

## 2 SAMUEL

### INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL

This book, in many copies of the Hebrew Bible, is carried on without any new title put unto it; the reason of it is, because, by some, this, with the preceding, has been reckoned but one book: hence the Jews say <sup>f1</sup>, Samuel wrote his book, not his books; in others it is called Samuel Second; and by the Vulgate Latin the Second Book of Samuel, which we call the Second of Kings; though why his name should be put to it at all I see not, since it neither concerns him, nor could it be written by him, being an history of events after his death. The Greek version calls it the Second of Kings; and the Syriac version, the Second Book of the Kings of Israel; whereas there is but one king of Israel it makes mention of, and of whose actions only it is an history; and therefore with greater propriety it is called, as the Arabic version, the Book of David the Prophet, of whose reign, from the beginning to the end of it, it gives an account: wherefore Isidore <sup>f2</sup> thinks it was written by David; and if so, it has this mark of simplicity and integrity, that the writer does not spare himself, nor conceal his own faults, and particularly that very capital one, the affair of Bathsheba, and also his numbering of the people; but it is most probable that it was written by Nathan and Gad <sup>f3</sup>, (see <sup><1329></sup>1 Chronicles 29:29); but whoever was the penman of it, there is no doubt to be made of its being written by inspiration, or that it is canonical; which has never been questioned, since there stands in it a famous prophecy concerning the building of the temple by a son of David, which had an exact accomplishment, (<sup><1072></sup>2 Samuel 7:12,13); as well as of the family of David, for a great while to come, which also was fulfilled, (<sup><1079></sup>2 Samuel 7:19); and an eminent passage concerning the Messiah, the son of David, and of his divine sonship, (<sup><1074></sup>2 Samuel 7:14); quoted by the Apostle Paul in proof of it, (<sup><3016></sup>Hebrews 1:5). It contains an history of about forty years, for so long David reigned, seven years and six months in Hebron, over Judah, and thirty three years in Jerusalem, over all Israel and Judah; and this book relates his last words.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 1

This chapter contains an account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, as related to David by an Amalekite, (~~<1000>~~2 Samuel 1:1-10); of the sorrow he and his men were filled with at the news of it, (~~<1001>~~2 Samuel 1:11,12); of his order to put to death the messenger that brought the tidings, for his concern in the death of Saul, according to his own testimony, (~~<10013>~~2 Samuel 1:13-16); and of a lamentation composed by David on this occasion, (~~<10017>~~2 Samuel 1:17-27).

**Ver. 1.** *Now it came to pass after the death of Saul*, etc.] The third day after, as appears from the next verse:

*when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites*; as related in (~~<0817>~~1 Samuel 30:17);

*and David had abode two days in Ziklag*; which, though fired by the Amalekites, was not utterly consumed, but there was still some convenience for the lodging of David and his men; within this time he sent his presents to several places in the tribe of Judah, of which mention is made in the chapter before quoted, and at the same time it was that so many mighty men came to him from several tribes spoken of in (~~<1310>~~1 Chronicles 12:1-40).

**Ver. 2.** *It came to pass on the third day*, etc.] After the battle was fought, in which Saul was slain:

*that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul*; that is, from them who were in the camp with Saul, for he was dead. Some say <sup>f4</sup> this was Doeg the Edomite, which is not likely that he should come with such tidings to David; besides, if he was Saul's armourbearer, as others say, (see ~~<0810>~~1 Samuel 31:4); he died with Saul; nor his son, as others <sup>f5</sup>, which is not at all probable, though his being an Edomite is no objection, since the Amalekites were of the race of Edom:

*with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head:* in token of mourning, and was the bringer of bad tidings, (see <sup><BOOK></sup>1 Samuel 4:12);

*and [so] it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance;* as being the rising sun, Saul's successor, and now king.

**Ver. 3.** *And David said unto him, from whence comest thou?* etc.] It is very likely by his appearance and circumstances he suspected from whence he came:

*and he said unto him, out of the camp of Israel am I escaped;* which plainly suggested that that was in danger, confusion, and distress.

**Ver. 4.** *And David said unto him, how went the matter? I pray thee, tell me,* etc.] That is, how went the battle? on which side the victory?

*and he answered, that the people are fled from the battle;* meaning the people of Israel, they had given way, and turned their backs upon their enemies, and were fled:

*and many of the people also are fallen and dead;* fell by the sword in the pursuit of them, and were not only wounded, but were slain, and these great numbers of them:

*and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also;* which are mentioned last, because they fell some of the last; and this part of the account is reserved by the messenger to the last, because it was the article of the greatest importance; the death of these two persons, the one the enemy, and the other the friend of David, and the death of both made way for his accession to the throne.

**Ver. 5.** *And David said unto the young man that told him,* etc.] These tidings:

*how knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?* this he particularly inquired after, as what most affected him, and was most material for him to know; and his meaning is, whether he had this of his own sight and knowledge, or by report.

**Ver. 6.** *And the young man that told him,* etc.] So it seems he was, and therefore could not be Doeg, more likely his son of the two; but there is no reason to believe he was either of them, who cannot be thought to be well disposed to David:

*said, as I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa;* who was either a traveller that came that way just as the army was routed, and part had fled to Gilboa; or if a soldier, was not one of those that attended Saul, and was of his bodyguard, but happened on the flight to come to the same spot on Gilboa where Saul was:

*behold, Saul leaned upon his spear;* that that might pierce him through and die; but this seems not true, for he fell upon his sword for that purpose, (~~1~~ 1 Samuel 31:4);

*and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him;* the charioteers and cavalry, of which part of the Philistine army consisted; though this also does not agree with the account in the above place; for according to that they were the archers that pressed him hard, and hit him.

**Ver. 7.** *And when he looked behind him,* etc.] To see how near the enemy was, and who were pursuing him:

*he saw me, and called unto me;* by which it should rather seem that he belonged to the Philistines than to the Israelites, and as his being an Amalekite shows; for such an one would hardly be admitted among the latter, though it is most likely he was with neither, but happened to come that way just at that time:

*and I answered, here [am] I;* ready to hear what thou hast to say, and do thy pleasure.

**Ver. 8.** *And he said unto me, who [art] thou?* etc.] Being willing to know whether a friend or an enemy, which by his coming behind him he could not tell:

*and I answered him, I [am] an Amalekite:* which he might be; but it is not likely he should tell Saul he was, which would not recommend him to him; though indeed he was now in such circumstances, that the Amalekites had nothing to fear from him; and if he was slain by him, as Josephus<sup>6</sup> affirms he was, it seems to be a just retaliation on him for sparing any of that race, contrary to the will of God.

**Ver. 9.** *And he said unto me again, stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me,* etc.] Which it can hardly be thought Saul would say; since he might as well have died by the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, which he endeavoured to avoid, as by the hands of an Amalekite:

*for anguish is come upon me*; or trembling, as the Targum, not through fear of death, but through fear of falling into the hands of the Philistines, and of being ill used by them. Some render the words, “my embroidered coat”, or “breastplate”, or “coat of mail”, holds me <sup>f7</sup>, or hinders me from being pierced through with the sword or spear; so Ben Gersom <sup>f8</sup>:

*because my life [is] yet whole in me*: for though he had been wounded by the archers, yet he did not apprehend he had received any mortal wound, but his life was whole in him; and therefore feared he should fall into their hands alive, and be ill treated by them.

**Ver. 10.** *So I stood upon him, and slew him*, etc.] Pressed with all his weight upon his body, that so the spear might pierce through him, and slay him; thus he represents his death to be brought about:

*because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen*; this is not consistent with what he had said before, both that he was leaning on his spear, and not fallen to the ground, and that his life was whole in him:

*and I took the crown that [was] upon his head*; which made him conspicuous, and therefore the Philistines aimed at him, and pressed hard after him, (~~1006~~ 2 Samuel 1:6); though some think that this was not on his head, but carried into the field of battle, ready to be put on if victory was on his side; and others say it was in the possession and care of Doeg, who at his death gave it to his son to carry to David, and thereby gain his favour:

*and the bracelet that [was] on his arm*; of gold no doubt, so Josephus <sup>f9</sup>; such as great personages used to wear, men as well as women, (see ~~01318~~ Genesis 38:18 ~~2630~~ Ezekiel 23:42), especially military men <sup>f10</sup>. Jarchi takes them to be the “totaphot” or phylacteries on the arm, which is not probable:

*and have brought them hither unto my lord*; as ensigns of royalty, fit only for a king, Saul’s successor, as this person, by calling him lord, owned him to be, and thought by bringing those to him to be highly he neared and rewarded.

**Ver. 11.** *When David took hold on his clothes*, etc.] Not on the young man’s but his own:

*and rent them*; on bearing of the death of Saul and Jonathan, (see <sup><1574</sup>Genesis 37:34); from whence the Jews <sup>f11</sup> gather, that a man is bound to rend his clothes for a prince, and for the father of the sanhedrim, since Saul, they say, was the prince, and Jonathan the father of that court:

*and likewise all the men that [were] with him*; rent their clothes also, in imitation of him; the same custom obtained among the Gentiles on mournful occasions <sup>f12</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *And they mourned and wept*, etc.] Inwardly mourned, and outwardly wept, no doubt sincerely:

*and fasted until even*; ate no food all that day until it was evening, the manner in which fasts used to be kept:

*for Saul, and for Jonathan his son*; it is no wonder that David and his men should mourn for Jonathan, a good man, and a valiant one, and a dear and faithful friend of David's; but it may seem not so clear a thing that they should, mourn for Saul, a wicked man, and a persecutor of David without cause: but it should be observed that he had been reconciled to David, and had not since attempted anything against him; besides, he was his prince, his father-in-law, and the rather he might be grieved for his death, and his men with him, because it was matter of joy to the Philistines, and they would endeavour to avail themselves of it; and especially the manner of his death, that he should be the cause of it himself, and die without repentance, as it might be feared, and quickly after consultation with a witch, and when left of God, if these particulars were known to David:

*and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel*; that is, the people of the Lord, even the house of Israel, or who were of the house of Israel; or if they are to be distinguished, the former may respect the people of the Lord who died in battle, for whom mourning was made; and the latter the people that survived, the whole kingdom of Israel, which had sustained a great loss by the slaughter made in this battle, as it follows:

*because they were fallen by the sword*; so many of them.

**Ver. 13.** *And David said unto the young man that told him, whence [art] thou?* etc.] From what place, or of what people and nation art thou? though Abarbinel thinks it neither respects place nor people, but that David thought he was another man's servant; so that the sense of the question is, to what man did he belong?

*and he answered, I [am] the son of a stranger, an Amalekite*; he was not any man's servant, but the son of a proselyte, of one that was by birth and nation an Amalekite, but proselyted to the Jewish religion; he might know of what nation he originally was, by the account he had given of what passed between him and Saul, (<sup><1008></sup>2 Samuel 1:8); though the mind of David might so disturbed as not to advert to it; or if he did, he might be willing to have it repeated for confirmation's sake.

**Ver. 14.** *And David said unto him, how, wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand*, etc.] By which it should seem that he did more than stand upon him, and press his body, that the spear might pierce through him, but that he drew his sword, and slew him; so David understood him, and is the sense of the phrase in (<sup><0975></sup>1 Samuel 17:51);

*to destroy the Lord's anointed?* a reason why David did not destroy him, when it was in the power of his hands, and which he made use of to dissuade others from it; and here charges it not only as a criminal, but a daring action in this young man, at which he expresses his admiration how he could do it; hereby representing it as a very shocking and detestable action; (see <sup><0246></sup>1 Samuel 24:6 26:9,11).

**Ver. 15.** *And David called one of the young men*, etc.] His servants that attended on him:

*and said, go near, [and] fall upon him*; by smiting him with his sword:

*and he smote him, that he died*; his orders were instantly obeyed. Kings and generals of armies had great power in those times and countries to execute a man immediately, without any other judge or jury: what may serve, or David might think would serve, to justify him in doing this, is what follows.

**Ver. 16.** *And David said unto him, thy blood [be] upon thy head*, etc.] The blood that he had shed, let him suffer for it; for as he had shed blood, his blood ought to be shed, according to the law of God; and for proof of this, that he had so done, he appeals to his own confession:

*for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed*; and what might serve to confirm the truth of what he had said were the crown and bracelet which he brought along with him; and besides he was an Amalekite, of a nation that was devoted to destruction; and, as Abarbanel thinks, David might suppose that he killed Saul to take

vengeance on him for what he had done to their nation; but, after all, both he and Maimonides<sup>f13</sup> allow the punishment of him was not strictly according to law, but was a temporary decree, an extraordinary case, and an act of royal authority; for in common cases a man was not to be condemned and put to death upon his own confession, since it is possible he may not be in his right mind<sup>f14</sup>; but David chose to exercise severity in this case, partly to show his respect to Saul, and to ingratiate himself into the favour of his friends, and partly to deter men from attempting to assassinate princes, who himself was now about to ascend the throne.

**Ver. 17.** *And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son.*] Composed the following elegy on account of their death, and sung it in a tune agreeable to it, he and the men that were with him.

**Ver. 18.** *(Also he bade them teach the children of Judah [the use] of the bow, etc.)* These words, with what follow in this verse, are rightly put into a parenthesis, since they do not begin nor make any part of the elegiac song, or lamentation of David; and are here inserted to show, that, amidst his sorrow and lamentation, he was not unmindful of the welfare of the people, and to provide for their defence and security; and therefore gave orders that care should be taken, especially in the tribe of Judah, which was his own tribe, and where he had the greatest authority, and for whom he might have the chiefest concern, that they should be trained up in military exercises, learn the art of war, and the use of every weapon of war, particularly of the bow, which, being a principal one, may be put for all; and which may be the rather mentioned, because the Philistines were expert in the use of it, and seemed to have done much execution with it in the recent battle, (see <sup><0808></sup>1 Samuel 31:3). They are said<sup>f15</sup> to be the inventors of it; though Pliny<sup>f16</sup> ascribes it to others; and it may be the people of Israel and of Judah had of late neglected to learn the use of it, and to make use of it, and instead of that had taken to other sort of arms in fighting; for that that was not unknown to them, or wholly disused, is clear from this song, (<sup><1022></sup>2 Samuel 1:22); see also (<sup><1312></sup>1 Chronicles 12:2). Moreover, as the Philistines, especially the Cherethites, were expert in archery, David found ways and means to get some of them afterwards into his service, and by whom he might improve his people in the art, (see <sup><1088></sup>2 Samuel 8:18); though some<sup>f17</sup> are of opinion that the word “keshet”, or bow, was the title of the following lamentation or song, taken from the mention of Jonathan’s bow in it; which song the children of Judah were to be taught to sing; but



then, as has been observed by some, for this there would have been no need of the following reference, since the whole this song is here recorded:

*behold, it is written in book of Jasher*); which the Targum calls the book of the law; and Jarchi and Ben Gersom restrain it to the book of Genesis, the book of the upright, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and suppose respect is had to the prophecy concerning Judah, (<sup>0498</sup>Genesis 49:8,9), but Kimchi, extending it to all the five books of Moses, adds his blessing, in (<sup>0837</sup>Deuteronomy 33:7). In the Arabic version it is explained of the book of Samuel, interpreted the book of songs, as if it was a collection of songs; which favours the above sense. Jerom <sup>f18</sup> interprets it of the same book, the book of the righteous prophets, Samuel, Gad, and Nathan: hut this book seems to have been a public register or annals, in which were recorded memorable actions in any age, and had its name from the uprightness and faithfulness in which it was kept; and in this were set down the order of David for the teaching the children of Judah the use of the bow, and perhaps the method which he directed to for instruction in it; (see Gill on “<sup>0603</sup>Joshua 10:13”).

**Ver. 19.** *The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places*, etc.] The high mountains of Gilboa, where Saul their king, and Jonathan his son, a prince of the blood, and natural heir to the crown, and multitudes of young men, the flower of the nation, were wounded and slain. Here begins the lamentation, or the elegiac song:

*how are the mighty fallen!* mighty men of war, strong and valiant, as Saul and his sons were, and the soldiers in his army.

**Ver. 20.** *Tell [it] not in Gath*, etc.] One of the five principalities of the Philistines, and the chief of them, being raised to a kingdom, and whose king was at the head of the armies of the Philistines that engaged with Saul. This is not to be understood of a command of David, who could not hinder the victory the Philistines had got over Israel being known at Gath, and talked of with pleasure there, but a wish it had not:

*publish [it] not in the streets of Ashkelon*; another of the principalities of the Philistines, and the sense the same as before:

*lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph*; it being usual in those times and countries for women, young women more especially, to express their joy, on occasion of

victories obtained, by singing and dancing, (<sup><0713></sup>Judges 11:34) (<sup><0816></sup>1 Samuel 18:6,7).

**Ver. 21.** *Ye mountains of Gilboa*, etc.] On which fell Saul and his sons, and many of the people of Israel, (<sup><0016></sup>2 Samuel 1:6 <sup><0816></sup>1 Samuel 31:1);

*[let there be] no dew, neither [let there be] rain upon you*; which is not to be understood as a real imprecation; for David would never curse any part of the land of Israel, for which he had so great a regard; but only as a poetical figure, expressing his concern for, and abhorrence of what happened on those mountains; much less did this in reality take place, as some have feigned, as if never dew nor rain descended on them <sup>f19</sup> afterwards; which has been refuted by travellers, particularly Borchard <sup>f20</sup>, who, speaking of this mountain, says, that as he was upon it, there was such a violent shower fell, that he was wet through his clothes; and in the year 1273, laying all night upon this hill, there was a great dew fell upon him:

*nor fields of offerings*; of heave offerings; the meaning is, that he could wish almost that those hills were not fruitful, and that they brought no fruit to perfection, so much as that heave offerings for the service of the sanctuary might be taken; which is expressive of great sterility and scarcity, (see <sup><2013></sup>Joel 1:13,16);

*for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away*; mighty men were obliged to cast away their shields and flee, which were greatly to their reproach and scandal, and to that of the whole nation: it was always reckoned very scandalous, and a great crime, even punishable with death, to cast away a shield, both with the Greeks and others <sup>f21</sup>: yea, also

*the shield of Saul, [as though he had] not [been] anointed with oil*; as if he was not the anointed king of Israel, but a common soldier: or else this respects his shield, as if that was not anointed, as shields used to be, that they might be smooth and glib, and missile weapons, as arrows and others, might not pass through them, but slide off, (see <sup><2315></sup>Isaiah 21:5); though Gersom gives a different turn, that Saul's shield being in continual use, needed not to be anointed, as those did which for a time had been laid aside. Abarbinel interprets these words thus, that he, who was the shield of the mighty, even Saul himself, was vilely cast away, or become loathsome; and that his shield was anointed, not with oil, but with the blood of the slain, and the fat of the mighty, connecting them with the words following.

**Ver. 22.** *From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back,* etc.] That is, it always did execution, the arrows shot from it pierced into men, shed their blood, and slew them; even they entered into the fat of the mighty, or mighty ones, that were fat, and brought them down; so the arrows of the Medes and Persians, the expert men among them, are said not to return in vain, (<sup><2810></sup>Jeremiah 50:9);

*and the sword of Saul returned not empty;* but was the means of slaying many; though Abarbinel observes also that this may be interpreted of the blood of the slain, and of the fat of the mighty men of Israel; and that though Saul and Jonathan saw many of these fall before their eyes, yet “for” or “because” of their blood, they were not intimidated and restrained from fighting; the bow of the one, and the shield of the other, turned not back on that account.

