, and a recipient of the king's protection. This demonstrates David's commitment to the covenant he made with Jonathan.

**Verse 8:** And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? Mephibosheth's response reflects his profound humility and awareness of his own worthlessness in the face of David's overwhelming generosity. He bows again and expresses his sense of unworthiness by using the self-deprecating metaphor of being a "dead dog." He acknowledges his perceived insignificance and feels unworthy of the king's attention. This displays Mephibosheth's understanding of his social standing and his surprise at being treated so kindly by the King.

**Verse 9:** Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. David now addresses Ziba, formalizing his arrangement with Mephibosheth. He declares that he is giving Mephibosheth, "thy master's son," all the inheritance that belonged to Saul's house. This signals a legal and social transformation, ensuring Mephibosheth's financial security and elevated status. It demonstrates David's commitment to his promise.

**Verse 10:** Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba has been given an important role in this arrangement. David directs Ziba, his sons, and his servants to work the land on Mephibosheth's behalf. The produce of this land is to provide food for Mephibosheth, ensuring his provision. Importantly, the verse reiterates that Mephibosheth will always eat at David's table, again symbolizing his inclusion within the royal household.

**Verse 11:** And Ziba said unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said Ziba, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons. Ziba responds with humility, expressing his unwavering obedience to the king's commands. He acknowledges his role as the king's servant and assures David that he will execute his instructions

perfectly. The phrase "so shall thy servant do" displays his loyalty to David. Ziba then states that Mephibosheth "shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons," which shows an agreement on how to treat Mephibosheth as the king's own son.

**Verse 12:** And Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame of both his feet. This verse summarizes the result of David's actions. Mephibosheth takes up residence in Jerusalem, the royal city, and fulfills David's promise by eating at the king's table continually. The final phrase reiterates his physical condition, highlighting the contrast between his disability and the extraordinary grace he receives.

**Verse 13:** So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame of both his feet. Again showing us that Mephibosheth remained in the capital city. He was a regular diner at the king's table, so there was no change. The last clause reminds us that Mephibosheth's physical disability persisted, and he remained "lame of both his feet".

## **CHAPTER 10:**

**Verse 1: And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. This verse marks the beginning of a new episode in the life of King David, which occurs after a series of events that have shaped his relationship with neighboring kingdoms. The death of the king of the children of Ammon creates a power vacuum, and his son Hanun takes over the throne. This transition sets the stage for a series of diplomatic exchanges and conflicts between the kingdoms of Israel and Ammon, which will test the wisdom and military prowess of King David. The fact that Hanun is the son of the deceased king suggests that he may be inexperienced and potentially vulnerable to external pressures, which could affect his decision-making and relationships with neighboring kingdoms.**

**Verse 2:** Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. So David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon. In this verse, King David decides to extend an olive branch to the new king of Ammon, Hanun, by showing him kindness and respect. David's motivation for doing so is rooted in the positive relationship he had with Hanun's father, Nahash, who had shown him kindness in the past. By sending a delegation of servants to comfort Hanun and offer condolences for his father's death, David aims to establish a foundation for peaceful relations between their kingdoms. The fact that David's servants are received into the land of the children of Ammon indicates that, at least initially, Hanun is open to David's overtures and willing to engage in diplomatic exchanges.

**Verse 3:** And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? The princes of Ammon, however, are skeptical of David's intentions and advise Hanun to be cautious. They interpret David's

gesture of kindness as a ruse, suggesting that his true intention is to gather intelligence about the city and ultimately conquer it. This reaction reflects the deep-seated mistrust and hostility that exists between the kingdoms of Israel and Ammon, which has been fueled by past conflicts and rivalries. The princes' warning to Hanun highlights the complexities of international diplomacy, where even genuine attempts at friendship and cooperation can be misinterpreted or exploited by opposing parties.

**Verse 4:** Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the midst, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. Hanun, swayed by the counsel of his princes, decides to humiliate and insult David's servants, rather than receiving them as envoys of peace. By shaving off half of their beards and cutting off their garments, Hanun's men subject David's servants to a symbolic and degrading treatment, which is meant to convey contempt and hostility. This actions sets the stage for a serious escalation of tensions between the two kingdoms, as David is unlikely to take such an affront lying down. The fact that Hanun's men cut off the servants' garments to their buttocks adds a layer of ridicule and shame to the already humiliating treatment, underscoring the depth of animosity between the two kingdoms.

**Verse 5:** When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return. When David learns of the humiliation suffered by his servants, he is outraged and decides to take action. However, he also recognizes that his servants are deeply ashamed and need time to recover from their ordeal. By instructing them to stay in Jericho until their beards have grown back, David gives them an opportunity to regain their dignity and composure before returning to their duties. This decision reflects David's concern for the well-being and morale of his servants, as well as his desire to avoid exacerbating the situation with Ammon. At the same time, David's restraint may also be seen as a calculated move, as he prepares for a potential conflict with Ammon and seeks to rally his forces for a decisive response.

**Verse 6:** And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bethrehab, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ish-tob twelve thousand men. The Ammonites, realizing that they have provoked David's ire, decide to bolster their military defenses by hiring mercenaries from neighboring kingdoms. They recruit a large force of soldiers from the regions of Beth-rehab, Zoba, Maacah, and Ish-tob, which are all located in the vicinity of Ammon. By assembling this formidable army, the Ammonites aim to intimidate David and deter him from taking military action against them. However, this move ultimately proves to be a miscalculation, as it prompts David to mobilize his own forces and prepare for a full-scale conflict.

**Verse 7:** And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. As the situation escalates, David decides to send his trusted general, Joab, along with a sizable contingent of elite soldiers, to confront the Ammonites and their mercenary forces. This move marks a significant escalation of the conflict, as David prepares to assert his military superiority and defend his kingdom's honor. By entrusting Joab with the command of his forces, David demonstrates his confidence in his general's abilities and his faith in the bravery and loyalty of his soldiers. The fact that David sends "all the host of the mighty men" suggests that he is committed to a decisive and comprehensive victory, and is willing to deploy his most powerful and experienced troops to achieve it.

**Verse 8:** And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and of Ish-tob, and of Maacah, were by themselves in the field. The Ammonites, having assembled their mercenary forces, prepare to engage David's army in battle. They deploy their troops in a defensive position at the entrance of the gate, while the Syrian mercenaries take up positions in the surrounding fields. This tactical arrangement suggests that the Ammonites are seeking to protect their city and its gates, while also utilizing the mobility and flexibility of their mercenary forces to outflank and disrupt David's army. However, the Ammonites' decision to divide their forces and fight on multiple fronts ultimately proves to be a weakness, as it allows David's army to target and defeat them in sequence.

**Verse 9:** When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: The rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. Joab, assessing the disposition of the enemy forces, recognizes that his army is threatened from both the front and the rear. To respond to this challenge, he selects the most elite and experienced soldiers from Israel and deploys them against the Syrian mercenaries, who are positioned in the fields. Meanwhile, Joab entrusts his brother Abishai with the command of the remaining troops, instructing him to array them against the Ammonites, who are defending the gate. This division of forces allows Joab to concentrate his most powerful troops against the Syrians, while also providing Abishai with a capable and motivated force to tackle the Ammonites.

**Verse 10:** And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. Joab, having divided his forces, issues a clear and coordinated battle plan to his brother Abishai. He instructs Abishai that if the Syrians prove too strong for him, Abishai should come to his aid and provide reinforcements. Conversely, if the Ammonites are too powerful for Abishai, Joab will mobilize his own troops to support his brother. This arrangement demonstrates the close coordination and trust between Joab and Abishai, as well as their shared commitment to achieving a decisive victory. By providing for mutual support and reinforcement, Joab and Abishai increase the overall effectiveness of their forces and reduce the risk of defeat.

**Verse 11:** Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good. Joab, before engaging the enemy, offers a stirring exhortation to his brother Abishai and the rest of the army. He urges them to be courageous and to fight valiantly on behalf of their people and the cities of their God. By invoking the Lord's name and acknowledging His sovereignty, Joab reminds his troops that their ultimate victory or defeat depends on God's will. This expression of faith and trust in God's providence serves to bolster the morale and confidence of the army, as they prepare to face the challenges of battle. At the same time, Joab's words also reflect his own humility and recognition of the limitations of human power, as he acknowledges that the outcome of the battle is ultimately in God's hands.

**Verse 12:** And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. Joab, having issued his battle plan and exhorted his troops, leads the charge against the Syrian mercenaries. As he and his soldiers approach the enemy lines, the Syrians are unable to withstand the ferocity and discipline of the Israeli army. They flee in disarray, abandoning their

positions and allowing Joab to secure a decisive victory. This initial success sets the tone for the rest of the battle, as the Israeli army gains momentum and confidence.

**Verse 13:** And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city: and Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem. As the Syrians flee, the Ammonites realize that their position is untenable and that they are in danger of being defeated. They retreat back into their city, seeking the safety of its walls and defenses. Abishai, having defeated the Ammonites, is able to claim victory, while Joab returns to Jerusalem, having successfully completed his campaign against the Ammonites and their mercenary forces. The fact that Joab returns to Jerusalem suggests that the city is now secure, and that the kingdom of Israel is once again at peace.

**Verse 14:** And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together. The Syrian mercenaries, having been defeated by Joab and forced to flee, regroup and reassess their situation. Recognizing that they have been "smitten before Israel," they understand that they are no match for the military might of the Israeli army. This realization prompts them to gather their forces and prepare for a potential rematch, as they seek to redeem themselves and regain their honor.

**Verse 15:** And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river: and they came to Helam; and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. The Syrian king, Hadarezer, responds to the defeat of his mercenaries by mobilizing a larger and more powerful army from the regions beyond the river. He dispatches this force to the city of Helam, where they are joined by Shobach, the captain of Hadarezer's host. Shobach's presence suggests that the Syrians are committed to avenging their earlier defeat and are prepared to engage the Israeli army in a major battle.

**Verse 16:** And when David heard of it, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. David, learning of the Syrian mobilization, decides to take the initiative and launch a preemptive strike against the enemy. He gathers all of Israel's forces and leads them across the Jordan River, marching towards the city of Helam, where the Syrians are gathered. The Syrians, anticipating David's move, deploy their troops in battle array and prepare to engage the Israeli army. The two forces clash, setting the stage for a fierce and decisive battle.

**Verse 17:** And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there. The battle between the Israeli and Syrian armies is fierce and intense, but ultimately the Syrians are unable to withstand the might of David's forces. They flee in disarray, abandoning their chariots and horsemen, as David's soldiers pursue and slay them. The Syrian captain, Shobach, is among those killed in the battle, marking a significant blow to the enemy's command structure. David's victory is comprehensive, with the Syrians suffering heavy casualties, including 700 chariots and 40,000 horsemen.

**Verse 18:** And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more. The decisive defeat of the Syrian army has a profound impact on the regional

balance of power. The kings who were formerly subject to Hadarezer, recognizing the futility of resisting the Israeli army, decide to make peace with David and acknowledge his supremacy. This development marks a significant shift in the region's politics, as the Syrians abandon their alliance with the Ammonites and refuse to provide them with further military support. The Ammonites, having lost their powerful ally, are now isolated and vulnerable to Israeli pressure, setting the stage for a potential conquest or subjugation.

**Verse 19:** And the servants of Hadarezer said unto him, Because we were not able to stand before the face of Israel, let us take our fathers' gods, the gods of Aram, which are beyond the river, and let us go to serve them; peradventure they may deliver us out of the hand of the king of Israel. The servants of Hadarezer, seeking to explain their defeat and find a way to redeem themselves, suggest that they should turn to the gods of Aram, which are worshiped beyond the river. They propose that by serving these deities, they may be able to secure their protection and avoid further defeat at the hands of the Israeli army. This response reflects the superstition and polytheism of the ancient world, where military defeats were often attributed to the disfavor of the gods.

## **CHAPTER 11:**

**Verse 1: "And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem."**

•This verse sets the stage for the tragic events that follow. It establishes a sense of normalcy with the routine of warfare, when kings traditionally lead their armies. David, however, is notably absent from the battlefield. Instead of leading his troops, including the seasoned warrior Joab, David remains in Jerusalem, suggesting a shift from his usual role as a military leader. This separation from his responsibilities creates an environment where temptation can take root and the ensuing sin will occur. The siege of Rabbah, the Ammonite capital, hints at the ongoing conflict and the scope of David's military power.

**Verse 2:** "And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon."

•This verse describes David's actions that led him to temptation. The timing, "in an eveningtide," suggests a time of day when the normal routines of the city are winding down, offering a sense of privacy. He rises from his bed, implying rest and relaxation. Instead of engaging in his normal duties, he walks on the roof of his palace, which elevates him and provides a vantage point. While surveying his surroundings, he observes a woman bathing. The phrase "very beautiful to look upon" reveals the immediate impact of the woman's appearance on David. This is the moment where David's unchecked desires begin to control his actions.

**Verse 3:** "And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"



- The initial spark of temptation quickly escalates into a more serious transgression. David immediately takes action, "sent and enquired after the woman," demonstrating his intense interest. The information he receives confirms her identity as Bathsheba, highlighting her status as a married woman, and her husband, Uriah, is a Hittite and one of David's loyal warriors. The information sets the scene as the knowledge will come in handy later on. The verse highlights the serious consequences that await David due to his actions.

**Verse 4:** "And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house."

- David's actions become increasingly bold and decisive. Instead of a momentary glance, he dispatches "messengers" to bring Bathsheba to him. The verb "took" emphasizes his authority and control. Bathsheba, apparently compliant, comes to David, and he "lay with her," which indicates sexual intercourse. The phrase "purified from her uncleanness" suggests this occurred after her menstrual cycle, a period where intimate relations would be permissible under the Law. At the conclusion of the interaction, Bathsheba returns home, potentially unaware of the full extent of the consequences.

**Verse 5:** "And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child."

- This verse marks a turning point, as the consequences of David's sin become undeniable. Bathsheba discovers she is pregnant and informs David of the development. This announcement signals that David's actions have had irreversible ramifications, revealing his sin to the public. David is now forced to manage the consequences of his desires, indicating the beginning of the effort to conceal his guilt.

**Verse 6:** "And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David."

- David's attempt at damage control begins. He sends a message to Joab, requesting the presence of Uriah the Hittite. The order is straightforward, and Joab complies by dispatching Uriah to the King. The intent of this interaction is not yet known to Uriah, whose complete trust in his King makes him ignorant to the scheme he is to become a part of.

**Verse 7:** "And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered."

- David feigns interest in the well-being of his army and the progress of the war. He uses the pretext of inquiring about Joab, the soldiers, and the war effort, and asks questions of Uriah to mask his true intentions. This interaction is a deliberate deception, intended to lull Uriah into a false sense of security, and to provide a legitimate explanation for his being summoned.

**Verse 8:** "And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king."

- David attempts to create a facade of innocence, by suggesting that Uriah spend time with his wife. David tries to send Uriah home, using the seemingly casual phrase, "Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet," a common expression for refreshing oneself after a journey. He also sends a "mess of meat" with Uriah, hoping to encourage the appearance of a normal interaction.

**Verse 9:** "But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house."

•Uriah's integrity and loyalty shine through his actions, undermining David's plan. Instead of going home, Uriah chooses to sleep at the door of the king's house, among David's other servants. His actions suggest that he will not enjoy the comforts of home, while his fellow soldiers are fighting the war.

**Verse 10:** "And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?"

•David, frustrated by Uriah's actions, confronts him. He is informed about Uriah's disobedience of his previous order. David questions Uriah, pointing out the opportunity to spend time with his wife. He is surprised, and perhaps disturbed, by Uriah's decision, indicating that he is not following the plan.

**Verse 11:** "And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel and Judah, dwell in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."

•Uriah provides a powerful justification for his actions, citing his devotion to his fellow soldiers and the Israelite community. His refusal to go home stems from his humility and his sense of duty. His words reflect a strong sense of communal responsibility, highlighting that his conscience does not allow him to indulge in pleasure while others suffer on the battlefield. He expresses his faithfulness and loyalty to David.

**Verse 12:** "And David said unto Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow."

•David, failing in his initial plan, makes another attempt to manipulate the situation. He orders Uriah to stay in Jerusalem for another two days. This attempt further demonstrates his determination to cover up his sin. Uriah complies, remaining unaware of David's true intentions.

**Verse 13:** "And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house."

•David's actions continue to descend deeper into depravity, and his original plan fails a second time. David attempts to alter Uriah's behavior by making him drunk. David tries to force him to stay home. However, despite the heavy drinking, Uriah again chooses to sleep "with the servants of his lord," still refusing to go to his own home.

**Verse 14:** "And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah."

•This verse represents a critical turning point, as David resorts to a truly wicked plan. David writes a letter and has Uriah carry it to Joab, creating a situation where Uriah unknowingly delivers his own death warrant. This deception and manipulation demonstrate the depth of David's sin and his willingness to sacrifice an innocent man to hide his transgression.

**Verse 15:** "And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die."

•David's letter contains the command to orchestrate Uriah's death. He instructs Joab to position Uriah in the most dangerous part of the battle, where he is most likely to be killed. Furthermore, David instructs

Joab to withdraw his troops from Uriah, ensuring his vulnerability and ultimate demise. The verse reveals the calculated and premeditated nature of David's plan.

**Verse 16:** "And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were."

- Joab executes David's command, although the verse does not indicate his reaction. He chooses a location where the battle will be particularly fierce, knowing Uriah's courage and skill. The placement of Uriah in a place with "valiant men" highlights that Uriah is being deliberately targeted for his bravery, making him vulnerable to certain death.

**Verse 17:** "And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also."

- The plan is executed, resulting in Uriah's death. A battle erupts, and men from the city engage with Joab's forces. In the midst of the fighting, both David's soldiers and Uriah are killed. The verse ends in tragedy, and emphasizes the consequences of David's actions.

**Verse 18:** "Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war."

- Joab informs David of the events. Joab keeps David updated on all aspects of the war, fulfilling his duty as a commander. This sets the stage for the next stage of the story.

**Verse 19:** "And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,"

- Joab carefully gives the messenger specific instructions. He includes an additional directive for the messenger, ensuring that the most critical and sensitive piece of information reaches the King. The message is designed to be relayed to David in a carefully controlled way.

**Verse 20:** "And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?"

- Joab anticipates the King's response and provides the messenger with specific guidance on how to handle any potential anger or questioning by the King. Joab anticipates that David might become upset about the losses of his troops. He instructs the messenger on how to respond to David's questions about the strategy and the proximity of the troops to the city.

**Verse 21:** "Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

- Joab provides a response to potential criticism, referencing the death of Abimelech. Joab tells the messenger to deflect the King's potential anger by referring to a past incident where Abimelech was killed by a woman from a city wall. The messenger is to acknowledge the risks of warfare and to subtly introduce the news of Uriah's death.

**Verse 22:** "So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for."

- The messenger, having been thoroughly prepared by Joab, conveys the information to David. The messenger successfully reports the events of the war. He relays the full account to David, ensuring the King is informed about the losses and, most importantly, about Uriah's death.

**Verse 23:** "And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them, even unto the entering of the gate."

- The messenger begins the report by setting the scene and describing the course of the battle. The messenger uses military terminology to describe the course of the battle, emphasizing the fierce nature of the fighting. This information gives David context and the events that preceded Uriah's death.

**Verse 24:** "And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

- The messenger delivers the key information regarding the casualties, including Uriah's death. The messenger, following Joab's instructions, subtly introduces the news of Uriah's death, mixing it with the deaths of other soldiers. This allows for a more indirect delivery of the tragic news, potentially mitigating David's reaction.

**Verse 25:** "Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage him."

- David's reaction is one of cold calculation. David's initial response is surprisingly detached, and gives the messenger instructions on how to console Joab. David expresses concern for the war effort, rather than expressing sadness or remorse over Uriah's death. He encourages Joab to intensify the attack on the city and to carry on.

**Verse 26:** "And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband."

- The verse highlights Bathsheba's grief. Bathsheba reacts to the news of her husband's death with grief and mourning, as expected. This indicates that she is unaware of the events and has a clear idea of her husband's death.

**Verse 27:** "And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD."

- This verse brings the tragic narrative to its conclusion, by highlighting the consequences of David's actions. The final verse in the chapter describes David's callous behavior in the immediate aftermath of Uriah's death. David, seemingly without remorse, brings Bathsheba to his house and marries her. The fact that she bears him a son emphasizes the consummation of his sin. Finally, and most importantly, the verse highlights the disapproval of the Lord for David's actions. This final sentence provides a summary of God's judgment and sets the stage for the consequences to come.

## **CHAPTER 12:**

**2 Samuel 12:1:** *And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.*

The opening verse establishes the immediate context for Nathan's crucial confrontation with David. The LORD, the covenant God of Israel, initiates the process of confronting David's sin by sending His prophet Nathan. This highlights God's active involvement in the moral affairs of His people. Nathan's arrival is a direct response to David's actions and sets the stage for a powerful narrative of judgment and mercy. Nathan begins his message with a parable, a simple story designed to capture David's attention and subtly guide him toward self-condemnation before revealing the specific gravity of David's transgression. The introduction of this parable, concerning two men in the same city, introduces the key elements of the narrative and creates a sense of suspense and intrigue in preparation for the coming revelation.

**2 Samuel 12:2:** *The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:*

The second verse delves into the situation of the rich man, setting the scene. This man's wealth is emphasized with the phrase "exceeding many flocks and herds." This detail sets the stage for the contrast with the poor man. The abundance implies a secure economic position and a comfortable lifestyle. This detail contributes to the rich man's moral reprehensibility as he will later be seen taking what he does not need. The fact that the rich man has excess is designed to highlight the injustice of what follows, as it becomes clear that he is not in need.

**2 Samuel 12:3:** *But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.*

This verse portrays the situation of the poor man. In stark contrast to the rich man, the poor man possesses only a single lamb. The description of the lamb is highly emotive; the phrase "one little ewe lamb" emphasizes the significance of the lamb, as it represents the man's sole possession. The lamb has an almost familial quality, being raised with his children, eating from the same table, drinking from the same cup, and even sleeping in the man's bosom. The lamb's closeness to the man and his family make it a symbol of affection, companionship, and dependency, intensifying the subsequent act of injustice. The repeated use of "his" emphasizes the special, intimate relationship the man has with the lamb. The rich man's wealth makes the poor man's poverty seem more acute, and heightens the wickedness of what he is about to do.

**2 Samuel 12:4:** *And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.*

This verse describes the rich man's transgression. A traveler arrives at the rich man's home, representing a situation requiring hospitality. Instead of utilizing his vast resources from his own flocks and herds, the rich man chooses to spare them. Instead, he callously takes the poor man's cherished lamb and slaughters it to feed the traveler. The description of the rich man's actions are calculated, demonstrating both greed and a lack of empathy. The rich man's actions demonstrate a blatant disregard for the poor man's right to property, violating principles of justice and kindness.

**2 Samuel 12:5:** *And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:*

David, hearing the parable, responds with righteous anger. He is incensed by the rich man's injustice, and in his judgment, he pronounces the death sentence upon the man. David's strong reaction reveals his understanding of basic moral principles and his commitment to justice, especially towards the poor and vulnerable. The oath "As the LORD liveth" emphasizes the solemnity of David's judgment, invoking God as a witness to his pronouncement. This shows David's capacity for righteous judgment and an understanding of the consequences of injustice and sin.

**2 Samuel 12:6:** *And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.*

David goes on to declare a further penalty. He decrees that the guilty man must restore the lamb fourfold, effectively quadrupling its original value. This illustrates the principle of restitution and underscores the severity of the transgression. The phrase "because he had no pity" offers the explicit reason for the extreme judgment. This highlights the moral dimensions of David's pronouncements. The condemnation of the man shows that the lack of compassion, rather than the act itself, is a particularly grievous sin.

**2 Samuel 12:7:** *And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;*

In this critical verse, Nathan reveals the true meaning of the parable, turning it directly upon David. "Thou art the man" is a direct and confrontational statement that removes any distance or ambiguity. The prophet then accuses David by comparing the parable to David's behavior. Nathan then delivers a message from God, reminding David of his divine calling and the covenant relationship between God and David. The Lord's reminder of his past favors - anointing him king and delivering him from Saul - highlights God's grace and David's accountability. This reminds David of the grace shown to him by God, increasing his sense of guilt and sin.

**2 Samuel 12:8:** *And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.*

God further rebukes David, listing His blessings. God recounts His generosity to David, pointing out the gifts that He had bestowed upon him. He gave David the house of his former master, Saul, in essence, his kingdom. He also gave David Saul's wives, establishing David's power and authority. God also gave him dominion over the entire nation of Israel and Judah. The implication is that David already possessed everything he could possibly need and yet, he still transgressed. The phrase "and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things" underscores the extent of God's generosity and makes David's actions even more inexcusable.

**2 Samuel 12:9:** *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.*

The Lord, through Nathan, accuses David of specific sins. The prophet directly confronts David's actions: his contempt for God's commandments and his wicked deeds. He points out the specific acts of adultery and murder. He directly names Uriah the Hittite, emphasizing David's betrayal of a loyal

servant. The phrase "hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon" emphasizes the deception and manipulation employed by David to carry out his wicked plan.

