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2SAMUEL 8: 1 After this, David struck the Philistines, and subdued them; and David took the bride of the mother city out of the hand of the Philistines.

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David subdues the Philistines, 2Sam 8:1; and the Moabites, 2Sam 8:2; and the king of Zobah, 2Sam 8:3, 2Sam 8:4; and the Syrians in general, 2Sam 8:5-8. Toi, king of Hamath, sends to congratulate him on his victories over the king of Zobah, and sends him rich presents, 2Sam 8:9-10. David dedicates all the spoils to God, 2Sam 8:11-13. He garrisons Edom, 2Sam 8:14; and reigns over all Israel, 2Sam 8:15. An account of his chief officers, 2Sam 8:16-18.

#### Verse 1

David took Metheg-ammah - This is variously translated. The Vulgate has, Tulit David fraenum tributi, David removed the bondage of the tribute, which the Israelites paid to the Philistines. Some think it means a fortress, city, or strong town; but no such place as Metheg-ammah is known. Probably the Vulgate is nearest the truth. The versions are all different. See the following comparison of the principal passages here collated with the parallel place in 1 Chr: - 2 Samuel 1 Chronicles 2Sam 8:1. - David took Metheg-ammah 2Sam 8:3. David 1Chr 18:1. - David took Gath and her towns. 1Chr 18:3. David smote Hadadezer 2Sam 8:4. And David took from him smote Hadarezer 1Chr 18:4. And David took from him 1000 and 700 horsemen, and 20,000 foot. 1000 chariots, and 7000 horsemen, and 20,000 foot. 2Sam 8:6. Then David put garrisons in Syria 2Sam 8:8. And 1Chr 18:6. Then David put in Syria 1Chr 18:8. And from Betah and Berothai cities of Hadadezer. 2Sam 8:9. from Tibhath and Chun cities of Hadarezer. 1Chr 18:9. When Toi heard that David had smitten When Tou heard that David had smitten Hadadezer 2Sam 8:10. Then Toi sent Joram his son Hadarezer 1Chr 18:10. He sent Hadoram his son 2Sam 8:12-Syria and Moab 2Sam 8:13. - Syrians, in the valley 1Chr 18:11-Edom and Moab 1Chr 18:12. - Edomites, in the valley of salt, 18,000 2Sam 8:17. - Ahimelech - and Seraiah of salt, 18,000 1Chr 18:16. - Abimelech - and Shausha was the scribe. 2Sam 10:16. Shobach the captain was scribe. 1Chr 19:16. Shophach the captain 2Sam 10:17. David passed over Jordan, and came 1Chr 19:17. David passed over Jordan and came אל־הַלַּמָּה to Helam. 2Sam 10:18. David slew 700 upon them 1Chr 19:18. David slew of the Syrians 7000 chariots of the Syrians, and 40,000 horsemen; chariots, and 40,000 footmen; and smote Shobach, etc. and killed Shophach, etc.

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2SAMUEL 8: 2 He struck Moab, and measured them with the line, making them to lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. The Moabites became servants to David, and brought tribute.

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#### Verse 2

And measured them with a line - even with two lines - It has been generally conjectured that David, after he had conquered Moab, consigned two-thirds of the inhabitants to the sword; but I think the text will bear a meaning much more reputable to that king. The first clause of the verse seems to determine the sense; he measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground - to put to death, and with one line to keep alive. Death seems here to be referred to the cities by way of metaphor; and, from this view of the subject we may conclude that two-thirds of the cities, that is,

the strong places of Moab, were erased; and not having strong places to trust to, the text adds, So the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts, i.e., were obliged to pay tribute. The word line may mean the same here as our rod, i.e., the instrument by which land is measured. There are various opinions on this verse, with which I shall not trouble the reader. Much may be seen in Calmet and Dodd.

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2SAMUEL 8: 3 David struck also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his dominion at the River.

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Verse 3

David smote - Hadadezer - He is supposed to have been king of all Syria, except Phoenicia; and, wishing to extend his dominions to the Euphrates, invaded a part of David's dominions which lay contiguous to it; but being attacked by David, he was totally routed.

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2SAMUEL 8: 4 David took from him one thousand seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David hamstrung all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for one hundred chariots.

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Verse 4

A thousand chariots - It is strange that there were a thousand chariots, and only seven hundred horsemen taken, and twenty thousand foot. But as the discomfiture appears complete, we may suppose that the chariots, being less manageable, might be more easily taken, while the horsemen might, in general, make their escape. The infantry also seem to have been surrounded, when twenty thousand of them were taken prisoners.