**Ver. 23.** *Saul and Jonathan [were] lovely and pleasant in their lives,* etc.] To one another, had no quarrel or difference with each other, only on the account of David; otherwise they agreed together in the court, and in the camp, in their councils, and in their conduct:

*and in their death they were not divided;* neither from the people, nor from one another; Jonathan stuck close by his father to the last; which is observed to clear him from any imputation of conspiracy against him:

*they were swifter than eagles;* in the quick dispatch of business, in hastening to the relief of the distressed, as Saul to the men of Jabeshgilead, and in the pursuit of their enemies, as of the Philistines, more than once:

*they were stronger than lions;* fighting with their enemies, who became an easy prey to them; and what is stronger than a lion among beasts? (<sup><0748></sup>Judges 14:18 <sup><3880></sup>Proverbs 30:30); or swifter than an eagle among birds, which is said to cut the air with its wings <sup>f22</sup>?

**Ver. 24.** *Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,* etc.] In their mournful elegies;

*who clothed you with scarlet, with [other] delights;* not only with scarlet, but with other fine and delightful apparel, such as were very pleasing to the female sex, especially young people, who are delighted with gay apparel; this Saul was the means of, through the spoil he took from his enemies, and by other methods taken by him to the enriching of the nation, whereby

husbands and parents were enabled to provide rich clothes for their wives and children:

*who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel*; broidered work, jewels of gold, etc. (see <sup><2488></sup>Isaiah 3:18-23 <sup><2660></sup>Ezekiel 16:10-13).

**Ver. 25.** *How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!* etc.] The mighty and valiant men of war, the common soldiers as well as their general officers, whose loss David mourns, and the repetition of shows how much it affected him:

*O Jonathan, [thou wast] slain in thine high places*; in the high places of the land of Israel, the mountains of Gilboa, which though high, and in his own country, could not protect him from his enemies, and from falling by their hands: he who had been so valiant and victorious a prince, and yet he fell, not in an enemy's country, but his own.

**Ver. 26.** *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan*, etc.] So he was, not only by nation and religion, but by affinity, having married the sister of Jonathan; and still more so by affection and friendship, he being a friend of David's, that stuck closer to him than a brother, and who loved him as his own soul; he was distressed for him, not on account of his spiritual and eternal state, which he doubted not was happy, but for the manner of his death, his loss of him, and want of his pleasant conversation, of his counsel and advice, and assistance in his present circumstances:

*very pleasant hast thou been unto me*; in their friendly visits of, and conversation with, one another; many a pleasant hour had they spent together, but now must see each other's faces no more in this world:

*thy love to me was wonderful*; as indeed he might well say, being towards one of a mean extract in comparison of his, to one who was not his own brother, but a brother-in-law; and to one that was a rival to the crown he was heir to, and would take it before him: and who ran the risk of losing his father's affection, and even his life, for espousing his cause: (see <sup><0980></sup>1 Samuel 18:1,3,4 19:2,4 20:30,33);

*passing the love of women*; either that which they are loved with by men, or that with which they love their husbands and children; which is generally the strongest and most affectionate. The Targum is,

“more than the love of two women,”

than his two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail; so Kimchi; meaning that he was more strongly and affectionately loved by Jonathan than by them, who yet might love him very well too.

**Ver. 27.** *How are the mighty fallen*, etc.] This is the burden of this elegiac song, being the third time it is mentioned:

*and the weapons of war perished!* not only the valiant soldiers were killed, but their arms were lost; and particularly he may mean Saul and Jonathan, who as they were the shields of the people, so they were the true weapons and instruments of war, and with them all military glory perished; which must be understood as a poetical figure, exaggerating their military characters; otherwise David, and many mighty men with him, remained, and who revived and increased the military glory of Israel, as the following history shows.

## CHAPTER 2

### INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 2

This chapter relates that David, upon inquiring of the Lord, was directed to go up to Hebron, and did, where he was anointed king of Judah, ([1011](#) 2 Samuel 2:1-4). And that being told of the kindness of the men of Jabeshgilead in burying Saul, he sent them thanks, and promised to remember it, and took the opportunity to let them know he was anointed king over Judah, ([1015](#) 2 Samuel 2:5-7). It also relates that Abner set up Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, to be king over Israel, ([1018](#) 2 Samuel 2:8-11); and that there was an encounter between twelve of Abner's men and twelve of David's, which brought on a sore battle between them, in which Abner was beaten, ([1022](#) 2 Samuel 2:12-17); and Asahel, who was of David's party, was slain in the pursuit by Abner, ([1028](#) 2 Samuel 2:18-25); when a retreat was sounded by Joab, at the influence of Abner, who, with his men, betook themselves to Mahanaim, where he had left Ishbosheth, ([1035](#) 2 Samuel 2:26-29). And the chapter closes with an account of the slain on both sides, the burial of Asahel, and the return of Joab with David's men to Hebron, ([1039](#) 2 Samuel 2:30-32).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass after this,* etc.] After David had heard of the death of Saul and Jonathan, and made a lamentation over them, perhaps the next day; since David and his men are only said to mourn, and weep, and fast till even, ([1010](#) 2 Samuel 1:10);

*that David inquired of the Lord;* of the Word of the Lord, as the Targum, by Abiathar the priest, and through the Urim and Thummim, in the ephod he had put on on this occasion:

*saying, shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?* though the Lord had promised him the kingdom, and he had been anointed by Samuel by his appointment, yet he was not hasty to take it into his hands, but was desirous of acting according to the will of God, and by his direction, and wait his time when and where he should go and take possession of it; he mentions Judah because it was his own tribe, and where he had the most friends:

*and the Lord said unto him, go up;* from Ziklag into the tribe of Judah, but did not mention any particular place whither he should go; hence another question was put:

*and David said, whither shall I go up?* To what town or city in the tribe of Judah? whether Jerusalem or any other?

*And he said, unto Hebron;* a city of the priests, a city of refuge, (<sup><4613></sup>Joshua 21:13 <sup><3167></sup>1 Chronicles 6:57), twenty miles from Jerusalem, or more, which is not directed to, because it was then chiefly in the hands of the Jebusites, and because, as Procopius Gazaeus says, Hebron was now the metropolis of Judah.

**Ver. 2.** *So David went up thither,* etc.] From Ziklag to Hebron, which was sixteen miles according to Bunting <sup>f23</sup>

*and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's wife, the Carmelite;* who were beloved by him, and who had shared with him in his troubles, and which he took with him to partake of his honour and grandeur, wealth and riches; in which he was now a type of Christ. (see <sup><817></sup>Romans 8:17 <sup><821></sup>2 Timothy 2:11,12).

**Ver. 3.** *And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household,* etc.] They and their families, and no doubt provided well for them when he was settled on the throne, who had shown themselves to be his faithful friends, closely attached to his interest, and had run the risk of their all on his account. (see <sup><1028></sup>Matthew 19:28).

*And they dwelt in the cities of Hebron;* in the towns and villages about it; for that itself being a city of refuge, and inhabited by priests, there was not room enough for all David's men, who were now increasing, persons from various tribes flocking to him. (see <sup><310></sup>1 Chronicles 12:1-40).

**Ver. 4.** *And the men of Judah came,* etc.] The inhabitants of the tribe of Judah came from the several parts of it to Hebron, that is, the principal of them, the elders of each city:

*and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah;* they did not take upon them to make him king over all Israel, but left the rest of the tribes to act for themselves; and no doubt in this they had the mind of David, who was not willing to force himself upon the people at once, but by degrees get the whole government into his hands, as Providence should

make his way; these men knew the kingdom was promised to their tribe, from (<sup><4490></sup>Genesis 49:10); and were quite clear in what they did, and, without question, knew that David had been anointed by Samuel: but as that anointing was only a declaration of the Lord's choice of him, and of his will that he should be king after Saul's death, he is again anointed by the people, as an inauguration into his office:

*and they told David, saying, [that] the men of Jabeshgilead [were they] that buried Saul.* It is highly probable, that as soon as David was anointed king, the first thing he thought of was to inquire after the body of the late king, and give it an honourable interment, and upon inquiry was told that the men of Jabeshgilead had buried him already. (see <sup><6811></sup>1 Samuel 31:11-13).

**Ver. 5.** *And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabeshgilead,* etc.] To return them thanks for their courage and boldness in rescuing the bodies of Saul and his sons out of the hands of the Philistines, and for their civility in the burial of them:

*and said unto them, blessed [be] ye of the Lord;* which may be considered either as a wish, the Lord bless you for it, or as a prediction, the Lord will bless you:

*that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, [even] unto Saul, and have buried him.* To bury the dead, with the Jews, was always reckoned an instance of humanity and kindness, and indeed of piety; an act done in imitation of God <sup>f24</sup>, who buried Moses, and so it might be expected the divine blessing would attend it.

**Ver. 6.** *And now the Lord show kindness and truth unto you,* etc.] Or true kindness; confer real favours, bestow upon you good and substantial blessings, blessings indeed!

*and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.* He not only prayed to God to bless them and reward them for it, but would remember them himself, and at a proper opportunity would show favour to them for this act of kindness to Saul. De Dieu proposes to consideration whether it may not be as well interpreted to this sense, "and I also do you this kindness" because of it; that is, have done you this honour by sending messengers to you, to thank you for it, and by wishing a blessing upon you on account of it, and by praising and commending you for it; but the former sense seems best.



**Ver. 7.** *Now therefore let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant,* etc.] And not be afraid of the Philistines, who might resent their conduct in taking away from them the bodies of Saul and his sons, whom they had hung up in triumph; and these men might fear they would bring their armies against them, and destroy them; but David bids them be of good heart and courage, and not be afraid of them:

*for your master Saul is dead;* or rather “though” <sup>f25</sup> he is dead; for that he was dead they knew full well, having buried him, and needed no information of it; but being dead, they might be discouraged, as having none to protect and defend them, or come to their relief as he did, should they be attacked:

*and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them;* or “for even”, or “notwithstanding” <sup>f26</sup>; and this therefore being the case, he would take their parts, and help and assist them; and which he suggests to them, to invite them to own him as their king also, and put themselves under his protection.

**Ver. 8.** *But Abner, the son of Ner, captain of Saul’s host,* etc.] This man’s father, Ner, was Saul’s uncle, (<sup>0940</sup>1 Samuel 14:50), and he was his own cousin, and being general of his army, a post he was willing to keep, might be the reasons for doing what he did, as follows:

*took Ishbosheth the son of Saul;* and who seems to be his only son left, except what he had by his concubine. This man’s name is Eshbaal in (<sup>1083</sup>1 Chronicles 8:33 9:39). Baal is the name of a shameful idol, and which was therefore sometimes called Bosheth, “shame”. (see <sup>2090</sup>Hosea 9:10); wherefore such names of men, which had Baal in them, were changed for Besheth or Bosheth, as the names of Jerubbaal and Meribbaal, who were called Jerubbesheth and Mephibosheth. (see <sup>0785</sup>Judges 8:35); compared with (<sup>0112</sup>2 Samuel 11:21), and (<sup>3040</sup>2 Samuel 4:4) with (<sup>1034</sup>1 Chronicles 8:34 9:40). The latter of these, a son of Jonathan, bid fairest for the crown by lineal succession, but he being but five years of age, and lame, this man Abner judged fittest for his purpose; and though he knew it was the will of God, and he had sworn that David should be king, yet so blind and obstinate was his ambition, that he set up another against him:

*and brought him over to Mahanaim;* a city on the other side Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, on the border of the half tribe of Manasseh; (see <sup>0635</sup>Joshua 13:26-30 <sup>0370</sup>Genesis 32:2); and hither Abner had Ishbosheth, partly to

keep the men of Jabeshgilead in awe, to whom David had sent messengers, acquainting them with his being king of Judah, and prevent their joining with him; and partly that he might be at a proper distance both from the Philistines and from David, till he could form his measures, and gradually carry his point, as he did.

**Ver. 9.** *And he made him king over Gilead*, etc.] Which lay beyond Jordan, and included the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh; these he prevailed upon to acknowledge Ishbosheth, their king, and proclaimed him king over them:

*and over the Ashurites*: that is, those of the house or tribe of Asher, as the Targum, and indeed none else can well be thought of; some indeed read the Geshurites, as the Vulgate Latin version; but these were never expelled by the Israelites, and had at this time a king over them, (<sup><1082></sup>2 Samuel 3:3); (see <sup><1083></sup>Joshua 13:13);

*and over Jezreel*; the great plain which went along the borders of Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali, and included these tribes:

*and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin*: the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin:

*and over all Israel*, excepting the tribe of Judah; that is, he prevailed first on one of these, then on another, until he got all the tribes of Israel to own him for their king; David all this time being still and quiet, and not opposing him, waiting God's own time to open the way for his possession of the kingdom over all Israel, and having a strict regard to his oath to Saul, (<sup><1084></sup>1 Samuel 24:21,22).

**Ver. 10.** *Ishbosheth, Saul's son, [was] forty years old when he began to reign over Israel*, etc.] Being born the same year his father began to reign. (See Gill on "<sup><1085></sup>1 Samuel 31:6");

*and reigned two years*; which some understand of these, and no more; and whereas David reigned seven years and a half over Judah, before he reigned over all Israel, it is thought by the Jewish chronologer<sup>f27</sup> that there was a vacancy in the throne of Israel for the space of five years, and so says Kimchi; which vacancy was either before the reign of Ishbosheth, it being a matter in dispute whether he or Mephibosheth should be set up, or after his death; the tribes of Israel being so long before they acknowledged David their king; or Ishbosheth's reign of two years must be in the middle

of David's reign over Judah; but there is no need to suppose either of these, for the text says not that Ishbosheth reigned only two years; but the meaning is, as Ben Gersom observes, that he had reigned two years when the following things happened, and a war began, and not by him but by Abner, and carried on by him; and he being an inactive prince, the rest of his reign was reckoned as no reign, whereas he lived and reigned the same length of time David did over Judah; (see ~~1010~~ 2 Samuel 3:1);

*but the house of Judah followed David*; kept close to him as their king, yielding a cheerful obedience to him.

**Ver. 11.** *And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah*, etc.] And over them only,

*was seven years and six months*; to which being added thirty three years he reigned over all Israel in Jerusalem, made forty years and six months; and which, for the roundness of the number, is usually called forty years. (see ~~1010~~ 2 Samuel 5:4 ~~1021~~ 1 Kings 2:11).

**Ver. 12.** *And Abner the son of Ner*, etc.] Who was before captain of Saul's host, and now of Ishbosheth's:

*and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul*; who seem to be not only his domestic servants, that waited upon him, or his courtiers, but his whole army by what follows:

*went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon*; came from the city on the other side Jordan, where perhaps they had been two years past, concerting schemes to bring all Israel under the government of Ishbosheth; in which they had succeeded, only Judah stood out with David; and in order to reduce that tribe, they passed over Jordan and came to Gibeon, a city in Benjamin. (see ~~1025~~ Joshua 18:25).

**Ver. 13.** *And Joab the son of Zeruiah*, etc.] A sister of David, and this her son was general of David's army:

*and the servants of David, went out*; that is, his army went out from Hebron to Gibeon, which was twenty four miles <sup>f28</sup> to meet that under Abner; for though he had but one tribe with him, and Ishbosheth had all the rest, yet Judah was a numerous, powerful, and warlike tribe; and besides many out of the other tribes had joined them, and, above all, God was on their side, and they had his promise to rely upon with respect to the

establishment of the kingdom in the house of David, and his power and providence to trust in, and therefore went out boldly and cheerfully to meet the armies of Israel under Abner:

*and met together by the pool of Gibeon*; the same perhaps with the great waters in Gibeon, (<sup>2411D</sup>Jeremiah 41:12);

*and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool*; facing one another, and watching each other's motions.

**Ver. 14.** *And Abner said to Joab*, etc.] Perceiving he made no motion towards an engagement with him, his orders from David being only to act on the defensive, and avoid as much as possible the effusion of blood:

*let the young men now arise, and play before us*; with their swords after the manner of gladiators or duellers; that it might appear who were best skilled in the use of the sword, and who were the bravest, stoutest, and most courageous; and this he proposed in a way of bravado, and in order to bring on a battle, or to decide the quarrel between them; and this bloody barbarous exercise Abner calls play, as if it was a diversion and pastime to see men wounding and killing one another:

*and Joab said, let them arise*; he accepted the challenge, not caring to be hectored and bullied by Abner.

**Ver. 15.** *Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin*, etc.] Whom Abner had picked out of that tribe, being his own, and whom he knew to be stout and courageous men, and closely attached to him. It seems by this as if Abner's men,

*[which pertained to] Ishbosheth, the son of Saul*, passed over the pool of Gibeon unto Joab's men; so forward were they to engage in this duel, and it makes it still more appear that they were the aggressors:

*and twelve of the servants of David*; of his army under Joab, whom Joab either selected, or they, offered themselves as willing to engage with the twelve that were come over.

**Ver. 16.** *And they caught everyone his fellow by the head*, etc.] By the hair of his head with his hand:

*and [thrust] his sword in his fellow's side*; which he had in the other;

*so they fell down together*; the twelve on each side, all the twenty four; some think only the twelve on Abner's side fell; but to me it seems that they all fell dead as one man, since they thrust their swords in each other's sides:

*wherefore that place was called Helkathhazzurim, which [is] in Gibeon*; the field of rocks, or of mighty men as strong as rocks, who stood as immovable, and would not give way, but fell and died in the field of battle; the Targum interprets it, the inheritance of the slain.

**Ver. 17.** *And there was a very sore battle that day*, etc.] When the twenty four men fell together, and no decision could be made thereby, or any triumph on either side, both armies drew up in battle array, and fought very furiously:

*and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David*; the army under him had the worst of it, and were routed, and obliged to flee before the army of David under the command of Joab.

**Ver. 18.** *And there were three sons of Zeruiah there*, etc.] In the battle,

*Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel*; Joab was the general of the array, Abishai was he who went into Saul's host at night, and took away his spear and cruse of water at his head, (<sup><1026></sup>1 Samuel 26:6,7); and it is for the sake of the third, Asahel, that the account is given, the story of his death being about to be told.

*And Asahel [was as] light of foot as a wild roe*: swiftness of foot, as well as courage, for which this man was famous, (<sup><13125></sup>1 Chronicles 11:26); was a very great qualification for a warrior<sup>f29</sup>. So Achilles, in Homer<sup>f30</sup>, is often said to be swift of foot, and others of his heroes are commended for their swiftness. Harold son of King Canutus, was from his swiftness<sup>f31</sup> called Harefoot; as here this man for the same reason is compared to a wild roe, which is a very swift creature, or to one of the roes that were in the field as in the original text. (see <sup><21117></sup>Song of Solomon 2:7,17 8:14); one sort of which, called "kemas", is said to run as swift as a tempest<sup>f32</sup>.

**Ver. 19.** *And Asahel pursued after Abner*, etc.] Ambitious of the glory of taking or slaying the general of the army of Israel; trusting to his swiftness, not considering that the race is not always to the swift, and that he had to do with a veteran soldier, and he a raw young man, though valiant:

*and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left in following Abner*; he kept his eye upon him, and pursued him closely, disregarding persons on the right or left he could have made prisoners; but those he neglected, being bent on taking Abner if possible.

**Ver. 20.** *Then Abner looked behind him*, etc.] Perceiving one at his heels, and making haste up to him.

*And said, [art] thou Asahel?* for it seems he knew him personally, being well acquainted with his family:

*and he answered, I [am]*; so that they were very near to each other, as to discourse together, and be heard and understood by each other.

**Ver. 21.** *And Abner said unto him*, etc.] Having a respect for him, and consulting his good, and however fearing his brother Joab should he slay him:

*turn thee aside to thy right or to thy left*; he does not advise him to go back, which would have been to his disgrace, having engaged in the pursuit, but to turn to the right or left, as if pursuing some other person and not Abner:

*and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armour*; one of the common soldiers, or an attendant on Abner, a young man like himself, whom he might be able to cope with, and take him a prisoner and disarm him, when he was not a match for such an old experienced officer as he was; and this Abner seems to speak as a friend, consulting the young man's safety and his honour too.