**2 Samuel 12:10:** *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

God announces the consequences of David's actions, beginning with a curse. The Lord declares that the sword will never depart from David's house, meaning that there will be perpetual violence, strife, and bloodshed within his family. This prophecy foretells the internal conflicts and tragedies that will plague his descendants. This curse is a direct result of David's disobedience, his contempt for God, and his taking of Uriah's wife. The repetition of "the wife of Uriah the Hittite" emphasizes the seriousness of David's adultery and the betrayal of a loyal servant.

**2 Samuel 12:11:** *Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.*

The LORD continues the prophecy, detailing further consequences. The Lord says that He will raise up evil from within David's own household, meaning that his own family will become a source of conflict and suffering for him. He also foretells a humiliating act where David's wives will be taken before his eyes and given to his neighbor, symbolizing a loss of honor and power. This act will be committed in broad daylight, in the sight of everyone, adding to David's shame and the public humiliation. This is a direct mirroring of David's own sins, with the idea of the Lord exacting "an eye for an eye".

**2 Samuel 12:12:** *For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.*

God explains that this is because David did his sin secretly. This verse clarifies the nature of God's justice. While David committed his sin in secret, God will bring his judgment upon him openly, before all Israel and even before the sun. This public punishment is meant to be a lesson and a warning to the nation of the consequences of sin. God makes a point of highlighting the contrast between David's secretive sin and the open nature of the punishment.

**2 Samuel 12:13:** *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.*

This verse records David's response to Nathan's pronouncements. David admits his sin, openly acknowledging his transgression against the Lord. He acknowledges his sin, marking a turning point in the narrative. Nathan's response provides immediate assurance of divine forgiveness. Although David's sin is severe, the Lord has already forgiven it. The assurance is not, however, unconditional. While he will not die, there will still be consequences.

**2 Samuel 12:14:** *Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die.*

Nathan continues, clarifying the conditions of David's forgiveness. Although David is forgiven, there will still be serious consequences, because his actions have given occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, and so the child born from the adultery will die. The death of the child is a direct consequence of David's sin, and serves as a demonstration of God's justice and the reality of the cost of

sin. The idea that David had given opportunity for others to blaspheme further demonstrates the serious nature of his transgression.

**2 Samuel 12:15:** *And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.*

This verse marks the execution of God's judgement. Nathan departs, having delivered his message, and the events begin to unfold. The LORD, according to his word, strikes the child born to David and Bathsheba. The child becomes severely ill. This physical manifestation of God's displeasure underscores the seriousness of David's sin and the cost of disobedience.

**2 Samuel 12:16:** *David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.*

David responds with earnest prayer and mourning. David shows deep sorrow and remorse for the child's illness. He pleads to God for the child's life. He engages in both fasting and physical prostration, demonstrating humility and supplication. This demonstrates David's repentance and his hope for mercy, even in the face of God's judgment.

**2 Samuel 12:17:** *And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.*

This verse describes David's continued state of mourning and his refusal to comfort. Those closest to him tried to persuade him to rise and to eat, but he refused. This illustrates his deep grief and his determination to demonstrate his repentance. The act of not eating is a sign of mourning and a denial of physical comfort.

**2 Samuel 12:18:** *And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?*

The child's death marks the fulfillment of God's judgment. After seven days of suffering, the child dies. The servants of David are hesitant to inform him, fearing his reaction. They recall his previous intensity of grief and fear that learning about the death will overwhelm him with grief. This displays the respect and concern of David's servants, as well as their awareness of his emotional vulnerability.

**2 Samuel 12:19:** *But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.*

David's awareness and acceptance of the tragic event is recorded. David, noticing the hushed whispers and the somber expressions of his servants, realizes the child has died. He asks them directly, and they confirm the news. David's immediate understanding shows his emotional intelligence.

**2 Samuel 12:20:** *Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.*



David's actions after the death of his son indicate that he accepted God's punishment. He shows a shift in his behavior, rising from his state of mourning, washing and anointing himself, and changing his clothes. He then goes to the house of the Lord to worship. This indicates that he accepted God's judgment and was ready to move forward. He also returns to his own house and eats, indicating his return to normal life. David's actions indicate a movement towards acceptance, and a trust in God despite his grief.

**2 Samuel 12:21:** *Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.*

David's servants question him, puzzled by his actions. His servants are curious and express their bewilderment at the sudden change in David's actions. They cannot understand why he mourned so intensely while the child lived, but now, after the child's death, he has returned to normal. Their question highlights the apparent inconsistency of David's actions in their eyes.

**2 Samuel 12:22:** *And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?*

David explains his actions. He explains that his earlier actions were motivated by hope and a desire for mercy. He explains that he fasted and wept, praying to God for the child's survival. David's words reveal that he was seeking God's grace in the hope that God would reverse the decree.

**2 Samuel 12:23:** *But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*

David explains that he accepts the will of God. Now that the child is dead, David sees no further reason to fast. He acknowledges that his efforts cannot change the situation, and that the child cannot be brought back to life. He states his belief that he will eventually join his son, emphasizing faith in an afterlife, or a reunion with the child.

**2 Samuel 12:24:** *And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.*

David finds solace and experiences a new beginning. The narrative shows David consoling his wife Bathsheba. He then conceives and she bears a son. This son is named Solomon. The last phrase states that God loved Solomon, emphasizing that even after the tragedy, God is continuing to work his plan.

**2 Samuel 12:25:** *And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.*

This verse highlights God's affirmation of David's new beginning. God sends Nathan to pronounce the boy's name. The verse also tells us that God gave Solomon another name - Jedidiah. This additional name means "beloved of the LORD". This act marks divine acceptance, and signifies that God's grace continues to be bestowed.

**2 Samuel 12:26:** *And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.*

The narrative shifts back to military matters, linking David's sin to his kingdom. The story shifts back to the realm of warfare, indicating that Joab continued his military campaign. Joab's success reflects the ongoing challenges David faces. The capture of the royal city reveals the military might of Israel and the continuing growth of David's kingdom.

**2 Samuel 12:27:** *And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.*

Joab reports his victory. He sends messengers to David with news of his success at Rabbah. He reports that he has taken the "city of waters," which is a significant accomplishment.

**2 Samuel 12:28:** *Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name.*

Joab makes a shrewd move by allowing David to gain the ultimate glory. Joab instructs David to gather the remaining forces and finish the job, ensuring that the city's victory is credited to David. He knows that the honor of conquering the city would be attributed to David.

**2 Samuel 12:29:** *And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.*

David's actions bring the story full circle. David takes the city and completes the victory. This marks a pivotal moment in his reign.

**2 Samuel 12:30:** *And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones; and it was set upon David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.*

David's actions show the completeness of the conquest. He takes the crown of the Ammonite king. The crown is exceptionally valuable, representing a symbol of the defeated enemy. He places the crown on his head and brings out a great abundance of spoil.

**2 Samuel 12:31:** *And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.*

David's actions show the consequences of rebellion. David inflicts harsh punishment on the surviving people of Rabbah. This action shows a brutal side of warfare. The actions taken here appear harsh, and may cause the reader to question David.

## **CHAPTER 13:**

### **Verse 1:**

**And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. (2 Samuel 13:1, KJV)**

This verse provides the setting and introduces two key characters in the narrative: Absalom, the son of David and a prince, and Tamar, his sister, described as "fair" indicating her beauty and attractiveness. It

also introduces Amnon, another son of David, who is the object of desire for Tamar. This verse foreshadows the events that will follow as it sets the stage for a dramatic and tragic series of events. The use of the word "loved" also implies deep affection and obsession, which will ultimately lead to devastating consequences.

**Verse 2:**

And Amnon was so tormented, that he fell sick for love after her: for she was chaste, and Amnon did despise her virginity. (2 Samuel 13:2, KJV)

In this verse, we see a deeper understanding of Amnon's motivations and feelings. His love for Tamar has become an intense obsession, to the point where it has made him physically ill. The phrase "he fell sick for love" suggests a level of emotional turmoil and desperation. However, it also reveals a darker aspect of Amnon's character as he "despise her virginity", indicating that he views Tamar not as a person to be valued and respected but rather as a possession to be claimed and exploited. This attitude will ultimately contribute to the tragic events that unfold.

**Verse 3:**

Now Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man. (2 Samuel 13:3, KJV)

This verse introduces a secondary character, Jonadab, who is described as "very subtil" which means clever or cunning. Jonadab is a friend of Amnon's and is likely an outsider who provides a different perspective. He serves as a catalyst for the events that follow, as he advises Amnon to pretend to be ill and invite Tamar to come to his room, where he will "lay with her". This advice suggests that Jonadab may be complicit in Amnon's desires and is willing to facilitate his actions.

**Verse 4-5:**

Jonadab said unto him, Lie down on thy bed, and pretend thyself a sick man: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and give me food, and dress me: so Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come unto him, he said unto him, O my lord, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and she shall make me a couple of cakes in the pan; or that she may set it before me, and I may eat it my hand. (2 Samuel 13:4-5, KJV)

These verses continue the narrative by showing Jonadab's advice in action. Amnon feigns illness and asks his father, King David, to let Tamar come to his room to take care of him. This request seems innocent, but it is really a ruse to get Tamar alone with him. Amnon's language is polite and deferential, but it also reveals his desperation and his willingness to deceive others to get what he wants. This sets the stage for the tragic events that will unfold.

**Verse 6:**

But when Tamar was come, she did make him cakes in the pan; but he smote her in the belly. (2 Samuel 13:6, KJV)

This verse marks a turning point in the narrative. Tamar comes to Amnon's room, unaware of the deception and thinking she is simply doing a kind act. However, when she arrives, Amnon betrays her trust and assaults her. The phrase "he smote her in the belly" is a graphic description of the violence and trauma that Tamar experiences. This action is not only a physical assault but also a violent violation

of trust and a destruction of Tamar's innocence. This verse sets the stage for the aftermath of the tragedy and the emotional and psychological consequences that Tamar and Amnon will face.

**Verse 7-9:**

Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he loved her: and Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. When Tamar rose and went, she also put a veil on her face. But she had left behind her the veil and put on the clothes of mourning. And Absalom her brother said to her, Hath Amnon thy brother humbled thee? now set thine hand, that which she bare in her hand, in my bosom: (2 Samuel 13:7-9, KJV)

After the assault, Amnon's emotions change from love to hatred, which is a tragic transformation. His initial love and infatuation have turned into a deep-seated loathing for Tamar. He orders her to leave, which is a clear indication of rejection and disdain. Tamar's response to the rejection is to don the attire of mourning, signifying that she has suffered a deep emotional and psychological wounding. This response also foreshadows the grief and pain that Tamar will experience in the aftermath of the assault. The fact that Absalom offers to take her hand, indicating that he will comfort her, adds a poignant element to the narrative, emphasizing the depth of Amnon's betrayal and the gravity of Tamar's situation.

**Verse 10-14:**

And she answered, Nay my brother; he would not be spoken unto; for he defamed me and would not answer me: therefore I took heave of him, because he defamed me before the men. (2 Samuel 13:10-14, KJV)

Tamar's response to Absalom's offer is a poignant expression of her pain and vulnerability. She says that Amnon would not speak to her, indicating that he has effectively abandoned her and is unwilling to listen to her or acknowledge her suffering. The fact that Amnon "defamed" her, or spoke ill of her, suggests that he has publicly humiliated her and has effectively ruined her reputation. Tamar's words to Absalom are a cry for help and a plea for support and validation. Absalom's response will likely determine the outcome of the narrative, as he has the ability to offer Tamar comfort and support.

**Verse 15:**

Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he loved her at the first. Now Absalom her brother spake unto her, saying, Hath Amnon thy brother humbled thee? (2 Samuel 13:15, KJV)

This verse is a repetition of verse 7-9, emphasizing Amnon's intense hatred for Tamar. Amnon's actions are so reprehensible that he surpasses his own initial love for Tamar. This emphasis on Amnon's hatred serves as a reminder of the gravity of his actions and the depth of his betrayal of Tamar.

**Verse 16:**

Wherefore Tamar remained desolate for five long years. (2 Samuel 13:16, KJV)

The aftermath of the tragedy is devastating for Tamar. She remains in a state of desolation and isolation for five years, indicating the depth of her emotional and psychological pain. This period of isolation is a testament to the lasting impact of Amnon's actions and the fact that Tamar has been left to suffer in

silence. This verse serves as a contrast to the initial description of Tamar as a "fair" or beautiful individual, highlighting the devastating impact that Amnon's actions have had on her life.

### **2 Samuel 13:17:**

Then he said, Call now this maid unto me. And when he had called her, she came in unto him, and he said, Put this thing away from me, and turn her out of the door.

Tamar, now horrified and violated, is brought before Amnon again at his command. He issues an order to the attending servant, instructing that she be expelled from his presence, that this abhorrent act should be erased from his sight. The terse command, "Put this thing away from me, and turn her out of the door," is a cruel dismissal, reflecting Amnon's utter lack of remorse and a desire to be rid of the physical evidence of his vile deed. He seeks to wipe away the stain of his actions, while leaving Tamar to bear the brunt of the shame and the consequences alone. The coldness of the command amplifies the trauma of what has occurred and the utter disregard for Tamar's well-being.

### **2 Samuel 13:18:**

And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

Tamar's attire, a "garment of divers colours," becomes significant here. This attire identifies her as a princess and therefore a virgin daughter of the king, signifying a woman of value and status. This garment, typically worn by royal virgins, should have afforded her protection and honor. Instead, it serves as a reminder of Amnon's desecration of her purity and the breach of her royal status. The act of the servant casting her out and bolting the door, a decisive action, underlines the irrevocability of her abandonment and the completeness of her rejection. The bolting of the door emphasizes both her expulsion from Amnon's private sphere and the imprisonment of her own ruined reputation.

### **2 Samuel 13:19:**

And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.

In response to her violation and rejection, Tamar engages in profound mourning and self-affliction. The pouring of "ashes on her head" symbolized grief, sorrow, and humility. She "rent her garment of divers colours", the very attire that marked her as a royal virgin, now torn in a visible expression of her lost innocence, her shame, and her broken status. The fact that she tears the beautiful garment is a powerful sign of her grief and the total obliteration of her previous status and station. The act of laying her hand on her head and weeping, amplifies her emotional anguish and the immensity of her distress. These gestures together signal a level of despair that only those deeply affected by the tragedy of rape and its consequences can truly understand.

### **2 Samuel 13:20:**

Then Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

Absalom, Tamar's full brother, comes upon her in this state of despair, perhaps alerted by others or witnessing her distress directly. He first inquires about the specific events, confirming the truth of Amnon's actions. Absalom then attempts to console Tamar by telling her "hold now thy peace" and to disregard what had occurred because Amnon was her brother, a statement implying that the family should attempt to cover the scandal. Absalom's words, though intended to comfort, fail to acknowledge the enormity of the injustice or the violation of Tamar's rights. The concluding phrase, "Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house," underscores her isolation and the enduring consequences of Amnon's actions, highlighting the ongoing damage she has suffered.

### **2 Samuel 13:21:**

But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.

News of Amnon's crime reaches King David, his father. The verse reports that he "was very wroth," suggesting intense anger and indignation. The anger is likely a mix of parental outrage at the violation of his daughter, fury at Amnon's transgression against the law and against the social order, and also perhaps a degree of shame at the corruption within his own household. While David's anger is clear, the passage does not explicitly indicate a sense of justice or corrective action. The inaction that follows, and the delay of justice, underscores the complex dynamics of power, family, and favoritism within the royal court.

### **2 Samuel 13:22:**

And Absalom spake unto Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

Absalom's reaction to his sister's violation is one of carefully concealed hatred. He refrains from any open confrontation with Amnon, avoiding any overt expressions of his rage, speaking "neither good nor bad" to his brother. This restrained behavior likely stems from a mixture of familial obligation, prudence, and perhaps a calculated plan for future vengeance. The verse clearly states that he "hated Amnon," specifically because of his abuse of Tamar. The suppression of his feelings adds an undercurrent of tension to the narrative, foreshadowing the ultimate tragic outcome. The suppressed hatred creates a sense of looming doom, a slow-burning fire that will eventually erupt.

### **2 Samuel 13:23:**

And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

Two full years pass, during which Absalom bides his time. The passage marks a significant shift in the narrative's timeline, building suspense toward an inevitable climax. Absalom arranges a sheep-shearing feast at Baalhazor, which is located near Ephraim. He extends invitations to all of King David's sons, suggesting an attempt to foster an atmosphere of camaraderie. This invitation of all of David's sons

gives Amnon a false sense of security. The feast is an important occasion in itself, but the inclusion of Amnon is the key element of the planning. The meticulous planning and the deliberate timing of the gathering suggest Absalom's calculated actions and the carefully orchestrated nature of his plot.

#### **2 Samuel 13:24:**

And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I pray thee, and his servants go with thy servant.

Absalom extends a formal invitation to the King, his father, to attend the sheep-shearing feast. He approaches David, emphasizing his role as a "servant" in a display of humility and respect. He asks that the king and his servants accompany him to the event. This invitation carries complex layers of meaning. It's likely a test of David's perception of the animosity between the brothers, with David being given the opportunity to see how Amnon might react to Absalom's presence. It also creates an atmosphere of openness and shared celebration, in an apparent act of reconciliation. However, within this seemingly benign request, there is an undercurrent of manipulation and a subtle demonstration of Absalom's power and control.

#### **2 Samuel 13:25:**

And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: but he would not go, but blessed him.

David declines Absalom's invitation, explaining that a large party would be "chargeable" and place a burden on Absalom. He shows reluctance to join the feast and is likely wary of the motivations behind Absalom's request. Absalom persists in his invitation, pressing his father to reconsider. Despite his persistence, David refuses but he blesses Absalom. This blessing could be a gesture of goodwill and paternal affection. David's refusal further strengthens the narrative's tragic tension, as it removes any possibility of a direct confrontation and the opportunity for David to potentially intercede. David's refusal leaves Amnon vulnerable, setting the stage for the impending tragedy.

#### **2 Samuel 13:26:**

Then Absalom said, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

Absalom, adapting his strategy, asks that Amnon at least attend. He is focused solely on Amnon. His request specifically targets the individual he wishes to punish. David, somewhat perplexedly, questions why Amnon should go with Absalom. David's question highlights the ambiguity of the situation; he seems unaware of the underlying animosity and the potential danger. His question suggests that the king is not fully aware of the strained relationship between his sons, a lack of awareness that will have devastating consequences.

#### **2 Samuel 13:27:**

But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go.

Absalom relentlessly pursues his objective. He perseveres in his request, relentlessly "pressing" for Amnon's inclusion at the feast, along with "all the king's sons". The repetition of "pressed him" highlights Absalom's determined nature. The insistence is aimed at creating an environment where Amnon is alone, and this pressure also means Absalom will have to bear the suspicion of the other sons. David relents, permitting Amnon and all his other sons to go. This acceptance of the invitation reveals a parental naiveté, an inability to see the dangers. It's a crucial turning point, sealing Amnon's fate.

### **2 Samuel 13:28:**

Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon, then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.

Absalom reveals the depth of his premeditated plan. He issues specific instructions to his servants. He orders them to watch for the opportune moment when Amnon is "merry with wine," suggesting he anticipates Amnon's state of intoxication. Absalom will give the signal: "Smite Amnon, then kill him, fear not." The directness of these commands and the complete lack of ambiguity demonstrate a cold-blooded determination. Absalom reassures his servants, reminding them that he has given the order and that they should be "courageous, and be valiant." These are the words of a leader about to unleash violence, emphasizing the planned and orchestrated nature of his revenge.

### **2 Samuel 13:29:**

And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

Absalom's servants carry out the heinous deed as commanded. They kill Amnon, completing the execution of Absalom's revenge. The text simply states the fact: "the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded." The act of violence is swift and decisive. Witnessing the brutal murder, the remaining sons of the king become terrified. Fear grips them, causing them to "arose" and, immediately, they "fled," each taking to his "mule" in an effort to escape the scene. The flight underscores the shock and widespread panic brought on by the violent events.

### **2 Samuel 13:30:**

And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.

As the king's sons flee, a false report reaches David. Messengers bring word of the massacre, claiming that "Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left." The report is exaggerated and incorrect, yet its immediate effect on David is immense. The timing of this news creates a potent moment of dramatic irony. The fear that Absalom would take revenge for Tamar's assault, and for the royal house, had now seemingly come to pass in its worst possible form. The false report is important because it reveals the chaos and confusion that surround the events.



## **2 Samuel 13:31:**

Then the king arose, and rent his garments, and lay on the earth: and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

David's reaction to the news is one of overwhelming grief and despair. He "arose, and rent his garments, and lay on the earth." The rending of garments is a traditional sign of mourning, and the act of prostration signifies deep sorrow and powerlessness. All of his servants, witnessing their king's anguish, also rend their clothes in a display of shared grief and solidarity. The king is overcome with a sense of profound loss, in a manner similar to Tamar. The fact that David thinks all his sons have been killed shows his lack of trust and his inability to see that his sons love him.

**Verse 32: And Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord the king think that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.**

Jonadab, a cousin of King David and son of David's brother Shimeah, attempts to calm the king's panic by providing information to the king and claiming to know the truth. Jonadab assures David that the situation isn't as dire as it appears, and only Amnon, is dead. Jonadab attributes the murder to Absalom. He connects the murder to Absalom's past actions against his sister Tamar. He makes it clear to the king that the assassination was planned.

**Verse 33:** Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.

Jonadab continues to try and reassure David. He attempts to relieve the king's distress. Jonadab urges David not to be overwhelmed by grief and fear, assuring him that it's not as catastrophic as he might initially imagine. He emphasizes that it's only Amnon who is dead.

**Verse 34:** But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side.

This verse provides a physical confirmation of Jonadab's words. It states that Absalom fled from the scene. The young man, who was keeping watch, visually observed the arrival of "much people." The people were approaching from the hillside.

**Verse 35:** And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.

Jonadab, the man who had previously provided a statement on the death of Amnon now speaks again. The king now receives confirmation that his other sons are still alive. Jonadab's words are verified by the return of the King's sons, as he had previously stated.

**Verse 36:** And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.

This verse details the arrival of the king's sons and their reaction. Immediately after Jonadab finished speaking, David's other sons arrive. They express their grief and sadness through loud crying. The king, David, and his servants also express their own great grief.

**Verse 37:** But Absalom fled, and went to Talmi, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day.

This verse establishes the location of Absalom's flight. It confirms that Absalom flees and seeks refuge with Talmi, the king of Geshur. David's mourning is constant and deep. David, now the grieving father, is left to suffer the loss of his son.

**Verse 38:** So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.

This verse repeats and emphasizes the length of Absalom's exile. Absalom's departure and exile to Geshur are reiterated, and the duration of his absence is given: three years.

**Verse 39:** And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

This verse focuses on King David's emotional state. It reveals David's deep longing for Absalom. David's heart is full of emotions for his son. The verse also indicates that David's initial grief over Amnon's death lessened. David now shifts his focus to his son, Absalom.

## **CHAPTER 14:**

### **Verse 1:**

**"Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom." This verse opens the chapter, establishing Joab's awareness of a crucial fact: King David harbors a deep, perhaps still tender, affection for his exiled son, Absalom. "Perceived" suggests Joab is astute and observant, understanding the subtle cues of the King's emotions and actions. The mention of Zeruiah, Joab's mother, subtly emphasizes his familial connection to the King through his sister, David's sister. This familial connection likely influenced Joab's willingness to act in David's favor in the chapter, even if the plan was somewhat manipulative.**

### **Verse 2:**

"And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead." Joab, wanting to address David's grief for Absalom, chooses a crafty and strategic method. He selects Tekoah, a location known for its wise women. He instructs her to craft a false narrative that will provoke a similar sympathetic response from the King. He details the appearance, mannerisms, and demeanor she needs to adopt: mourning attire, no anointing with oil, and a prolonged period of mourning. This underscores Joab's manipulative strategy: to use the King's emotions to achieve his desired outcome, which is the return of Absalom.

**Verse 3:**

"And go to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. And Joab put the words in her mouth." Joab provides the details of the story the wise woman is to tell. He gives her a script, dictating the precise words she should use to evoke David's compassion. He is not merely suggesting a tactic; he is intricately planning and controlling the entire interaction. This again highlights Joab's control over the situation, his understanding of human psychology, and his willingness to use deception for what he perceives as a worthy cause.

**Verse 4:**

"And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, Help, O king." The wise woman follows Joab's instructions to the letter. Her actions reflect the customary deference and respect for the king's authority. She immediately sets the stage for her story by humbling herself and pleading for the King's assistance, thus establishing David's role as a just ruler.

**Verse 5:**

"And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead." David, hearing her distress, immediately shows the Kingly interest in her concerns, asking about her troubles. The wise woman introduces her story with the basic facts: she is a widow, her husband is dead, and she seeks the King's intervention. The opening line establishes a foundation for her plea for justice and evokes a sense of vulnerability and need for protection that would get David to be sympathetic toward her.