David houghed all the chariot horses - If he did so, it was both unreasonable and inhuman; for, as he had so complete a victory, there was no danger of these horses falling into the enemy's hands; and if he did not choose to keep them, which indeed the law would not permit, he should have killed them outright; and then the poor innocent creatures would have been put out of pain. But does the text speak of houghing horses at all? It does not. Let us hear; ויעקר דוד את כל הרכב vayeakker David eth col harecheb, And David disjointed all the chariots, except a hundred chariots which he reserved for himself. Now, this destruction of the chariots, was a matter of sound policy, and strict piety. God had censured those who trusted in chariots; piety therefore forbade David the use of them: and lest they should fall into the enemy's hands, and be again used against him, policy induced him to destroy them. The Septuagint render the words nearly as I have done, και παρελυσε Δαυιδ παντα τα ἄρματα.

He kept however one hundred; probably as a sort of baggage or forage wagons.

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2SAMUEL 8: 5 When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

2SAMUEL 8: 6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

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Verse 6

Brought gifts - Paid tribute.

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2SAMUEL 8: 7 David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

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Verse 7

David took the shields of gold - We know not what these were. Some translate arms, others quivers, others bracelets, others collars, and others shields. They were probably costly ornaments by which the Syrian soldiers were decked and distinguished. And those who are called servants here, were probably the choice troops or body-guard of Hadadezer, as the argyraspides were of Alexander the Great. See Quintus Curtius.

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2SAMUEL 8: 8 From Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.

2SAMUEL 8: 9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had struck all the army of Hadadezer,

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Verse 9

Toi king of Hamath - Hamath is supposed to be the famous city of Emesa, situated on the Orontes, in Syria. This was contiguous to

Hadadezer; and led him to wage war with Toi, that he might get possession of his territories. For a comparison of the 10th verse, see 1Chr 18:9.

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2SAMUEL 8: 10 then Toi sent Joram his son to king David, to greet him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and struck him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:

2SAMUEL 8: 11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, with the silver and gold that he dedicated of all the nations which he subdued;

2SAMUEL 8: 12 of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the plunder of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

2SAMUEL 8: 13 David earned a reputation when he returned from smiting the Syrians in the Valley of Salt, even eighteen thousand men.

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## Verse 13

David gat him a name - Became a very celebrated and eminent man. The Targum has it, David collected troops; namely, to recruit his army when he returned from smiting the Syrians. His many battles had no doubt greatly thinned his army.

The valley of salt - Supposed to be a large plain abounding in this mineral, about a league from the city of Palmyra or Tadmor in the wilderness.

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2SAMUEL 8: 14 He put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

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## Verse 14

He put garrisons in Edom - He repaired the strong cities which he had taken, and put garrisons in them to keep the country in awe.

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2SAMUEL 8: 15 David reigned over all Israel; and David executed justice and righteousness to all his people.

2SAMUEL 8: 16 Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder;

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## Verse 16

Joab - was over the host - General and commander-in-chief over all the army.

Ahilud - recorder - מזכיר mazkir, remembrancer; one who kept a strict journal of all the proceedings of the king and operations of his army; a chronicler. Or, remembrancer, or, writer of chronicles.

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2SAMUEL 8: 17 and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were priests; and Seraiah was scribe;

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## Verse 17

Seraiah - the scribe - Most likely the king's private secretary. See 1Chr 24:3 (note).

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2SAMUEL 8: 18 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers.

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## Verse 18

Benaiah - The chief of the second class of David's worthies. We shall meet with him again.

The Cherethites and the Pelethites - The former supposed to be those who accompanied David when he fled from Saul; the latter, those who came to him at Ziklag. But the Targum translates these two names thus, the archers and the slingers; and this is by far the most likely. It is not at all probable that David was without a company both of archers and slingers. The bow is celebrated in the funeral lamentation over Saul and Jonathan; and the sling was renowned as the weapon of the Israelites, and how expert David was in the use of it we learn from the death of Goliath. I take for granted that the Chaldee paraphrast is correct. No weapons then known were equally powerful with these; the spears, swords, and javelins, of other nations, were as stubble before them. The bow was the grand weapon of our English ancestors; and even after the invention of firearms, they were with difficulty persuaded to prefer them and leave their archery.