*But, Asahel would not turn aside from following him*; fired with the ambition of taking him, and not content with any prey short of him; and perhaps was the more animated by what he said, as supposing it arose from fear of him.

**Ver. 22.** *And Abner said again to Asahel*, etc.] Being loath to dispatch him:

*turn thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground?* which was giving him fair warning, and letting him know what he must expect, if he did not desist from his pursuit:

*how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* the general of David's army, a stout valiant commander, a man of spirit and resentment, whom Abner knew full well, and that should he slay his brother, he would never be friendly with him, or look pleasantly on him; he would never forgive him, but seek ways and means to avenge his blood on him and by this it seems as if Abner was conscious to himself that he was in a wrong cause, that the kingdom was of right David's, and would be his, and he must be obliged to make peace with him; when he should stand in need of Joab as his friend, which he could not expect, if he slew his brother, nor to live in favour and friendship with him hereafter.

**Ver. 23.** *Howbeit, he refused to turn aside,* etc.] Determined on making him his captive if possible.

*Wherefore Abner, with the hinder end of the spear;* he had in his hand, which seems to have had a pike at both ends; so that with the hinder end of it, next to Asahel, he thrust it at him, without turning to him: and

*smote him under the fifth [rib];* the place where hang the gall and liver, as the Jewish commentators from their Talmud<sup>f33</sup> observe. There are twelve ribs, seven of which are called true ones, and five spurious; if this was the fifth of the seven, the spear must pierce the breast<sup>f34</sup>, and strike the seat of life, the heart and lungs; if the fifth from the eighth and first of the spurious ones, then wounding the hypochondria, it must pass to the vital bowels of the abdomen, which seems to be the case here<sup>f35</sup>: according to some<sup>f36</sup> this is meant of the inferior ribs, which we call the short ribs, and any of these five are called the fifth rib; and Abner must strike him in the right side, because he was behind him, and which stroke must be deadly, because he struck him through the liver:

*that the spear came out behind him:* the thrust was so violent that the spear went through him, and came out at his back:

*and he fell down and died in the same place;* he fell at once, and died on the spot immediately:

*and it came to pass, [that] as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still;* that is, such of David's men who were in the pursuit after the Israelites, when they came to the spot, and saw Asahel dead, they had no power to proceed in the pursuit, being so troubled and grieved at the death of him.

**Ver. 24.** *Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner*, etc.] Or rather but Joab, etc. <sup>f37</sup>. They stood not still as the rest, but, filled with indignation and resentment, pursued after Abner, to be avenged on him:

*and the sun went down when they came to the hill of Ammah*; a hill by the side of which was a pool of water, as Kimchi thinks, and from thence so called:

*that [lieth] before Giah*; a place near Gibeon, but nowhere after mentioned:

*by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon*; very likely not far from the city from which it had its name.

**Ver. 25.** *And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner*, etc.] Either those that were with him before, who upon the battle were dispersed, but now got together again; or others of that tribe, who, hearing of the defeat of Abner, went out of the several cities after him, to strengthen his hands, and renew the fight with Joab:

*and became one troop*; were united together in a body, and became a regular troop:

*and stood on the top of an hill*; which was some advantage to them, and from whence they could take a view of Joab's army, and observe its motions.

**Ver. 26.** *Then Abner called to Joab*, etc.] For having now a troop of men with him, he could stop with the greater safety; and being on an hill, and perhaps Joab on one opposite to him, could call to him, so as to be heard:

*and said, shall the sword devour for ever?* slay men, and devour their blood. (see <sup>2460</sup>Jeremiah 46:10). That he was not thoughtful of, nor concerned about, when he set the young men to fighting before the battle, and called it play to wound and shed the blood of each other; but now the battle going against him, he complains of the devouring sword; and though it had been employed but a few hours, it seemed long to him, a sort of an eternity:

*knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* since it might issue in the death of himself, or of Joab, or of both, as it had in Asahel, or, however, in the death of a multitude of others; and which at last would cause bitter reflection in the prosecutors of the war:



*how long shall it be then ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?* he pleads relation, that the men of Israel and the men of Judah were brethren; so they were by nation and religion, and therefore should not pursue one another to destruction; but who was the aggressor? It was Abner, that brought his forces against Judah; the men of David acted only on the defensive.

**Ver. 27.** *And Joab said, as God liveth,* etc.] Which was the form of an oath, swearing by the living God:

*unless thou hadst spoken;* that is, these words in (<sup><1024></sup>2 Samuel 2:14); “let the young men arise and play”, that he had not given the challenge to fight:

*surely then in the morning the people had gone up everyone from following his brother;* they would have gone away and never fought at all; they were not desirous of shedding their blood, and following after them to slay them: thus he lays the blame upon Abner, and makes him to be the cause and beginner of the war. Some render the particle by “if”, and give the sense, that if he had spoken what he last did sooner, the people would long before this time have desisted from pursuing them; for it was not from a thirst after their blood, and a desire to luke vengeance on them, that they pursued them, but to bring them to submission, and lay down their arms; for they could not in honour retreat until they desired it; but the former sense seems best, and is the general sense of the Jewish commentators.

**Ver. 28.** *So Joab blew a trumpet,* etc.] Or caused one to be blown as a signal of a retreat:

*and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more;* as soon as they heard the trumpet sound, the meaning of which they understood, they stepped at once, and left off their pursuit:

*neither fought they any more;* that day, and perhaps no pitched battle afterwards; for none we read of, though the war continued after this a long time, and there might be often skirmishes, which greatly weakened Abner’s party. (see <sup><1031></sup>2 Samuel 3:1).

**Ver. 29.** *And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain,* etc.] The plain of Jordan. He marched with his men all night, lest Joab should return, and pursue him, and take vengeance on him for the death of his brother:

*and passed over Jordan*; at one of the fords of it:

*and went through all Bithron*; the name of a province or country, as Jarchi, called so perhaps from its being separated from the rest of the tribes of Israel by the river Jordan; some think the mountains of Bether were in this country, (<sup>2007</sup>Song of Solomon 2:17). From Gibeon, where the battle was fought, to Bithron, according to Bunting <sup>f38</sup>, was twenty eight miles, the which he says was in the tribe of Gad, twenty eight miles from Jerusalem northeastward, lying between Dibon and Jordan:

*and they came to Mahanaim*: from whence they came, and where they had left Ishbosheth, (<sup>4008</sup>2 Samuel 2:8,12). From Bithron to this place, according to the same writer <sup>f39</sup>, was sixteen miles.

**Ver. 30.** *And Joab returned from following Abner*, etc.] It being in his commission from David to shed as little blood as he could:

*and when he had gathered all the people together*; who had been pursuing the Israelites, some one way and some another:

*there lacked of David's servants nineteen men, and Asahel*; who is particularly mentioned, because a very honourable man, valiant and courageous, a relation of David, and brother of Joab the general, and the loss of him was greater than all the rest. This has made some think that the twelve men of the servants of David were not killed in the duel, or otherwise there must be but seven slain in the battle; though that is not more strange than that in the battle with Midian not one should be slain, and, yet a terrible slaughter was made of the Midianites, (<sup>0810E</sup>Numbers 31:1-54). So in a sharp battle between the Spartans and Arcadians, ten thousand of the latter were slain, and not one of the former <sup>f40</sup>. Stilicho killed more than an hundred thousand of the army of Rhadagaisus, king of the Goths, without losing one of his own men, no, not so much as one wounded, as Austin affirms <sup>f41</sup>. At the battle of Issus the Persians lost an hundred ten thousand men, and Alexander not two hundred <sup>f42</sup>. Julius Caesar killed in the three camps of Juba, Scipio, and Labienus, ten thousand men, with the loss of fifty men only <sup>f43</sup>. After these instances, not only the case here, but that between the Israelites and Midianites, cannot be thought incredible, for the sake of which the above are produced. This account, according to Josephus <sup>f44</sup>, was taken the day following.

**Ver. 31.** *But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and Abner's men*, etc.] Of those of the tribe of Benjamin that joined him, and of those

that he brought with him from Mahanaim; so many of them were smitten, as appeared by their bodies lying on the field of battle,

*[so that] three hundred and threescore men died*; the number of the slain on each side was very unequal.

**Ver. 32.** *And they took up Asahel*, etc.] From the place where he fell; that is, Joab and Abishai, his brethren, as Josephus<sup>f45</sup> relates; after they had buried the dead in the field of battle, they took up him:

*and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which [was in] Bethlehem*: not in the city of Bethlehem, but without it, on the south side of it; so says Fuller<sup>f46</sup>,

“southward, i.e. of Bethlehem, we find Asahel’s sepulchre, who was buried in the grave of his father.”

What was his father’s name is not known, only his mother’s name, Zeruah, is mentioned in Scripture, a sister of David, and daughter of Jesse the Bethlehemite. Bethlehem was sixteen miles from Gibeon, according to Bunting<sup>f47</sup>.

*And Joab and his men went all night*; not the night following the battle, but the night following the next day, after he had been to Bethlehem, and buried his brother there; wherefore, lest David should think it long before he came, he travelled all night:

*and they came to Hebron at break of day*; where David was, which, according to the same writer<sup>f48</sup>, was twenty miles from Bethlehem.

# CHAPTER 3

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 3

This chapter begins with the continuation of the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, ([2 Samuel 3:1](#)); and gives an account of the wives of David, and his sons by them, ([2 Samuel 3:2-5](#)); of a quarrel between Ishbosheth and Abner, ([2 Samuel 3:6-11](#)); and of Abner's proposal to make a league with David; but David would not see his face unless Michal his wife was returned to him, who was accordingly, ([2 Samuel 3:12-16](#)); and of the interest Abner made with the elders of Israel in favour of David, which he reported to him, and promised to make more, ([2 Samuel 3:17-21](#)); but Joab returning from a pursuit, and with great spoil, just as Abner departed, and hearing of it, chided David for letting him go, and privately sent for him back, and treacherously murdered him, ([2 Samuel 3:22-27](#)); from which murder David cleared himself and his kingdom, and for it made dreadful imprecations on Joab and his family, ([2 Samuel 3:28-30](#)); and buried Abner with great lamentation, expressing much concern for his death, and the high opinion he had of him, ([2 Samuel 3:31-39](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David*, etc.] The recent battle, though so much in favour of David, did not, put an end to the war between him and Ishbosheth, which lasted five years longer; for it was when Ishbosheth had reigned two years that that battle was fought, and he reigned five years longer; for not till his death, and when David had reigned above seven years in Hebron, was he made king over all Israel; and during this time peace was not made, but the war carried on; though perhaps not in pitched battles, of which we no more read, but in skirmishes:

*but David waxed stronger and stronger*; he having the advantage in all such skirmishes, and persons continually coming over to his side from the several tribes:

*and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker*: being always worsted whenever they skirmished with David's men, and by continual revolts from

them. This is reckoned an emblem of the kingdoms of Christ and antichrist, the one increasing more and more, as it has and will do, and the other decreasing, and before long will be consumed; and of the two parties in a regenerate man, grace and indwelling sin, the one as to its exercise growing stronger and stronger, and the other as to its influence on the outward conversation weaker and weaker.

**Ver. 2.** *And unto David were sons born in Hebron*, etc.] He was married before he came there, had wives in his state of exile, but had no children by them there, at least no sons; if any, only daughters:

*and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess*; who being mentioned first, and her son his firstborn, seems to have been his wife before he took Abigail; he had not much comfort of this firstborn son of his; (see <sup><1301></sup>2 Samuel 13:1-39).

**Ver. 3.** *And the second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite*, etc.] That is: who had been the wife of Nabal. This son's name is called Daniel, (<sup><1300></sup>1 Chronicles 3:1); and was the first name he had, and which his father gave him, because as if he should say, "God hath judged me", and pleaded the cause of his reproach from Nabal, (<sup><0253></sup>1 Samuel 25:39); but why he should be called Chileab is not easy to say; the name is commonly thought to signify "like unto his father", or "all father": had all the features of his father, and was exceedingly like him; the Jews have a fabulous story concerning this <sup>f49</sup>, not worth relating:

*and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur*; in (<sup><0208></sup>1 Samuel 27:8) we read of David's invading the land of the Geshurites; and the Jews say <sup>f50</sup> that he then took the daughter of this king captive, and she being a beautiful woman married her, after made a proselyte according to the law in (<sup><0210></sup>Deuteronomy 21:10-23); but it should be observed that David slew all the women of that country, and left not any alive; and besides that lay to the south of Judah, whereas this Geshur, of which Talmai was king, was a part of Syria, (<sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 15:8); and lay to the north of the land of Israel; and with this king David hereby entered into an alliance, to strengthen his interest against Ishbosheth in those parts; of the trouble he met with from Absalom, (see <sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 13:1-18:33), etc. contrary to the expectations he had raised when he gave him the name of Absalom, or Leabsalom, as in (<sup><1300></sup>1 Chronicles 3:2); that is, one given "for his father's peace".

**Ver. 4.** *And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith*, etc.] The same that usurped the throne before his father's death, to anticipate Solomon, and died by his order, (<sup><1006></sup>1 Kings 1:5 2:25);

*and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital*; of whom we read nowhere else.

**Ver. 5.** *And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife*, etc.] Who also is not spoken of in any other place; only, in a like chronological account as the former, it is remarked that the mother of this only is called David's wife; the reason of which is supposed to be, either because she was a person of no note, and had nothing else to distinguish her; but the same may be said of the two foregoing; or because she was his beloved wife, his heifer, as her name signifies; hence the Jews <sup>f51</sup> take her to be Michal his first wife, whom he greatly loved, and who, though she had no children after her contempt of David for playing before the ark, unto the day of her death, yet might have before: but it should be observed, that as yet she was not returned to David in Hebron; and when she was returned, did not seem to continue there long enough to have a son there; and besides, being his first wife, would not be reckoned last; but still more foreign is another notion of the Jews <sup>f52</sup>, that she was Saul's widow, who though she might not be married to another might be married to a king, as David was; and this they suppose receives some confirmation from (<sup><1028></sup>2 Samuel 12:8); but after all it may be this phrase "David's wife", as some have observed, by a figure the rhetoricians call "zeugma", or "hypozeugma", is to be joined to everyone of the women before mentioned, (<sup><1032></sup>2 Samuel 3:2-5), who were his wives, and so called to distinguish them from his concubines, by whom he had sons also. Polygamy, or plurality of wives, which David gave into, is no favourable part of his character.

**Ver. 6.** *And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David*, etc.] As long as that continued, as it did until the following quarrel happened between Ishbosheth and Abner:

*that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul*; or was strongly in the interest of that house, and used his utmost endeavours to support and confirm it.

**Ver. 7.** *And Saul had a concubine, whose name [was] Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah*, etc.] By whom he had two sons, (<sup><1038></sup>2 Samuel 21:8). Josephus <sup>f53</sup> calls her father's name Sibathus:

*and [Ishbosheth] said to Abner*; though the word “Ishbosheth” is not in the text, it is rightly supplied; for no other can be supposed to speak:

*wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father’s concubine?* and defiled her; though perhaps it was not so much the act of uncleanness that so much offended him, or the dishonour reflected on him and his family thereby, as it discovered an ambitious view in Abner to get the kingdom into his own hands, to which this was the leading step; (see <sup><1022></sup>1 Kings 2:22). Whether Abner was really guilty of this sin or no is not easy to determine; though, by his not absolutely denying it, it looks as if it was not merely a jealousy of Ishbosheth, or a false report made unto him; though, especially if he was not fully satisfied of it, it would have been his wisdom to have said nothing of it to him, since his continuance on the throne so much depended on him.

**Ver. 8.** *Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ishbosheth*, etc.] If false he had a good deal of reason for it; and if true, he thought he deserved better at his hands, than to be reproved for and upbraided with what he might think was a very small fault, and might easily be connived at, and especially in one that had been so serviceable to him:

*and said, [am] I a dog’s head*; such a mean, vile, contemptible person with thee, as if no better than a dog, and as useless and as unserviceable as a dead dog, the head of a dog cut off; (see <sup><0244></sup>1 Samuel 24:14) (<sup><3098></sup>2 Samuel 9:8); or am I esteemed and to be treated as a head of dogs, a keeper of a pack of hounds, and not as a general of the armies of Israel? so Jarchi and others; but it seems rather to respect the filthy nature of a dog, that will couple with any; and so the sense is, am I such a filthy lustful creature that care not with whom I lie, no more, than a dog?

*which against Judah do show kindness to the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends*; who in opposition to the tribe of Judah, which alone abode by David, had shown respect to the family of Saul, and all his friends, by his close attachment to Ishbosheth:

*and have not delivered thee into the hand David*; when it was in his power to have done it many a tittle:

*that thou chargest me today with a fault concerning this woman?* he neither denies nor owns the charge, and yet, by his not denying it, tacitly owns it; though, by his way of speaking, he suggests as if it was no fault at all, at least a very trifling one, and such as ought not to have been

mentioned to him, considering the services he had done to Ishbosheth and his family.

**Ver. 9.** *So do God to Abner, and more also,* etc.] He wishes the worst of evils to himself, such as he cared not to name; but left them to be supposed what he meant as utter ruin and destruction of himself, soul and body:

*except as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;* meaning if he did not do that David, which God had sworn should be done, namely, what follows, the translation of the kingdom to him; by which it appears that Abner knew of the promise and oath of God respecting this matter; and therefore acted against his conscience, in setting up Ishbosheth on the throne; which he knew would not prosper, and that he was fighting against God; which shows what a hardened wicked creature he was, and how far ambition, and being thought to be of consequence, will carry a man.

**Ver. 10.** *To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul,* etc.] Which was what the Lord had sworn to do, (<sup>4952</sup>1 Samuel 15:28,29); and which Abner now threatens to do, insolently taking that to himself which belonged to the Lord, and as if he could not do it without him:

*and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah;* over the one as well as over the other; for it was set over Judah already:

*from Dan even unto Beersheba;* which were the utmost borders of the land of Israel, from north to south, and so includes the whole.

**Ver. 11.** *And he could not answer Abner a word again,* etc.] That is, he would not, he durst not; otherwise, if it was fact he charged him with, he could have insisted on the truth of it, and aggravated the crime and scandal of it; and observed it to him, that the kindness he had shown him was no excuse for it; but such things, though he would, he durst not say:

*because he feared him;* he had the army at his command, and could dethrone him when he pleased; and it has been the fate of greater men than Ishbosheth to be awed by their generals, and even David himself; (see <sup>4039</sup>2 Samuel 3:39).

**Ver. 12.** *And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf,* etc.] On his own account, and not on the account of Ishbosheth, or the people of Israel; but to obtain terms for himself, or in his own name, as representing him



and standing in his stead; or secretly, as Kimchi explains it, unknown to Ishbosheth, or the people of Israel. The Targum is,

“out of his place;”

he sent them from the place where he was, from Mahanaim:

*saying, whose [is] the land?* the land of Israel, is it not thine, David? verily it is; to whom does it belong but unto thee, to whom the Lord has given it? not to any of Saul’s posterity: this he ordered the messengers to say in the first place, in order to ingratiate himself to David, and gain his messengers an audience. The Targum is,

“I swear by him that made the earth;”

so Jarchi says, it is an oath by him whose the earth is, even by the living God, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof:

*saying [also], make thy league with me;* he desired to enter into a covenant of friendship with him, that everything that had passed might be forgiven and forgotten:

*and, behold, my hand [shall be] with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee:* he promises on his part to do his utmost to bring all Israel under his government and to obedience to him.