**Verse 6:**

"And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was no help to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him." She introduces a tragic situation within her family. Her narrative paints a picture of a domestic tragedy – a violent act between her two sons. She uses the phrase "thy handmaid" which suggests a sense of respect and humility, further emphasizing her vulnerable position. The vivid description of the fight in the field aims to create a scene of chaos and loss for David. The inability to part the sons suggests a lack of intervention, highlighting the helplessness in her position.

**Verse 7:**

"And, behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so shall they quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth." The woman explains the repercussions of the death of one son. She is in danger, and the whole family demands the remaining son's execution according to the law of retribution ("life for a life"). The mention of destroying the heir and quenching the coal is a poignant image of the total destruction of her family line, emphasizing the sense of despair and hopelessness. This appeals to the King's concern for justice and preservation of lineage.

**Verse 8:**

"And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee." David, affected by the story, reassures her that he will address the situation. He tells her to return home,

suggesting he will investigate and provide a resolution. This demonstrates that David is willing to offer protection and justice to his subjects.

**Verse 9:**

"And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house: and the king and his throne be guiltless." The wise woman, understanding the possible implications of her words, cleverly deflects responsibility. This shifts the focus from the personal implications of the situation on to the king's potential involvement. She is also subtly implying her own manipulation, using the phrase to ensure that the King is not held responsible if the situation escalates, further establishing her understanding of how David may react to the situation.

**Verse 10:**

"And the king said, Whosoever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more." David offers a protective guarantee to the woman. He assures her that anyone who attempts to interfere or harm her in any way will be held accountable. This demonstrates his resolve to ensure justice is done and that the woman is safe from the family's vengefulness.

**Verse 11:**

"Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God, that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son." She asks for a larger plea from the King that has wider implications. She asks the King to remember the Lord (God), thus appealing to his faith and sense of righteous judgement. She requests that the King intervene to stop the cycle of revenge. She also explicitly connects the story to the legal requirement for avenging blood, framing it as a matter of religious duty and a violation of divine law.

**Verse 12:**

"And he said, As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth." David, moved by her plea and appealing to his sense of justice and the Lord's authority, swears an oath. He vows that no harm shall befall her son, guaranteeing his safety. This indicates his conviction to protect the innocent and uphold the principles of justice.

**Verse 13:**

"Then the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou devised such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished." The woman reveals the core of Joab's intent, revealing that the story is not only about the woman's family but subtly relates to the King's inaction. By questioning the king's moral standing, she draws attention to the parallel between the King's treatment of his banished son, Absalom, and the situation presented in her story, directly pointing out the hypocrisy of the King's actions.

**Verse 14:**

"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him." This verse is a powerful philosophical statement, justifying the need for reconciliation and urging the king to act in accordance with God's will. It emphasizes mortality and the ultimate justice that God seeks for all, implying the King's actions should be aligned with God's mercy. The reference to "water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again" is a metaphor for death, emphasizing that life

is fleeting, and justice should be exercised while there's time. The line about God not respecting any person implies that all are subject to divine law, including the king and that the banished should be brought home.

**Verse 15:**

"Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid." The wise woman directly states her motivation. She admits that the people's fear has driven her to approach the king. The fear of retribution, or social pressure, has compelled her to speak. The use of the phrase "thy handmaid" keeps up the theme of humility.

**Verse 16:**

"For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God." She continues to explain why she is there. She expects the King to intervene and protect her and her son from those who would take their inheritance. She implicitly claims a right of inheritance, and asserts it as a God-given right. She also subtly connects this to the larger issue of Absalom and the inheritance of the kingdom, further reinforcing Joab's underlying intention.

**Verse 17:**

"Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad: therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee." She flatters the King, appealing to his ego and reassuring him of his ability to make sound judgements. She compares him to an "angel of God," emphasizing his wisdom and divine right to lead. She encourages him that God is with him to provide direction.

**Verse 18:**

"Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee." David, now engaged and attentive, asks for the truth. He recognizes that there is more than the presented story, and he wants the woman to reveal it, suggesting that his protective shield is coming down and his inquisitive nature is awakening.

**Verse 19:**

"And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak that which he speaketh in his heart: for the king is as an angel of God, to discern good and bad: therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee." She subtly hints at the true intent behind her story. She allows the King to say what is truly on his mind. She repeats her praise of the king, to reinforce the idea of his divine wisdom, and to allow him to feel comfortable admitting his own desires and to act upon them.

**Verse 20:**

"To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth." The woman reveals the truth: Joab orchestrated the entire scenario. She praises David's wisdom, acknowledging that he is insightful and understands that Joab is behind her story. She is essentially giving Joab credit for manipulating the King to bring about the change of heart.

**Verse 21:**

"And Joab, who is behind the scenes of this plan, and has brought all the elements together to bring the plan into action. My lord is as wise as an angel of God who knows what is happening. Joab, therefore, wants to fetch home again the banished one" Now the wise woman, using Joab's plan as a parallel with the King's situation, makes a direct appeal for the King to bring Absalom back home. This is the purpose of the entire deception. This is the core of Joab's motivation.

**Verse 22:**

"And Joab fell to the ground, and did obeisance, and blessed the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord the king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant." Joab now comes into the scene, demonstrating the same submission and respect as the wise woman. He is now in the King's presence, acknowledging that his plan has worked, and he has been blessed. The reference to having found favor in the King's eyes shows Joab knows his manipulative plot has worked.

**Verse 23:**

"So the king brought Absalom back to Jerusalem." David, persuaded by the story and Joab's intervention, takes action. He brings Absalom back to Jerusalem, which is the central purpose of the wise woman's fabricated story. It shows that David's heart is open to reconciliation with his son.

**Verse 24:**

"And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face." Even though Absalom is back in Jerusalem, David still has some reservations. He does not immediately want to meet Absalom, perhaps feeling resentment or shame. He tells him to return to his home. This action suggests the complexity of the reconciliation process: forgiveness, though initiated, is still partial and contains a degree of emotional distance.

**Verse 25:**

"And in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom, for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." The description of Absalom focuses on his physical beauty. The emphasis underscores his attractiveness and charisma, which will soon be used to garner public support and incite rebellion. The phrase "no blemish in him" suggests his perfect physical form, contrasting with his flawed moral character.

**Verse 26:**

"And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight." Absalom is described as having long hair, which he cut yearly, and the weight of his hair is noted. The emphasis on his physical appearance, hair, and wealth highlights his pride and vanity. The detail about measuring his hair adds a layer of vanity to his persona.

**Verse 27:**

"And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance." This verse gives more personal details about Absalom's family. It mentions his sons and his daughter, Tamar. The mention of the daughter (Tamar) is significant because her name links to the narrative of David's family's problems, especially since the first Tamar in the

David's story was also the daughter of David. This adds another layer of complexity and foreshadows potential trouble. The description of Tamar as a "woman of a fair countenance" mirrors the description of Absalom's physical beauty, setting the stage for future events.

**Verse 28:**

"So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face." This verse describes a period of tension between Absalom and David. Despite being back in Jerusalem, Absalom and the king remained estranged. It shows that reconciliation is incomplete.

**Verse 29:**

"Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come." Absalom, wanting to make amends and gain David's favor, attempts to communicate with the king through Joab. This describes Absalom's desire to gain David's favor and further shows Joab's pivotal role.

**Verse 30:**

"Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire." Frustrated by Joab's refusal to see him, Absalom resorts to a drastic measure, burning Joab's barley field. This shows Absalom's impatience and willingness to use aggressive tactics. He is ready to use violence to get what he wants.

**Verse 31:**

"Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?" Joab, responding to Absalom's aggressive action, confronts him directly. Joab now is forced to respond because of the actions of Absalom.

**Verse 32:**

"And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? it had been good for me to have been there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me." Absalom reveals the deeper motivation for his actions. He wants to speak to the King and understands his exile must end. He seems to seek a final resolution from David.

**Verse 33:**

"So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom." Joab relays Absalom's message to the King, and David decides to see his son. The meeting culminates in David, the father, kissing Absalom, showing a moment of reconciliation and familial forgiveness. The kiss signifies David's love and acceptance of Absalom, completing the reconciliation process that began earlier in the chapter. The chapter ends on a somewhat hopeful note, though the reader may see a foreshadowing of darker events to come.

**CHAPTER 15:**

**Verse 1: "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him."**

This verse marks a significant turning point in the narrative, setting the stage for Absalom's rebellion against his father, King David. The phrase "after this" suggests that the events detailed in the preceding chapters, likely including David's sin with Bathsheba and the subsequent family turmoil, have sown the seeds of Absalom's discontent. The preparation of chariots and horses, along with a personal retinue of fifty men, represents a clear demonstration of Absalom's ambition and his desire to project an image of power and authority. These would have been symbols of wealth, status, and military might, indicating Absalom was accumulating resources to compete with his father for influence and perhaps the throne itself. The inclusion of men to "run before him" suggests Absalom was trying to mimic the displays of royal prestige and perhaps further amplify the image of his growing power.

**Verse 2:** "And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of such and such a tribe of Israel."

Absalom's strategy for undermining his father's authority is revealed in this verse. He rises "up early" and takes a position near the city gate, the traditional location where legal disputes were handled. This suggests dedication and a calculated plan. Absalom capitalizes on the complaints and grievances of the people. When someone came to the king seeking justice, Absalom intercepts them. He carefully inquires about their city and tribe, feigning a personal interest. This personalized interaction sets the stage for his manipulative tactics. The use of the title "Thy servant" by the men seeking judgment establishes an image of humility and service, helping build a connection between the people and Absalom.

**Verse 3:** "And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee."

Here, Absalom begins the active phase of his deception. He initially acknowledges the validity and "good and right" nature of the men's grievances, implying a sense of justice and understanding. However, he swiftly undermines David's authority by claiming that the king has not appointed someone to hear their case. This statement implies that the king is either neglectful or incompetent in his duties, thereby creating a doubt of David's ability to serve the people. The implication is that the people's problems are not being heard and resolved because of a lack of attention from the king.

**Verse 4:** "Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!"

This verse provides insight into Absalom's ambition and his tactics. He expresses a yearning to be appointed as judge, suggesting a personal desire for power. The statement "Oh that I were made judge in the land" reveals his desire for authority and control. He emphasizes his supposed commitment to justice, claiming that every person with a cause would be able to seek his help, with the promise that Absalom would "do him justice." This contrasts with the image Absalom is building of David as someone unable or unwilling to provide justice.

**Verse 5:** "And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him."



Absalom cleverly manipulates the custom of showing respect. The phrase "to do him obeisance" indicates that people were approaching Absalom with the intention of showing him respect and recognizing his status. Absalom, in a disingenuous display of humility and warmth, reaches out, embraces, and kisses them. This is a performance designed to gain their affection and trust. The kiss, in this context, is a gesture of friendship and solidarity, which would have been highly unusual for someone of his stature. This calculated act of familiarity would have been especially effective in endearing himself to the common people and turning them against his father, the king.

**Verse 6:** "And in this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

The culmination of Absalom's efforts is described in this verse. "In this manner" highlights the repetition of his deceptive behavior. He consistently acts in the same way toward "all Israel that came to the king." The verse asserts the true effect of his manipulation - "so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." This phrase indicates a gradual, subtle, and deliberate process of swaying the people's loyalty away from David and toward himself. Absalom's calculated behavior created an illusion of fairness and care, turning the people's affection away from David and toward himself.

**Verse 7:** "And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron."

The time frame of forty years here is likely a scribal error, as Absalom's rebellion occurs much earlier in David's reign. This sets up the deception that will fully unfold. Absalom, with feigned piety, approaches the king with a request to go to Hebron to fulfill a vow made to the Lord. The phrase "I pray thee" shows an attempt to maintain an appearance of respect and obedience to David. Hebron was a significant location in the history of Israel, being the city where David had first reigned as king. The vow serves as a convenient pretext for his actions, attempting to deflect suspicion and provide a cover for his true intentions, while the location of Hebron is important.

**Verse 8:** "And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron."

David, seemingly unaware of Absalom's treachery, grants him permission to go to Hebron. The king's words "Go in peace" may reflect his trusting nature, his parental affection, or perhaps a lack of insight into Absalom's growing ambitions. This casual acceptance of Absalom's request allows him to proceed with his plot. Absalom's departure for Hebron is not only an act of departure but also of rebellion.

**Verse 9:** "But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron."

This verse reveals the organized, orchestrated nature of Absalom's rebellion. He doesn't just go to Hebron; he has a network of spies deployed throughout the tribes of Israel. These spies are given a specific signal: "the sound of the trumpet." Upon hearing this signal, the spies are instructed to proclaim, "Absalom reigneth in Hebron." This orchestrated announcement indicates Absalom's intention to usurp his father's throne and his meticulous planning. The use of a trumpet suggests a public proclamation, aiming to reach a wide audience and announce the establishment of his rule.

**Verse 10:** "And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing."

The verse mentions two hundred men from Jerusalem who joined Absalom in Hebron. It's vital to recognize the phrase "that were called," meaning those were invited or summoned. These men are described as going "in their simplicity," suggesting naiveté or a lack of awareness of the true nature of Absalom's intentions. "And they knew not anything" means they were ignorant of the conspiracy to overthrow David.

**Verse 11:** "And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom."

This verse shows the level of support Absalom gathers and the seriousness of his plot. Absalom sent for Ahithophel, who was David's counselor. This is a significant blow to David, as Ahithophel was known for his wisdom and strategic counsel. Ahithophel's defection to Absalom demonstrates the extent of the rebellion and the potential for David's downfall. Absalom's recruitment of Ahithophel, while he was "offering sacrifices," suggests that he was trying to exploit the religious practices of the time to gain support. The verse states that "the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom," highlighting the growing momentum behind Absalom's movement.

**Verse 12:** "And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom."

This verse marks a turning point in David's awareness of the rebellion. A messenger arrives with the stark news: "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." This news confirms the success of Absalom's deception and the extent of the support he has amassed. The phrase "the hearts of the men of Israel" emphasizes the emotional and psychological aspect of the rebellion – the people's loyalty has shifted. The messenger's words would have had a devastating impact on David, shattering his sense of security and trust in his people.

**Verse 13:** "And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword."

Faced with the news of the widespread support for Absalom, David makes the difficult decision to flee Jerusalem. He addresses "all his servants" with a direct command to "arise, and let us flee." David recognizes the gravity of the situation and believes that staying in Jerusalem would put them in danger. The reason for the flight is clear: "for we shall not else escape from Absalom." David orders them to "make speed to depart" because of his fear of being overtaken by Absalom "suddenly." This statement is a reflection of David's awareness that Absalom is capable of ruthlessly pursuing his objectives and could bring "evil" upon them.

**Verse 14:** "And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint."

David's servants respond with loyalty and obedience to their king. "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint," meaning they are prepared to follow his orders without hesitation, regardless of the circumstances. This statement reinforces the bond between the king and his loyal servants and suggests their unwavering commitment to David, even in the face of adversity.

**Verse 15: And the king said to all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.**

In this verse, David, the King, addresses his loyal servants who remained with him in Jerusalem. The urgency of the situation is palpable. The word "Arise" commands immediate action, reflecting the dire circumstances. He acknowledges that their only hope of survival against Absalom's rebellion lies in flight. David recognizes the speed with which Absalom is likely to move, highlighting the need to flee "lest he overtake us suddenly." This flight is not just for self-preservation; it's a move designed to prevent the city from being destroyed. David understands the consequences of being captured: Absalom would likely bring "evil" upon them and the city, possibly by using military force, indicated by the phrase "smite the city with the edge of the sword".

**Verse 16:** And the king's servants said, Whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint, behold, thy servants are ready to do.

This verse demonstrates the unwavering loyalty of David's servants. Their response is one of complete obedience and submission. They express their willingness to follow the king's commands without hesitation, declaring themselves "ready to do" whatever David "shall appoint." The phrase "Whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint" underscores the servants' faith in David's leadership and their recognition of his authority. This collective sentiment of loyalty is vital to David's morale and likely strengthens their resolve to withstand the turmoil.

**Verse 17:** And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

Following his servants' expression of loyalty, the verse describes the beginning of David's exodus from Jerusalem. The king's departure is decisive and prompt, followed by "all the people," signifying the broad support he still maintained. The text notes the significance of the distance in this particular context, the mention of the "place that was far off" suggests a retreat away from the immediate threat of Absalom's forces. The verse marks the beginning of David's displacement, underscoring the reality of his temporary defeat and the challenges that lie ahead.

**Verse 18:** And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

This verse describes the composition of the group fleeing with David. Along with his regular servants, a diverse group of loyal soldiers and mercenaries accompanies him. The mention of the Cherethites and the Pelethites highlights their crucial role as David's personal bodyguards. Their presence provides a sense of security and shows that David has

retained a core of loyal fighters. The "Gittites," six hundred men who followed him from Gath, suggests that David has supporters even from outside the kingdom. These mercenaries represent a military strength and underscore the king's resources. The fact that these forces "passed on before the king" shows that they are leading the way to offer the king protection, making a distinction between the main body of David's following, and his immediate security.

**Verse 19:** Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile.

David addresses Ittai the Gittite, a leader from Gath who has chosen to follow him. The king questions Ittai's decision to join the flight, acknowledging that Ittai is a "stranger" and an "exile," implying that he does not have a natural obligation to David. The king desires him to return to his own place and remain with "the king," which refers to Absalom. David does not want to burden Ittai with his current predicament and appears concerned about the Gittite's safety, trying to release him from the hardships to come. David's words show a sensitivity to Ittai's situation and demonstrate that David's care extends to those beyond his core followers.

**Verse 20:** Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee.

David continues to dissuade Ittai from following him, emphasizing the recent nature of their association, saying, "thou camest but yesterday." David is reluctant to involve Ittai in his uncertain situation, where the outcome is unknown, highlighting the difficult circumstances of his flight, the "go up and down with us." He emphasizes that he has no fixed destination ("I go whither I may"). He instructs Ittai to return and take his "brethren" with him, referring to the Gittites who came with him. David closes with a blessing: "mercy and truth be with thee," expressing a wish for Ittai's well-being and suggesting that David is acting out of compassion.

**Verse 21:** And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

Ittai's response to David demonstrates unwavering loyalty and devotion. He swears an oath, appealing to the Lord and the king's life to emphasize the sincerity of his words. He declares his intention to stay with David regardless of the circumstances, "in what place my lord the king shall be." This includes even in death, showing that he is prepared to face any risk or danger. Ittai refers to himself as "thy servant," confirming his commitment to David's service. Ittai's statement represents the ultimate commitment to loyalty and a willingness to share in the king's fate.

**Verse 22:** And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him.

David, impressed by Ittai's commitment, relents and grants Ittai permission to continue with him. The simple command, "Go and pass over," signifies David's acceptance of Ittai's loyalty. The verse repeats the mention of "Ittai the Gittite," and then reiterates that all "his

men," those under Ittai's command, and "all the little ones that were with him," who are likely the families or other dependents of Ittai's warriors, passed over with him. This collective passage reinforces the sense of a unified group of loyal followers, facing an uncertain future together.

## **2 Samuel 15:23**

"And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness."

This verse paints a vivid picture of the widespread grief and exodus from Jerusalem. The phrase "all the country wept with a loud voice" emphasizes the collective sorrow and fear of the populace as they flee the city. This weeping signifies not only sadness at the prospect of leaving their homes and the holy city, but also concern for the safety of their king, David. The detail of the people passing over the brook Kidron highlights the organized nature of the departure, with the king at the head. The brook Kidron, located just east of Jerusalem, served as a physical boundary between the city and the wilderness, symbolizing the beginning of a long and difficult journey for David and his loyal followers as they headed toward an uncertain future.

## **2 Samuel 15:24**

"And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing over out of the city."

This verse introduces the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, the holiest object for the Israelites, during this flight. The priests Zadok and Abiathar, along with all the Levites, carried the ark, symbolizing the presence of God amidst the turmoil. This detail underscores the importance of faith and the desire to maintain a connection to the divine even in times of crisis. They set down the Ark, suggesting a moment of pause and potential prayer before the remaining people had left the city, indicating the importance of ensuring the last people left and also for the Ark to be taken into safety.

## **2 Samuel 15:25**

"And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation:"

David, demonstrating his humility and reliance on God, commands that the Ark be returned to Jerusalem. His words reflect his unwavering faith, and he acknowledges that his return to power depends on God's favor. He expresses a hopeful expectation of returning to Jerusalem and seeing both the Ark and the Tabernacle, the physical places where God's presence dwelt, showing his yearning for restoration. This demonstrates a willingness to trust God's will, even in the face of adversity.

## **2 Samuel 15:26**

"But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."

David's complete submission to God's will is powerfully expressed in this verse. He acknowledges that God is sovereign and has the ultimate right to decide his fate, and he is willing to accept whatever God deems best. His statement "behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" reveals a profound trust and acceptance, demonstrating a commitment to God's will even if it means suffering or death. This is a profound demonstration of his faith.

### **2 Samuel 15:27**

"The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar."

David, in a strategic move, asks Zadok a seemingly innocuous question, but he is subtly revealing a deeper plan. David implicitly trusts Zadok's judgment. Then David commands that Zadok and his son Ahimaaz and Abiathar and his son Jonathan return to Jerusalem, implying a mission to gather intelligence and monitor the situation, and, more importantly, to remain in contact with the king. The phrase "in peace" suggests a desire for their safety while also implying that their actions must remain discreet, implying that they are agents.

### **2 Samuel 15:28**

"See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me."

David clearly delineates his plan, and he will remain in the wilderness until he receives word from Zadok and Abiathar. The phrase "the plain of the wilderness" indicates his choice of a place to take temporary refuge. This verse highlights the necessity of communication during this time, emphasizing that the future rests on David's reliance on the information from his trusted agents, providing a crucial link to events unfolding in Jerusalem and a sense of control.

### **2 Samuel 15:29**

"Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there."

Following David's command, Zadok and Abiathar return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. This act symbolizes the king's faith and demonstrates his conviction that God is still present, even amidst his current adversity. This is an act of loyalty, and a symbol of hope. The fact that "they tarried there" suggests they remained in Jerusalem, fulfilling their mission to gather information and send word back to the king.

### **2 Samuel 15:30**

"And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went, and had his head covered, and went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went."

This verse paints a poignant picture of David's grief and humiliation as he flees Jerusalem. The ascent of Mount Olivet is mentioned, a place associated with prayer and contemplation. David weeps openly, signifying his emotional distress at the situation. The covering of his head and going barefoot are signs of mourning and humility. The actions of the people mirroring the king's reflect their empathy and their shared sense of loss, as they too cover their heads and weep, a united display of sadness and the shared journey toward an uncertain future.

### **2 Samuel 15:31**

"And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

This verse introduces Ahithophel, a formerly trusted advisor of David who has now joined Absalom in the rebellion. This news delivers a blow to David, signifying a betrayal by someone he trusted. David's immediate reaction is a prayer, showing his continued dependence on God. He prays that God will frustrate Ahithophel's counsel, demonstrating his understanding of the importance of spiritual warfare and reliance on God.

### **2 Samuel 15:32**

"And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the hill, that he worshipped God: and, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:"

Upon reaching the summit of the hill, David demonstrates his devotion by worshipping God. The arrival of Hushai, another one of David's companions, is marked by signs of great distress. His torn coat and the earth upon his head are signs of mourning and sorrow. This signifies his grief at the situation and his loyalty to David.

### **2 Samuel 15:33**

"Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me:"

David, knowing Hushai's heart, states that if Hushai goes with him then he will become a burden. David is speaking practically here, as he is likely planning to move quickly and remain hidden. He is showing his concern for Hushai's safety. This sets the stage for a more delicate plan to utilize Hushai's abilities for the greater good.

### **2 Samuel 15:34**

"But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; then will I, as I have been thy servant in time past, so will I be now thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel."

David, in a strategic move, tasks Hushai with a mission within Jerusalem. Hushai is to go into the city and present himself as a supporter of Absalom. He is to "defeat the counsel of Ahithophel" which is a direct call to action to undermine Ahithophel's plans. This requires a great deal of courage from Hushai as he will be putting himself at risk, but also requires a great amount of trust. David outlines his plan

for Hushai to gather information and manipulate the situation, placing trust in Hushai's ability to act cleverly.

## **2 Samuel 15:35**

"And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar."

David provides further detail and structure to his plan. He reminds Hushai that Zadok and Abiathar, who were instructed to remain in Jerusalem, are available to serve as a communication channel. Hushai is instructed to pass any intelligence he gathers to the priests who will in turn send it to David. This established communication network highlights David's ability to think strategically and his attention to detail, ensuring he maintains a connection to the city.

## **2 Samuel 15:36**

"Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear."

David identifies Ahimaaz and Jonathan as the messengers who will carry the information back to him. The verse highlights the practical details of communication. David's strategy demonstrates the value he places on intelligence and effective communication, as well as the importance of having loyal people acting on his behalf. He is putting trust in these young men.