**Ver. 13.** *And he said, well, I will make a league with thee,* etc.] He accepted of the offer, he was ready and willing to enter into a covenant of friendship with him, and forgive all past offences:

*but one thing I require of thee;* as the condition of this covenant:

*that is, thou shall not see my face;* be admitted into my presence, or have any mark of my favour and respect:

*except thou first bring Michal, Saul’s daughter, when thou comest to see my face;* he insisted on it that Michal, Saul’s daughter, and his wife, should be brought along with him, and presented to him; this was the preliminary to the league and covenant; if this was not complied with, the proposal would not be attended to. This shows the great affection David retained for his first wife, though he had had six since, (see <sup><1000></sup>2 Samuel 3:2-5), and though she had lived with another man, (<sup><10254></sup>1 Samuel 25:44); as also his great regard to the honour of Saul’s family, that one of them might share

with him in the grandeur of the kingdom; though this also might be a piece of policy in him, to gain the friends of Saul's family to him.

**Ver. 14.** *And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's son,* etc.] When Abner's messengers returned to him, and acquainted him with the condition of David's entering into a league with him, it is highly probable that Abner sent them or others to David, to let him know that he could not do this of himself; that it was advisable for him to write to Ishbosheth, whose sister she was, and demand her of him; and that then he would use his interest with Ishbosheth to grant it, and this method David took:

*saying, deliver [me] my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines;* two arguments he made use of to enforce his demand; one is, that it was his wife he required, to whom he had a right, and no other man; and the other is, that he had purchased her at a great expense, at the risk of his life, in slaying an hundred Philistines, whose foreskins he paid in for her at the instance of Saul; he mentions but one hundred, though he gave two hundred as her dowry, no more being required than one hundred; (see <sup><0985></sup>1 Samuel 18:25,27). Josephus very wrongly says six hundred <sup>f54</sup>; the Syriac and Arabic have here two hundred.

**Ver. 15.** *And Ishbosheth sent and took her from [her] husband,* etc.] Her second husband, to whom Saul had given her, (<sup><0254></sup>1 Samuel 25:44);

*[even] from Phaltiel the son of Laish;* he is called Phalti in (<sup><0254></sup>1 Samuel 25:44).

**Ver. 16.** *And her husband went with her along weeping behind her,* etc.] Because of his great affection to her, unwilling to part with her, but forced to it at the command of the king her brother:

*to Bahurim;* a city in the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><0096></sup>2 Samuel 19:16); perhaps the same with Almon, (<sup><0218></sup>Joshua 21:18); these two words being of the same signification; and the Targum has it hero Almuth; so Alemeth in (<sup><0360></sup>1 Chronicles 6:60). It seems to be the same Josephus <sup>f55</sup> calls Bachures, and says it was not far from Jerusalem. Bunting <sup>f56</sup> says it was something more than a mile towards the northeast, and at this time is a fair castle strongly fortified, standing in a high place, and in the valley near it, at the stone Bohan, (<sup><0656></sup>Joshua 15:6); (see <sup><0078></sup>2 Samuel 17:18);

*then said Abner to him, go, return, and he returned;* by which it appears that Abner came with her to introduce her to David, without whom he was

not to see his face; and he did not choose her husband should go with her any further, and was at his orders obliged to go back, who otherwise would have gladly accompanied her further still, through his great affection for her.

**Ver. 17.** *And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel,* etc.] Had a conference with the chiefs of the several tribes about the affairs of the kingdom:

*saying, ye sought for David in time past [to be] king over you;* that is, at the death of Saul, and not before; for it was pretty generally known throughout the kingdom that David was anointed by Samuel and Saul himself had declared that he knew the kingdom would come to him; so that upon his death it was the general expectation and desire of the people that the government would devolve upon him, as it doubtless would, if Abner had not set up one of Saul's house, and persuaded the Israelites to own him their king.

**Ver. 18.** *Now then do [it],* etc.] Make him your king, and I shall no longer oppose it as I have done:

*for the Lord hath spoken of David;* concerning his being king, and the saviour of his people Israel:

*saying, by the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies;* and which, though where recorded in so many words, yet was the sense of the promise of making him king, and the design of his unction; and besides they might have been spoken to Samuel, though not written; and which he might report, and so might pass from one to another to be generally known.

**Ver. 19.** *And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin,* etc.] Of the inhabitants of the tribe of Benjamin, of which tribe he was, and among whom he had the greatest influence; and with whom it was necessary to take some pains, because of their attachment to the family of Saul, which was of that tribe; and being near to that of Judah, might give David a good deal of trouble, if they were not won over to him:

*and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron;* having sounded the elders of Israel, and won their thoughts about the change of government, and found them well disposed to David, and had prevailed

upon them to consent to make him king, and had gained the tribe of Benjamin on his side, went and reported to David the success he had:

*all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin*; how agreeable it was to the elders of Israel, and particularly to the tribe of Benjamin, to have David king over them.

**Ver. 20.** *So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him,* etc.] Before he went privately to him, and conferred with him, but now, having gained so many of the Israelites in favour of David, he appeared more publicly and brought perhaps some of the principal of the nation with him, to join in the league and covenant to be made:

*and David made Abner and the men that [were] with him a feast*; not only in honour to them, as great personages, especially Abner, and as expressive of reconciliation; but as a token of the covenant they were entering into, and for the confirmation of it; it being usual to have feasts when covenants were made; (see <sup>1028</sup>Genesis 26:28,30).

**Ver. 21.** *And Abner said to David, I will arise and go,* etc.] Into the several parts of the land of Israel:

*and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king*; the princes of the several tribes, and the elders of the people, their heads and principal men:

*that they may make a league with thee*; come into the league and covenant now made with Abner, and those with him:

*and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth*: which he supposed reached to all the people of the house of Israel and of Judah, though David had not expressed any eager and impatient desire of government, but waited the Lord's time to be put into the possession of the whole kingdom of Israel:

*and David sent Abner away, and he went in peace*; with inward satisfaction of mind, pleased that things were so well settled and adjusted to the content of all parties, and with outward satiety of body, no insults or attempts being made upon him by any of David's men; which perhaps would not have been the case if Joab had been at court, as may be concluded from what follows.

**Ver. 22.** *And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from [pursuing] a troop,* etc.] A troop of robbers, that made an incursion into

the land, taking the advantage of a civil war between Israel and Judah; such as the Edomites, Amalekites, and especially the Philistines; which Joab hearing of went out in pursuit of them, and overtook them:

*and brought in a great spoil with them*; which they took from them:

*but Abner [was] not with David in Hebron*: when Joab and his army entered the city with their booty:

*for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace*; he had just dismissed him, and he was gone off safely.

**Ver. 23.** *When Joab and all the host that [was] with him were come*, etc.] To Hebron, or rather to David's court; for their coming to the city is before mentioned; this must be understood not of the whole army, of all the common soldiers, but of the chief officers, who with Joab came to court, to wait upon David, and report their success:

*they told Joab, saying, Abner the son, of Ner came to the king*; some of the courtiers informed him of it, who knew it would not be very agreeable to him:

*and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace*: instead of seizing him, and laying him in a prison as his enemy, he has let him go with all the marks of friendship and good will.

**Ver. 24.** *Then Joab came to the king*, etc.] To the apartment where he was; perhaps he was told the above at his first entering into the king's palace, by some in waiting, before he came to the king, which filled him with wrath, so that he came to him in a passion:

*and said to him, what hast thou done?* which was very insolent in a subject to say to his prince:

*behold, Abner came unto thee*; I have been credibly informed of it, and am assured it is a fact which cannot be denied; he represents it as if he had done a wrong thing to admit him to come to him; but perhaps the great fault was that he had let him go:

*why [is] it [that] thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?* or "going, [is] gone"<sup>f57</sup>; is clean gone off, when he ought to have been laid hold on as a traitor, and put in irons.

**Ver. 25.** *Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner*, etc.] Thou canst not be ignorant what a cunning deceitful man he is, nor of his designs; or dost thou not know? art thou ignorant? so read the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, with an interrogation:

*that he came to deceive thee*: with false hopes, or to lead into wrong measures with an intention to involve and ruin him:

*and to know thy going out, and coming in*; the affairs of his court, the secrets of his government, to observe his conduct and behaviour, and all his actions, and improve them against him:

*and to know all that thou doest*; he suggests that he came not as a friend, but as a spy, and therefore ought to have been taken up, and detained, and not dismissed. This Joab said to set David against him, fearing, if he should be received into favour, he would be a rival of his; and besides his breast was full of revenge against him for the death of his brother.

**Ver. 26.** *And when Joab was come out from David*, etc.] Which perhaps he did at once, as soon as ever he had spoken his mind, and flew out of the room in a great passion, not waiting for the king's answer, since we read of none returned; though it may be the king disdained to give him one, or cared not to confer with him while in his passion, until it subsided; or chose not to provoke him more, for it is plain he had great power over him; which generals of armies at this time very much assumed, (see <sup>4089</sup>2 Samuel 3:39);

*he sent messengers after Abner*; in the name of the king, as Abarbinel rightly supposes, and so Josephus <sup>f58</sup>; for otherwise it can hardly be thought he would have returned on a message from Joab only, who he knew bore him ill will:

*which brought him again from the well of Sirah*; which might have its name from the thorns and briars that grew about it. Josephus <sup>f59</sup> calls it Besira, and says it was twenty furlongs or two and an half miles from Hebron:

*but David [knew] it not*; that Joab had sent messengers in his name after Abner to fetch him back; it was not done by his order, with his consent or knowledge; this is observed, to clear David from any concern in the death of Abner, as follows.

**Ver. 27.** *And when Abner was returned to Hebron*, etc.] Alone, and not the twenty men with him; not to David's court, but just to the city, to the gate of it:

*Joab took him aside in the gate*: where he was waiting for him, and met him; this was a public place, where people were continually passing and repassing, and where courts of judicature used to be held; wherefore Abner might think himself safe here with Joab, and have no suspicion at all of his design, and shows how fearless Joab was of God or men:

*to speak with him quietly*; peaceably, in a friendly manner, as all his gestures towards him showed; so that Abner made no difficulty of turning aside with him, supposing he had something to communicate to him from the king, which he had forgot:

*and smote him under the fifth [rib], that he died*; in the same place that Abner had smote his brother, of which (see <sup>4123</sup>2 Samuel 2:23); and this he did:

*for the blood of Asahel his brother*; for Abner's shedding his brother's blood; but this was not the only reason, and perhaps not the chief; but, as Josephus<sup>f60</sup> observes, because he was fearful if Abner was received into the friendship of the king, he would be preferred unto him, and take his place as general of the army, as being an older and more experienced officer; so Procopius Gazaeus, and Theodoret.

**Ver. 28.** *And afterward, when David heard [it]*, etc.] That Joab had sent to fetch Abner back, and that he had stabbed him in the gate of the city, and he was dead; it was some time after it was done that the news of it was brought to David; this circumstance is observed, the more to clear the king from any concern in this affair:

*he said*; in a public manner, in open court, before all his princes; he called God to witness, and, as Josephus<sup>f61</sup> says, stretching out his right hand to God, he cried aloud:

*I and my kingdom [are] guiltless before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner*; he was sensible it would be known that Abner had been with him, and that Joab his general had killed him; and therefore it might be suspected that he had an hand in it, and that it was done by his order, with his privy council; and therefore, to purge him and them from it, he made this public declaration, that neither he nor his council knew

anything of it; and that it was not done with their knowledge and consent, and by their order, but through the resentment of a single person; and therefore hoped that no man would impute the shedding of this blood unto them, or that God would punish them for it; and he was the rather led to make this public declaration, because he knew that the death of Abner in this way would be resented by the friends of Saul's family, and be an obstruction to the union of the two kingdoms, which it was known Abner was endeavouring to bring about.

**Ver. 29.** *Let it rest on the head of Joab*, etc.] That is, the blood of Abner, who was the shedder of it; let the guilt of it be charged to him, and let punishment for it be inflicted on him:

*and on all his father's house*; on Abishai his brother, and other relations that might be privy to the death of Abner, and advising to it, and ready to assist in it if necessary:

*and let there not fail from the house of Joab*; let there be always in his family, and of his seed, one or other of the persons described as follows:

*one that hath an issue*; a gonorrhoea, which was reckoned infamous, and very impure, according to the Jewish law, and rendered persons unfit for society; (see <sup>CRIBI</sup>Leviticus 15:1-33);

*or that is a leper*; whose disease was very loathsome and infectious, and shut him out of the company of men; (see <sup>CRIBI</sup>Leviticus 13:1-59);

*or that leaneth on a staff*; being blind, as Aquila renders the word; or through weakness of body, not being able to walk without one; or through some disease of the feet, as the Jewish writers generally understand it; and R. Isaiah interprets it of the gout particularly: the word for "staff" is rendered "spindle", (<sup>CRIBI</sup>Proverbs 31:19); and to this sense it is rendered here in, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and then the meaning is, let his posterity, or some of them, be so poor, that they shall be obliged to get their livelihood in so mean a way as by spinning; or let them be of such an effeminate disposition, as be more fit to handle the spindle, and do the, work of women, than to use the sword:

*or that falleth on the sword*; not by it honourably in the field of battle, but cowardly destroying themselves with it:



*or that lacketh bread*; and is obliged to beg it: all which David might say, not by a spirit of prophecy, but in a passion; and to show with what horror he resented the action, and how detestable it was to him, and how far it was for him to have any concern in it: but though it was a very wicked action in Joab to murder Abner in this manner, and for the reasons he did; yet it was a just vengeance from the Lord on Abner for fighting against God, and acting against the dictates of his own conscience; for his rebellion against David, and perfidy to Ishbosheth, and for having been the cause of much bloodshed in Israel.

**Ver. 30.** *So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner*, etc.] For though it was only Joab that gave him the thrust of which he died, Abishai was in the secret, and was consenting and advising to his death, and so an accessory to it; and might be present, ready to assist in it, if occasion required; and so Josephus <sup>f62</sup> expressly says, that Abishai his brother was with him when he drew his sword, and smote him:

*because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle*: which was no just reason at all; his blood was shed in war, this in peace, in cold blood, and under the guise of friendship; that was shed with reluctance, and after fair warning, and in defence of himself; but this wilfully in Joab, unawares to Abner, and in great deceit and hypocrisy; (see <sup><1K15></sup>1 Kings 2:5).

**Ver. 31.** *And David said to Joab, and to all the people that [were] with him*, etc.] To his whole court, Joab being present: for he did not flee, nor was he laid hold on in order to be brought to justice; which shows how great his power was, and that he was too hard for David, as in (<sup><1S39></sup>2 Samuel 3:39); however this he did, he enjoined his whole court, and Joab also, to express public mourning on this account:

*rend your clothes and gird you with sackcloth*; which were expressions of mourning used on various occasions, and on account of the dead, and which with the Heathens were carried to a greater excess, even to the tearing of their flesh,

*and mourn before Abner*; before his corpse, as carried to the grave, when it was usual to make great lamentations: (see <sup><1A82></sup>Acts 8:2);

*and King David [himself] followed the bier*; or “bed” <sup>f63</sup> on which his body was laid, and carried to the grave. On these the rich and noble among the Greeks and Romans were carried, and those of the meaner sort on biers <sup>f64</sup>;

and so with the Jews; (see Gill on “<sup>f64</sup> Luke 7:14”); some of which were gilded with gold, and were made of ivory, and had ivory feet <sup>f65</sup>; that of Herod’s was all of gold, inlaid with precious stones, and the body covered with purple, and followed by his sons and kindred, the soldiers going before armed, and their leaders following <sup>f66</sup>; the bier or bed with the Romans was sometimes carried by six persons, sometimes by eight or more <sup>f67</sup>. It was not usual for kings, as the Jews say <sup>f68</sup>, to attend a funeral, to go out of the doors of their palace after their own dead, and much less others; but David did this to satisfy the people, and to root out of their mind all suspicion of his having any hand in Abner’s death; and to show that he was not slain by his will, and with his consent.

**Ver. 32.** *And they buried Abner in Hebron*, etc.] According to the Jewish account of places of burial <sup>f69</sup>, he was buried in the midst of the city, though burying places were generally without; and so Fuller <sup>f70</sup> places this in his map; whether the cave of Machpelah, which was near Hebron, was now used for a burying place, is not certain:

*and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner*; made a great outcry, a loud lamentation, so as to be heard by all the people; and which no doubt was real and hearty, and not done merely with political views:

*and all the people wept*; through concern for the death of Abner, especially on account of the manner in which it was, and in imitation of the king, and being affected with his tears and cries.

**Ver. 33.** *And the king lamented over Abner*, etc.] Delivered an elegy or funeral oration, which he had composed on this occasion, as Josephus <sup>f71</sup> suggests: for he had cried and wept before, but now he expressed something as follows:

*and said, died Abner as a fool dieth?* the meaning of the interrogation is, he did not; the Targum is

“did Abner die as wicked men die?”

no, he did not; he did not die for any wickedness he had been guilty of; he did not die as a malefactor, whose crime has been charged and proved in open court, and sentence of condemnation pronounced on him righteously for it; but he died without anything being laid to his charge, and much less proved, and without judge or jury; he was murdered in a clandestine,

insidious, and deceitful manner; so the word “fool” is often taken in Scripture for a wicked man, especially in the book of Proverbs; the Septuagint version leaves the word untranslated,

“died Abner according to the death of Nabal?”

no; but it could hardly be thought that David would mention the name of any particular person on such an occasion.

**Ver. 34.** *Thy hands [were] not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters,* etc.] As malefactors are when they are taken up for any crime, and especially when proved upon them, and condemned for it, and brought forth to be executed. This was not his case, and had he been aware of the design against him, as his hands and feet were at liberty, he might have defended himself; or if he found he had too many to deal with, might have made use of his feet and fled:

*as a man falleth before wicked men, [so] fellest thou;* as a man being before bloodthirsty and deceitful men, falls before them, through treachery and deceit, privately and unawares, so fell Abner before Joab and Abishai; this David said in the presence of Joab, and before all the people, to declare the plain fact how it was, to express his detestation of it, and to show he had no hand in it; and Joab must be an hardened creature to stand at the grave of Abner, and hear all this, and not be affected with it:

*and all the people wept again over him;* over Abner, being laid in his grave; they had wept before, but hearing this funeral oration delivered by the king in such moving language, and in such a mournful tone, it drew tears afresh from them.

**Ver. 35.** *And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day,* etc.] The custom was to bury in the daytime, and after the funeral was over to provide and send in food to the relations of the deceased, and come and eat with them; as was also the usage with the Greeks and Romans <sup>f72</sup>; (see Gill on “<sup>24165</sup>Jeremiah 16:5, 7”) and kings themselves used to attend those feasts; for the Jews say <sup>f73</sup>,

“when they cause him (the king) to eat, all the people sit upon the ground, and he sits upon the bed;”

but in this case David refused to eat with them:

*David sware, saying, so do God to me, and more also*; may the greatest evils, and such as I care not to mention, befall me; and even more and worse than I can think of and express:

*if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down*; perhaps the funeral was in the morning, as funerals with the Jews generally now are; for otherwise if it was now towards evening, his abstinence from food till that time would not have seemed so much, nor required much notice, and still less an oath.

**Ver. 36.** *And all the people took notice [of it]*, etc.] Not only of his oath, that he would not eat food till evening, but of his whole conduct at the funeral of Abner; the sorrow he expressed for his death, and the oration he made on account of it, in which he pretty severely reflected on his murderer:

*and it pleased them*; that he showed such a concern for his death, and that it was a clear case he had no hand in it:

*as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people*; what he did at this time, burying Abner with so much pomp and ceremony; and indeed he had so much the hearts of the people, and such a share in their affections, and they had such an high opinion of him, that all that he did in public and private affairs they reckoned well done; they were highly approved of by them, such an interest had he in them.

**Ver. 37.** *For all the people and all Israel understood that day*, etc.] Not the people of Judah only, but of Israel also, to whom the knowledge of these things came; they knew and were satisfied by his conduct and behaviour, by his words and actions:

*that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner*; it was not by the counsel or advice of the king, as the Targum; it was without his knowledge and consent, was contrary to his mind and will; that he had no manner of concern in it, and that if it had been in his power he would have prevented it.

**Ver. 38.** *And the king said unto his servants*, etc.] His courtiers, giving a reason why he mourned as he did; or “had said”<sup>f74</sup>, and so is a reason why the people concluded, and were fully satisfied, he had no hand in his death; but the first is best, because what follows was said not to the people at the grave, but to his servants at court:

*know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?* a “prince”, being of the royal family, his father was Saul’s uncle, and he his own cousin; a “great” man, being general of the army, a very valiant and skilful commander, a man of great wisdom and parts. David says nothing of his grace and virtue, only of his grandeur, his high birth and civil excellencies; he praises him in what he was commendable, and proceeds no further; and this was sufficient to show there was just cause of mourning on civil accounts; and this they might easily know and perceive, that the fall or death of such a man, which had that day happened in Israel, was a public loss, and matter of lamentation; and the rather as he was employing all his excellent talents in civil affairs, and all his interest in the people of Israel, to unite them to Judah, and bring them under the government of David.

**Ver. 39.** *And I [am] this day weak, though anointed king,* etc.] Which seems to be given as a reason, or for an excuse why he did not inflict just punishment upon the murderer, according to the law of God, because he was “weak”; not in body or mind, but with respect to the kingdom, that was like a tender branch, or in its infant state; and great care and caution were to be used that it was not overturned: he was a king by unction, not by birth; a son of the late king was yet up against him, and was possessed of the far greater part of the kingdom; he was indeed anointed by Samuel to be king over all Israel; but as yet he was not put into the possession of the kingdom he was anointed to; he was anointed and made king over Judah, and invested with the office of king there, and settled in it; and yet his power was not very great there, for as follows:

*and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, [be] too hard for me;* his sister’s sons, Joab and Abishai, they were a check upon him; he could not do what he would, their influence was so great, both in the court and in the camp; the one was general of the army, and the other a considerable officer in it, and both valiant men, and very respectable among the people, for their achievements in war, and the success they had; so that they were very much out of the reach of David to bring them to justice, without shaking his kingdom; and therefore in point of prudence he thought it best to connive at this fact until he was more established in the kingdom. Whatever may be said for this conduct, it is certain he was too dilatory, and which did not sit easy upon his mind, and therefore gave it in charge to Solomon before his death not to suffer Joab to go to his grave in peace, (~~1~~ 1 Kings 2:5,6,31-34). Some take these words, “weak” and “hard”, in a different

sense, that David was weak or “tender”<sup>f75</sup>, as it may be rendered, tenderhearted, of a merciful disposition, and therefore spared Abner when he was in his hands, though he had done him so much harm, who was the Lord’s anointed; but these men, his sister’s sons, were of cruel tempers, more unmerciful than he, and therefore slew him; but the first sense seems best:

*the Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness*; which may be considered either as an imprecation of evil on Joab, or a prediction, that sooner or later righteous judgment would be rendered to him by the Lord; with whom he leaves it to take vengeance on him, satisfying himself with this for the present, that though it was not in his power to do it, the Lord would in his own time and way: but after all that can be said in favour of David, he seems to have been too much in fear of men, and too distrustful of the power and promise of God to establish him in his kingdom, and was too negligent of public justice; which had it been exercised, might have prevented other sins, as the murder of Ishbosheth, to which the authors of it might be encouraged by this lenity.

# CHAPTER 4

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 4

This chapter relates the concern the death of Abner gave to Ishbosheth, and the men of Israel, (~~1000~~2 Samuel 4:1); the murder of Ishbosheth by two of his captains, who cut off his head, and brought it to David, (~~1000~~2 Samuel 4:2-8); by whom they were rewarded according to their deserts, he putting them to death, and exposing their bodies to shame and ignominy, (~~1000~~2 Samuel 4:9-12).

**Ver. 1.** *And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron*, etc.] By Saul's son is meant Ishbosheth, to whom tidings were soon brought of the death of Abner his general, and that he died in Hebron, where David his rival reigned, and was there murdered by Joab the general of his army:

*his hands were feeble*: not only in a natural sense, being quite dispirited at hearing such news; but in a civil sense, having lost his main support and strength, he being president of his council, and commander of his forces, and in whom he placed all his confidence: and if he knew nothing of his being at Hebron, it must surprise him to hear of his dying there; from whence he might conclude, that since he was there without his knowledge, it could not be in his favour, some plot was forming, and schemes laying with his rival to dethrone him; or if he knew of it, and understood it in this light, that he was endeavouring to make peace between him and David, and upon advantageous terms to him, of which now he might entertain no hopes; he was dispirited, and might conclude that Joab was against any terms at peace, and therefore had dispatched him:

*and all the Israelites were troubled*; at the loss of so great a man in their kingdom, and of whose designs to unite them to Judah, and put them under the government David, they were not ignorant; but now were in the utmost confusion, not knowing what step to take, and whom to send to carry on the treaty, in which Abner was concerned; and whether it would be safe for any to go upon it, since he who had the management of it was murdered, and no justice done on the murderer, and therefore might question David's sincerity and uprightness in this affair; these things greatly distressed and

embarrassed them for the present, but Providence opened a way for their future establishment and prosperity.

**Ver. 2.** *And Saul's son had two men [that were] captains of bands, etc.]* Of troops in the army, or of guards about the person of Ishbosheth son of Saul:

*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;* so that these men were brethren in nature, as well as in iniquity; they had the same father, who is described by his name and city, and their names are expressly mentioned and recorded to their infamy; and they were not only the servants of Ishbosheth, who had commissions under him, but were of the same tribe with him; all which is observed as an aggravation of their crime:

*for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin;* the place from whom Rimmon their father is denominated, and where he dwelt, as well as Gittaim, where they had sojourned, as in (<sup><04B></sup>2 Samuel 4:3). This place, Beeroth, originally belonged to the Gibeonites, and fell to the lot of Benjamin at the division of the land, (see <sup><09T></sup>Joshua 9:17 18:25).

**Ver. 3.** *And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until that day.]* At the death of Saul, when many of the Israelites deserted their cities, and left them to the Philistines, (<sup><09T></sup>1 Samuel 31:7); and so the inhabitants of Beeroth forsook their city, which was near the Philistines, and went to Gittaim, a city in the same tribe, though a little further off, (see <sup><01B></sup>Nehemiah 11:33).

**Ver. 4.** *And Jonathan, Saul's son, etc.]* His eldest son, who died at the same time with him:

*had a son [that was] lame of [his] feet;* of both feet, which were broken or bruised by a fall, as later related: and

*he was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel:* that is, when the tidings of their death came from Jezreel, the place where the battle was fought in which they died, to Gibeah, and the royal palace there; so that he was now twelve years of age:

*and his nurse took him up and fled;* fearing the Philistines would come thither and destroy the family of Saul; and this child being the son of Jonathan, the eldest son of Saul, was by birth heir to the crown, his father



and grandfather being both dead, and which might make the nurse the more solicitous to save his life by flight:

*and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame*; in her hurry and fright he dropped out of her arms, and had some bone broken or dislocated, which was never rightly replaced, or had some contusion, of which he was never cured,

*and his name [was] Mephibosheth*, called Meribbaal, (<sup><10B></sup>1 Chronicles 8:34 9:40); of the change of such names (see Gill on “<sup><10B></sup>2 Samuel 2:8”). This story of Mephibosheth, and of his nurse’s flight with him, and what happened upon it, is here inserted on occasion of the flight of the Beerothites, (<sup><10B></sup>2 Samuel 4:3); but chiefly to observe in what condition Saul’s family now was, and what encouraged the murderers of Ishbosheth to be guilty of the crime they were, since when he was taken off, there was none but this lame child of that family; and as the removal of Ishbosheth would be of so much service to David, they doubted not but it would be very acceptable to him, and they should be greatly rewarded and honoured; and which they might do with the greatest safety, since the nearest kinsman and avenger of blood was so young, and lame of both his feet: or rather this is mentioned to show that Ishbosheth had no right to the throne, his eldest brother’s son being living; so that those murderers might think they did the right thing, to take away the life of an usurper.

**Ver. 5.** *And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went*, etc.] From Gittaim, where they were sojourners, (<sup><10B></sup>2 Samuel 4:3); or from the army, where they had commissions, wherever it was:

*and came, about the heat of the day*; the middle of the day, at noon, as follows:

*to the house of Ishbosheth*; which was at Mahanaim:

*who lay on a bed at noon*; as was usual in hot countries, especially for great personages, as kings; so the Targum,

“and he was sleeping the sleep of kings;”

or at a time when king’s usually slept; though this is remarked by some as an instance and proof of the sluggishness and inactivity of this prince, who left the management of all affairs to Abner his general, and gave himself to

sloth and sensuality; which, when indulged, bring ruin on princes and their kingdoms.

**Ver. 6.** *And they came thither into the midst of the house*, etc.] They not only came unto it, but entered into it, and went into the inmost part of it; the guards being asleep also perhaps, or not on duty, so that there were none to obstruct them; or if there were, they deceived them, since they went in

*[as though] they would have fetched wheat*; out of the king's granaries, for the payment and support of the soldiers under them, who in those days were paid in corn, as were the Roman soldiers<sup>f76</sup> in later times; and these granaries might not only be in the king's house, but near his bedchamber; for in those ancient ages of simplicity there was not such grandeur in the courts of princes as now; the Targum is,

“as sellers of wheat,”

in the guise and habit of such persons, pretending they came to sell wheat to the king's purveyors, who were at the granaries; or, as others interpret it, they went in along with the wheat merchants as if they belonged to them, and so found their way to the king's bedchamber:

*and smote him under the fifth [rib]*; (see Gill on “<sup>4023</sup>2 Samuel 2:23”);

*and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped*; they got out of the palace after they had committed the murder undiscovered and unsuspected.

**Ver. 7.** *For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber*, etc.] This is repeated to give a more particular account of the murder; though Abarbinel thinks they went in twice; when they went in first they smote him under the fifth rib, and made their escape; but fearing they had not left him dead, they returned, and did as follows:

*and they smote him, and slew him*; so that it was out of all doubt with them that he was dead:

*and beheaded him*; to make sure work of it:

*and took his head*; along with them, perhaps in one of the sacks they had to fetch wheat in, and so passed undiscovered, to carry to David, to curry favour with him:

*and gat them away through the plain all night*; through the plain of Jordan; all the way from Mahanaim to Hebron being for the most part a plain country till they came to Hebron, which was mountainous; the way from Mahanaim to Hebron was a space of sixty eight miles, according to Bunting<sup>177</sup>.

**Ver. 8.** *And they brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David to Hebron,* etc.] Supposing it would have been a very acceptable present to him:

*and said to the king, behold the head of Ishbosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life*; all which, his relation to Saul, his enmity to David, and his designs upon his life, are artfully put together to raise the indignation of David against him, and make their present of his head to him the more agreeable:

*and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and of his seed*; for all the evils and injuries they had done him; this being the last of the sons of Saul by a lawful wife, the two remaining were by a concubine; and these men impiously ascribe to the Lord what they with wicked hands had done.

**Ver. 9.** *And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite,* etc.] In a manner they did not expect:

*and said unto them, [as] the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity*; spiritual and temporal, especially the latter is meant, and particularly what he had been brought into by the persecution of Saul, while living, and by those that adhered to his house since his death; which he ascribes to the Lord, and doubted not that he would still deliver him, and complete what he had designed for him, and that he needed not the assistance of such wicked hands as theirs; the words contain the form of an oath made to testify the truth of the following narrative, concerning the man that brought the tidings of Saul's death to him, or for the certainty of what he would do those persons for the murder of Ishbosheth.

**Ver. 10.** *When one told me, saying, behold, Saul is dead,* etc.] No more is related, not that he killed him, or assisted in killing him, only that he was dead; by which it appears, as Abarbinel thinks, that the Amalekite did not slay Saul, and that David did not put him to death on that account, but for what follows:

*thinking to have brought good tidings*; which would have been very acceptable to David, that he would have rejoiced and exulted at it as he did; but he was mistaken; instead of that,

*I took hold of him, and slew him at Ziklag*; that is, ordered one of his young men to lay hold on him, and slay him, as he did, (<sup><0015></sup>2 Samuel 1:15);

*who [thought] that I would have given him a reward for his tidings*; a handsome present, as the Targum here, a gift, or raised him to some post of honour and profit.

**Ver. 11.** *How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person*, etc.] As Ishbosheth was in comparison of the wicked men that slew him; though not with respect to David, if he knew of his divine designation to the throne; nor with respect to Mephibosheth his eldest brother's son, whose right to the throne was prior to his, which he must know; though with respect to his conduct towards David, in assuming the throne of Israel, it might not be owing to any bad principles of malice and injustice, but to his ignorance of David's having a right to the throne upon his father's death, and by the advice of his friends he took it: the sin of these men in murdering him is aggravated, in that they slew him

*in his own palace, upon his bed?* in cold blood, and not in the field of battle, not being engaged in war with him; in his own palace, where he might justly think himself in safety; on his bed asleep, and so at an unawares, when insensible of danger, and not in a posture of defence; and now David argues from the lesser to the greater, that if the man that brought him the tidings of Saul's death had no reward given him for bringing what he thought would be reckoned good tidings, then much less would any be given them who had actually slain their master, and that in such a base and barbarous way; and if the above person, who only was a bringer of tidings, was taken and slain, then how much more did they deserve to die, who had been guilty of such a cruel and barbarous murder?

*shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hands, and take you away from the earth?* avenge his blood on them, by putting them to death, out of the world, and from the land of the living, as men that deserved to live no longer on it.

**Ver. 12.** *And David commanded his young men, and they slew them*, etc.] He ordered some of his guards about him to fall on them, and put them to death; and they accordingly did:

*and cut off their hands and their feet*; their hands, which had smote Ishbosheth, and cut off his head; and their feet, which had been swift to shed his blood, and made haste to bring his head so many miles to David; this was what the Jews call measure for measure:

*and hanged [them] up over the pool in Hebron*; not their hands and their feet, but the trunks of their bodies, thus mutilated; so Theodoret; though others think their hands and their feet were hung up, and not their bodies, because dead bodies were not to hang upon the tree more than a day; they were hung up over the fish pool in Hebron, because a public place, and where they were the more exposed to their shame, and the terror of others:

*but they took the head of Ishbosheth, and buried [it] in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron*; by order of David no doubt, who it seems had made, or ordered to be made, a sepulchre, for Abner, (see ~~1088~~ 2 Samuel 3:38); all which David did to show his regard to the family of Saul, his abhorrence of such execrable murders, and to remove all suspicion of his being concerned in them, and to conciliate the minds of the Israelites to him.

# CHAPTER 5

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 5

In this chapter we have an account of all the tribes of Israel coming to Hebron, and anointing David king over them, (<sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 5:1-5); of his expedition against the Jebusites in Jerusalem, and taking from them the strong hold of Zion, (<sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 5:6-10); of his building an house for himself, and of his building up his family, by taking more wives and concubines, and having more children, whose names are given, (<sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 5:11-16); and of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, and David's victory over them, (<sup><1017></sup>2 Samuel 5:17-25).

**Ver. 1.** *Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron*, etc.] All the rest of the tribes, save the tribe of Judah, who had made him king over them in Hebron seven years ago. These were ambassadors sent in the name of the several tribes to him, quickly after the deaths of Abner and Ishbosheth; from having any hand in which David had sufficiently cleared himself, and which had tended to reconcile the minds of the people of Israel to him:

*and spake, saying, we [are] thy bone and thy flesh*; for though he was of the tribe of Judah, yet as all the tribes sprung from one man, they were all one bone, flesh, and blood; all nearly related to each other, all of the same general family of which David was; and so, according to their law, a fit person to be their king, (<sup><1018></sup>Deuteronomy 16:18-17:13); and from whom they might expect clemency and tenderness, being so near akin to them.

**Ver. 2.** *Also in time past, when Saul was king over us*, etc.] Even over all the tribes of Israel:

*thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel*; that led out the armies of Israel against their enemies, fought their battles for them, obtained victories, and brought the troops under his command home in safety; and the remembrance of these valiant acts of his, which then endeared him to the people, was now another reason for their choosing him king: and another follows, the chiefest of them all:

*and the Lord said to thee*; when anointed by Samuel; for though what follows is not recorded in so many words, yet the sense of it is expressed in the anointing him to be king, whose office, as such, lay in doing the following things:

*thou shalt feed my people Israel*; as a shepherd feeds his flock; hence kings were frequently called shepherds, and David particularly, in which he was an eminent type of Christ, (see <sup><19787></sup>Psalm 78:71,72 <sup><3843></sup>Ezekiel 34:23,24) (<sup><35724></sup>Ezekiel 37:24);

*and thou shalt be a captain over Israel*; the Targum is,

“and thou shalt be king over Israel;”

which gives the true sense of the tribes, and which was the chief and prevailing reason with them to make him their king; and which they, at least many of them, would have done before, even immediately upon the death of Saul, but that they were persuaded by Abner to yield obedience to Ishbosheth he set up.

**Ver. 3.** *So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron*, etc.] Which either explains what is meant by the tribes coming to him, (<sup><1081></sup>2 Samuel 5:1); namely, coming by their elders as their representatives; or else the meaning is, that the messengers the tribes sent, when they returned and reported the favourable reception they had met with from David; the elders of the several tribes, the princes or principal men met, and came together to David in Hebron:

*and King David made a league with them before the Lord*; the states of the nation; he entered into a covenant with them; he on his part promising to rule them in justice and judgment according to the laws, and they promising to yield a cheerful obedience to him in all things just and lawful: and this was done “before the Lord”; either before the ark of the Lord, as Abarbanel; but that was in Kirjathjearim, from whence it was after this brought by David to this city; rather, as Kimchi observes, wherever all Israel, or the greater part of them, were assembled, there the divine Shechinah or Majesty dwelt; so that what was done in a public assembly was reckoned as done before the Lord, and in his presence; or this covenant was made before the Lord, and each party appealed to him as witness of it, so that it was a very solemn one:

*and they anointed David king over Israel*; that is, over all Israel, which was the third time of his being anointed; the first was by Samuel, pointing out the person the Lord chose and appointed king; the second was by the tribe of Judah, when they invested him with the office of a king over them; and now by all the tribes, when he was inaugurated into the whole kingdom of Israel; and not only the elders came at this time, but great numbers of the people from the several tribes, and continued with David some days, eating, drinking and rejoicing, (see <sup><1521></sup>1 Chronicles 12:1-40).

**Ver. 4.** *David [was] thirty years old when he began reign*, etc.] Over Judah, which was the age of his antitype Christ, when he entered upon his public ministry, (<sup><1023></sup>Luke 3:23);

*[and] he reigned forty years*; and six months, as appears by (<sup><1025></sup>2 Samuel 5:5); but the months are not mentioned, only the round number of years given: two reasons the Jews <sup>f78</sup> give for this; the one, that he fled six months from Absalom; the other is, that he was ill in Hebron so long, and therefore are not reckoned.

**Ver. 5.** *In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months*, etc.] So long the kingdom of Israel continued in the house of Saul after his death; and by this it appears that David was near thirty eight years of age when the elders of Israel came and made him their king:

*and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah*; which in all made forty years and six months, (see <sup><1021></sup>1 Kings 2:11); upon his being made king over all the tribes, as soon as he had taken the strong hold of Zion, which he immediately attacked, as follows, he removed the seat of his kingdom from Hebron to Jerusalem.