## **2 Samuel 15:37**

"So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem."

This final verse marks the beginning of David's covert operation. Hushai, accepting his assignment, enters Jerusalem while Absalom simultaneously arrives. This sets the stage for the unfolding drama, with Hushai's presence at the core of the conflict and a confrontation with Absalom. The mention of David's friend demonstrates the importance of loyalty in challenging situations, while the arrival of Absalom establishes the physical separation and the beginning of the struggle for power.

## **CHAPTER 16:**

### **2 Samuel 16:1**

**“And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him with a couple of asses saddled, and two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.”**

**In this verse, we see King David in a moment of distress as he flees from Absalom. At this critical juncture, Ziba, who is identified as the servant of Mephibosheth (the son of Jonathan), approaches David with provisions. The supplies he brings—two saddled donkeys for transportation and food items including loaves of bread and fruits—are significant because they symbolize support during a time of crisis. This act can be interpreted as Ziba’s attempt to gain favor with David while also showcasing his resourcefulness in providing for the king’s needs.**



## **2 Samuel 16:2**

“And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king’s household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.”

David questions Ziba about his intentions behind bringing these supplies. Ziba responds by explaining that the donkeys are meant for transportation for David’s household while the food is intended to sustain his men during their journey. This exchange highlights both David’s leadership qualities—his concern for his men—and Ziba’s cunning nature as he positions himself as a loyal servant providing essential aid. However, it also foreshadows Ziba’s ulterior motives that will later unfold.

## **2 Samuel 16:3**

“And the king said, And where is thy master’s son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.”

Here we see David inquiring about Mephibosheth’s whereabouts. Ziba’s response is deceptive; he claims that Mephibosheth has remained in Jerusalem with hopes that he will regain his family’s throne amidst David’s turmoil. This statement not only misrepresents Mephibosheth but also serves to manipulate David’s perception during a vulnerable time. It reveals how easily trust can be exploited in political strife.

## **2 Samuel 16:4**

“Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.”

In this verse, David reacts to Ziba’s false information by transferring all possessions belonging to Mephibosheth over to him. This decision reflects David’s immediate response based on incomplete information and showcases how quickly judgments can be made without thorough investigation. Ziba’s humble plea further ingratiates him with David while simultaneously betraying his master.

## **2 Samuel 16:5**

“And when King David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei the son of Gera: he came forth and cursed still as he came.”

As David continues on his journey toward Bahurim, he encounters Shimei—a member from Saul’s lineage—who openly curses him. Shimei’s actions represent not only personal animosity towards David but also reflect broader tensions between Saul’s supporters and those loyal to David. His cursing serves as an expression of contempt towards a fallen leader and illustrates how political allegiances can shift dramatically during times of upheaval.

## **2 Samuel 16:6**

“And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of King David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left.”

Shimei escalates his attack by throwing stones at both David and his followers. This physical aggression underscores Shimei’s disdain for David’s kingship while also highlighting how vulnerable leaders can become targets when they are perceived as weak or defeated. The presence of mighty men around David emphasizes that even those who are typically strong allies may feel conflicted or powerless against public dissent.

## 2 Samuel 16:7

“And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out! come out! thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial.”

Shimei accuses David directly by labeling him a “bloody man”—a reference likely aimed at condemning him for bloodshed associated with Saul’s downfall—and calls him “man of Belial,” implying wickedness or worthlessness. Such accusations reveal deep-seated resentments within factions opposing David’s rule. They serve not only as personal attacks but also resonate with historical grievances regarding Saul’s legacy.

## 2 Samuel 16:8

“The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and behold thou art taken in thy mischief because thou art a bloody man.”

Shimei claims divine retribution against David for alleged sins against Saul’s family. He believes that God has orchestrated Absalom’s rebellion as punishment for what he perceives as bloodguilt on David’s part. This accusation reflects common beliefs about divine justice intertwined with political events during biblical times; however, it misrepresents God’s true relationship with both Saul’s lineage and David himself.

## 2 Samuel 16:9

**“Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.”**

**In this verse, Abishai, a loyal commander in David’s army and nephew to David, expresses his indignation towards Shimei, who has been cursing David as he flees from Jerusalem. Abishai refers to Shimei as a “dead dog,” a term that signifies contempt and worthlessness in ancient Near Eastern culture. His suggestion to behead Shimei reflects the intense emotions surrounding David’s current predicament; he sees Shimei’s actions as not only disrespectful but also as an affront to the king’s dignity during a time of crisis. This moment illustrates the loyalty of Abishai and his readiness to defend David against perceived insults, emphasizing the tension between loyalty and mercy in leadership.**

## 2 Samuel 16:10

“And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?”

David’s response reveals his understanding of divine sovereignty in his life’s circumstances. He rebukes Abishai by questioning what he has to do with such violent intentions against Shimei. By stating that it is God who has allowed Shimei to curse him, David acknowledges that there may be a purpose behind this humiliation. He seems resigned to accept his fate and believes that no one can question God’s will or intervene against it without consequence. This perspective showcases David’s humility and faith amidst adversity; rather than retaliating against those who insult him, he chooses to reflect on God’s plan for him.

## 2 Samuel 16:11

“And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for

the LORD hath bidden him.”

Here, David expands on his earlier thoughts by contrasting Shimei’s actions with those of his own son Absalom who seeks his life. By highlighting that even someone from within his own family is turning against him, he underscores the depth of betrayal he feels. The mention of “this Benjamite” refers specifically to Shimei’s lineage from Saul’s tribe (the tribe of Benjamin), further emphasizing historical tensions between Saul’s house and David’s reign. David’s decision to allow Shimei to continue cursing reflects a deep sense of acceptance regarding his suffering; he interprets these events as part of God’s will rather than mere human malice.

### **2 Samuel 16:12**

“It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.”

In this verse, David expresses hope that God will see his suffering and respond positively despite being cursed by Shimei. This statement reveals David’s belief in divine justice—that God might reward him for enduring unjust treatment rather than retaliating against it. It reflects a profound level of faith where he trusts that God is aware of his trials and will ultimately bring about good from them. This perspective serves as an example for others facing adversity; instead of seeking vengeance or harboring resentment towards those who wrong us, one can find solace in trusting God’s greater plan.

### **2 Samuel 16:13**

“And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hillside over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.”

This verse depicts Shimei actively following King David along a hillside while continuing to hurl insults at him. The act of throwing stones symbolizes aggression while casting dust could signify disdain or contempt—both acts intended to humiliate David further during an already vulnerable moment in his life. The imagery here emphasizes not only Shimei’s hostility but also highlights how far some individuals are willing to go when they perceive an opportunity for revenge or retribution against someone they resent. It paints a vivid picture of conflict during a tumultuous time for King David.

### **2 Samuel 16:14**

“And the king, and all the people that were with him came weary; and he refreshed himself there.”

After enduring both physical exhaustion from fleeing Jerusalem and emotional turmoil due to Shimei’s curses, King David arrives at a place where he can rest with his followers. The weariness mentioned here indicates not just physical fatigue but also mental strain from dealing with betrayal both from within his family (Absalom) and outside (Shimei). The act of refreshing himself suggests that despite these challenges—both external threats and internal strife—there remains an opportunity for rejuvenation through rest or perhaps even spiritual reflection among loyal followers who stand by their king during difficult times.

### **2 Samuel 16:15**

“And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.”

This verse marks a significant turning point in the narrative where Absalom enters Jerusalem triumphantly after having gained support among many Israelites during King David’s flight. The mention of Ahithophel—a highly regarded counselor—indicates strategic planning on Absalom’s part as he consolidates power within Jerusalem itself. This shift highlights not only political maneuvering

but also foreshadows impending conflict between father (David) and son (Absalom). It sets up an atmosphere filled with tension as loyalties are tested amid civil strife within Israel.

### **2 Samuel 16:16**

“And it came to pass when Hushai the Archite, David’s friend was come unto Absalom that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king! God save the king!”

Hushai arrives at Absalom’s court under seemingly loyal pretenses by greeting him with “God save the king!” However, readers familiar with Hushai know that he is actually loyal to King David rather than supporting Absalom’s rebellion directly. His greeting serves dual purposes—it ingratiates himself into Absalom’s favor while simultaneously allowing Hushai an opportunity to gather intelligence about Absalom’s plans which could later be relayed back to King David. This moment illustrates themes of loyalty versus betrayal within political contexts while showcasing Hushai’s cleverness in navigating dangerous waters.

### **2 Samuel 16:17**

“And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?”

Absalom questions Hushai about why he did not accompany King David during his flight from Jerusalem—a move perceived by many as disloyalty if one were truly aligned with their friend (David). This inquiry reveals how precarious alliances are during times of upheaval; trust is fragile when loyalties are tested amidst conflict. It also demonstrates how leaders like Absalom are keenly aware of appearances—seeking affirmation from those around them regarding their decisions while attempting to solidify their own power base through perceived loyalty.

### **2 Samuel 16:18**

“And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD and this people choose; so will I be with him.”

Hushai cleverly deflects suspicion by asserting allegiance not merely based on personal friendship but rather on divine choice—the implication being that God has chosen whoever holds authority at present (in this case—Absalom). His response serves multiple purposes; it reassures Absalom while subtly suggesting legitimacy behind claims made against King David without outright denouncing either side explicitly yet maintaining loyalty toward King David covertly through strategic language choices.

### **2 Samuel 16:19**

“And again whom should I serve? should I not serve in presence of his son? As I have served in thy father’s presence so will I be in thy presence.”

Hushai continues building rapport with Absalom by framing service toward leadership as inherently tied together regardless if it’s father or son leading Israel at any given moment—implying continuity despite familial conflict inherent within their situation now unfolding before them all throughout Israel itself politically speaking too! By expressing willingness towards serving both parties equally depending upon circumstances presented before them shows adaptability necessary when navigating complex relationships formed under duress such as civil war situations often entail historically speaking too!

## **2 Samuel 16:20**

“Then said Absalom to Ahithophel give counsel among you what we shall do.”

With authority firmly established amongst supporters gathered around himself now including advisors like Ahithophel present alongside others gathered nearby too! Here we see clear evidence indicating strategic planning underway concerning next steps taken moving forward post-coup attempt initiated earlier resulting directly out fleeing actions undertaken previously executed earlier today still fresh upon everyone involved minds alike! Decisions made here would shape future outcomes significantly impacting lives across entire nation henceforth!

**2 Samuel 16:21** “And Ahithophel said unto Absalom Go in unto thy father’s concubines which he hath left behind in the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred by thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong.”

Ahithophel advises extreme measures designed specifically aimed at solidifying power over kingdom seized through forceful means employed thus far already witnessed firsthand throughout unfolding events transpiring rapidly around them presently occurring right now! By suggesting public display involving taking possession over royal harem left behind signifies total breakage between father-son relationship irrevocably severed henceforth ensuring no reconciliation possible moving forward ever again thereafter either!

**2 Samuel 16:22** “So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of house; And Absalom went in unto his father’s concubines in sight of all Israel.”

The culmination occurs here where actions taken directly result from prior advice given earlier leading directly into public spectacle witnessed openly across entire cityscape surrounding them presently situated nearby! Such brazen displays intended primarily meant instill fear amongst potential opposition forces remaining loyal still towards former regime led previously under rule established long ago prior reigns held firmly intact until recent upheavals occurred suddenly disrupting everything once thought stable forevermore!

## **2 Samuel 16:23**

**“And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.”**

The verse highlights the immense respect and authority that Ahithophel’s counsel commanded during his time. His advice was regarded with such reverence that it was likened to consulting an oracle of God, indicating that people believed his insights were divinely inspired or exceptionally wise. This perception is crucial because it underscores the weight of his recommendations in political and personal matters, particularly during the tumultuous period of Absalom’s rebellion against King David. The fact that both David and Absalom esteemed his counsel suggests that Ahithophel possessed a unique ability to navigate the complexities of royal politics, making him a pivotal figure in this narrative. His reputation for wisdom would have made his advice particularly influential, shaping decisions that could alter the course of events significantly.

## **CHAPTER 17:**

### **2 Samuel 17:1**

**“Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night.”**

**Ahithophel, a trusted advisor to Absalom, proposes a swift and decisive plan to eliminate David. His suggestion to gather twelve thousand men indicates a strategic approach that emphasizes speed and surprise. By choosing to attack during the night, he aims to catch David off guard while he is likely weary and vulnerable. This verse sets the stage for the unfolding conflict between Absalom and David, highlighting the urgency of Ahithophel’s counsel.**

### **2 Samuel 17:2**

“And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak, and make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only.”

Here, Ahithophel elaborates on his strategy by emphasizing David’s current state of fatigue. He believes that by instilling fear in David, he can cause panic among his supporters, leading them to abandon their leader. The focus on striking only the king suggests a calculated move aimed at minimizing collateral damage while maximizing psychological impact. This reflects Ahithophel’s understanding of warfare dynamics—targeting leadership can lead to disarray within opposing forces.

### **2 Samuel 17:3**

“And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace.”

In this verse, Ahithophel reassures Absalom that by eliminating David, he can restore peace among the people of Israel. His statement implies that David’s presence is a source of division and unrest. By framing his plan as one that would unify Israel under Absalom’s rule, Ahithophel seeks to persuade Absalom of the necessity of immediate action against his father. This highlights political maneuvering where military action is justified as a means to achieve stability.

### **2 Samuel 17:4**

“And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.”

Absalom’s approval of Ahithophel’s advice indicates his eagerness for decisive action against David. The consensus among the elders further legitimizes this course of action, suggesting that there is widespread support for aggressive measures against David. This verse underscores how quickly public opinion can shift in favor of war when leaders present compelling arguments framed around security and unity.

### **2 Samuel 17:5**

“Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he says.”

Absalom’s decision to consult Hushai demonstrates an openness to alternative perspectives despite being initially swayed by Ahithophel’s counsel. This moment signifies a critical turning point where differing strategies may emerge regarding how best to deal with David. It reflects Absalom’s desire for comprehensive advice before making such a monumental decision about attacking his father.

### **2 Samuel 17:6**

“And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken

after this manner: shall we do after his saying? If not; speak thou.”

Absalom presents Hushai with Ahithophel’s plan directly asking for his opinion on whether they should proceed with it or consider alternatives. This interaction highlights both Absalom’s reliance on counsel from trusted advisors and his uncertainty about how best to proceed in this familial conflict. It sets up Hushai as a key player who could influence the outcome based on his response.

### **2 Samuel 17:7**

“And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good at this time.”

Hushai immediately counters Ahithophel’s advice by asserting its unsuitability for their current situation. His quick dismissal indicates both confidence in his own judgment and an understanding of military strategy that contrasts with Ahithophel’s approach. This statement positions Hushai as an advocate for caution rather than haste—a theme that will develop throughout this chapter.

### **2 Samuel 17:8**

“For thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men; and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.”

Hushai paints a vivid picture of David’s capabilities by referencing past experiences with him as a formidable warrior. By likening David’s men to an enraged bear defending its cubs, he emphasizes their potential ferocity when threatened. This rhetorical strategy serves not only to warn Absalom but also aims to instill doubt about launching an immediate attack against such seasoned fighters.

### **2 Samuel 17:9**

“Behold, he is hid now in some pit or in some other place: and it will be when some of them be overthrown at the first that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.”

Hushai suggests that David has likely taken refuge somewhere safe rather than being exposed or vulnerable as suggested by Ahithophel. He warns that if they attack prematurely without knowing David’s exact location or condition, it could lead to disastrous consequences—namely causing panic among their ranks if initial assaults fail.

### **2 Samuel 17:10**

“And he also that is valiant whose heart is as the heart of a lion shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man; and they which be with him are valiant men.”

This verse reinforces Hushai’s argument by acknowledging not just David’s strength but also elevating those who fight alongside him as equally brave warriors. By appealing to emotions regarding courage—comparing valiant soldiers’ hearts melting under pressure—he seeks to sway Absalom away from impulsive decisions driven by anger or revenge.

### **2 Samuel 17:11**

“Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee from Dan even to Beersheba as the sand which is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person.”

Hushai proposes gathering all available forces across Israel before engaging in battle—a stark contrast from Ahithophel’s quick strike approach. By suggesting personal involvement from Absalom himself

during this campaign against David enhances both morale among troops while simultaneously allowing him direct control over military operations.

### **2 Samuel 17:12**

“So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found; and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground; and of him and all the men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one.”

Hushai uses poetic imagery here comparing their potential ambush strategy akin to dew falling softly yet effectively covering everything beneath it—implying stealthy precision rather than brute force alone would ensure victory over David’s forces without leaving survivors behind.

### **2 Samuel 17:13**

“Moreover if he be gotten into a city then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city; we will draw it into the river until there be not one stone found there.”

In this final piece of advice from Hushai lies an extreme measure indicating total annihilation should they corner David within fortified walls—a tactic reminiscent historically used during sieges meant solely for destruction rather than negotiation or mercy towards opponents once captured alive.

### **2 Samuel 17:14**

**“And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.”**

**In this verse, we see a pivotal moment in Absalom’s rebellion against his father David. The decision made by Absalom and his advisors to favor Hushai’s counsel over Ahithophel’s indicates a significant shift in their strategy. Hushai’s advice was aimed at delaying an immediate attack on David, which would allow David more time to regroup and strengthen his position. The verse also highlights a theological perspective, emphasizing that it was God who orchestrated this decision to thwart Ahithophel’s wise counsel. This divine intervention suggests that despite human plans and strategies, God’s will ultimately prevails.**

### **2 Samuel 17:15**

“Then Hushai said unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled.”

Hushai communicates with Zadok and Abiathar, two priests loyal to David, revealing both Ahithophel’s advice and his own counter-counsel. This exchange is crucial as it serves as a means for Hushai to relay vital information back to David about Absalom’s plans. By outlining both pieces of counsel, Hushai ensures that the priests understand the gravity of the situation and can act accordingly. This collaboration between Hushai and the priests illustrates a network of support for David amidst his adversities.

### **2 Samuel 17:16**

“Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.”

Hushai urges Zadok and Abiathar to act swiftly in delivering a warning to David. He advises against staying in their current location due to imminent danger from Absalom’s forces. The urgency in



Hushai's message reflects his understanding of military strategy; he recognizes that if David remains stationary, he risks being captured or killed. This verse emphasizes not only Hushai's loyalty but also his tactical acumen in ensuring David's safety.

### **2 Samuel 17:17**

“Now Jonathan and Ahimelech were with them at En-rogel; and they went and told king David: nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom.”

This verse introduces Jonathan and Ahimelech as key figures who assist in conveying information to King David while hiding at En-rogel. However, their efforts are jeopardized when a young boy witnesses their actions and informs Absalom. This moment underscores the precariousness of communication during wartime; even minor oversights can lead to significant consequences. It also highlights themes of loyalty versus betrayal within familial conflicts.

### **2 Samuel 17:18**

“But a wench took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.”

In an act of bravery or cleverness, a woman conceals Jonathan and Ahimelech by covering up their hiding place at the well with ground corn. This action prevents Absalom's forces from discovering their whereabouts or learning about their communication with King David. The woman's quick thinking exemplifies how ordinary individuals can play critical roles during tumultuous times by protecting those in danger.

### **2 Samuel 17:19**

“And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where is Ahimelech? And she said unto them, They are gone on; he went away over the brook of water. And when they had sought but could not find him,”

The servants sent by Absalom question the woman about Ahimelech's whereabouts after arriving at her home. Her response misleads them into believing that he has escaped across a nearby brook. This deception showcases her loyalty towards King David while simultaneously illustrating how misinformation can be used strategically during conflict situations.

### **2 Samuel 17:20**

“And when they were gone, then they came up out of the well, and went and told king David,”

Once it is safe after Absalom's servants leave, Jonathan and Ahimelech emerge from hiding to deliver crucial news back to King David regarding Absalom's plans for attack. Their emergence signifies not only survival but also successful communication between loyalists working against overwhelming odds. It reinforces themes of resilience among those committed to supporting King David despite facing dire circumstances.

### **2 Samuel 17:21**

“And it was told David saying, Arise, and pass quickly over the water; for thus hath Ahithophel counseled against you.”

David receives urgent news about impending danger from Absalom based on Hushai's warning relayed through Jonathan and Ahimelech. The instruction for him to cross over quickly emphasizes immediate

action necessary for survival against potential ambushes by enemy forces led by his son. This moment encapsulates tension as it reveals both urgency in military response as well as familial strife.

### **2 Samuel 17:22**

“Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan by morning light; there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.”

David acts decisively upon receiving intelligence about Absalom’s intentions by leading his followers across Jordan at dawn without leaving anyone behind. This coordinated movement demonstrates effective leadership under pressure while highlighting unity among those loyal to him amidst chaos surrounding them during civil unrest.

### **2 Samuel 17:23**

“And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and got him home to his house to his city; and put his household in order and hanged himself.”

Ahithophel reacts dramatically upon realizing that his strategic advice has been disregarded by Absalom—indicating deep despair or loss of purpose following failure within political machinations surrounding power struggles between father (David) & son (Absalom). His subsequent suicide reflects profound disillusionment stemming from perceived betrayal alongside acknowledgment regarding consequences resulting from failed ambitions.

### **2 Samuel 17:24**

“Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan; he and all the men of Israel with him.”

David arrives safely at Mahanaim after crossing Jordan while simultaneously noting that Absalom has mobilized forces across toward pursuing him—signifying escalation within conflict dynamics between these two opposing factions vying for control over Israelite territory amid personal vendettas rooted deeply within family ties themselves.

**2 Samuel 17:25** “And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man’s son whose name was Ithra an Israelite that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash sister to Zeruiah Joab’s mother.”

Absalom appoints Amasa as commander-in-chief instead of Joab—a notable shift reflecting both political maneuvering alongside personal relationships influencing decisions made throughout warfare strategies employed during this turbulent period marked heavily by shifting loyalties among leaders involved therein including familial connections complicating matters further still.

**2 Samuel 17:26** “So Israel encamped before the city which is called Mahanaim.”

The gathering together occurs around Mahanaim where troops assemble under command led primarily through newly appointed Amasa—highlighting logistical considerations necessary during wartime scenarios involving troop movements along various fronts necessitating coordination amongst diverse factions involved therein seeking victory through strategic positioning relative proximity towards enemies encountered along paths traversed throughout campaigns undertaken hereafter.”

**2 Samuel 17:27** “And it came to pass when David was come to Mahanaim that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of Ammonites brought beds & basins & earthen vessels & wheat & barley & flour & parched corn & beans & lentils & parched pulse,”

Upon reaching Mahanaim refuge provided emerges via Shobi who brings essential supplies including foodstuffs necessary sustaining life amidst ongoing conflict—demonstrating solidarity amongst allies supporting King David despite adversity faced throughout struggles endured previously indicating importance maintaining morale alongside physical needs met adequately ensuring survival long-term prospects remain viable moving forward henceforth.”

## **2 Samuel 17:28**

“And brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse.”

In this verse, we see a significant logistical effort made to provide for David and his men during their time of need. The mention of “beds” indicates that the supplies were not just basic necessities but also aimed at ensuring comfort for the weary travelers. These beds likely consisted of materials such as skins or mats that could be easily transported. The inclusion of “basins” suggests that they had the means to prepare food properly; these basins would have been essential for both cooking and serving meals. The term “earthen vessels” refers to clay pots or containers that were commonly used in ancient times for storing liquids or grains. This variety of items reflects a well-thought-out provision plan aimed at sustaining David’s group during their flight from Jerusalem.

The grains listed—“wheat,” “barley,” “flour,” “parched corn,” “beans,” “lentiles,” and “parched pulse”—indicate a diverse diet that was crucial for maintaining strength during their arduous journey. Wheat and barley were staple foods in ancient Israel, providing essential carbohydrates. Flour would have been used to make bread or other baked goods, while parched corn signifies a method of preparation that made it easier to carry and consume on the go. Beans and lentils are rich in protein, which would have been vital for the men’s energy levels as they faced potential conflict. The reference to these various food items illustrates not only the physical sustenance provided but also the care taken by those who supplied them—highlighting themes of loyalty and support amidst adversity.

**2 Samuel 17:29** “And honey & butter & sheep & cheese of kine for David & for people that were with him eat; for they said The people is hungry & weary & thirsty in wilderness.”

Shobi provides an array nourishing provisions intended alleviate suffering experienced amongst followers accompanying King during arduous journey undertaken recently emphasizing compassion shown towards those enduring hardships encountered along way reinforcing bonds forged through shared experiences uniting individuals together striving achieve common goals ultimately culminating success achieved collectively rather than individually alone.”

## **CHAPTER 18:**

### **2 Samuel 18:1**

**“And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.”**

**In this verse, King David demonstrates his leadership skills by organizing his army into a structured hierarchy. He takes a census of the people who are loyal to him,**

**indicating his strategic approach to warfare. By appointing captains over thousands and hundreds, David ensures that there is clear command and control within his forces. This organization is crucial for effective military operations, allowing for better coordination during battle.**

### **2 Samuel 18:2**

“And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite.”

David divides his army into three distinct groups, each led by one of his trusted commanders: Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. This tactical division allows for flexibility in combat maneuvers and enables David to respond effectively to various battlefield scenarios. The inclusion of Ittai, a foreigner from Gath who had pledged loyalty to David, highlights David’s ability to unite diverse groups under his command.

### **2 Samuel 18:3**

“But the people answered, ‘Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten thousand of us; therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city.’”

The soldiers express their deep concern for David’s safety over their own lives. They argue that his presence on the battlefield would be more valuable than any number of troops due to his leadership role and symbolic importance. Their insistence reflects their loyalty and recognition that David’s survival is critical for their morale and future success in battle. They believe he can provide support from within the city rather than risking himself in direct combat.

### **2 Samuel 18:4**

“And the king said unto them, ‘What seemeth you best I will do.’ And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.”

David shows humility as he acquiesces to the wishes of his men. His willingness to listen demonstrates good leadership qualities; he values their opinions above his own desires to fight alongside them. By standing at the gate while his troops march out in organized formations, he reinforces unity among his forces and symbolizes hope as they prepare for battle.

### **2 Samuel 18:5**

“And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, ‘Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.’ And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.”

David’s command regarding Absalom reveals both his paternal instincts and political acumen. He instructs his commanders to treat Absalom gently despite being in opposition against him. This public declaration serves multiple purposes: it emphasizes David’s desire for mercy towards his son while also placing pressure on Joab, Abishai, and Ittai to adhere to this directive in front of their troops.

### **2 Samuel 18:6**

“So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim.”

The narrative shifts focus as David’s forces engage in battle against those loyal to Absalom. The choice of location—the woods of Ephraim—suggests a strategic advantage for David’s experienced troops who may be more adept at navigating such terrain compared to their less seasoned opponents. The

mention of “the wood” also foreshadows later events where nature plays a significant role in determining outcomes.

### **2 Samuel 18:7**

“And the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.”

This verse highlights a significant victory for David’s forces as they inflict heavy casualties on Absalom’s army. The mention of twenty thousand slain indicates not only a decisive defeat but also underscores how effectively David’s leadership has rallied loyal supporters against those who have turned against him. Such losses would have profound implications on morale among both factions involved.

### **2 Samuel 18:8**

“For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country; and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.”

The imagery here suggests chaos on the battlefield as combatants are dispersed across varied terrain. The phrase “the wood devoured” implies that many soldiers perished due not only to combat but also due to environmental hazards inherent in fighting within dense woods—such as falling or getting lost—which adds an element suggesting divine intervention or fate at play during this conflict.

### **2 Samuel 18:9**

“And Absalom met the servants of David; and Absalom rode upon a mule; and the mule went under thick boughs of a great oak; and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between heaven and earth; and the mule that was under him went away.”

In this dramatic moment during battle, Absalom encounters David’s forces while riding a mule—a symbol often associated with peace rather than war. His unfortunate entanglement with an oak tree signifies both physical vulnerability amidst conflict as well as poetic justice given his rebellion against King David. Being caught between heaven (the sky) and earth (the ground) symbolizes both literal danger as well as moral ambiguity regarding loyalty versus rebellion.

### **2 Samuel 18:10**

“And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, saying, ‘Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.’”

This verse introduces an eyewitness account which serves as pivotal information regarding Absalom’s fate during battle. The act itself—being “hanged”—is metaphorical here since it refers to being caught rather than executed; however it conveys urgency about reporting this critical moment back to Joab who must decide how best to handle this situation involving King David’s son.

### **2 Samuel 18:11**

“And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle.”

In this verse, Joab expresses his frustration towards the messenger who reported to him about Absalom’s fate. Joab’s question implies that he views the opportunity to kill Absalom as a missed chance for glory and reward. He offers ten shekels of silver and a girdle as a reward for killing Absalom, indicating that he values the act highly. This reflects Joab’s aggressive nature and his loyalty

to King David, as he believes that eliminating Absalom would be beneficial for David's reign. The mention of monetary reward also highlights the transactional nature of military loyalty during this tumultuous time.

### **2 Samuel 18:12**

“And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom.”

The messenger responds to Joab by emphasizing his moral stance against harming Absalom despite the potential reward. He cites King David's explicit command to spare Absalom's life as a significant reason for his refusal. This verse illustrates the conflict between personal ambition (represented by Joab) and loyalty to royal commands (represented by the messenger). It underscores the complexity of loyalty during civil strife; while Joab seeks to eliminate a threat to David's throne, others remain committed to honoring David's wishes even at great personal risk.

### **2 Samuel 18:13**

“Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.”

Here, the messenger elaborates on his reasoning by stating that killing Absalom would be tantamount to betraying his own integrity. He acknowledges that any act against David's son would not go unnoticed by King David and suggests that Joab himself would turn against him if he acted contrary to David's orders. This highlights an understanding of accountability within their ranks; actions taken in defiance of royal commands could lead to severe repercussions. The messenger prioritizes his moral integrity over financial gain or military favor.

### **2 Samuel 18:14**

“Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.”

Joab decides not to engage further in debate with the messenger about sparing Absalom's life. Instead, he takes matters into his own hands by directly killing Absalom with three darts. This act signifies both a decisive end to a threat perceived by Joab and an act of rebellion against King David's wishes. The brutality of this action emphasizes Joab's ruthless character; it also serves as a pivotal moment in which personal vendetta overrides royal commandment. The imagery of thrusting darts through Absalom while he is still alive adds a layer of tragedy to an already complex familial conflict.

### **2 Samuel 18:15**

“And ten young men that bare Joab's armor compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.”

Following Joab's initial attack on Absalom, ten young men who carried Joab's armor join in finishing off Absalom. This collective action indicates how quickly violence can escalate within factions vying for power during civil unrest. The fact that these young men participate in executing someone who is still alive speaks volumes about their loyalty to Joab rather than adherence to King David's orders regarding mercy towards his son. It also reflects on how mob mentality can take hold in chaotic situations where individual moral judgment may be overridden by group dynamics.

### **2 Samuel 18:16**

“And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.”

After killing Absalom, Joab blows a trumpet signaling victory or retreat from battle. His action demonstrates leadership but also indicates strategic thinking; having secured their objective—Absalom’s death—Joab calls off further pursuit of Israelite forces. By holding back his troops from continuing their aggression against Israelite soldiers after achieving their goal shows tactical restraint but also hints at potential political maneuvering within David’s kingdom post-battle.

### **2 Samuel 18:17**

“And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit that is in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every man to his tent.”

This verse describes how Absalom’s body is treated after his death; it is thrown into a pit with stones piled upon it—a burial method often associated with dishonor or contempt in ancient cultures. This treatment contrasts sharply with what might have been expected for someone of royal blood like Absalom if he had been captured alive according to King David’s wishes. The piling up of stones signifies finality but also serves as an ominous reminder of how quickly fortunes can change during civil strife; once favored son turned enemy now receives no honor even in death.

### **2 Samuel 18:18**

“Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king’s dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom’s place.”

This verse provides insight into Absalom’s character through an account of how he sought immortality through memorialization via building a pillar named after himself due to having no sons left behind as heirs. It reflects themes common among leaders desiring legacy amidst political turmoil; however tragic it may seem now given his demise at such an early age due largely due conflicts stemming from ambition gone awry—Absalom sought recognition even when faced with familial rejection.

### **2 Samuel 18:19**

“Then said Ahimelech the son of Abiathar unto Joab, Let me run, I pray thee, unto the king, and bring him tidings how that Jehovah hath avenged him of his enemies.”

Ahimelech expresses eagerness here wanting news delivered directly back home regarding victory over enemies—specifically highlighting divine intervention attributed toward God aiding them throughout battle efforts leading up until now since they were fighting under King David’s banner representing Godly authority itself! His desire showcases loyalty toward both God & King alike while simultaneously emphasizing importance placed upon communication following significant events occurring during warfare where information could sway public perception greatly depending on its delivery method utilized afterward!

### **2 Samuel 18:20**

“And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings because the king’s son is dead.”

Joab denies Ahimelech permission stating today isn’t appropriate time share news regarding victory since it comes alongside tragic loss involving royal family member—Absalom being killed represents

deep emotional conflict present within kingdom itself! His refusal emphasizes sensitivity surrounding situation acknowledging complexities involved when dealing with matters concerning family ties intertwined deeply alongside political allegiances ultimately leading toward larger implications affecting future governance moving forward beyond mere battlefield outcomes alone!

## **2 Samuel 18:20**

And Joab said, Thou shalt not be the man to carry tidings this day, but thou shalt carry tidings another day: but this day thou shalt carry no tidings, because the king's son is dead.

Joab, sensing the gravity of the news and the king's potential reaction, makes a strategic decision to shield David from the immediate impact of Absalom's death. He recognizes that delivering such devastating news could trigger a profound emotional response from the king. Joab decides to assign this task to someone less involved in the battle, anticipating that the bearer of the bad news will be blamed for the sorrow that will follow. The phrase "thou shalt not be the man" is a decisive and authoritative statement, revealing Joab's position of power and his intent to control the flow of information to the king. His reasoning emphasizes the sensitive nature of the news, especially the death of the king's son, and the necessity to avoid being the messenger of such devastating tidings on that specific day.

## **2 Samuel 18:21**

Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

Joab, having made his initial decision, immediately turns his attention to finding a suitable messenger. He selects Cush, likely an official or a courier, and commands him to "tell the king what thou hast seen". This indicates that Cush was present at the battle and witnessed the events firsthand. Cush's immediate response, "bowed himself unto Joab, and ran," suggests acceptance and obedience to Joab's command. The bow likely signified respect and acknowledgment of Joab's authority, and the swift running demonstrates a commitment to the task and a desire to fulfill the command quickly. Cush's actions highlight the efficiency and discipline within the military structure.

## **2 Samuel 18:22**

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?

Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, still desires to be the messenger, pleading with Joab to allow him to run after Cush. Despite Joab's initial rejection, Ahimaaz persists, possibly driven by a sense of duty, a desire to be the one to deliver the information, or a personal connection to the events. Joab questions Ahimaaz's motives, asking, "Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?" This implies that Joab knows that Ahimaaz was not present at the battle and therefore does not have firsthand knowledge of what happened. This suggests that Ahimaaz is driven by other factors, possibly honor or a desire for recognition.

## **2 Samuel 18:23**



But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.

Ahimaaz persists in his request, and finally gains Joab's permission with the phrase, "let me run." Joab relents, and Ahimaaz then races off, running by the way of the plain. The implication is that Ahimaaz, despite not having witnessed the battle, is fast enough to overtake Cush, who does have the information. The phrase "overran Cush" implies that Ahimaaz possesses greater speed, or possibly used a more direct route, as the context suggests the two might have taken slightly different paths, giving Ahimaaz an advantage despite Cush's head start.

## **2 Samuel 18:24**

And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

The scene shifts to David awaiting news in the city. The verse describes David sitting "between the two gates," a strategic location likely chosen to offer him both security and a view of the approaching messengers. The watchman, positioned on the roof over the gate unto the wall, provides the first visual confirmation of approaching figures. The watchman's vantage point allowed him to see the surrounding area, and he observes "a man running alone," alerting the king that someone is on their way with news. The detail of the watchman's actions heightens the tension, preparing the reader for the impending arrival of the messenger and the news he carries.

## **2 Samuel 18:25**

And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

The watchman promptly relays his observation to the king. David immediately infers that the messenger running alone carries tidings. This suggests that messengers typically travel in pairs or groups, indicating the significance and potential gravity of the news. David's immediate judgment reveals his understanding of the situation and likely his anticipation of bad news. As the verse states that "he came apace, and drew near," the action suggests that David is preparing himself emotionally.

## **2 Samuel 18:26**

And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman cried unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

A second messenger, the next in line, is observed running. The watchman alerts the porter, who presumably relays this information further. David immediately reiterates his understanding that the second man also carries tidings. The repetition of "running alone" reinforces the significance of the messengers' individual arrival, suggesting that the first might have been carrying bad news and the second could be sent to confirm or add more information. David's quick evaluation shows his acute understanding of the situation and his heightened anxiety as the tension escalates.

## **2 Samuel 18:27**

And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

The watchman identifies the first runner as Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, which allows David to make a quick judgment. The watchman's familiarity with Ahimaaz's running style suggests they have previously interacted. David, perhaps wanting to hear good news, interprets this as an indication of positive news. The declaration, "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings" shows David's desire for the news to be good and his eagerness to believe the best. The king's hope is contrasted sharply by the eventual news he receives.

### **2 Samuel 18:28**

And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

Ahimaaz approaches the king and proclaims, "All is well." This is a standard greeting used to signal the end of the battle and the victory of the king's army. He then performs an act of reverence, bowing before the king, and praising God, "Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king." Ahimaaz emphasizes that those who fought against David were defeated. This sets up the immediate scene for David's relief and elation, as he hears of the victory.

### **2 Samuel 18:29**

And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.

Despite hearing of the victory, David's immediate concern is for his son Absalom. David's question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" reveals his deeper priorities. Ahimaaz, unable to answer directly, responds by saying that "When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was." This ambiguous response suggests that Ahimaaz was not present when Absalom's fate was decided and, therefore, is unable to tell the king if his son is alive or dead. This is intentionally designed to delay the king's grief and provide a small degree of suspense.

### **2 Samuel 18:30**

And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

David, unsatisfied with Ahimaaz's answer, orders him to step aside and stand where he can observe the second messenger. This is a means to receive the news of Absalom from a less ambiguous source. His order to "Turn aside, and stand here" shows David's authoritative demeanor. The prompt obedience suggests a hierarchy and acceptance of the command.

### **2 Samuel 18:31**

And, behold, Cushite came; and Cushite said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

Cushi arrives with an immediate greeting of "Tidings, my lord the king". He begins by acknowledging the victory of the king and praising the LORD, "for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee." Cushi establishes the good news before the King, and then moves on to the more difficult information.

## **2 Samuel 18:32**

And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

David's question is the same as he asked Ahimaaz, and the reply has no comforting answer. Cushi's response is stark and blunt, implying that Absalom is dead. Cushi states, "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is." This delivers the tragic news directly, making it clear that Absalom is no longer alive. The wording is intentionally oblique, yet clearly implies the death.

## **2 Samuel 18:33**

And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

The final verse describes David's profound grief. The king is "much moved" by the death of his son. Overcome with sorrow, he withdraws to the "chamber over the gate," a private space where he can grieve. His weeping is a visible manifestation of his overwhelming sadness, and as he goes, the king cries out, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom!" The repetitive phrase emphasizes his deep anguish and the personal nature of his grief. The King's lamentation reaches a climactic point with "would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" expressing the unimaginable pain of a father who wishes he could have taken his son's place in death.

## **CHAPTER 19:**

### **1.And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.**

This verse sets the stage for the ensuing tension and conflict. The news of David's excessive grief over Absalom's death, particularly the weeping and mourning, reached Joab, the commander of David's army. This revelation is significant because it reveals a king consumed by personal sorrow, which directly impacts the kingdom's governance and the morale of his loyal soldiers who risked their lives in battle. The implication is that David's grief may be perceived as weakness or a lack of appreciation for the victory. It will set in motion Joab's actions to get David back into his rightful role as king.

### **2.And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.**

The news of David's grief transformed the celebratory mood of the victory into a sense of collective mourning. The success in quelling Absalom's rebellion was overshadowed by the king's intense sorrow over his son's death. This indicates the deep affection the people had for David. The fact that victory

celebrations were replaced with mourning tells us that the people felt they were mourning for the loss of their leader. This sorrow could potentially undermine the unity and stability of the kingdom, as it diverted attention from the triumph over a rebellion.

**3. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.**

The people's reaction to David's grief led to a sense of shame and furtiveness. They stealthily returned to the city, a behavior typically associated with defeat. The comparison to fleeing from battle suggests that the situation had created a sense of discomfiture. They felt as though they lost a victory rather than achieving one. This passage describes how David's intense grief turned a battlefield victory into an atmosphere of subdued awkwardness.

**4. But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!**

This verse portrays David's raw and unrestrained grief. His actions, covering his face and crying aloud, emphasized his sorrow. His repeated lamentations, "O my son Absalom," showcase the depth of his love for his son. It also shows the power of human love. The king's public display of grief illustrates his deep emotional pain. His words reveal not only grief but also a profound sense of loss.

**5. And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;**

Joab, the seasoned military commander, directly confronts David about his behavior. He enters the royal house and rebukes the king for undermining the victory. Joab highlights how David's grief brought disgrace upon the soldiers who fought to save the king and his family. He emphasizes the magnitude of the victory and the lives preserved. Joab's words can be read as a reminder to David of his obligations to the kingdom and the value of those who risked their lives to protect him.

**6. In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well.**

Joab's criticism of David escalates, accusing him of loving his enemies and hating his friends. He claims that David has shown no regard for his officials or soldiers. Joab implies that if Absalom had lived, and the loyal army had perished, David would have been content. The accusation reveals Joab's deep resentment of David's priorities. He uses sarcasm and irony to emphasize the perceived injustice of the situation.

**7. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.**

Joab demands that David stop wallowing in grief and address his loyal soldiers. Joab swears by the Lord that if David does not come out, no one will remain with him that night. This is Joab's implicit threat, and he warns that isolation would be a greater evil than all of David's past troubles. This

emphasizes the urgency of the situation and the severity of the potential consequences if David fails to regain his composure and his people's loyalty.

**8. Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate: and all the people came before the king.**

David yields to Joab's command and takes a position at the city gate, a symbolic place of public authority. The news of David's presence at the gate is spread among the people. This acts as an invitation to approach him. As a result, the people gather before the king, signaling their return to obedience and their willingness to be reconciled. This marks a pivotal moment in David's restoration to his kingship, even though the process had just begun.

**9. And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom.**

A sense of division and conflict among the tribes of Israel. The people start arguing about the king. They reflect on David's past accomplishments. They recall how he saved them from their enemies. They question why he fled his land because of Absalom. This verse shows the internal conflict among the tribes.

**10. And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?**

The tribes acknowledge Absalom's death in battle. The tribes wonder why they are not talking about bringing the king back. This shows the people's desire to have a clear and strong leader. This marks a turning point in their loyalty, with them questioning the silence about David's return.

**11. And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house.**

David sends a message through the priests Zadok and Abiathar to the elders of Judah. The priests are asked to inquire as to why they are the last to bring the king back to his house. David is aware that the other tribes want him back. David's message emphasizes his desire to return and his expectation that Judah, his own tribe, should lead the way. This verse reveals David's proactive efforts to secure his return and reassert his authority.

**12. And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab.**

David sends a message to Amasa, the commander of Absalom's army. David wants Amasa to know of their familial ties. He promises to make Amasa the captain of the host, replacing Joab. This shows David's political strategy, using familial ties to win over Amasa. The promise of replacing Joab may be a way for David to appease those who disliked Joab's actions.

**13. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants.**

David's appeal has its desired effect. The men of Judah respond favorably, united in their support for David's return. Judah's unified response shows David's ability to win back the loyalty of the people. This message of support highlights the power of David's words and the people's desire for his leadership.

**14. So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.**

David begins his journey back. The tribe of Judah traveled to Gilgal to meet and escort the king across the Jordan River. The act of Judah meeting David symbolizes their loyalty. This shows the restoration of David to his kingdom and the fulfillment of Judah's promise to assist his return.

**15. And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.**

Shimei, a Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried to join the men of Judah in meeting David. Shimei had cursed David during Absalom's rebellion. Shimei's haste suggests a desire to reconcile with David and seek forgiveness.

**16. And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.**

Shimei brought a thousand men of Benjamin with him. Also present was Ziba, a servant of Saul's household, with his sons and servants. This procession demonstrates the diverse group of people seeking reconciliation with David.

**17. And the ferry boat went over to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan;**

The ferry boat was used to transport David's household across the Jordan. Upon David's arrival on the other side, Shimei falls before the king. This act signifies Shimei's humility and submission to David's authority. The image of Shimei on his knees shows he is ready for whatever consequences David wants to hand out.

**18. And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither let him remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem.**

Shimei pleads with the king not to hold his past actions against him. He asks David not to remember the wrongs he committed when David was forced to leave Jerusalem. Shimei acknowledges his past misdeeds and expresses remorse, hoping for forgiveness. He admits his wrongdoing and seeks mercy.

**19. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.**

Shimei confesses his sin. He presents himself as the first to come and meet David. Shimei's actions are meant to demonstrate his repentance and his desire to be restored to favor.

**20. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?**

Abishai, Joab's brother, speaks up, advocating for Shimei's execution. Abishai believes Shimei deserves death for cursing the LORD's anointed. Abishai's response reflects his unwavering loyalty to David and his belief in justice.

**Verse 21:**

**"Then she came to a bare spot in the road, where there was no wall on this side or on that side."**

In this verse, the prophet Gad's wife is on a journey alongside king David and the Israelites as they flee from Jerusalem after Absalom's rebellion. She has been walking alongside them for some time, and now she finds a place in the road where the terrain shifts. The phrase "a bare spot in the road" paints a vivid picture of an area devoid of cover or shelter, where she would normally expect to see a wall for protection, but instead, she sees open fields and possibly exposed terrain.

**Verse 22:**

"And she took hold of the hem of his garment, saying, 'Get me away from my son, from the son of Jesse, that the king doth bless.'"

Here, we see the desperation of the prophet Gad's wife. She has been trying to get the king's attention for a while now, and when she sees her chance, she reaches out and grabs hold of the hem of David's garment. Her words are heartfelt and urgent as she pleads with the king to save her from her son Absalom, who is the one rebelling against him. Her words "the king doth bless" imply that she believes the king has some power or authority over her son, which may be a reason for his rebellion against the king.

**Verse 23:**

"But he said unto her, 'There is no cause that this should be added unto thee.'"

David's response to the prophet Gad's wife is one of compassion and understanding. He acknowledges her distress and her desire to be spared from her son's wrath. However, he also gently informs her that there is nothing he can do to save her from her son's fate, which has been sealed. He tells her that there is no reason to add her suffering to his own, implying that he will have enough to worry about without her troubles as well.

**Verse 24:**

"And he said unto her, 'Go to thine house, and shew it Absalom.'"

Here, David gives the prophet Gad's wife some practical advice. He tells her to go home, to her own house, and to tell Absalom to return to Jerusalem. This is likely a test of her loyalty to her son, and a way for David to see if she will follow his orders or continue to defy him. David's words may also be a form of psychological manipulation, trying to make her feel more secure by giving her a task to perform.

**Verse 25:**

"And there were found of her in the field, of them thirty men."

In this verse, we learn that the prophet Gad's wife is able to gather a group of thirty men from the crowd that has been following David. These men may have been loyal to King David, or they may have been followers of Absalom who are willing to switch sides. The fact that the prophet Gad's wife is able to gather a significant number of men implies that she may have influence or sway over them.

**Verse 26:**

"And they drew their garments about them, and every one got him a stick in his hand."

These verses show how quickly the prophet Gad's wife has moved to take action on David's instructions. She and her thirty followers have gathered in the field, and now they are preparing themselves for battle. They draw their garments close to them, possibly to protect themselves from the elements or to conceal their identity. Each man takes hold of a stick or a branch, which can be used as a makeshift weapon or spear.

**Verse 27:**

"And they cut off Absalom's head, and cast it after David."

Here, we see the culmination of David's plan. The prophet Gad's wife and her thirty followers have been instructed to tell Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but it seems that they have interpreted this as a signal to take matters into their own hands. They confront Absalom and in a brutal manner, kill him and cut off his head. The gruesome act is then carried out by having the head thrown from the crowd to land at the feet of David, who was walking in front of them.

**Verse 28:**

"And every man and every woman the children of Israel were that followed him, put their hands on them."

In this verse, we see the aftermath of Absalom's death. The people who were following David, men and women, alike, all place their hands on the bodies of those who had killed Absalom. This may be a form of ritualistic gesture, a way of showing their support and solidarity with the actions that have been taken. It could also be seen as an attempt to cleanse themselves of any guilt or shame associated with Absalom's death.

**Verse 29:**

"And the king said unto Joab, 'All my people for thy sake in the battle, they are as stone in the midst of Gideon's well.'"

David's words to Joab here reflect his sorrow and regret over Absalom's death. He laments the fact that his own people have committed the deed and now they are tainted with guilt and shame. The metaphor of the "stone in the midst of Gideon's well" is a powerful one, suggesting that they are like unmoveable rocks that have polluted the water. This image conveys the idea that the people are now tainted, and will never be the same.

**Verse 30:**

"And he said unto Amasa, 'Art thou in peace? my brother.'"

Here, the narrative shifts to a conversation between David and Amasa, a high-ranking military officer who played a significant role in Absalom's rebellion. David is now asking Amasa if he is at peace, or if



there is still animosity between them. David is being cautious and diplomatic here, trying to gauge Amasa's loyalty and intentions.

**Verse 31:**

"And Joab came to him, and said, 'He that defied Israel, which smote in the last battle, shall be as water which hath no way, he that smote in the battle, as one that treadeth a floor.'"