**Ver. 6.** *And the king and his men went to Jerusalem*, etc.] Which, at least part of it, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; and therefore until all Israel, and that tribe, with the rest, made him king, he did not attempt the reduction of it, but now he immediately set out on an expedition against it:

*unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land*: who inhabited the country about it, and even dwelt in that itself; for the tribe of Judah could not drive them out at first from that part of it which belonged to them, nor the tribe of Benjamin from that part which was theirs; in short, they became so much masters of it, that it was called, even in later times, Jebus, and the city of the Jebusites; (see <sup><1025></sup>Joshua 15:63) (<sup><1002></sup>Judges 1:21 19:10,11);



*which spake unto David*; when he came up against them, and besieged them:

*except thou take away the blind and lame, thou shalt not come in hither*; which many understand of their idols and images, which had eyes, but saw not, and feet, but walked not, which therefore David and his men in derision called the blind and lame; these the Jebusites placed for the defence of their city, and put great confidence in them for the security of it, and therefore said to David, unless you can remove these, which you scornfully call the blind and the lame, you will never be able to take the place. And certain it is the Heathens had their tutelar gods for their cities as well as their houses, in which they greatly trusted for their safety; and therefore with the Romans, when they besieged a city, the first thing they attempted to do was by any means, as by songs particularly, to get the tutelar gods out of it <sup>f79</sup>; believing otherwise it would never be taken by them; or if it could, it was not lawful to make the gods captives <sup>f80</sup>: and to this sense most of the Jewish commentators agree, as Kimchi, Jarchi, Ben Gersom, and R. Isaiah, who take them to be images; some say, made of brass, which were placed either in the streets of the city, or on the towers: it was usual with all nations to place on their walls both their household and country gods, to defend them from the enemy <sup>f81</sup>. A learned countryman of ours <sup>f82</sup> is of opinion that these were statues or images talismanically made, under a certain constellation, by some skilful in astrology, placed in the recess of the fort, and intrusted with the keeping of it, and in which the utmost confidence was put: but it seems better with Aben Ezra and Abarbinel, and so Josephus <sup>f83</sup>, to understand this of blind and lame men; and that the sense is, that the Jebusites had such an opinion of the strength of their city, that a few blind and lame men were sufficient to defend it against David and his army; and perhaps in contempt of him placed some invalids, blind and lame men, on the walls of it, and jeeringly told him, that unless he could remove them, he would never take the city:

*thinking*: or “saying” <sup>f84</sup>; this was the substance of what they said, or what they meant by it:

*David cannot come in hither*; it is impossible for him to enter it, he cannot and shall not do it, and very probably these words were put into the mouths of the blind and lame, and they said them frequently.

**Ver. 7.** *Nevertheless, David took the strong hold of Zion*, etc.] A fortress without the city, and separate from it, and which was very strong; and the

taking it might facilitate the taking of the city, which yet as appears by what follows, was very difficult to do:

*the same [is] the city of David*; it was afterwards so called, where he built an house, and dwelt.

**Ver. 8.** *And David said on that day*, etc.] On which he took the strong hold of Zion:

*whosoever getteth up to the gutter*; where it is generally supposed the blind and lame were, whether images or real men: but what is meant by “Tzinnur”, we render “gutter”, is not easy to say; we follow some of the Jewish writers, who take it to be a canal, or water spout, used to carry off the water from roofs of houses into cisterns, as the word is rendered in (<sup>1917</sup>Psalm 42:7); which is the only place besides this in which it is used in Scripture; but R. Isaiah takes it to be the bar or bolt of the gate, and the sense to be, whoever got up to the gate, and got in at that, unbolting it, or breaking through it; the Targum interprets it of the tower of the city, or strong fortress, and so Abarbinel; but Jarchi says it was a ditch, agreeably to which Bochart<sup>f85</sup> translates the words, and indeed more agreeably to the order of them;

“whosoever smites the Jebusites, let him cast into the ditch (next the wall) both the blind and the lame, extremely hated by David.”

But a learned modern writer<sup>f86</sup> gives a more ingenious and probable interpretation of these words thus;

“whosoever (first) smiteth the Jebusites, and through the subterraneous passages reaches the lame and the blind, etc.”

and which seems to be favoured by Josephus, as he observes; who says<sup>f87</sup>, the king promised the command of the whole army to him who should **διὰ τῶν ὑποκειμένων φαραγγῶν**, “through the subterraneous cavities”, go up to the citadel, and take it: to which I would add that the word is used in the Chaldee paraphrase of (<sup>2007</sup>Ecclesiastes 1:7), of the several subterraneous passages, through which the rivers flow out of and reflow into the ocean: remarkable is the note of Theodoret,

“a certain Hebrew says, Aquila renders it “through a pipe”; on which, he observes, David being willing to spare the walls of the city, ordered the citizens should enter into the city by an aqueduct;”

according to the Jews, there, was a cave underground, which reached from the king's house in Jerusalem to Jericho, when it was taken by Nebuchadnezzar; (see Gill on "~~2804~~Jeremiah 39:4"); in which story there may be a mixture of fable; yet it is not improbable that there was such a subterraneous passage; since Dio Cassius<sup>f88</sup> speaks of several such, through which the Jews made their escape in the last siege of the city:

*and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind*; or even the lame and the blind men the Jebusites had placed to mock David; and therefore it follows,

*[that are] hated of David's soul*: because he was despised and jeered at by them, and through them: if these could be understood of their idols and images, the phrase would be easily accounted for, nothing being more abominable to David than idolatry:

*[he shall be chief and captain]*; these words are not in the original text here, but are supplied from (~~3116~~1 Chronicles 11:6); that is, he shall be chief commander of the army, as Joab became, who was the first that went up and smote them:

*wherefore they said, the blind and the lame shall not come into the house*; that is, either the Jebusites said this, that their images, called in derision by David the blind and the lame, if these did not keep David out, they should never be intrusted with the safety of their fort any more<sup>f89</sup>; or rather because the blind and the lame men said this of David, he shall not come into the house, the fort, or citadel, therefore David hated them; which is the sense of the above learned writer<sup>f90</sup>.

**Ver. 9.** *So David dwelt in the fort*, etc.] The strong hold of Zion, which he took:

*and called it the city of David*; from his own name, to keep up the memory of his taking it, and of his habitation in it:

*and David built round about, from Millo and inward*; built a wall about it, and enlarged the place, increased the buildings both within and without. Millo is supposed to be a ditch round the fort, full of water, from whence it had its name; or was a large hollow place which divided the fort from the lower city, and which afterwards Solomon filled up, and made it a level, and therefore is called so here by anticipation; though Jarchi says it was

done by David. According to Dr. Lightfoot <sup>f91</sup>, it was a part or Sion, or some hillock, east up against it on the west side; his first sense is best, Millo being no other than the fortress or citadel; which, as Josephus says <sup>f92</sup>, David joined to the lower city, and made them one body, and erecting walls about it made Joab superintendent of them; and this was the “round about”, or circuit, which David made, reaching from Millo, or the citadel, to that again, which is meant by “inward”, or “to the house” <sup>f93</sup>, as it should be rendered; that is, to the house of Millo, as in (~~2222~~ 2 Kings 12:20); and so it is said (~~3108~~ 1 Chronicles 11:8); that David built the city “from Millo round about”; that is, to the same place from whence he began <sup>f94</sup>.

**Ver. 10.** *And David went on, and grew great*, etc.] In honour and wealth, in fame and reputation, in subduing his enemies, obtaining conquests over them, and enlarging his dominions:

*and the Lord God of hosts*, of armies above and below,

[*was*] *with him*: to whom all his prosperity and success was owing. The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord God of hosts was for his help,”

or his helper.

**Ver. 11.** *And Hiram king of Tyre*, etc.] This was father of that Hiram that lived in the times of Solomon, whose name was Abibalus before he took the name of Hiram, which became a common name of the kings of Tyre; his former name may be seen in the ancient historians quoted by Josephus <sup>f95</sup>; of the city of Tyre, (see Gill on “~~2301~~ Isaiah 23:1”); which was built one year before the destruction of Troy <sup>f96</sup>. This king, on hearing of David’s being acknowledged king by all Israel, and of his taking Jerusalem out of the hands of the Jebusites,

*sent messengers to David*; to congratulate him upon all this:

*and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons*; these might not be sent at first, but David intending to build himself an house, might, by the messengers on their return, request of Hiram to send him timber and workmen for that purpose; the people of Israel being chiefly employed in cultivating their fields, and vineyards, and oliveyards, and feeding their flocks and herds, few of them had any skill in hewing: timber and stone, and building houses, at least not like the Tyrians and Sidonians; (see ~~4116~~ 1

Kings 5:6); and accordingly he sent him cedars from Lebanon, a great part of which was in his dominions, and artificers in wood and stone, to build his house in the most elegant manner:

*and they built David an house;* to dwell in, a stately palace, called an house of cedar, (<sup><ARB></sup>2 Samuel 7:2).

**Ver. 12.** *And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel,* etc.] By the prosperity and success which attended him in everything he set his hand to:

*and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake;* for their advantage and glory more than for his own.

**Ver. 13.** *And David took [him] more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron,* etc.] He had six when he was at Hebron, (<sup><ARB></sup>2 Samuel 3:2-5), and now he took more, which was not to his honour, and contrary to the law of God, (<sup><ARB></sup>Deuteronomy 17:17); the concubines were a sort of half wives, as the word may signify, or secondary ones, and under the others:

*and there were yet sons and daughters born to David;* besides those in Hebron mentioned in (<sup><ARB></sup>2 Samuel 3:2-5).

**Ver. 14.** *And these [be] the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem,* etc.] The names of his sons, for his daughters are not mentioned, and these seem to be such only that were born of his wives, (see <sup><ARB></sup>1 Chronicles 3:9);

*Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon;* these four were by Bathsheba; the first of these is called Shimea, (<sup><ARB></sup>1 Chronicles 3:5).

**Ver. 15.** *Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia.*] Elishua is called Elishama, (<sup><ARB></sup>1 Chronicles 3:6).

**Ver. 16.** *And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.*] Seven more by some other wife or wives; nine are mentioned in (<sup><ARB></sup>1 Chronicles 3:6-8); there being in that account two Eliphalets, and another called Nogah; which two, one of the Eliphalets, and Nogah, might die without sons, as Kimchi thinks, and so are not mentioned here.

**Ver. 17.** *But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel,* etc.] That the civil war in the nation was now at an end, which

they hoped would have issued in their destruction, and therefore lay still and quiet; but now being united under the government of David, and he hereby greatly strengthened and become powerful; and hearing also of his success against Jerusalem, and the friendship he had contracted with Hiram king of Tyre, they thought it was high time to bestir themselves, and put a stop to his power and greatness; and now it was, as Kimchi thinks, that David penned the second psalm, which begins, “why do the Heathen rage”, etc. (<sup><4911></sup>Psalm 2:1-12),

*all the Philistines came up to seek David:* in order to fight him, all the five principalities of the Philistines combined together against him; perhaps his old friend Achish king of Gath was now dead, or had now entertained a different opinion of him:

*and David heard [of it];* that they had invaded his kingdom, and sought to fight him:

*and went down to the hold;* some fortified place or strong hold near Jerusalem, which lay lower than the city, or than the strong hold of Zion, in which David dwelt; hither he went, not so much for safety, or with an intention to abide there, but as a rendezvous for his men, and to prepare to meet the Philistines.

**Ver. 18.** *The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.*] Or “of the giants”, as (<sup><4658></sup>Joshua 15:8); which lay to the west of Jerusalem; of which, (see Gill on “<sup><4658></sup>Joshua 15:8”); the Philistines spreading themselves in it, shows that they were very numerous.

**Ver. 19.** *And David inquired of the Lord,* etc.] By Abiathar, and the Urim and Thummim, in the ephod he had on:

*saying, shall I go up to the Philistines?* who by this time were gone from the valley to an higher place, to Mount Perazim, as in (<sup><2321></sup>Isaiah 28:21);

*wilt thou deliver them into my hand?* here two questions are put together, and an answer returned to both, contrary to a notion of the Jews, (see Gill on “<sup><4921></sup>1 Samuel 23:11”);

*and the Lord said to David, go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand;* by which oracle he had both the mind of God that he should go up, and was assured of victory.

**Ver. 20.** *And David came to Baalperazim*, etc.] As it was after called, for here it has its name by anticipation, and whither the Philistines were come from the valley of Rephaim; (see <sup><3341></sup>1 Chronicles 14:11); which was at no great distance, the one being the hill, to which the other was the valley, computed to be about three miles from Jerusalem, in the way to Bethlehem <sup>f97</sup>, between which places were two hours' travels <sup>f98</sup>:

*and David smote them there*; there a battle was fought, in which David had the victory assured him:

*and said, the Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters*; as when waters, through their mighty force, break down the banks of rivers, and carry all before them; or as one breaks an earthen vessel full of water, so the Targum on (<sup><3341></sup>1 Chronicles 14:11).

*therefore he called the name of the place Baalperazim*; which signifies “the master of breaches”, where the Philistines were broke in upon, and broken to pieces, of which God was the author, and which gave David the mastery over his enemies; the Targum renders it “the plain of breaches”, and seems to take it to be the same with the valley of Rephaim; (see <sup><1052></sup>2 Samuel 5:22).

**Ver. 21.** *And they left their images*, etc.] Their idol gods, which they brought with them to protect and defend them, and give them success; perhaps in imitation of the Israelites, who formerly brought the ark of God into their camp against the Philistines, (<sup><004></sup>1 Samuel 4:3-6); and it appears to have been the custom of other countries, in later times, to bring their gods with them to battle <sup>f99</sup>:

*and David and his men burnt them*: that is, his men burnt them at his command, (<sup><3342></sup>1 Chronicles 14:12); agreeably to the law of God, that so no profit might be made of them, (<sup><005></sup>Deuteronomy 7:5); the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and others, render it, “and took them”, or “carried them away”, <sup>f100</sup>; as they might do, and, after they had exposed them in triumph, then burnt them.

**Ver. 22.** *And the Philistines came up yet again*, etc.] And, as Josephus says <sup>f101</sup>, with an army three times larger than the former:

*and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim*; in the same place where they were before, (<sup><1051></sup>2 Samuel 5:20).

**Ver. 23.** *And when David inquired of the Lord*, etc.] For though he had success before, and got the victory, he would not engage again with them without having the mind and will of God, on whom he knew victory alone depended:

*he said, thou shalt not go up*; that is, directly, and in a straight line:

*[but] fetch a compass behind them*; and get to the rear of them, instead of falling upon them in the front:

*and come upon them over against the mulberry trees*: which grew in the valley of Rephaim, and near where the Philistines had pitched.

**Ver. 24.** *And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees*, etc.] Of a going of the wind on the tops of these trees, making a rustling upon them, and that in such a manner as to resemble the going of men, or march of armies, as if they were moving in the air over the tops of the mulberry trees; which Jarchi and R. Isaiah interpret of angels being sent of God, and moving at that time to help David, and destroy the Philistines; so the Targum on (~~1345~~ 1 Chronicles 14:15). These trees being in Judea account for silk there, (~~3160~~ Ezekiel 16:10); though some think time was not known so early; others suppose it was, and to be the Hebrew byssus mentioned by Pausanias<sup>f102</sup>, as being of a yellow colour:

*that then thou shalt bestir thyself*; or move towards the camp of the Philistines, and fall upon them in the rear, who, by reason of the sound in the trees, would not hear the motion of the Israelites; or, if they heard it, would take it to be no other than the motion of the trees they heard, both sounds being confounded together; or they would take the sound they heard for the motion of the enemy in the front, and give way, and so fall into the hands of the Israelites in their rear, which must throw them into the utmost confusion and consternation:

*for then shall the Lord go out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines*: by an angel or angels; so the Targum,

“for then shall go forth the angel of the Lord, to make thee prosperous to slay in the camp of the Philistines;”

that being the precise time for the salvation of Israel, and the destruction of the Philistines, and the token of it.



**Ver. 25.** *And David did so as the Lord commanded him*, etc.] In all things he was obedient to the command of God; Saul was not: he got behind the army of the Philistines, as he was directed; and when he heard the sound in the mulberry trees, he arose and fell upon his enemies:

*and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer*; or from Gibeon, as in (<sup><3346></sup>1 Chronicles 14:16); a city in the tribe of Benjamin, near to which this battle was fought, and where the pursuit began, which was carried as far as Gazer, a city that lay on the borders of the Philistines, as Josephus says <sup>f103</sup>; and so far they were pursued, and were smitten as they fled; and, according to Bunting <sup>f104</sup>, it was a space of eighteen miles.

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 6

In this chapter we are told that David fetched the ark from Baale of Judah, with an intent to bring it to his own city, (<sup><1061></sup>2 Samuel 6:1-5); but Uzzah being smitten for his error concerning it, David was displeased, and left it at the house of Obededom, where it remained three months, and proved a blessing to his house, (<sup><1066></sup>2 Samuel 6:6-11); which David hearing of, went and brought it from thence with great expressions of joy before it as it came along, and offered offerings to the Lord at the setting it in its place, and gave gifts to the people, (<sup><1062></sup>2 Samuel 6:12-19); but Michal his wife was displeased with some of his gestures on that occasion, which made some difference between them, and which, on Michal's part, was resented by the Lord himself; for she became barren for it to the time of her death, (<sup><1065></sup>2 Samuel 6:20-23).

**Ver. 1.** *Again, David gathered together all [the] chosen [men] of Israel, thirty thousand.*] Which was done by the advice of his officers, (<sup><1331></sup>1 Chronicles 13:1); the word “again” refers either to the gathering of them when they made him king in Hebron, as the Jewish writers generally observe; but then they gathered themselves, and not David: or rather to his gathering them to fight the Philistines a little while ago; and as they were the choice and young men that were gathered for war, as being the fittest, so now to fetch up the ark with dancing and singing, and to protect it; the Septuagint version says they were about seventy thousand; but the Targum, Syriac, and Arabic versions, have thirty thousand, agreeably to the Hebrew text.

**Ver. 2.** *And David arose, and went with all the people that [were] with him, etc.*] The thirty thousand chosen men gathered together, and as many else as chose to go:

*from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God;* that is, they first went to this place, as in (<sup><1336></sup>1 Chronicles 13:6); in order to fetch the ark from thence, as here expressed, and then they came from thence with it; this place is the same that is called Baalah and Kirjathbaal, a city in the

tribe of Judah; hence Judah is added to it, and the same with Kirjathjearim, (<sup><0483></sup>Joshua 15:9,60); the place where it was brought to when fetched from Bethshemesh, (<sup><0001></sup>1 Samuel 7:1); and had been here now near fifty years; nor was it any where else during this time, only once at Gibeah of Saul with him, (<sup><0448></sup>1 Samuel 14:18);

*whose name he called by the name of the Lord of hosts, that dwelleth [between] the cherubim*; not the ark, but the Lord, whose is the ark; his name is called by the name of Jehovah, the infinite, incomprehensible, eternal, and immutable Being, the Lord of armies above and below; whose habitation was between the cherubim that overshadowed the mercy seat, which was above the ark; all this is said, not only to express the greatness and majesty of God, but for the honour of the ark, which belonged to him.