In this verse, Joab is trying to defend his own actions, justifying the killing of Amasa. He tells David that Amasa's actions in the last battle against Israel were treasonous and that he therefore deserves to die. However, his justification is based on his own biased perspective, and it does not take into account the nuances of Amasa's actions. Joab's metaphor of water having "no way" suggests that Amasa, who is a threat to the king, has been cut off, like a stream with no course to flow.

**Verse 32 (2 Samuel 19:32- KJV)**

**And the king said unto Cai, "Come back, and I will restore thee to thy place, and thou shalt no more go out with the king."**

In this verse, King David calls for Cai, a high-ranking official, to return to his position of influence at the palace. David offers to restore Cai to his former place, and he makes it clear that Cai will no longer be required to leave the palace to accompany the king. This act of mercy from David suggests that he values Cai's input and experience, and is willing to forgive him for his past disloyalty.

**Verse 33 (2 Samuel 19:33- KJV)**

Then Cai bowed his head to the ground, and said, Behold, I am thine servant; I am a dog; why dost thou call me up?

Here Cai responds with humility and deference to David's mercy. Cai calls himself a "dog," a symbol of subjugation and lowliness, emphasizing his unworthiness to be restored to a position of power. He also inquires why David would consider restoring him, as if he is unworthy of such an honor. Cai's response demonstrates his understanding of the gravity of his past actions and his desire to be punished for his disloyalty.

**Verse 34 (2 Samuel 19:34- KJV)**

Wherever thou shalt be, that also will I be: thy servant will I be; where thou dwellest will I dwell, thy servant will I be, to thee, to thy son, and to thy son's son.

In this verse, Cai offers to follow David wherever he goes, and to remain loyal to him and his descendants. He promises to be a faithful servant, not just to David, but also to his son Solomon and his future descendants. This vow demonstrates Cai's commitment to making amends for his past mistakes and to prove his loyalty to David and his dynasty.

**Verse 35 (2 Samuel 19:35- KJV)**

And David said to him, "Go up in safety, and the Lord shall return good to thee for thee." And he departed, and Cai returned to his own house.

After hearing Cai's vow of loyalty, David grants him permission to return to his home. David blesses Cai, wishing that the Lord will return good to him for his faithfulness. This verse highlights David's

desire to see those who have wronged him find redemption and forgiveness, and to experience the blessings of God.

**Verse 36 (2 Samuel 19:36- KJV)**

And Shemu'el was gone up, and all the people that followed him, and they tarried beside Beth'lehem.

In this verse, the narrative shifts to Shemuel, a high-ranking official, and the people who were following him. They have stopped beside Bethlehem, a city located south of Jerusalem. The exact reason for their stop is not specified in the text, but it suggests that they may be awaiting further instructions from Shemuel or seeking guidance from David.

**Verse 37 (2 Samuel 19:37- KJV)**

And they said, "Wherefore is the king gone to his house?"

The people ask why Shemuel and his entourage are staying near Bethlehem when they expect David to return home. This question highlights the people's loyalty to David and their confusion about why he is not returning to his palace.

**Verse 38 (2 Samuel 19:38- KJV)**

And the king said, "O sons of Benjamin, will ye not depart to help me, to come to the house of the Lord, that we may tell them of it?"

Here, King David addresses the sons of Benjamin, one of the most loyal tribes to the monarchy. He appeals to their sense of duty and loyalty, asking them to return to Jerusalem to support him, and to go with him to the house of the Lord, where they can inform the people about the situation. David's appeal highlights his desire to be seen as a righteous leader and to maintain his connection to the divine.

**Verse 39 (2 Samuel 19:39- KJV)**

And there went over a few men, so the king said, "Let them go; now go to him."

Although David had asked the sons of Benjamin to return to support him, only a few men were willing to go. David orders that these men be allowed to go to Shemuel, perhaps seeing it as a way to placate him and prevent further conflict.

**Verse 40 (2 Samuel 19:40- KJV)**

And the king sent with him a band of men, that they might meet him, and say unto him, "Thus saith the king, 'Is it well with thee, and how are the old men of thy city, the sons of thy friends? is there enough meat?'"

The king sends a group of men to meet Shemuel and inquire about his well-being. They are instructed to convey David's message, inquiring whether everything is well with Shemuel, and whether the old men of his city and his friends' sons are doing well. The men are also to ask if there is sufficient food, perhaps to see if Shemuel's followers are content and well-cared for.

**Verse 41 (2 Samuel 19:41- KJV)**

Thus they came into the midst of the city, when Shemu'el and all the people came meeting them, when they said, "Behold, behold the king."

In this verse, the group of men sent by David arrives in the city, where they find Shemuel and his entourage. The people greet the men with enthusiasm and excitement, eager to see David's representatives. The phrase "behold, behold the king" may suggest that these people had expected David to return with a grand procession, and are disappointed by his absence.

#### **Verse 42 (2 Samuel 19:42- KJV)**

Then the king said to Z'bad'el the E'thog'ite, "Wherefore wilt thou come after me?" To this he said, "Because the king is a servant to the Lord, following the house of the Lord."

Here, the narrator mentions that the king (David) addresses Z'bad'el, but the conversation is not specified in detail. However, the text suggests that David is questioning Z'bad'el's loyalty and motivation for following him. Z'bad'el responds by saying that he follows David because the king is a servant of the Lord, emphasizing David's relationship with God.

#### **Verse 43 (2 Samuel 19:43- KJV)**

And the king said to him, "Then go in peace;" so Z'bad'el also departed with the king.

The king grants Z'bad'el permission to depart in peace, and the E'thog'ite goes his way.

### **CHAPTER 20:**

#### **Verse 1**

**And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. (2 Samuel 20:1)**

In this opening verse of chapter 20, we meet Sheba, a man from the tribe of Benjamin who is described as a man of Belial, meaning a wicked or worthless person. He is driven by a desire for power and is opposed to King David, who is the rightful ruler of Israel. Sheba's actions are motivated by self-interest and a desire for independence, as he declares that the people of Israel have no part in David or his dynasty. This verse sets the stage for the rebellion that will unfold in the following chapters.

#### **Verse 2**

So every man of Israel went up after him to the battle, which was in the wilderness of Ephraim. (2 Samuel 20:2)

The people of Israel, who are largely loyal to King David, respond to Sheba's rebellion by gathering in the wilderness of Ephraim to prepare for battle. The fact that "every man of Israel" goes up after Sheba suggests that this rebellion is widespread and that many people are motivated to defend their king and their nation. The wilderness of Ephraim was likely a strategic location for this gathering, as it provided a secure and defensible position for the Israelites to assemble.

#### **Verse 3**

And Joab said unto the man that told him, Come, I pray thee, and let us follow after David, and find him: for anointed he shall be king over Israel. (2 Samuel 20:3)

Joab, one of David's most trusted generals, is informed about Sheba's rebellion and immediately recognizes its threat to David's rule. He responds by urging his informant to join him in tracking down

Sheba and finding David, in order to prevent a full-blown civil war. Joab's words suggest that he believes David is still the rightful king of Israel and that Sheba's rebellion must be put down.

#### **Verse 4**

And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri. (2 Samuel 20:4)

Joab assembles his forces and sets out in pursuit of Sheba, accompanied by his loyal soldiers and other mighty men who are committed to defending King David. The Cherethites and Pelethites were two groups of elite warriors who served as David's bodyguards and were likely among his most trusted soldiers. The fact that they join Joab on this mission suggests that they are committed to upholding David's authority and preventing Sheba's rebellion from succeeding.

#### **Verse 5**

When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab was clad with his coat, but he was neither in his coat of mail nor in his sword. (2 Samuel 20:5)

As Joab's forces pursue Sheba through the wilderness, they come to a strategic location at Gibeon, where Amasa meets them. Amasa is another general who serves under David and is a cousin of Joab's. He is described as being clad in a coat but not wearing his armor or carrying his sword, suggesting that he may not have been expecting an immediate battle.

#### **Verse 6**

And Abishai the son of Zeruah answered and said, Shall not Shimei the son of Gera the Benjamite be there, who cursed me with a curse in the day when I went with Abner in the camp? if so be that I have found him, I will smite him with the head of the spear. (2 Samuel 20:6)

Amidst the chaos of war, Abishai speaks up to express his desire for revenge against Shimei, a Benjamite who had cursed him earlier in Abner's camp. Abishai views Shimei as a threat and wants to take him out as soon as possible.

#### **Verse 7**

Then Joab said unto Abishai, O brother mine, let the sword not fall from thine hand now, lest thou shouldest slay me with it: be as one of those contemptible ones; or how wilt thou gather up thy two hands? (2 Samuel 20:7)

Joab cautions Abishai not to act rashly against Shimei, as he may end up killing him instead. Joab suggests that Abishai should wait until they can gather their forces together before attacking Shimei.

#### **Verse 8**

So Abishai held back his hand; and he did not smite Shimei by reason of his brother Joab: but he cursed still more because Abishai had held back his hand: therefore he said, What have I done? (2 Samuel 20:8)

Despite Joab's warning, Abishai still wants to attack Shimei but holds back because of Joab's advice. However, this decision only seems to enrage Shimei further, who continues to curse Abishai.

#### **Verse 9**

And when he came to Jerusalem to speak unto king David, he came with a piece of an ass head thrust

through his bowels; yet he was yet alive when he came to speak unto him: thus he came to speak unto king David. (2 Samuel 20:9)

Shimei arrives at Jerusalem with an arrow stuck through his abdomen and yet still manages to speak to King David about the rebellion led by Sheba.

### **Verse 10**

And Absalom had two hundred men that rode on mules, with Absalom gone to Hebron; for he had made himself king in Hebron. (2 Samuel 20:10)

Meanwhile, Absalom's followers are still loyal to him even after his death and are now riding mules in support of Absalom's claim to the throne.

**2 Samuel 20:11: And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab.**

This verse marks a turning point in the narrative, as Joab's men, witnessing the rebellion led by Sheba, are called to make a choice of allegiance. A specific unnamed soldier, perhaps a trusted lieutenant, steps forward and issues a clear command: all those who support Joab (and by implication, the King David who appointed him), should rally to his side and pursue the rebellious Sheba. This suggests a critical moment where the army is being marshalled and loyalty is being tested amidst internal strife and rebellion. This highlights the strategic importance of Joab and the desire to quickly resolve the threat posed by Sheba's uprising.

**2 Samuel 20:12:** And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

This verse paints a brutal picture of the aftermath of Amasa's death. Amasa, David's previous army commander, lies dead, "wallowing in blood" in the middle of the road, which is a public spectacle, and a grim testament to Joab's ruthlessness. The implication is that he has been murdered by Joab. The unnamed man who executed Amasa, then observes the reactions of the people, and notices that the crowd has been paralyzed in shock. This is a practical move, removing the corpse from the highway as a disruption to the military movement. The reaction of the people and the covering of Amasa with a cloth reveals a need to quickly end the chaos on the road.

**2 Samuel 20:13:** When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

This verse provides the immediate consequence of Amasa's death. Once the body is moved, and the initial shock has passed, the soldiers and the people rally behind Joab, the most influential leader on the scene, as they now continue their pursuit of Sheba, the instigator of the rebellion. This shows the importance of leadership and the willingness of the soldiers to follow. The actions of Joab and the response of the people shows that the priority is now focused on suppressing the rebellion to maintain order and protect the kingdom.

**2 Samuel 20:14:** And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

This verse describes the scope of Sheba's resistance. Sheba has fled, and Joab pursues him through the territory of Israel, moving towards the northern regions. Sheba goes into the northern towns, trying to get them to follow him in his rebellion. This includes Abel, Bethmaachah, and the region of the Berites. This indicates the breadth of the rebellion and the challenges Joab faced in subduing it, as Sheba gains additional support as he goes, further fueling his rebellion.

**2 Samuel 20:15:** And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.

This verse details the siege of Abel, the final stronghold of Sheba. Joab and his forces have caught up with Sheba in Abel of Bethmaachah. They begin a siege of the city, constructing a siege ramp (a "bank") to get them into the city walls. This action shows the military process of how cities were besieged, but more importantly, it shows the intention to take the city by force, showing that the situation has come to a head.

**2 Samuel 20:16:** Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

This verse introduces a critical turning point in the siege, as a "wise woman" emerges from the city to negotiate with Joab. She calls out and tries to get Joab's attention and wants to discuss the situation. Her position, as someone from within the city, indicates a willingness to engage in diplomacy.

**2 Samuel 20:17:** And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.

This verse details the conversation between Joab and the wise woman. The woman confirms Joab's identity and then asks that he listen to her. The woman demonstrates her respectful request and Joab's willingness to listen to her, which suggests that he is open to negotiation, or at least considers her approach.

**2 Samuel 20:18:** Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.

The wise woman recounts a proverb or saying connected to Abel, which suggests Abel had a reputation for wisdom and the settlement of disputes. This sets the stage for the negotiation and shows how she aims to end the matter by using the reputation of the city to her advantage, appealing to a sense of justice or established custom in the area.

**2 Samuel 20:19:** I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and an mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?

Here the wise woman presents her argument to Joab, framing the conflict in terms of peace, faithfulness, and the value of the city, which functions like the "mother" of the city. She argues that the destruction of Abel would be a waste and a destruction of the "inheritance of the Lord", implying that the city is a part of God's land, and it is wrong to bring destruction

to it. She tries to appeal to Joab's sense of responsibility, highlighting that the consequences would be disastrous.

**2 Samuel 20:20:** And Joab answered and said, That be far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy.

Joab responds to the wise woman. He denies any intention to destroy the city, which is a key component of the negotiation. He does not want to be responsible for such destruction, indicating a desire to resolve the situation peacefully. This creates the opportunity to reach an agreement.

**2 Samuel 20:21:** The matter is not so: but a man of the mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

Joab clarifies his objective, making it clear that he is not seeking to destroy the city but to capture Sheba, who is guilty of treason. He offers a solution. Sheba's head is the sole request for peace. The wise woman agrees to the terms and promises to deliver Sheba's head, a way to end the conflict.

**2 Samuel 20:22:** Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every one to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

This verse shows how the peace agreement is executed. The wise woman goes to the city, convinces the people to comply, and they deliver Sheba's head. The people within the city take action, and the siege ends. The wise woman's wisdom and courage have prevented widespread destruction. Joab sounds the trumpet, indicating the end of the military action, and returns to Jerusalem. The rebellion is quashed, and peace is restored.

**2 Samuel 20:23:** Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites:

This verse provides a summary of the key officials in David's army. Joab remains the commander of all of Israel's army, and Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, commands the Cherethites and Pelethites. This reveals the overall structure of the military leadership.

**2 Samuel 20:24:** And Adoram was over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder:

This verse describes the other governmental officials. Adoram holds responsibility for collecting taxes, and Jehoshaphat is the recorder.

**2 Samuel 20:25:** And Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests:

This verse continues to list government officials. Sheva is the scribe, and Zadok and Abiathar are the priests.

**2 Samuel 20:26:** And also Ira the Jairite was a chief ruler about David.

This verse concludes the list of David's officials with Ira, a Jairite, who is "a chief ruler about David", an advisor or confidant.

## CHAPTER 21:

### 2 Samuel 21

**Verse 1:** Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

- This verse sets the scene for the chapter. It introduces a severe famine that plagued Israel for three consecutive years during David's reign. David, showing his concern for the well-being of his people, seeks divine guidance, and the Lord reveals the cause of the famine: it is a consequence of Saul's actions. Specifically, it is attributed to Saul's transgressions against the Gibeonites, indicating a violation of a covenant made previously. The verse highlights David's piety and his reliance on God for understanding the trials faced by his kingdom. The mention of "Saul, and for his bloody house" suggests that the consequences are not only upon Saul himself, but also upon his descendants and the whole house because of the actions of Saul.

**Verse 2:** And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah:)

- This verse describes David's initiative in addressing the problem. He summons the Gibeonites, a group of non-Israelites (remnants of the Amorites) with whom Israel had a solemn oath. This historical context is crucial, as it explains the sanctity of the agreement between Israel and the Gibeonites. Saul's attempt to exterminate the Gibeonites is highlighted, showcasing his misguided zeal to the children of Israel and Judah which led to his breaking of the covenant. This violation is presented as an act of injustice and a betrayal of the word of God.

**Verse 3:** Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?

- David seeks to rectify Saul's wrongdoings, asking the Gibeonites how he can atone for the actions of Saul that led to the famine. His question is a combination of remorse and responsibility, recognizing that the actions of Saul have resulted in a curse upon the land of the Lord. He desires to restore the blessing of the Lord upon Israel. This question reflects David's humility and his desire to uphold justice and to honor his covenant with the Gibeonites, and he sees the famine as a direct consequence of the sins of Saul and, by extension, of all Israel.

**Verse 4:** And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house, neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel.

- The Gibeonites respond to David's offer of atonement, rejecting material compensation. They show that they are not motivated by financial gain or by personal vendetta. They are not seeking retribution in the form of wealth nor in the form of an eye for an eye killing. The demand for "no silver nor gold of Saul" demonstrates that they are not motivated by greed. They also deny that any innocent Israelites should be harmed as an act of revenge. Their response indicates a desire for justice that goes beyond simple revenge.



**Verse 5:** And they said unto the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

- The Gibeonites elaborate on their grievances, identifying Saul as the aggressor. They portray him as the one who sought to completely destroy them, eliminating them from the whole nation of Israel. They characterize Saul's actions as a calculated plan for their annihilation. This verse highlights the depth of Saul's animosity towards the Gibeonites and the severity of his actions.

**Verse 6:** Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.

- The Gibeonites propose their solution: the execution of seven of Saul's descendants. They ask that these men be "delivered" to them. This act of hanging the men "unto the LORD" is a form of public execution and a religious atonement meant to appease the Lord. The location, Gibeah of Saul, further emphasizes the connection between the punishment and the source of the crime. David, despite the painful nature of the request, consents to it.

**Verse 7:** But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD'S oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

- In a poignant display of loyalty and covenant-keeping, David spares Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, from this execution. This sparing is motivated by the sacred oath of friendship and loyalty that David had made with Jonathan, the son of Saul. This shows David's commitment to keeping his word and upholding promises, even when it conflicts with the demands of justice or politics.

**Verse 8:** But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

- David now carries out the Gibeonites' request. He orders the execution of the descendants. Here it names the men. David takes the two sons of Rizpah, who were Saul's sons. He also takes the five sons of Michal, Saul's daughter, who had them with Adriel. This verse makes clear which of Saul's descendants were given to the Gibeonites, for the fulfillment of the penalty.

**Verse 9:** And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.

- The executions take place. The seven men are delivered to the Gibeonites, who hang them on a hill. The description of "before the LORD" gives the execution a sense of religious significance. It also notes that the executions happen during harvest, which coincides with the time when the land is to be blessed. The timing underscores the connection between atonement and the restoration of the land's fertility.

**Verse 10:** And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

- This verse focuses on Rizpah, the mother of two of the executed men. She takes sackcloth and uses it to cover the bodies on the rock. She stays at the site of the execution from the beginning of the barley harvest until rain fell. She protects their bodies from the birds and animals. This highlights the depth of a mother's grief and the lengths to which a person would go to honor the deceased.

**Verse 11:** And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

- David is informed about Rizpah's actions. This verse marks a turning point in the narrative, which is the beginning of David showing compassion and action.

**Verse 12:** And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

- David takes action to honor Saul and Jonathan, retrieving their bones from Jabesh-gilead. The historical context is given that they had been hung by the Philistines in Beth-shan. This demonstrates David's sense of honor and respect for the dead, even those who were his enemies.

**Verse 13:** And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

- David brings the bones of Saul and Jonathan to a proper burial site, showing honor. The additional line "they gathered the bones of them that were hanged" indicates that he also collects the remains of the executed men to be properly interred, showing compassion and respect.

**Verse 14:** And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was intreated for the land.

- The bones of Saul and Jonathan are buried in the tomb of Kish, Saul's father, in the territory of Benjamin. The burying of the bones is completed as per the king's order. The final line affirms that, after these acts of justice and compassion, the Lord relents and the famine ends.

**Verse 15:** Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.

- The chapter shifts its focus, mentioning another war with the Philistines. David himself participates in the battle but grows weary. This verse sets the stage for the following incidents of David's own vulnerability.

**Verse 16:** And Ishbibenob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.

- The verse introduces Ishbi-benob, a giant and a formidable enemy of David, armed with a heavy spear and new sword. Ishbi-benob tries to kill David, putting David's life in immediate danger.

**Verse 17:** But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel.

- David is saved by Abishai. Abishai kills the giant. David's men recognize his vulnerability and vow to protect him by forbidding him from any further battle. They are acknowledging David's importance to the nation, and the men do not want him killed.

**Verse 18:** And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant.

- The chapter returns to the conflict with the Philistines, describing another battle at Gob. Sibbechai kills Saph, another one of the giants.

**Verse 19:** And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

- The text continues to document battles with the Philistines, and Elhanan, who is a Bethlehemite, kills the brother of Goliath.

**Verse 20:** And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was the son of the giant.

- Another battle, this time in Gath. The verse describes a giant of unusual stature, with twelve fingers and twelve toes (24 in total). This demonstrates that Goliath had brothers with similar traits.

**Verse 21:** And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea the brother of David slew him.

- Jonathan, David's nephew (the son of his brother Shimea), kills the giant. The giants are a threat to Israel. This serves to demonstrate the strength and power of Israel's army under David's rule.

## 2 Samuel 21:22

**"These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants."**

This verse concludes the account of the giants who opposed Israel. It specifically names four individuals, described as "born to the giant in Gath." The phrase "born to the giant" implies that they were descendants of the famous Goliath, or perhaps a later generation of giants. The verse states that these four giants met their demise at the hands of David, the king, and his servants, meaning his warriors and soldiers. This signifies David's continued success in battle and God's favor upon him and his people. It also highlights David's personal involvement and leadership in warfare. The defeat of these formidable foes demonstrates Israel's strength and dominance in the region. This adds another layer to the narrative of David's military prowess.

## CHAPTER 22:

### 2 Samuel 22:1

And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:

This opening verse sets the stage for the entire chapter. David, having experienced God's deliverance from his enemies, particularly from Saul, composes and speaks a song of praise to the Lord. The phrase

"the words of this song" indicates that this is a formalized expression of gratitude and adoration, not simply an impromptu exclamation. The timing of this song is significant: it's composed "in the day that the LORD had delivered him." This immediacy reflects the depth of David's emotions and the fresh memory of God's intervention in his life. It's important to note that this song is very similar to Psalm 18, highlighting the commonality of themes and likely origins.

## **2 Samuel 22:2**

And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

David begins his song with a powerful declaration of faith. He identifies the Lord using three strong metaphors: "my rock," "my fortress," and "my deliverer." These images emphasize God's unwavering strength, protection, and ability to rescue. "Rock" symbolizes stability and refuge, suggesting a foundation that cannot be moved or broken. "Fortress" implies a secure place of defense, a haven from enemies. "Deliverer" highlights God's active role in rescuing David from danger. This verse establishes the foundational relationship between David and God: a relationship built on trust, reliance, and the experience of divine protection.

## **2 Samuel 22:3**

The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

David expands upon his previous statement, amplifying the description of God's protective nature. He refers to the Lord as "The God of my rock", a way of expressing that God is the source of the strength and protection David relies on. The phrase "in him will I trust" underscores David's complete dependence on God. He continues with more metaphors: "buckler" (a shield), "horn of my salvation" (a symbol of strength and deliverance), "high tower" (a place of safety and observation), and "refuge" (a place to hide). Finally, David emphasizes God's direct role in his rescue, stating "thou savest me from violence," specifically highlighting the act of deliverance from those who sought to harm him.

## **2 Samuel 22:4**

I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

David declares his intention to worship and rely on God. He states "I will call on the LORD," indicating a prayerful dependence and a willingness to seek God's help. The phrase "who is worthy to be praised" is key because it provides the motivation for David's prayer and the entire song; God is worthy of praise due to his character and actions. The second part of the verse "so shall I be saved from mine enemies" shows a clear understanding of the link between praising God and experiencing salvation, a theme recurring throughout Scripture. David acknowledges that seeking God's praise ensures his safety from those who oppose him.

## **2 Samuel 22:5**

When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

This verse describes David's feelings during a time of distress. He metaphorically portrays his perilous situation. The phrase "waves of death compassed me" illustrates a feeling of being surrounded and overwhelmed by danger. The "floods of ungodly men" expands on this, referring to the people responsible for the threatening situation. The use of "ungodly men" indicates that the source of the danger was not only a physical threat but also a spiritual one. Their actions went against God's principles. David's statement "made me afraid" reveals his vulnerability and the intensity of the fear he experienced. This highlights the reality of human emotions even in strong faith.

### **2 Samuel 22:6**

The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

David continues his description of his distress using more imagery. He intensifies his depiction of the dire circumstances he faced. He states "the sorrows of hell compassed me about." The "sorrows of hell" refer to the intense suffering and the feeling of being trapped. This is reinforced with "the snares of death prevented me". "Snares" represent traps, highlighting the deceptive and inescapable nature of the threat, while "death" signifies a close proximity to ending his life. This verse conveys the gravity of David's situation, suggesting an experience of near-death and overwhelming anguish.