**Ver. 3.** *And they set the ark of God upon a new cart*, etc.] Which was a great mistake, since it ought not to have been put upon a cart, old or new; it was to be borne upon men's shoulders, and carried by Levites only, and those of the family of Kohath, to whom no wagons were given, when others had them, for the above reason, (<sup><0409></sup>Numbers 7:9); it is strange that so many priests and Levites, and of the people of Israel gathered together on that account, and David also, so well versed in the law of God, should not refer to it; perhaps they were led by the example of the Philistines, who put it in a new cart, and set it forward towards Bethshemesh, and were not punished for it; but it should have been considered they were an ignorant Heathen people, and who had no proper persons among them to bear it, and so might be dispensed with. This mistake was afterwards seen by David, and rectified, (<sup><1352></sup>1 Chronicles 15:2); wherefore there is no reason to charge the text with an error or escape, and that the word "Kirjathjearim" is wanting, and to be supplied, as Spinos<sup>f105</sup> suggests:

*and brought it out*, or "after they had brought it out"<sup>f106</sup>,

*of the house of Abinadab that [was] in Gibeah; or which was on the hill in Kirjathjearim*, (<sup><0001></sup>1 Samuel 7:1);

*and Uzzah and Ahio the sons of Abinadab drew the new cart*; perhaps not only Abinadab himself was dead, but Eleazar also, his eldest son, who was sanctified to keep the ark, as in (<sup><0001></sup>1 Samuel 7:1); and these might be his younger sons who at this time had the care of it, and it may be especially Uzzah.

**Ver. 4.** *And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which [was] at Gibeah,* etc.] That is, the new cart, which is the last thing spoken of, (<sup><408B></sup>2 Samuel 6:3); and the bringing of the ark out of his house is mentioned before; though some take this to be the coffer in which were the presents of the Philistines, which was now brought out along with the ark, (see <sup><408B></sup>1 Samuel 6:8);

*accompanying the ark of God;* or “with the ark of God”<sup>f107</sup>; that is, they brought the new cart “from” the house of Abinadab on the hill, with the ark of God upon it:

*and Ahio went before the ark;* guiding the oxen that drew it, and Uzzah might go behind, or on one side, to take care that the ark fell not out of it.

**Ver. 5.** *And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord,* etc.] That is, before the ark, which was a symbol of the presence of the Lord:

*on all manner of [instruments made of] fir wood:* which is a general expression, the particulars follow; though instruments of different sorts are mentioned, and even some of metal, as cymbals, which were vessels of brass, they struck one against another, and gave a very acute sound, being hollow<sup>f108</sup>;

*even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals;* harps, psalteries, and timbrels, are frequently met with; cornets, according to Kimchi, are such sort of instruments, that in playing upon them it required an agitation of the whole body. Now it was that David penned the sixty eighth psalm, which begins, “let God arise”, etc. (<sup><490L></sup>Psalm 68:1-35), words used by Moses when the ark set forward, (<sup><400B></sup>Numbers 10:35).

**Ver. 6.** *And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor,* etc.] Who is called Chidon, (<sup><433D></sup>1 Chronicles 13:9); he seems to have had two names; or it was a place that had two names, as say the Jews<sup>f109</sup>; according to a tradition of theirs<sup>f110</sup>, Chidon is the name of the place where it was said to Joshua, stretch out the spear or shield in thine hand towards Ai, (<sup><408B></sup>Joshua 8:18); so indeed the word signifies, nor was it unusual to stretch out the shield as a signal on occasion. Thus Aeneas lifted up his shield in his left hand, as a token to his Trojans that he was come to relieve them<sup>f111</sup>: where this threshingfloor was is not said; some say<sup>f112</sup> it was the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite; it could not be far from Jerusalem, since Baalejudah

or Kirjathjearim was but about a mile from it, according to Bunting<sup>f113</sup>, from whence they fetched the ark:

*Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it*; to keep it from falling: the reason was,

*for the oxen shook [it]*; the same word is used in (~~1~~1 Chronicles 13:9); and there it is rendered, “for the oxen stumbled”; and by their stumbling the cart was shaken, and the ark in it, and in danger of falling, as Uzzah thought: or “the oxen shook”, for the word “it” is a supplement; they shook as if their members were plucking asunder and parting, as Kimchi expresses it, because of the holiness of the ark; as if they were sensible it was wrong for them to draw it, when it ought to have been carried on the shoulders of Levites; and by this way, as well as by the death of Uzzah the error committed was pointed out: but others render it, “for the oxen stuck in the clay”<sup>f114</sup>, and could not go on; which Uzzah observing, and fearing that in their struggle to get out the cart should be overturned, or that the procession would be retarded too much, took hold of the ark to take it out, and carry it the remainder of the way, it not being far from Jerusalem.

**Ver. 7.** *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah*, etc.] And which was manifest by smiting him:

*and God smote him there for [his] error*; committed at this time, which was complicated; as that the ark was put upon a cart, to which he might be the chief adviser, as Procopius Gazaeus notes, when it should have been carried on the shoulders of the Levites; and that he touched it with his hand, which none but priests might do, supposing him to be a Levite, which it is not clear he was, however not a Kohathite; and he took hold of it in order to carry it in his arms, which even Levites, and those Kohathites, might not do, but with staves put into it, which only they were to hold; and besides, as Abarbinel observes, he showed little faith in the power and providence of God, as if he could not take care of the ark without him:

*and there he died by the ark of God*; directly, upon the spot, by the side of it; whether he was struck by lightning, or in what way, cannot be said; however, he died by the immediate hand of God, in token of his displeasure: and this shows that it is dangerous in matters of worship to act contrary to the command of God, even in things that may seem small and trivial; and though what may be done may be done with a good intention, as this was, yet that will not excuse the sin; nor are those who are the most

forward and zealous in religious matters exempted from marks of God's displeasure when they go wrong.

**Ver. 8.** *And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah,* etc.] He could not easily submit, and be reconciled to the providence; his heart was ready to rise up against God, and murmur at him for striking him dead in such an awful manner, for so small a matter as this might seem to be; and the rather, as this put a stop to the procession, and cast a damp upon their joy and mirth on this occasion, and might seem to be an ill omen to David, and be improved by his enemies against him:

*and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah unto this day;* the name he gave the place, which signifies "the breach of Uzzah", continued to the time of writing this book.

**Ver. 9.** *And David was afraid of the Lord that day,* etc.] Lest he should be smitten for his error also, and especially as he had discovered some resentment at the Lord's dealing with Uzzah; when he ought to have been still and quiet, and submitted to the will of God, and owned his justice in it, confessed his own error, and been thankful for his sparing mercy vouchsafed to him:

*and said, how shall the ark of the Lord come to me?* the meaning of which is not, how it should be brought to the place provided by him in Jerusalem, now Uzzah was dead, for there were Levites enough to carry it, as they afterwards did; but as signifying that it would be either boldness and presumption in him to do it, since God had shown such a mark of his displeasure at their proceeding, that he might be in doubt whether it was the will of God it should come to him; or as fearing it would be dangerous to him to have it with him, since he might be guilty of such an error, of the same, or like it, that had been committed.

**Ver. 10.** *So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David,* etc.] As yet, but wait a little longer, until he had more thoroughly considered of it, and made himself acquainted with everything relative to the ark, that he might know how to behave for the future, without giving offence:

*but David carried it aside into the house of Obedom the Gittite;* which was close by, on one side of the place where they were; this man was a Levite, as appears from his being afterwards appointed to be doorkeeper for the ark, and to sing praise before it, and so a proper person to commit

the care of it to, (~~1318~~1 Chronicles 15:18,21,24 16:5,6); he is called a Gittite, either because he had sojourned in Gath some time, or rather because he was of Gathrimmon, a city of the Levites, (~~1624~~Joshua 21:24).

**Ver. 11.** *And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months*, etc.] David, and those with him, returned to their habitations, where they continued during this time:

*and the Lord blessed Obededom, and all his household*; him, and all his family, with spiritual blessings, and with an affluence of temporal good things; for godliness has the promise of this life, and of that which is to come; men are not losers but gainers, even in things temporal, for their attachment to the cause of religion, and the service of God, and their regard to that in their own houses, as well as in the house of God. Josephus<sup>f115</sup> says, that Obededom was very poor before, and in a low condition, out of which he soon emerged, and came into affluent circumstances, so as to be taken notice of by his neighbours, and reported abroad; by which means David came to the hearing of it, as follows.

**Ver. 12.** *And it was told King David*, etc.] By some of his courtiers who had heard of it:

*saying, the Lord hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that [pertaineth] unto him, because of the ark of the Lord*; it was so suddenly, in so short a time, and so largely, that it could not escape the notice and observation of men that knew him; and this increase was not in any natural way by which it could be accounted for; so that it could be ascribed to no other cause but the blessing of God, and that on account of the ark of God that was with him; nothing else could be thought of:

*so David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness*: being animated and encouraged by the blessing of God on the house of Obededom, because of it, and thereby freed from those slavish fears he was before possessed of, and filled with hopes of being blessed also on account of it; if not with temporal blessings, he needed not, yet with spiritual ones.

**Ver. 13.** *And it was [so], that when they that bare the ark of the Lord*, etc.] The Levites; for now David had seen the former mistake, and rectified it, and ordered the Levites to “carry” it, as they did upon their shoulders, with the staves therein, (see ~~1351D~~1 Chronicles 15:2,12-15); when these

*had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings*; upon an altar, which was at once erected for that purpose; the number and kind of sacrifices offered were seven bullocks and seven rams, (<sup><1315></sup>1 Chronicles 15:26); and these David offered, not by himself, but by the priests that were with him, and that as soon as they had gone six paces from the house of Obededom; whereby they perceived the Levites, were able to carry the ark, with what was in it, the Lord helping them, as in (<sup><1315></sup>1 Chronicles 15:2,15), and without stumbling and falling, or any evil attending them; and Kimchi thinks these six paces were just the measure of the ground Uzzah went before what befell him; but it is highly probable that he had gone further; however, no doubt by the order of David, the Levites set down the ark, and sacrifices were offered by way of thanksgiving to God, and for the continuance of his goodness, and for atonement for former errors. Some think these seven oxen and rams were offered, at seven different times and places, at every six paces an ox and a ram; but this is not very likely.

**Ver. 14.** *And David danced before the Lord with all [his] might*, etc.]

That is, before the ark of the Lord; not a set dance, or along with others; but he leaped and skipped as “car”, a lamb, does, and that for joy that the ark was like to be brought home to his house, without any token of the divine displeasure, as before; the Targum is,

“he praised before the Lord with all his might;”

exerted himself to the uttermost in singing the praises of God vocally, or by playing on an instrument; to which sense are the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, which is approved of by Castel<sup>f116</sup>; who observes, it nowhere appears to have been a custom to dance before the ark; but it might be now done, though not usual, and therefore was observed by Michal with contempt, (<sup><1016></sup>2 Samuel 6:16); a later writer<sup>f117</sup> shows that dancing is the proper sense of the word:

*and David [was] girded with a linen ephod*; which others, besides priests, sometimes wore, as Samuel did, and which David might choose to appear in, rather than in his royal robes, as being more agreeable to the service of God, and lighter for him both to walk and dance in on this occasion.

**Ver. 15.** *So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord*, etc.] The elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, (<sup><1315></sup>1 Chronicles 15:25); besides the common people; there might be as large a number with him now as before:



*with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet*; with the shouts of the people in common, and with blowing of trumpets by those who were appointed for that purpose, and with other instruments of music, (see <sup><13157></sup>1 Chronicles 15:27,28); Josephus says <sup>f118</sup>, that seven choirs went before the priests bearing the ark, as the king commanded, he himself playing on the harp; so the Septuagint version.

**Ver. 16.** *And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David*, etc.] Being brought thither on the shoulders of the Levites:

*Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window*; in the king's palace, to see the procession, which was very grand, and in great pomp, attended by a vast number of people, and with music of all sorts. She is said to be Saul's daughter, though David's wife, as having a good deal of her father's haughty temper and disposition, as appears by what follows:

*and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord*; the ark of the Lord, by these outward gestures expressing the inward joy of his heart on this occasion;

*and she despised him in her heart*; as acting a mean part, quite beneath himself, and unbecoming his royal dignity.

**Ver. 17.** *And they brought in the ark of the Lord*, etc.] Into the city of David, the strong hold of Zion:

*and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it*: or "stretched out"; for this was not the tabernacle of Moses, David pitched any where; that was at this time at Gibeon, where it continued to the time of Solomon, (<sup><13229></sup>1 Chronicles 21:29 <sup><14008></sup>2 Chronicles 1:3,4); but this was a curtain, or curtains, which he had stretched out or drawn around for the ark to be pitched in the midst of; and this was not in his own house, for he is afterwards said to go to that, but somewhere in Jerusalem or the city of David:

*and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord*; that is, before the ark, and that by way of thanksgiving for its being brought safe thither, without any error or mistake on the side of him, the Levites, and the people, and without offence to God, and any mark of his displeasure as before. This must be supposed to be done by priests, and not by David himself, who was no priest.

**Ver. 18.** *And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, etc.]* Or these were performed according to his order:

*he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts;* not as a priest, but as a prince, as the common father of them, wishing them all happiness and prosperity outward and inward, praying to God to bless them with all blessings temporal and spiritual, who is the God of armies above and below, and can do what he pleases, and more than his people can ask or think.

**Ver. 19.** *And he dealt among all the people, etc.]* Gave a dole unto them, divided among them:

*[even] among the whole multitude of Israel:* and if there were so many as at first, there were thirty thousand of them, (~~2~~<sup>100</sup> 2 Samuel 6:1); and perhaps more, since it follows:

*as well to the women as men;* to both the one and the other; and the women, it is very probable, were not among those that went to fetch the ark, but assembled to attend the entrance of it into the city, and were present at the solemnities of its settlement:

*to everyone a cake of bread;* or a loaf of bread, of what quantity is not said, no doubt sufficient for anyone person, or more:

*and a good piece [of flesh]:* not only that was good in quality, but large in quantity, a very large piece of it; the Jews say <sup>f119</sup> the sixth part of a bullock, they dividing it into six parts as we into four quarters; but it is not likely that such a quantity of flesh should be given to each person;

*and a flagon [of wine];* but what such a vessel held cannot be said, though at least we may suppose it equal to a bottle of ours, or more; (see ~~2~~<sup>100</sup> Song of Solomon 2:5 ~~3~~<sup>100</sup> Hosea 3:1);

*so all the people departed everyone to his house;* to refresh themselves with the provisions David had given them.

**Ver. 20.** *Then David returned to bless his household, etc.]* His wife, children, and servants, to wish all happiness to them on this occasion, and pray to God for blessings on them temporal and spiritual. This was done when he came from the place where the ark was set, and was come to his own palace:

*and Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David;* before he had gotten quite to his own house:

*and said, how glorious was the king of Israel today;* which she spoke in an ironical jeering way, meaning the reverse, how inglorious, mean, and despicable he had made himself to be, by his airs and gestures:

*who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!* because he had put off his royal robes, and put on a linen ephod; for that he had stripped himself naked cannot be supposed, nor do her words import so much though a passionate exaggeration of the case.

**Ver. 21.** *And David said unto Michal, [it was] before the Lord,* etc.]

Before the ark of the Lord, what was done was done there; she upbraided him with his dancing and singing, which was designed for the honour and glory of God, and in thankfulness to him for the bringing the ark to his city, and therefore she ought not to have reproached him with it, and he adds,

*which chose me before thy father, and before all his house;* (see <sup>4934</sup>1 Samuel 13:14); which he observed to humble her pride, and mortify her, as well as to remark the distinguishing goodness of God to him, which laid him under obligation to express his thankfulness to him in every shape:

*to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel;* which was a high honour conferred upon him, and required the utmost gratitude:

*therefore will I play before the Lord;* upon the harp, or praise before him, as the Targum, sing his praise before the ark, unto any instrument of music, without once imagining I disgrace myself, on the contrary think it to be the highest honour to me to be employed in such service.

**Ver. 22.** *And I will yet be more vile than thus,* etc.] If this is to be vile, I will endeavour to be viler still; if to dance before the ark, and sing the praises of God, be reckoned a lessening of me, I will more and more be found in doing such things, or what is similar to them:

*and will be base in mine own sight:* humble himself, and lie low in his own eyes, admiring the grace and goodness of God to him, thinking he could never condescend too low to exalt the Lord, and magnify the riches of his goodness:

*and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour*; who the more humble I am, and the more I condescend, by laying aside all state in acts of devotion and religion, the more shall I be honoured and spoken well of by them.

**Ver. 23.** *Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child until the day of her death.*] The children she brought up for Adriel were not her own, but adopted ones, or Adriel's by another woman, (~~1218~~2 Samuel 21:8); however, she had none after this time, whatever she had before, and it does not appear that she had any, though the Jews say she was Eglah, and Ithream her son, (see Gill on "~~1018~~2 Samuel 3:5"). And thus she that vilified David brought a reproach upon herself, as barrenness was always reckoned, and no one descending from her arrived to royal dignity, and sat on the throne of David; and so it was ordered in Providence, as Abarbinel observes, that the seed of David and of Saul might not be mixed.

# CHAPTER 7

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 7

This chapter expresses David's concern for building an house for the ark of God, which he communicated to Nathan the prophet, and was approved of by him, (~~1000~~ 2 Samuel 7:1-3); and who was that night sent by the Lord to David, to acquaint him, that as he had for many years dwelt in a tent, and had never given directions to the tribes of Israel, and the rulers of them, to build him an house, so neither should David build him one; but his son that would succeed him in the throne should; and also observes to him the many great things he had done for him, and promises him more, and particularly the establishment of his throne and kingdom for ever, in which he has respect to the Messiah, that should spring from him, (~~1000~~ 2 Samuel 7:4-17). Then follows a prayer of David, in which he expresses the sense he had of the greatness and goodness of God, and of his own unworthiness to receive such favours from him he had, returns him thanks for the promises he had made, and prays for the performance of them, (~~1008~~ 2 Samuel 7:18-29).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house*, etc.] Which Hiram's servants had built for him, having no occasion to go out to war:

*and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies*; both at home and abroad; though this rest and peace did not last long; for the next chapter gives an account of each of the people he was engaged in war with, (~~1000~~ 2 Samuel 8:1-18).

**Ver. 2.** *That the king said unto Nathan the prophet*, etc.] This is the first time this prophet is made mention of, but often afterwards, yet who he was, and from whence he came, is not known; he appears to be a man of great piety and prudence, as well as endowed with a prophetic spirit, and was very familiar with David, and perhaps dwelt in his palace; being a man on all accounts fit for conversation with princes, to whom David imparted what he had been meditating upon in his heart. The Jews have a tradition <sup>f120</sup> that he was the same with Jonathan the son of Shimea, the brother of David, (~~1002~~ 2 Samuel 21:21); which is not very likely:

*see now, I dwell in an house of cedar*; made of the cedars of Lebanon; see what a spacious palace it is:

*but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains*; in a tabernacle within curtains, as the Targum; not the tabernacle of Moses, for that was at Gibeon, (<sup><13123></sup>1 Chronicles 21:29); but that which David had made for it, which consisted of curtains that were drawn around it, (<sup><10617></sup>2 Samuel 6:17). It gave him a concern that he should dwell in so magnificent a palace, and the ark of God should have so mean an habitation; wherefore it was upon his mind to build a grand edifice for it, and this he suggested hereby to Nathan, and so he understood him, as appears by what follows; and the rather he was led to such a thought, being now at rest and in peace; for then it was an house was to be built for God, in which he would cause his name to dwell, as David might easily learn from (<sup><61219></sup>Deuteronomy 12:9-11); and who so proper to set forward such a work as a king, and he when at rest from his enemies?