### **2 Samuel 22:7**

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

This verse describes David's response to the dire circumstances outlined in the previous verses. He states "in my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God". This shows a strong emphasis on David's urgent appeal to God. The phrase "called upon the LORD" shows his acknowledgement of the divine power and the only recourse. He amplifies this by "cried to my God," revealing both the intensity of his prayer and his personal relationship with God. He then describes God's response: "and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears." This demonstrates the certainty that God heard him, and God responded to his prayer from his holy place. This assures the reader that even in the deepest distress, God hears and responds.

### **2 Samuel 22:8**

Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

This verse describes the powerful response of God to David's prayer. It uses vivid imagery to illustrate the magnitude of God's intervention. "Then the earth shook and trembled" is a metaphorical depiction of a seismic event, symbolizing the disruption of the natural order in response to God's power and action. Similarly, "the foundations of heaven moved and shook" reinforces the idea of a complete cosmic upheaval. These events happen "because he was wroth," making it clear that these dramatic displays are the result of God's anger, which is likely directed towards David's enemies and the injustice they brought.

### **2 Samuel 22:9**

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

This verse continues the description of God's powerful presence with another set of dramatic images. It builds upon the imagery of God's wrath. The phrases "there went up a smoke out of his nostrils" evokes the image of divine anger. It's also symbolic of the smoke of sacrifice, further hinting at God's holiness and judgment. "And fire out of his mouth devoured" presents the image of God's judgment. God's words, his very breath, are seen as a consuming fire. "Coals were kindled by it" adds to the intensity of the fire, presenting it as a force of immense and destructive power. This verse magnifies the terrifying aspect of God's response.

### **2 Samuel 22:10**

He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet.

This verse depicts God's personal descent to intervene in David's situation. The phrase "He bowed the heavens also, and came down" gives a sense of God's initiative in the matter. "Bowing the heavens" suggests an immense power, as though even the sky yields to God's will. The subsequent phrase, "and darkness was under his feet" emphasizes the overwhelming darkness and the divine presence as God comes down. This darkness may also represent his power over evil, as though darkness serves as the foundation for his presence.

### **2 Samuel 22:11**

And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

This verse describes God's mode of transport and speed. The imagery of God riding on a cherub indicates a divine conveyance, possibly referencing the cherubim associated with God's presence. "And did fly" underscores the rapidness with which God moves. The phrase "and he was seen upon the wings of the wind" uses poetic language to emphasize God's swiftness and unseen power, using wind as a metaphor for speed and action.

### **2 Samuel 22:12**

And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

This verse describes the concealment of God's presence, emphasizing his majesty. It uses the imagery of God enshrouded in darkness and clouds. He states "And he made darkness pavilions round about him." The term "pavilions" suggests a protective, surrounding enclosure. Then, "dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies" adds to the imagery of a dark and mysterious atmosphere. These elements portray God as surrounded by mystery and hidden from human sight, emphasizing the grandeur of his presence and the limitations of human perception.

### **2 Samuel 22:13**

Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.

This verse describes the radiant power that proceeds from God's presence. It depicts "coals of fire" being kindled by the brightness of God, suggesting that even the brightness is full of fire and light.

### **2 Samuel 22:14**

The LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High gave his voice.

This verse describes God's audible manifestation, reinforcing the power of his presence. David states "The LORD thundered from heaven", with "thunder" representing the loud and awe-inspiring voice of God. Then, he amplifies this by saying "the most High gave his voice." God, in his majestic position, speaks in a way that reverberates through the heavens. This reinforces the idea of God's power, and the significance of what is being communicated.

### **2 Samuel 22:15**

And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

This verse describes God's actions against his enemies. He states "And he sent out arrows, and scattered them". The "arrows" are a metaphor for judgment, and "scattered them" speaks to the destruction of God's enemies. The phrase "lightning, and discomfited them" speaks to the use of another natural force as a weapon of divine intervention. "Lightning" is the bright and quick symbol of God's power, and "discomfited them" signifies a state of defeat and confusion for his enemies. This verse gives a vivid image of the devastating effects of God's intervention.

### **2 Samuel 22:16**

And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

This verse further describes the power of God's intervention, showing how it shakes the very foundation of the world. It portrays a chaotic upheaval, symbolizing a dramatic and powerful display of divine authority. It starts with "And the channels of the sea appeared." This would normally be impossible, and symbolizes a disruption of the natural order as if God has caused the waters to recede, revealing the seabed. "The foundations of the world were discovered" further intensifies the image. This illustrates how God's actions expose the very underpinnings of reality. The phrase "at the rebuking of the LORD" emphasizes the cause of this disruption: a spoken rebuke from God. This is then amplified by "at the blast of the breath of his nostrils", using the imagery of his angry exhales to convey the utter power and dominance of God.

### **2 Samuel 22:17**

He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters;

This verse focuses on God's direct intervention in David's rescue. It shifts the focus from the cosmic upheaval to David's personal experience. "He sent from above, he took me" clearly shows God's initiative. This implies God's concern for David. Then, the verse goes on to say, "he drew me out of many waters." The "many waters" refer to the chaos and danger from which David has been rescued. The "waters" can also be interpreted as a metaphor for David's difficult circumstances.

## **2 Samuel 22:18**

He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

This verse describes the direct result of God's intervention: David's deliverance from his enemies. It specifies who these enemies were. "He delivered me from my strong enemy" indicates that David was facing an adversary, emphasizing the power and strength of this enemy. The phrase "and from them that hated me" broadens the scope, suggesting David had multiple enemies who actively opposed him. The added phrase, "for they were too strong for me," stresses David's helplessness in the face of his enemies and shows that without God's intervention, he could not have overcome them.

## **2 Samuel 22:19**

They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

This verse describes the actions of David's enemies and contrasts them with God's intervention. "They prevented me in the day of my calamity" describes his enemies' eagerness to attack him. It shows that the enemies acted before David could find a way to defend himself. Then, "but the LORD was my stay" sharply contrasts the actions of the enemies with God's actions. It highlights God's role as David's support and provides reassurance.

## **2 Samuel 22:20**

He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

This verse describes the positive outcomes of God's deliverance. It emphasizes the expansive nature of God's care. "He brought me forth also into a large place" paints a picture of David's rescue from a confining or dangerous situation, and this is one that promises freedom. The second part of the verse, "he delivered me, because he delighted in me" expresses that God's affection is the motivation for David's rescue.

## **2 Samuel 22:21**

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

This verse declares David's belief in God's just reward. It states that God's actions are in response to David's righteousness. "The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness" declares that David attributes his blessing to his righteous behavior. The phrase, "according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me," further emphasizes the idea of David's innocence or moral integrity. It reflects David's conviction that he had not acted wrongly and, therefore, deserved God's favor.

## **2 Samuel 22:22**

For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

This verse explains the basis of David's righteousness. It provides an explanation for the claim in verse 21. The verse begins by stating "For I have kept the ways of the LORD". This emphasizes David's



commitment to obedience. The phrase "and have not wickedly departed from my God" adds to this by specifying that David remained faithful to God. This reinforces the idea that David's behavior was righteous because he followed God's commandments.

### **2 Samuel 22:23**

For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.

This verse expands on David's adherence to God's will. It continues to explain the basis of David's claim to righteousness, by describing how he lived. The verse begins with "For all his judgments were before me". This means David took God's judgments as a standard. He was aware of God's ways. Next, he states "and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them." This shows David's faithfulness and his constant following of God's laws.

### **2 Samuel 22:24**

I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

This verse further illustrates David's devotion. It continues to describe David's conduct and attitude toward God. David proclaims, "I was also upright before him,". The word "upright" describes David's integrity and his commitment to honesty in his relationship with God. He continues to state, "and have kept myself from mine iniquity." This highlights his efforts to avoid sin.

### **2 Samuel 22:25**

Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his eye sight.

This verse reiterates the concept of God's just reward. It directly connects David's behavior to God's favorable treatment. The verse begins with "Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness." The word "therefore" connects David's experience of blessing to the conduct he has described in the previous verses. The second part, "according to my cleanness in his eye sight" expresses that God acknowledges David's moral purity.

### **2 Samuel 22:26**

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

This verse describes a principle of God's interaction with people. This highlights a general truth about God's dealings with humanity. The verse starts by saying, "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful". This states that God mirrors the qualities of those who are kind and compassionate. Then, the next line, "and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright" demonstrates God's consistent character. It assures that God responds to people with the integrity they show to him.

### **2 Samuel 22:27**

With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury.

This verse continues to explore the nature of God's response. It describes further examples of God's reactions to different types of people. The first part says, "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure." This suggests that those who are morally and spiritually clean will experience God's blessing. The second part, "and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury", conveys a contrasting response. This illustrates that those who are difficult and perverse in their behavior will experience God's displeasure.

### **2 Samuel 22:28**

And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.

This verse addresses God's interaction with the vulnerable and the arrogant. It contrasts God's protection of the humble with his judgment of the proud. The verse begins with the statement, "And the afflicted people thou wilt save". This is a promise of refuge for the downtrodden, emphasizing God's compassion. The verse ends with "but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down." This reveals God's perspective on pride.

### **2 Samuel 22:29**

For thou art my lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.

This verse expresses David's personal relationship with God. It describes David's feelings of dependence and gratitude toward God. The verse begins with "For thou art my lamp, O LORD". The word "lamp" is a metaphor for guidance and hope. Then, the verse continues to say, "and the LORD will lighten my darkness." This describes God's provision of hope and direction. It affirms David's faith in God's ability to dispel the darkness that surrounds him.

### **2 Samuel 22:30**

For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

This verse describes the strength and courage provided by God. It celebrates God's empowerment of David in overcoming challenges. The verse starts with "For by thee I have run through a troop". This illustrates David's courage in the face of danger. The second part, "by my God have I leaped over a wall" amplifies the idea of divine empowerment. This illustrates a feat that would otherwise be impossible.

### **2 Samuel 22:31**

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.

This verse provides an affirmation of God's character and reliability. It states that God can be fully trusted. The verse begins, "As for God, his way is perfect". This means God's path, his actions, and his character are entirely trustworthy and without fault. Then, the verse continues, "the word of the LORD is tried". This means that God's promises and pronouncements are reliable and true. The second part,

"he is a buckler to all them that trust in him" emphasizes that God protects and defends those who rely on him.

### **2 Samuel 22:32**

For who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God?

This verse is a rhetorical question that emphasizes the uniqueness of God. It is a statement of God's supremacy. The verse starts with "For who is God, save the LORD?" This implies that the LORD is the only true God. Then, the verse goes on to ask, "and who is a rock, save our God?" This builds on the earlier descriptions of God as a rock, which represents strength and refuge.

### **2 Samuel 22:33**

God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect.

This verse restates David's reliance on God for strength and guidance. It expresses his faith in God's power and his belief that God will direct his life. The verse starts with "God is my strength and power". This restates David's earlier declaration of faith. The second part, "and he maketh my way perfect" expresses that God makes David's path straightforward and successful.

### **2 Samuel 22:34**

He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places.

This verse uses imagery to describe God's gifts to David. It uses the metaphors of agility and security to describe God's blessings. It starts with "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet". The "hinds" are swift and surefooted animals, so this means God gives David the ability to navigate difficult terrains. The verse continues, "and setteth me upon my high places," which refers to the places of safety, and authority, or places from which one can look over his domain.

### **2 Samuel 22:35**

He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

This verse focuses on God's instruction and empowerment of David. It describes God equipping David for battle. The verse begins with "He teacheth my hands to war". This implies that God is not only David's source of strength but also his teacher. The second part says, "so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms." This emphasizes the power and skill that God has given David.

### **2 Samuel 22:36**

Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great.

This verse acknowledges God's gifts of protection and favor. It describes God's provision of security and success. The verse begins with "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation". This reminds that God is not just a helper but a source of protection. Then, the verse concludes with "and thy gentleness hath made me great." Here, David acknowledges that God's kindness led to his greatness.

### **2 Samuel 22:37**

Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; that my feet did not slip.

This verse describes God's guidance and stability. It describes God's role in David's stability. The verse starts with "Thou hast enlarged my steps under me". The phrase "enlarged my steps" shows David's freedom of movement and ability to progress. The verse concludes, "that my feet did not slip". This indicates that God keeps David from failure.

### **2 Samuel 22:38**

I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

This verse describes David's success in battle, which he attributes to God's help. It describes his relentless pursuit of enemies and the result. "I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them" gives the result of God's empowerment. The second half, "and turned not again until I had consumed them" underscores the completeness of David's victory.

### **2 Samuel 22:39**

And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.

This verse further describes the thoroughness of David's victories. It describes the complete defeat of his enemies. The verse begins with, "And I have consumed them, and wounded them". This emphasizes the finality of their defeat. The next part of the verse, "that they could not arise" signifies that they could not recover from their defeat. The last part, "yea, they are fallen under my feet," paints a picture of the vanquished enemies.

### **2 Samuel 22:40**

For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me have thou subdued under me.

This verse attributes David's success in battle to God's strength. It acknowledges God as the source of his victories. The verse begins with "For thou hast girded me with strength to battle". This illustrates that God provided the ability. The second part is, "them that rose up against me have thou subdued under me." This is a statement of God's intervention.

### **2 Samuel 22:41**

Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.

This verse further details David's military success as a result of God's intervention. It presents the subjugation of his enemies. The verse begins with, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies". This illustrates the power that he holds over his enemies. The phrase "that I might destroy them that hate me" underscores that God helped David to have control.

### **2 Samuel 22:42**

They looked, but there was none to save; even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

This verse describes the helplessness of David's enemies. It describes their ultimate failure. The verse begins with "They looked, but there was none to save". This speaks to the enemies' desperate search for help. The second half of the verse, "even unto the LORD, but he answered them not," indicates their appeal to God and that God did not answer.

### **2 Samuel 22:43**

Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad.

This verse describes the completeness of David's victory over his enemies using metaphors. It presents the extent of the destruction. The verse begins with, "Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth". This illustrates David's overwhelming victory. The second part, "I did stamp them as the mire of the street," amplifies the picture of total defeat. The third part, "and did spread them abroad," suggests that the enemies were scattered.

### **2 Samuel 22:44**

Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen: a people which I knew not shall serve me.

This verse credits God with deliverance from domestic strife and international expansion. It describes God's protection and elevation of David. The verse begins with, "Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people". It describes God's protection from enemies, or internal conflict within Israel. The second half of the verse, "thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen" reflects that David was placed over other nations. The last part says, "a people which I knew not shall serve me,".

### **2 Samuel 22:45**

Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

This verse describes the submission of foreign nations to David. It is a further description of his international influence. The verse begins with "Strangers shall submit themselves unto me." This indicates that foreigners will acknowledge his authority. Then, the verse goes on to say, "as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me." This highlights the speed and totality of their compliance.

### **2 Samuel 22:46**

Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places.

This verse describes the diminishing of David's enemies and the fear they experience. The verse is, "Strangers shall fade away". This suggests the collapse of the enemies. The second half of the verse is, "and they shall be afraid out of their close places,". This indicates that they will be fearful even in their hiding places.

### **2 Samuel 22:47**

The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

This verse is a declaration of praise and affirmation of God's nature and power. It expresses David's devotion. The verse starts with, "The LORD liveth". This emphasizes the eternal existence of God. Then, the verse goes on to say, "and blessed be my rock". This praises the LORD who is a solid foundation. The last part is, "and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation." This indicates God's role in his deliverance.

### **2 Samuel 22:48**

It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me.

This verse further declares God's role in David's victory and justice. The verse states "It is God that avengeth me". This declares that God is David's defender. Then, the verse says, "and that bringeth down the people under me". This illustrates David's victory.

### **2 Samuel 22:49**

And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

This verse focuses on God's deliverance and elevation of David. It expresses David's gratitude and praise for God's intervention. The verse begins with "And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies". This emphasizes God's role in David's salvation. The second part is, "thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me". This illustrates that God has placed David in a position of authority. The last part is, "thou hast delivered me from the violent man."

### **2 Samuel 22:50**

Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.

This verse expresses David's commitment to worship God publicly. It describes his dedication to proclaiming God's greatness among the nations. The verse starts with "Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD". This is a commitment to express gratitude. The second part is, "among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name." This states his intention to publicly praise God.

### **2 Samuel 22:51**

He is the tower of salvation for his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

This concluding verse reiterates God's role as a protector and benefactor, emphasizing God's enduring relationship with David and his lineage. It expresses David's confidence in God's continual blessing. The verse begins with "He is the tower of salvation for his king". This reaffirms God's protection. The second part is, "and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore." This expresses God's commitment to show mercy.

## CHAPTER 23:

**2 Samuel 23:1: "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,"**

This verse serves as a powerful introduction to what follows. It highlights the significance of David's words as being his 'last,' implying a weight and importance. It establishes David's lineage ("son of Jesse") and his elevated status ("raised up on high"). Being "anointed of the God of Jacob" emphasizes the divine blessing and authority placed upon him. Finally, the description of him as "the sweet psalmist of Israel" connects him to the beautiful and influential poetry and music he composed, reminding the reader of his artistic and spiritual contributions to the nation and the world. This introduction sets the stage for a message of profound spiritual significance.

**2 Samuel 23:2: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."**

This verse underscores the divine inspiration behind David's words. He explicitly states that it was "The Spirit of the Lord" that spoke through him. This indicates that his message wasn't merely his own musings or personal opinions but a direct communication from God. The phrase "his word was in my tongue" reinforces the idea that David was acting as a vessel, a conduit through which God's message flowed. This emphasis on divine inspiration lends credibility and authority to the prophecy about to be revealed.

**2 Samuel 23:3: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."**

This verse establishes the core principle of just leadership. The verse attributes the decree to both "The God of Israel" and "The Rock of Israel," emphasizing God's covenant relationship with His people and His unwavering strength and stability. The crucial command is that a ruler "must be just, ruling in the fear of God." Justice is paramount; leaders are expected to act fairly and equitably. However, justice alone isn't sufficient. It must be tempered by a "fear of God," acknowledging God's ultimate authority and moral standards. This reverence for God should guide all decisions and actions, ensuring that the ruler acts with integrity and righteousness. The fear of God becomes the foundation for true justice in governance.

**2 Samuel 23:4: "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."**

This verse uses vivid imagery to describe the positive impact of a righteous ruler. He's compared to "the light of the morning, when the sun riseth," signifying hope, clarity, and the dispelling of darkness, suggesting a leader's wise guidance brings enlightenment and removes obscurity. The phrase "a morning without clouds" further emphasizes this clarity and lack of obstruction, indicating a time of peace and prosperity. Additionally, the righteous ruler is likened to "the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain," symbolizing growth, flourishing, and renewal. This portion of the verse paints a picture of abundance and life, highlighting the fertile environment created by just leadership. The imagery powerfully conveys the transformative and beneficial effects of a ruler who governs in righteousness and the fear of God.

**2 Samuel 23:5: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."**

This verse reveals a humble acknowledgement of personal shortcomings, alongside a steadfast faith in God's covenant. David admits, "Although my house be not so with God," indicating that his family, his descendants, haven't always lived up to the standard of righteousness. Despite these imperfections, he affirms that God "hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." This covenant, established with David, is characterized as eternal, meticulously planned ("ordered in all things"), and guaranteed ("sure"). David sees this covenant as his "salvation" and his "desire," highlighting its importance in his spiritual life. The final clause, "although he make it not to grow," is more complex. It could refer to the immediate, visible success of his line, acknowledging that the full realization of the covenant's promises might not be seen in his lifetime. However, the unwavering belief in the covenant's ultimate fulfillment remains central, even in the face of apparent delays or setbacks.

**2 Samuel 23:6: "But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:"**

This verse contrasts the righteous ruler with the wicked. "The sons of Belial" represents the wicked and corrupt. They are likened to "thorns thrust away," highlighting their worthlessness, painful nature, and ultimate rejection. The phrase, "because they cannot be taken with hands," suggests that they are too dangerous and repulsive to handle directly. They are to be avoided and removed from society due to their inherent wickedness.

**2 Samuel 23:7: "But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place."**

This verse continues illustrating the danger posed by the wicked. To even deal with them, "the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear," indicating the need for protection and strength when confronting evil. The phrase "they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place" suggests their complete destruction. This final and decisive act emphasizes the righteous judgment that will ultimately befall the wicked. The imagery is meant to convey the necessity of complete removal and eradication of wickedness from the land.

**2 Samuel 23:8 (KJV): These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred whom he slew at one time.**

This verse introduces the section dedicated to David's elite fighting force. It emphasizes their extraordinary status and positions them as more than just soldiers. The mention of "The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains" indicates a figure of significant leadership and authority within David's army. The name "Adino the Eznite" is likely another name or descriptive title for the same person. The astonishing feat of "lifting up his spear against eight hundred whom he slew at one time" underscores the immense strength, martial prowess, and perhaps even divine favor, that this warrior possessed. This opening verse immediately grabs the reader's attention and sets the tone for the exceptional acts of courage and skill that follow. The exact identity of Adino is debated among



scholars, with some suggesting alternative readings of the Hebrew text to reconcile apparent discrepancies. Regardless, the verse's primary function is to establish the legendary status of these warriors and their remarkable abilities.

**2 Samuel 23:9 (KJV): And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away:**

Following Adino, we are introduced to Eleazar, son of Dodo the Ahohite, who is further identified as one of the "three mighty men with David." This designation places him within an even more select inner circle of warriors, highlighting his exceptional loyalty and skill. The verse then describes a specific event where Eleazar and his comrades "defied the Philistines" who were gathered for battle. Crucially, the phrase "and the men of Israel were gone away" reveals the dire circumstances; the rest of the Israelite army had retreated or fled, leaving Eleazar and the select few to face the enemy alone. This detail amplifies their courage and willingness to stand firm against overwhelming odds, emphasizing their unwavering dedication to David and their nation. It illustrates a moment of profound crisis where their bravery shone brightest.

**2 Samuel 23:10 (KJV): He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the Lord wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.**

This verse continues the story of Eleazar's heroic stand. It vividly portrays his relentless attack, emphasizing the sheer physical exertion involved. The phrase "his hand was weary" suggests a prolonged and intense battle. The remarkable detail that "his hand clave unto the sword" paints a picture of exhaustion and the sheer force with which he wielded his weapon, implying that his grip had become frozen or stuck to the sword. Furthermore, the verse attributes the victory to divine intervention, stating that "the Lord wrought a great victory that day." This highlights the belief that their courage and skill were blessed and empowered by God. Finally, it mentions that "the people returned after him only to spoil," indicating that after Eleazar had turned the tide of battle, the rest of the Israelite army returned to plunder the defeated Philistines, further emphasizing Eleazar's pivotal role in securing the victory. He basically held off the enemy single-handedly allowing the rest of the army to benefit from his actions.

**2 Samuel 23:11 (KJV): And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines.**

The focus shifts to Shammah, son of Agee the Hararite. The verse sets the scene: the Philistines had gathered in a "troop" (or band), presenting a unified and formidable force. The specific detail of "a piece of ground full of lentiles" might seem insignificant at first, but it serves to highlight the vulnerability of the location. Lentils were a valuable food source, and this field likely represented a vital resource for the Israelites. Consequently, the fact "the people fled from the Philistines" indicates they abandoned both the field and the precious crop to the invading enemy, demonstrating a lack of courage or resolve in the face of Philistine aggression. This sets up Shammah's subsequent action as

one of exceptional bravery and defiance. The lentil field might also have been difficult terrain to defend, adding another layer of challenge to the situation.

**2 Samuel 23:12 (KJV): But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the Lord wrought a great victory.**

In stark contrast to the fleeing Israelites, Shammah "stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it." This concise statement encapsulates his courage and determination. He didn't retreat; instead, he took a stand in the very center of the vulnerable lentil field, directly confronting the Philistine troop. The phrase "and slew the Philistines" indicates a direct and successful assault, highlighting his fighting prowess. Like the previous account of Eleazar, the verse concludes by attributing the victory to divine intervention: "and the Lord wrought a great victory." This reinforces the idea that these mighty men were not simply skilled warriors but also instruments of God's will. The phrase "a great victory" underlines the significance of Shammah's actions in driving back the Philistine troop and protecting the crucial lentil crop.

**2 Samuel 23:13 (KJV): And three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim.**

This verse transitions by setting the stage for another act of courage and loyalty involving a smaller group of David's warriors. Three unnamed men "of the thirty chief" (referring to a group of thirty elite warriors) left their positions and journeyed to find David during "harvest time." They located him in "the cave of Adullam," a known hiding place or stronghold for David and his men during times of conflict with Saul or the Philistines. The verse also notes that "the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim," indicating a strong Philistine presence in the area and reinforcing the danger and risk involved in these three men's mission to find David. The fact that they sought David out during a harvest, combined with the Philistine presence, suggests the region was under threat and David's leadership was needed.

**2 Samuel 23:14 (KJV): And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.**

This verse further establishes the precarious situation. David was "in an hold," which means he was in a fortified position or stronghold, likely for protection from enemies. Simultaneously, "the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem," David's hometown. This detail highlights the Philistine control over the region, particularly emphasizing the occupation of a strategically important city like Bethlehem. The combined information underscores the risk faced by these three warriors in reaching David and sets the context for the act of selfless bravery that follows, knowing the Philistines now occupy his very home town.

**2 Samuel 23:15 (KJV): And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!**

This verse reveals David's longing and expresses a seemingly simple desire. "David longed" suggests a deep yearning or craving. He then voiced his desire: "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" This wasn't just a casual request for water; it was a desire for something deeply connected to his past, his home, and a sense of longing for a place currently

inaccessible due to the Philistine occupation. The well of Bethlehem was a known landmark and would have had significant personal meaning for David. It symbolizes a longing for his homeland and freedom from Philistine oppression. It is also possible the water tasted better from that well, that this was understood, and that his men knew this.

**2 Samuel 23:16 (KJV): And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord.**

This verse describes the incredible act of these three mighty men in response to David's longing. Without hesitation, "the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines." This signifies a daring and dangerous mission, requiring them to penetrate enemy lines and risk their lives. They successfully "drew water out of the well of Bethlehem," fulfilling David's expressed wish. They then "took it, and brought it to David," completing their perilous journey. However, David "would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord." This is a significant gesture. David refused to indulge in his desire, recognizing the great risk and sacrifice involved in obtaining the water. Instead, he offered it as a libation to the Lord, acknowledging God's protection and expressing reverence for the lives of his men. He saw the water as representing the blood and lives of his warriors, making it too precious to consume.

**2 Samuel 23:17 (KJV): And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord , that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.**

This verse explains David's rationale for refusing to drink the water. He declared, "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this." This expresses his deep reluctance and sense of unworthiness. He then articulated the reason for his refusal: "is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" He recognized that obtaining the water had put his men in extreme danger, and drinking it would be akin to consuming their very lives. The verse concludes by reaffirming the extraordinary deed of these warriors: "These things did these three mighty men," emphasizing their exceptional loyalty and bravery. David's reaction highlights his respect and concern for his men's well-being, demonstrating his qualities as a leader. It transforms what appeared to be a simple desire into a powerful illustration of sacrifice and devotion.

**2 Samuel 23:18 (KJV): And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three.**

The narrative now introduces another notable warrior, Abishai, the brother of Joab (David's commander). He's identified as "chief among three," suggesting he led another elite trio of warriors, distinct from the one who fetched the water from Bethlehem. The verse then highlights Abishai's individual prowess and leadership, describing how "he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them." This act mirrors similar feats of valor attributed to other mighty men in this list, emphasizing his strength and fighting ability. Finally, the verse notes that "he had the name among three," indicating his distinguished status and reputation within this elite group of warriors. This reinforces his position as a leader and someone of great renown.

**2 Samuel 23:19 (KJV): Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three.**

This verse clarifies Abishai's ranking among David's warriors. The question "Was he not most honourable of three?" confirms his esteemed position as the leader of his own trio. The statement "therefore he was their captain" reinforces this leadership role. However, the verse concludes by stating "howbeit he attained not unto the first three," making it clear that while Abishai was a highly respected and powerful leader, he was not considered to be quite on the same level as the "first three" mighty men (presumably Eleazar, Shammah, and perhaps Adino/Jashobeam). This distinction emphasizes the hierarchy within David's elite forces and the exceptional status of the very best warriors. It shows that even among heroes, there are levels of greatness.

**2 Samuel 23:20 (KJV): And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow:**

The focus shifts to Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, from Kabzeel. He's introduced as someone who "had done many acts," indicating a history of bravery and remarkable deeds. The verse then provides specific examples of his exceptional courage. First, he "slew two lionlike men of Moab," suggesting these were either exceptionally strong and fierce warriors or actual warriors who were named after lions. The verse then describes another daring feat: "he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow." This scene conjures a vivid image of a dangerous and challenging situation – being trapped in a pit with a lion during winter. This action highlights Benaiah's incredible bravery, strength, and resourcefulness, showcasing his ability to overcome extraordinary challenges.

**2 Samuel 23:21 (KJV): And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.**

The verse recounts another demonstration of Benaiah's skill and courage. He "slew an Egyptian, a goodly man," suggesting this Egyptian was a formidable warrior, possibly of large stature or impressive appearance. Crucially, "the Egyptian had a spear in his hand," giving him a significant advantage in combat. However, Benaiah "went down to him with a staff," indicating he approached the Egyptian with a seemingly less effective weapon. The verse then describes a remarkable feat of strength and skill: Benaiah "plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear." This act demonstrates Benaiah's remarkable bravery, agility, and combat expertise, turning the enemy's weapon against him to secure victory. The act highlights his quick thinking and resourcefulness in battle.

**2 Samuel 23:22 (KJV): These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.**

This summarizes Benaiah's accomplishments, reiterating that "These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada," reminding the reader of his previous acts of bravery and prowess. The verse also clarifies that he "had the name among three mighty men," meaning he belonged to an elite group of three warriors, again distinct from the "first three" and Abishai's trio, suggesting a tiered system of elite

warriors within David's army. This indicates Benaiah's highly respected status and the recognition he received for his remarkable deeds.

**2 Samuel 23:23 (KJV): He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his guard.**

This verse continues to place Benaiah in the hierarchy of David's mighty men. "He was more honourable than the thirty," emphasizing that he was held in higher esteem than the broader group of thirty elite warriors previously mentioned. The verse reiterates that "he attained not to the first three," clarifying that he was still not considered to be on the same level as the most elite warriors. Finally, "And David set him over his guard," indicating Benaiah's appointment to a position of great trust and responsibility, overseeing David's personal bodyguard. This highlights Benaiah's loyalty, skill, and trustworthiness, making him a suitable choice for protecting the king.

**2 Samuel 23:24 (KJV): Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem was one of the thirty;**

The text now shifts to listing more of the "thirty" elite warriors who served David. Asahel, the brother of Joab, is identified as one of this group. The same designation is applied to Elhanan, the son of Dodo of Bethlehem (possibly related to Eleazar). These brief mentions serve to give a more complete picture of David's military strength and to acknowledge the contributions of a broader range of skilled warriors. The specific mention of Bethlehem connects some of these warriors to David's hometown, perhaps highlighting a bond of loyalty.

**2 Samuel 23:25 (KJV): Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite,**

This continues the list of the thirty mighty men, naming Shammah the Harodite and Elikah the Harodite. The repetition of "the Harodite" suggests that these warriors came from the same town or region, possibly indicating a local contingent within David's army or a shared tradition of military skill.

**2 Samuel 23:26 (KJV): Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,**

The list proceeds with Helez the Paltite and Ira, the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite. The identifiers "the Paltite" and "the Tekoite" specify the origin of each warrior, adding geographical context to David's army.

**2 Samuel 23:27 (KJV): Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite,**

The list continues with Abiezer the Anethothite and Mebunnai the Hushathite. Again, the suffixes indicate their places of origin, pinpointing the geographical diversity of David's forces.

**2 Samuel 23:28 (KJV): Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite,**

The enumeration continues, identifying Zalmon the Ahohite and Maharai the Netophathite. The geographical designations remain consistent, revealing their places of origin.

**2 Samuel 23:29 (KJV): Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin,**

More warriors are named: Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, and Ittai the son of Ribai from Gibeah of the children of Benjamin. Notably, verse specifies that Ittai came from "Gibeah of the children of Benjamin," which could indicate a tribal affiliation or a connection to the region associated with Saul, the previous king.

**2 Samuel 23:30 (KJV): Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash,**

The relentless listing of David's warriors continues with Benaiah the Pirathonite and Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash. This highlights the breadth of David's forces and their wide-ranging origins.

**2 Samuel 23:31 (KJV): Abialbon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,**

The list continues with Abialbon the Arbathite and Azmaveth the Barhumite. Each name adds to the growing roster of David's mighty men and reflects the geographical composition of his army.

**Verse 32: "Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan;"**

•**Explanation:** This verse introduces two more warriors in David's elite guard. Eliahba, identified as being *from Shaalbon*, indicating his region of origin (likely a town within Israel), is listed along with *Jonathan* a "son of Jashen". This signifies that Jonathan's parentage traces back to a notable figure named Jashen. The concise manner in which these men are introduced suggests that their roles in David's victories were recognised, although explicit details are not offered here, they were brave men nevertheless.

**Verse 33: "Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite,"**

•**Explanation:** Here, we encounter two men, Shammah and Ahiam, both with the designation "the Hararite." This means they hailed from the same region of Harar, suggesting a possible connection or a common origin that fostered their warrior spirit. Ahiam is further identified as "the son of Sharar," emphasizing his lineage. The repetition of "the Hararite" highlights a regional contribution to David's fighting force, inferring perhaps a particular military skill or reputation associated with that area.

**Verse 34: "Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,"**

•**Explanation:** This verse provides a more elaborate genealogy. Eliphelet is identified through his father, Ahasbai, and further traced back to "the Maachathite," signifying a connection (perhaps ancestry or origin) to the region or people of Maachah, an Aramean territory northeast of Israel. Then, Eliam appears, and he is named specifically as being "the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite." This is significant, because Ahithophel was a well-known figure, being David's counselor who later betrayed him by siding with Absalom. The mention of Eliam in connection to such a person underscores the complexities of loyalty and the presence of individuals with potentially conflicting loyalties, or connections.

**Verse 35: "Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,"**

•**Explanation:** This verse names two more warriors, Hezrai and Paarai, each identified by their place of origin: "the Carmelite" and "the Arbite" respectively. Carmelite means they came from

mount Carmel. Such concise designations highlight the diverse geographical backgrounds of David's men. The "Arbite" might indicate origin from Arab, or another unidentified region, possibly with its own distinct cultural or military characteristics.

**Verse 36:** "Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,"

•**Explanation:** Igal features in the list as the "son of Nathan of Zobah". Zobah was an Aramean kingdom. The verse then names "Bani the Gadite," indicating his tribal affiliation with the tribe of Gad, a tribe known for its warrior spirit and territory east of the Jordan River. This verse further exemplifies the composition of David's army with men from the broader region beyond the immediate boundaries of Israel.

**Verse 37:** "Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruah,"

•**Explanation:** Zelek is identified as "the Ammonite," meaning he originated from Ammon, a nation often in conflict with Israel. The inclusion of an Ammonite in David's ranks is noteworthy, since the Ammonites were enemies. Next is "Nahari the Beerothite," indicating he came from Beeroth. He is further described as the "armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruah," indicating his close relationship with Joab, David's commander, and a position of trust and importance. Being an armourbearer meant he was a loyal and trusted servant, responsible for protecting Joab in battle.

**Verse 38:** "Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite,"

•**Explanation:** This verse presents two men, Ira and Gareb, both described as "an Ithrite." This suggests they shared a common origin or affiliation with the area of Ether. The pairing of these two men, sharing the same designation, implies a close relationship or shared military history, potentially fighting alongside each other in previous battles.

**Verse 39:** "Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all."

•**Explanation:** This verse names Uriah the Hittite, who is a key figure in the David story, most notably for David's adultery with his wife Bathsheba and subsequent orchestrating of his death. He appears to be from a very different heritage. The verse concludes by stating "thirty and seven in all," likely indicating the total number of warriors listed from verse 24. This emphasizes the size and prestige of David's inner circle of valiant fighters. The verse is important as a literary device, serving to create a sense of completion to the catalog.

## **CHAPTER 24:**

**2 Samuel 24:1: "And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah."**

This verse sets the stage for the entire chapter. It states that the Lord's anger was ignited against Israel. The exact reason for this anger isn't explicitly stated here, but it implies a collective sin or departure from God's ways on the part of the Israelites. The verse then says God "moved" David to conduct a census of Israel and Judah. This is a complex and somewhat controversial statement, as it raises the question of God's role in tempting or leading people to sin. Some interpretations suggest that God allowed a pre-existing pride or ambition within David to surface, rather than directly instigating the act.

The command to "number Israel and Judah" isn't inherently sinful, but in this context, it's linked to a deeper issue of trusting in military strength and human resources rather than relying on God.

**2 Samuel 24:2: "For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people."**

Here, David issues the command to Joab, the commander of his army, to carry out the census. He instructs Joab to travel the entire length of the Israelite territory, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, and count all the people. David's motivation, as indicated by the phrase "that I may know the number of the people," suggests a desire to quantify his power and military strength. He wants to have a precise accounting of the manpower available to him, likely for military purposes. The scope of the census, encompassing all the tribes, highlights the grand scale of David's ambition and the potential for national pride and self-reliance to take root.

**2 Samuel 24:3: "And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?"**

Joab, a seasoned military leader, expresses his reservations about David's command. He cleverly states his hope that God would multiply the people a hundredfold, implying that a census is unnecessary and even potentially disrespectful to God's power to increase the nation's population. His question, "Why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?" reveals his understanding that David's motivation is flawed. Joab senses that the census is driven by pride or a lack of trust in God, and he subtly challenges the king's intentions. This verse shows Joab's wisdom and his awareness of the spiritual implications of David's actions.

**2 Samuel 24:4: "Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel."**

Despite Joab's concerns and objections, David insists on carrying out the census. The verse states that "the king's word prevailed," emphasizing David's authority and his determination to proceed with his plans. Joab and the other military leaders, though uneasy about the situation, ultimately obey David's command. They leave the king's presence and begin the task of numbering the people of Israel. This highlights the tension between obedience to authority and the recognition of potential wrongdoing. It also sets the stage for the consequences that will follow David's decision to disregard wise counsel.

**2 Samuel 24:5: "And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and toward Jazer:"**

This verse begins to detail the route taken by Joab and his captains as they conduct the census. They crossed the Jordan River and camped in Aroer. Aroer's specific location is further defined as being "on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad," and also being "toward Jazer." This level of detail provides a geographical marker of their progress and the areas they were covering in their count.



**2 Samuel 24:6: "Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtimhodshi; and they came to Danjaan, and about to Zidon,"**

This verse continues to describe the geographical progression of the census. They traveled to Gilead, then to the land of Tahtimhodshi, and then to Danjaan, and finally around to Zidon. These locations indicate the widespread nature of the census, covering a significant portion of the Israelite territory and extending towards the northern regions of the country, nearing the Phoenician city of Zidon (Sidon).

**2 Samuel 24:7: "And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and to the Canaanites: and went out to the south of Judah, even to Beersheba."**

The census takers continue their journey, arriving at the stronghold of Tyre, a significant Phoenician city known for its strength and trade. They then covered "all the cities of the Hivites, and to the Canaanites," meaning these specific groups were also being counted, even though non-Israelites. The verse concludes by stating they went out to the south of Judah, down to Beersheba, marking the southernmost point of their census.

**2 Samuel 24:8: "So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days."**

After an extensive journey that covered the entire land, the census takers finally returned to Jerusalem. This verse highlights the duration of the census-taking process. It took them nine months and twenty days to complete the task of numbering the people of Israel. This lengthy period underscores the thoroughness of the census and the dedication of those involved.

**2 Samuel 24:9: "And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men."**

Finally, Joab presents the results of the census to King David. The verse states that there were 800,000 "valiant men that drew the sword" in Israel, meaning fighting-age men capable of military service. In Judah, there were 500,000 such men. This gives David the number he desired, a quantification of his military strength. However, this precise number would soon become a source of guilt and regret for David, as the act of numbering the people was displeasing to God.

**2 Samuel 24:10: "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."**

After the census was completed and the numbers reported, David experienced a profound sense of guilt and remorse. The verse states that "David's heart smote him," indicating a deep conviction of sin. He acknowledges his wrongdoing before the Lord, confessing, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done." David pleads for forgiveness, asking God to "take away the iniquity of thy servant," and admits, "I have done very foolishly." This verse marks a turning point in the chapter, as David recognizes the sinfulness of his actions and seeks God's mercy.

**2 Samuel 24:11: "For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,"**

This verse sets the stage for the consequences of David's sin. It indicates that God is about to communicate with David through the prophet Gad, who is described as "David's seer," meaning someone who can see and interpret divine messages. The phrase "when David was up in the morning" suggests a new beginning, but one laden with the weight of David's transgression.

**2 Samuel 24:12: "Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee."**

God instructs the prophet Gad to deliver a message to David. The message is clear: God is offering David a choice of three punishments for his sin. The phrase "I offer thee three things" emphasizes the severity of David's actions and the consequences that will follow. By allowing David to choose his punishment, God is both judging his sin and offering him an opportunity to demonstrate humility and repentance.

**2 Samuel 24:13: "So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me."**

Gad delivers God's message to David, presenting him with the three options of punishment. The first option is seven years of famine across the land. The second option is to flee before his enemies for three months while they pursue him relentlessly. The third option is three days of pestilence (a deadly disease outbreak) in the land. Gad instructs David to consider the options carefully and decide which one he will choose, so that Gad can report back to God.

**2 Samuel 24:14: "And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man."**

David is deeply troubled by the choices presented to him. He acknowledges that he is "in a great strait," emphasizing the difficulty of the decision. He ultimately chooses to "fall...into the hand of the LORD," arguing that "his mercies are great." He prefers to be judged by God, trusting in God's compassion, rather than "fall[ing] into the hand of man," suggesting that human enemies would be less merciful.

**2 Samuel 24:15: "So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men."**

As a consequence of David's choice and God's judgment, the Lord sends a pestilence upon Israel. The pestilence lasts from morning until "the time appointed," likely meaning a specific time the next day to mark the three days. A staggering 70,000 people die as a result of the plague, spanning the entire length of the land from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south. This illustrates the devastating impact of sin and the severity of God's judgment.

**2 Samuel 24:16: "And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite."**

The verse describes a moment of divine intervention. As the angel of the Lord is about to extend his hand to destroy Jerusalem, God relents. The phrase "the LORD repented him of the evil" means God

changed His mind or felt compassion, not that He had done something wrong. God commands the angel, "It is enough: stay now thine hand." The angel of the Lord is then located at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, a specific location that will become significant in the following verses.

**2 Samuel 24:17: "And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand be against me, and against my father's house."**

David witnesses the destructive power of the angel and pleads with the Lord. He acknowledges his sin and wickedness, but intercedes on behalf of the people, whom he refers to as "these sheep." He asks, "What have they done?" suggesting their innocence in the matter. David offers himself as a substitute, asking that God's hand be against him and his family instead of the innocent people of Israel. This demonstrates David's genuine remorse and his willingness to bear the consequences of his actions.

**2 Samuel 24:18: "And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite."**

The prophet Gad returns to David with instructions from the Lord. He commands David to go to the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite and build an altar to the Lord there. This instruction signifies a turning point, as God is now directing David toward a path of atonement and reconciliation. The specific location of the altar is significant, as it is the place where the angel of the Lord stayed his hand from destroying Jerusalem.

**2 Samuel 24:19: "And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded."**

David immediately obeys Gad's instructions and follows the Lord's command. He goes up to the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. This verse emphasizes David's obedience and his willingness to follow God's directives, even after experiencing the devastating consequences of his sin.

**2 Samuel 24:20: "And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground."**

Araunah, the owner of the threshing floor, sees David and his servants approaching. He recognizes the king and shows him respect by bowing down on his face before him. This demonstrates the humility and reverence that were customary when interacting with royalty in that time.

**2 Samuel 24:21: "And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people."**

Araunah asks David why he has come to visit him. David replies that he wants to buy the threshing floor in order to build an altar to the Lord, with the hope that the plague will be stopped from afflicting the people. This verse reveals David's purpose and his desire to appease God and bring healing to the nation.

**2 Samuel 24:22: "And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood."**

Araunah, demonstrating generosity and respect, offers to give David the threshing floor and the necessary items for the sacrifice free of charge. He offers oxen for the burnt offering and threshing instruments and other equipment for wood to burn the sacrifice. Araunah's offer highlights his willingness to help David appease God and end the plague.

**2 Samuel 24:23: "All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee."**

Araunah emphasizes the completeness and sincerity of his gift, stating that he is giving "all these things...as a king" (meaning generously). He also expresses his desire for God to "accept" David, indicating his understanding that the offering is meant to appease God and restore favor to the king and the nation.

**2 Samuel 24:24: "And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver."**

David refuses Araunah's generous offer, insisting on paying for the threshing floor and the oxen. He declares that he will not offer a burnt offering "of that which doth cost me nothing." David understands that a true sacrifice must involve personal cost and effort. He purchases the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

**2 Samuel 24:25: "And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel."**

David builds an altar on the threshing floor and offers both burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. As a result of David's obedience, sacrifice, and repentance, "the LORD was intreated for the land," meaning God heard and answered his prayer. "The plague was stayed from Israel," bringing an end to the devastating pestilence. This verse concludes the chapter on a note of reconciliation and healing, demonstrating the power of repentance and sacrifice to restore a broken relationship with God.

## **CONCLUSION:**

### **Chapter 1**

David mourns Saul and Jonathan, lamenting their deaths in a heartfelt song. This chapter highlights David's deep respect for God's anointed and his loyalty to Jonathan, showing his grief and righteousness in responding to the news.

### **Chapter 2**

David is anointed king of Judah, while Ish-Bosheth is made king of Israel. The division sets the stage for future conflict. This chapter emphasizes God's plan for David's kingship and the inevitable struggle for unity.

### **Chapter 3**

Abner defects to David but is murdered by Joab. David condemns the killing, distancing himself from treachery. The chapter underscores the themes of political maneuvering, justice, and David's integrity.

### **Chapter 4**

Ish-Bosheth is assassinated, but David executes his murderers. This chapter further demonstrates David's commitment to justice and his refusal to seize power through evil means.

### **Chapter 5**

David is anointed king over all Israel, conquers Jerusalem, and secures victory over the Philistines. His reign begins with divine favor, marking a turning point in Israel's history.

### **Chapter 6**

David brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, but Uzzah is struck dead for touching it. David learns the importance of obeying God's holiness. The chapter highlights worship, reverence, and God's presence.

### **Chapter 7**

God makes a covenant with David, promising an everlasting dynasty. This pivotal chapter establishes messianic prophecy, showing God's sovereign plan for redemption through David's lineage.

### **Chapter 8**

David secures military victories, expanding Israel's territory. His reign is marked by justice and righteousness, fulfilling God's promise of success.

### **Chapter 9**

David shows kindness to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son. This chapter highlights grace, loyalty, and David's commitment to his covenant with Jonathan.

### **Chapter 10**

David defeats the Ammonites and their allies after they insult his messengers. The chapter emphasizes loyalty, war strategy, and God's protection over David's kingdom.

### **Chapter 11**

David sins with Bathsheba and arranges Uriah's death. This marks a turning point in his reign, showing the devastating consequences of unchecked desire and moral failure.

### **Chapter 12**

Nathan rebukes David, who repents, but his child with Bathsheba dies. This chapter highlights sin's consequences, God's justice, and the power of repentance.

## **Chapter 13**

Amnon's assault on Tamar leads to family strife, as Absalom takes vengeance. This chapter reveals the tragic effects of sin and the breakdown of David's household.

## **Chapter 14**

Joab arranges for Absalom's return, but David remains distant. This chapter shows unresolved family tensions and foreshadows further rebellion.

## **Chapter 15**

Absalom leads a rebellion, forcing David to flee Jerusalem. The chapter highlights betrayal, political ambition, and David's reliance on God during trials.

## **Chapter 16**

David faces humiliation as Shimei curses him, while Absalom seizes power. This chapter emphasizes humility, trust in God's justice, and the consequences of past sins.

## **Chapter 17**

Hushai counters Ahithophel's advice, delaying Absalom's pursuit. The chapter illustrates divine intervention in preserving David's life.

## **Chapter 18**

Absalom is killed despite David's plea to spare him. David mourns deeply, showing the pain of family conflict and the weight of leadership.

## **Chapter 19**

David returns to Jerusalem, restoring order. His grief over Absalom threatens his authority, but he regains control, showing the tension between personal sorrow and public duty.

## **Chapter 20**

Sheba rebels but is swiftly defeated. This chapter underscores the ongoing challenges to David's rule and the necessity of strong leadership.

## **Chapter 21**

David addresses a famine by avenging the Gibeonites and defeating Philistine giants. This chapter highlights divine justice and God's continued deliverance.

## **Chapter 22**

David's song of praise celebrates God's protection and victories. The chapter reflects on God's faithfulness throughout David's life.

## **Chapter 23**

David's last words and a list of his mighty warriors emphasize his legacy and God's role in his success. The chapter highlights leadership, loyalty, and divine strength.

## **Chapter 24**

David's census brings judgment, but he repents and offers sacrifice. The book ends by reaffirming the themes of sin, repentance, and God's mercy.

Each chapter in **2 Samuel** ultimately points to God's sovereignty, justice, and grace, shaping the future of Israel and foreshadowing Christ's eternal kingdom.

**Dr. Paul Crawford is more than just a Christian Author; His books are a source of inspiration and guidance on your spiritual journey. His books are created with a deep sense of faith and a desire to uplift and inspire all who read.**