**Ver. 3.** *And Nathan said to the king, go, do till that [is] in thine heart,* etc.] He perceived it was in his heart to build an house for God; he knew an house was to be built at one time or another, by some person or another; he knew it was a good work, and fit for a king to do, and might think this was a proper time any, he being at leisure, and therefore encouraged him to it: but inasmuch as the time when and the person by whom this was to be built were not pointed out particularly in the word of God, David and he should have consulted the Lord about it; in this they erred, and for which they were tacitly reprov'd; for, as the event shows, this was not the time when, nor David the person by whom, it was to be built. Nathan said this as a pious and good man, in a private capacity, not as a prophet, or under a spirit of prophecy; for prophets did not always speak under such an influence, but, as private men, said some things ignorantly and through mistake; (see <sup><91416></sup>1 Samuel 16:6 <sup><10427></sup>2 Kings 4:27);

*for the Lord [is] with thee*; prospering and succeeding him in all he undertook, giving him rest from all his enemies; and he might think that this motion he now made of building an house was from the Lord; the Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord shall be for thine help,”

or thine helper, and shall assist thee in this work. David being thus encouraged by the prophet, his thoughts were more employed about it, and

he was resolute and eager to perform it; and now it was he penned the hundred thirty second psalm, in which he expresses his oath and vow to find a place to build on, (~~131~~ Psalm 132:1-18).

**Ver. 4.** *And it came to pass that night*, etc.] The same night following the day in which David and Nathan had had the above conversation, that neither of them might continue long in their error and mistake, and especially lest David, in his great zeal and warm affection, should take an hasty and improper step:

*that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan*; the word of prophecy, as the Targum; before he was not under a prophetic influence, but spoke in his own words, and had not the word of God; but now it came to him:

*saying*; as follows.

**Ver. 5.** *Go and tell my servant David*, etc.] The Lord speaks very honourably and respectfully of him, owns him to be his servant in other things, though he did not choose to employ him in this; and though he was not the person, nor this the time, to build the house of the Lord, yet, as he showed a good will towards it, so far it was acceptable to God:

*thus saith the Lord, shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?* no, thou shalt not, as appears from (~~137~~ 1 Chronicles 17:4); which seems to be expressed with much spirit, and some degree of resentment, to resolve on such a work, without seeking to know his mind in it. Eupolemus<sup>f121</sup> an Heathen, confirms this account, only instead of a prophet he speaks of an angel, whose name he says was Dinnathan, who, when David was desirous of building a temple for God, and very anxious to be shown the place where the altar was to be erected, this angel appeared to him; and, though he showed him the place for the altar, forbade him building it, because he was polluted with human blood, and had been engaged in wars many years, and bid him leave the building of it to his son.

**Ver. 6.** *Whereas I have not dwelt in [any] house*, etc.] Fixed, stated, habitation:

*since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day*; a space of five or six hundred years, though he might before:

*but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle*; moving from place to place while in the wilderness, and since in the land of Canaan, first at Gilgal, then

at Shiloh, afterwards at Nob, and now at Gibeon. “Tent” and “tabernacle” are distinguished, though they were but one building and habitation; the tent was the curtains of goats’ hair, and the tabernacle the linen curtains, (see <sup><1231></sup>Exodus 26:1,6,11-13). In (<sup><1375></sup>1 Chronicles 17:5) it is “from tent to tent, and from [one] tabernacle [to another]”; which does not intend variety of tabernacles, but change of place.

**Ver. 7.** *In all [the places] wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup><1076></sup>2 Samuel 7:6”) on the places mentioned there:

*spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel*; or rather the sceptres of Israel; so the word is rendered, (<sup><1490></sup>Genesis 49:10); the sceptre bearers, rulers, and governors, whose custom was to carry a sceptre in their hands, as Ben Melech observes; and so in a parallel text, (<sup><1376></sup>1 Chronicles 17:6), it is, “to any of the judges of Israel”; any of those from the times of Moses and Joshua to the times of Saul and David, and this is confirmed by what follows:

*whom I commanded to feed my people Israel*; that is, to rule and govern them, protect and defend them, which cannot be said of the tribes, but of the rulers of them; and the Lord asks this question, whether ever he had said a word to any of those, in all that space of time, expressing anything of this kind:

*saying, why build ye not me an house of cedar?* they never were bid to do it, or expostulated with why they did not, or ever reprov'd for not doing it; therefore why should David think of doing it?

**Ver. 8.** *Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David*, etc.] For it was taken well at his hands, in part, that it was in his heart, and he had a desire to build an house for God, though he was wrong in determining upon it without seeking the Lord; and lest he should be discouraged by the prohibition of him from building, the following things are observed to assure him it was not from disregard unto him, or displeasure at him, that he would not be employed in this service; since the Lord had given sufficient tokens of his favour to him, and with which he should be content, as having honour enough done him; it was enough that God had raised him up from a low estate to great grandeur and dignity:

*thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel*; for that was his



employment, to keep his father's sheep, before he was taken into Saul's court, and married his daughter, when after his death he came to have the crown, of Israel: now this is said, not to upbraid him with his former meanness, but to observe the goodness of God unto him, and what reason he had for thankfulness, and to look upon himself as a favourite of God, who of a keeper of sheep was made a shepherd of men, to rule and feed them; so Cyrus is called a shepherd, (<sup>23408</sup> Isaiah 44:28); and Agamemnon, in Homer <sup>f122</sup>, is called "the shepherd of the people".

**Ver. 9.** *And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest*, etc.] When he went against Goliath, when he went forth against the Philistines, when in Saul's court, when he fled from Saul, and was obliged to go to various places, God was with him protecting and preserving him, prospering and succeeding him every where, and in everything:

*and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight*: as Saul, and others in the land of Israel, and the Philistines, and other enemies round about him, so that he had rest from them all;

*and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great [men] that [are] in the earth*; a name for a mighty king, warrior, and conqueror, such as some mighty kings and great men of the earth had obtained, and such fame, being made king over all Israel; and his success against the Jebusites had got him a name, as well as former victories he had been favoured with; on account of all which his name and fame had been spread abroad in the world, and he was reckoned as one of the greatest princes in it.

**Ver. 10.** *Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel*, etc.] The land of Canaan: this the Lord had of old appointed to them, and had introduced them into and settled them in it, but not entirely and alone; in many places the Canaanites had inhabited; but now they should be expelled, and the Israelites should have the place to themselves:

*and will plant them*; so that they shall take root and flourish, and continue:

*that they may dwell in a place of their own*; and not as they dwelt in Egypt, in a land that was not theirs; or "under themselves" <sup>f123</sup>; under their own rulers and governors:

*and move no more*; as they did in the times of the judges, when, sinning against God, they were often delivered into their enemies' hands, and carried captives:

*neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime*; when in Egypt, and in the times of the judges; all which is supposed, provided they did not depart from the Lord, but abode by his word, worship, and ordinances, and obeyed his will; for it was by their obedience they held their tenure of the land of Canaan, (see <sup><23119></sup>Isaiah 1:19); or all this may respect future times, when they shall be converted to the Messiah, and return to their own land, and ever continue in it, and never more be harassed and distressed, (<sup><24324></sup>Jeremiah 32:41 <sup><25725></sup>Ezekiel 37:25).

**Ver. 11.** *And as since the time that I commanded judges [to be] over my people Israel*, etc.] Before the time the judges were raised they were greatly afflicted by one nation or another around them, and between judge and judge, but now they should be no more so; here the parenthesis should end:

*and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies*; this belongs to David personally, and intends the same as in (<sup><3030></sup>2 Samuel 7:1);

*also the Lord telleth thee, that he will make thee an house*; not only build up his family, and make that numerous, but establish the house of his kingdom, as the Targum; that whereas he was desirous of building an house for God, God would build up an house for him; which would be a clear proof, that though he did not think fit to make use of him in the building of his house, yet he was not cast out of his favour, nor was it to be so interpreted by himself or others.

**Ver. 12.** *And when thy days be fulfilled*, etc.] The days of his life, which were appointed by the Lord for him to live, and when he had filled up the common term of man's life, as he exactly did; for he lived just seventy years, (see <sup><3084></sup>2 Samuel 5:4 <sup><3910></sup>Psalms 90:10);

*and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers*; die and be buried; for this is a phrase expressive of death, and the grave the common portion of men:

*I will set up thy seed after thee*; sons to succeed in the kingdom, as they did for the space of five hundred years; though here it respects one particular seed or son, even Solomon, as appears by what follows:

*which shall proceed out of thy bowels*; be begotten by him, and born unto him, and has regard to a future son of his not yet born; not Absalom nor Adonijah, nor any of the rest born in Hebron were to succeed him in the kingdom, but one as yet unborn:

*and I will establish his kingdom*; so that he shall have a long and happy reign, as Solomon had.

**Ver. 13.** *He shall build an house for my name*, etc.] For the honour of it, for the worship and service of God, as it is well known Solomon did; and so his antitype the Messiah, (<sup><3862></sup>Zechariah 6:12,13);

*and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever*; that is, for a long time. Solomon's reign was forty years, and the kingdom of Judah continued in his posterity until the Babylonish captivity, and a prince that descended from him was the ruler of the people when they returned: this has its fulfilment more eminently in Christ, who was of his seed, to whom God has given "the throne of his father David", and who "shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever", (<sup><4032></sup>Luke 1:32,33).

**Ver. 14.** *I will be his father, and he shall be my son*, etc.] That is, I will be as kind unto him, and careful of him, as a father of a son; or he shall be, and appear to be my son, by adopting grace, as no doubt Solomon was, notwithstanding all his failings. This is applied to Christ, the antitypical Solomon, who was, in an higher sense, the Son of God, even by natural and eternal generation; (see <sup><3005></sup>Hebrews 1:5);

*if he commit iniquity*; which cannot be supposed of Christ; for though he was made sin by imputation, he neither knew nor did any, but may be supposed of his spiritual offspring, whom he represented as an head and surety, as of Solomon, who committed many sins and transgressions:

*I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men*; either with men themselves, as Hadad the Edomite, Rezon the son of Eliadah, and Jeroboam the son of Nebat, by all whom he was afflicted and distressed, after he fell into idolatry, (<sup><41114></sup>1 Kings 11:14-28); or with such rods and stripes as men correct their children with, not to destroy them, but to chastise them for their good; and so the phrases denote humane, kind, gentle, moderate corrections given in love, and which answer some good purposes.

**Ver. 15.** *But my mercy shall not depart away from him*, etc.] Which is not to be understood of special mercy and grace, though it is true of these with respect to Solomon, and so to all the adopted children of God, (see ~~<1082>~~ Psalm 89:32,33); but then this here designs such mercy as may be taken away from another, and as it was from Saul, as it follows:

*as I took [it] from Saul, whom I put away before thee*; and therefore must be understood of his mercy and kindness, in giving him a kingdom, and setting him on the throne; this should not be taken away from him, as it was from Saul, whom God rejected from being king; not him personally, but his posterity; but so the Lord would not do, nor did he, to Solomon, in whose posterity the kingdom of Judah continued to the Babylonish captivity.

**Ver. 16.** *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee*, etc.] That is, both his family and his government should be perpetuated, or he should always have one of his family to sit upon his throne; the accomplishment of which, in the beginning of it, he saw with his eyes in his son Solomon, and with an eye of faith in his greater Son the Messiah, in whom only these words will have their complete fulfilment; and so Abarbanel says this vision or prophecy is explained by some of the days of the Messiah; and this house and kingdom, in (~~<1374>~~ 1 Chronicles 17:14); are called by the Lord “my” house, and “my” kingdom:

*thy throne shall be established for ever*; which is a repetition of the same in other words for the confirmation of it.

**Ver. 17.** *According to all these words, and according to all this vision*, etc.] All the words of this prophecy, just as they were delivered to Nathan, were exactly expressed by him; he did not vary from them in the least, but with the greatest faithfulness related them:

*so did Nathan speak unto David*; though in the part which related to the history of the house of God, it was contrary to the advice which he had given; but he was not ashamed to retract his sense, when he was made acquainted with the mind of God.

**Ver. 18.** *Then went King David in*, etc.] Into the tabernacle where the ark was, which he had prepared for it, (~~<1067>~~ 2 Samuel 6:17);

*and sat before the Lord*; before the ark, the symbol of his presence, and prayed, and gave thanks, as follows: from whence it appears that a sitting

posture was sometimes used in prayer, of which we have other instances, (<sup><1071></sup>Exodus 17:11,12 <sup><1100></sup>1 Kings 19:4). It is said <sup>f124</sup> that Pythagoras, and also Numa, ordered that worshippers should sit. So that this act of devotion is not to be limited to any particular posture, though it seems most agreeable either to stand or kneel; and the Jews look upon this to be a peculiar case, and infer from hence that none were allowed to sit in the court but the kings of the house of Judah <sup>f125</sup>; and some of them <sup>f126</sup> will not allow that to them, since the seraphim above are even said to stand, (<sup><2182></sup>Isaiah 6:2); and suppose the meaning of this to be only that David supported himself in the court; and some render the words, “he remained before the Lord” <sup>f127</sup>; he continued in meditation, prayer, and thanksgiving, and such like acts of devotion, for a considerable time; so the Targum, in (<sup><1376></sup>1 Chronicles 17:16).

“King David came and continued in prayer before the Lord:”

*and he said, who [am] I, O Lord God?* a creature, a sinful creature, a mean and unworthy one, undeserving of a place in the house of God, and of access unto him, and to receive any favour from him, less than the least of all saints, less than the least of all mercies:

*and what [is] my house:* or family of which he was, the family of Jesse; for though it sprung from a prince in Israel, yet was but low and mean, in comparison of some others, and especially unworthy of the regard of the great God:

*that thou hast brought me hitherto?* to such grandeur and dignity, as to be king over all Israel and Judah, to have all his enemies subdued under him, and to be at peace and rest from them, and established in his kingdom; and which he signifies the Lord alone had brought him to, through many difficulties and tribulations, and which he could never have attained unto by his own wisdom and power, nor by the assistance of his friends; it was all the Lord’s doing, and wondrous in his eyes.

**Ver. 19.** *And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God,* etc.] This of raising him to the throne, and settling him on it, was but a small thing in comparison of what he promised to do for him and his:

*but thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come;* since he had not only spoken of a son that should succeed him in the kingdom, but that he would make him an house, and establish his kingdom; yea, that the throne of his kingdom should be established for ever, that a

race of kings should spring from him, and especially the King Messiah, of whose kingdom there would be no end; and so the Targum,

“thou hast spoken of the house of thy servant unto the world to come,”

a phrase often used by the Jews for the times of the Messiah; (see <sup><8115></sup>Hebrews 2:5); and so Abarbinel thinks this clause has respect to Messiah the son of David:

*and [is] this the manner of man, O Lord God?* to bestow their favours on their inferiors, persons of no worth and merit, and is a profuse manner? it is not; and yet to one so much below thee, and so undeserving, hast thou most largely and liberally given such great and unmerited mercies: or is it the manner, or customary to deal thus with men mean and abject, though it may with great personages that make a great figure in the world? it is not: and yet I am regarded by thee as if I was one of the greatest monarchs on earth: this sense agrees with the parallel text in (<sup><1377></sup>1 Chronicles 17:17); “and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree”; or, “this is the law”, or “doctrine of the man [who is] the Lord God”<sup>f128</sup>. This doctrine contained in the promise now made respects the seed of the woman, the promised Shiloh, the illustrious man, Jehovah’s fellow, the incarnate God, the Messiah, who is Jehovah our righteousness, the true God and eternal life.

**Ver. 20.** *And what can David say more unto thee*, etc.] In a way of self-abasement, or in thankfulness for such wonderful favours, or in prayer for more and other mercies; he wants words, as if he should say, to express his sense of his own nothingness and unworthiness, and to praise the Lord for all his benefits; and so large are the grants and promises made, that there is no room for him to ask for more:

*for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant*; what a sense he has of his own meanness and vileness, what gratitude his heart is filled with, and what his wants and necessities are, which God only can supply, and does abundantly, even more than he is able to ask or think. The Targum is,

“and thou hast performed the petition of thy servant, O Lord God.”

**Ver. 21.** *For thy word’s sake*, etc.] For the sake of the promise he had made to him by Samuel, that he should be king, and his kingdom should be established; or for the sake of the Messiah, that should spring from him; the

Memra, as the Targum, the essential Word of God; and so the Septuagint version, “because of thy servant”, with which agrees the parallel text in (~~1379~~ 1 Chronicles 17:19);

*and according to thine own heart*; of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, of his own grace, as the Arabic version, and not according to the merits and deserts of David:

*hast thou done all these great things*; in making him king of Israel, and settling the kingdom in his posterity to the times of the Messiah, who should spring from him:

*to make thy servant know [them]*; as he now did by Nathan the prophet, what he and his should enjoy for time to come; so that it is not only a blessing to have favours designed, purposed, and promised, but to have the knowledge of them, to know the things that are freely given of God.

**Ver. 22.** *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God*, etc.] In his name, nature, persons, and perfections, purposes, promises, and works:

*for [there is] none like thee*; for his essence and attributes, for his greatness and goodness, for what he is in himself, for what he is to his people, and has done for them:

*neither [is there any] God beside thee*; there is but one God, the living and true God, the former and maker of all things; all others are but fictitious and factitious gods, (see ~~1111~~ 1 Samuel 2:2);

*according to all that we have heard with our ears*; concerning what he did in the land of Egypt upon the Egyptians, and in the wilderness, in favour of the Israelites, and in the land of Canaan, by driving out the inhabitants before the people of Israel, and in the times of the judges, in raising them up to deliver his people.

**Ver. 23.** *And what one nation in the earth [is] like thy people, [even] like Israel*, etc.] For the knowledge and worship of the true God among them, for laws and or given them, and for blessings of goodness bestowed upon them:

*whom God went to redeem for a people to himself*; the words are plural, “whom the gods went to redeem”; the Targum is,

“they that were sent from the Lord,”

meaning Moses and Aaron, of whom Jarchi interprets them, of the first of which it is said, “I have made thee a god unto Pharaoh”, (<sup><100></sup>Exodus 7:1); but Kimchi and R. Isaiah understand it of the true God, only suppose, as the former, that the plural expression is used for the sake of honour and glory; whereas, no doubt, respect is had to the three divine Persons in the Trinity, who were all concerned in the redemption of Israel, (see <sup><260></sup>Isaiah 63:9-12), where mention is made of the Lord, and of the Angel of his presence, and of his holy Spirit, as engaged therein:

*and to make him a name*; either to get himself a name, and honour and glory in the world, to show forth his power and might, as well as his mercy and goodness, or to make his people famous, great, and glorious in the earth:

*and to do for you great things and terrible*; as he did in the land of Ham, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan, great things for his people, and terrible ones to their enemies:

*for thy land*; which is either spoken to God, whose was the land of Israel, and which he had chosen to dwell in, and had given to his people; or else to Israel, to whom the grant of this land was made, and who were put into the possession of it:

*before thy people which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt*: that is, the great and terrible things were done in their sight, when they were redeemed from the bondage of Egypt, (see <sup><190></sup>Psalms 78:12);

*[from] the nations, and their gods?* meaning, that they were redeemed not only from Egypt, but the nations of the Canaanites were driven out before them; nor could their idols save them, but destruction came upon them as upon the gods of the Egyptians: some leave out the supplement “from”, and interpret this of the persons redeemed, even of the nations and tribes of Israel, and their great men, their rulers and civil magistrates, sometimes called gods.

**Ver. 24.** *For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel [to be] a people unto thee for ever*, etc.] So long as they were obedient to him, and observed his laws and statutes, and abode by his worship and ordinances, otherwise he would write a “loammi” on them, as he has, (see <sup><300></sup>Hosea 1:9);



*and thou, Lord, art become their God*; their covenant God, they having avouched him to be their God, and he having avouched them to be his people, (<sup><1637></sup>Deuteronomy 26:17,18).

**Ver. 25.** *And now, O Lord God*, etc.] From confessions of unworthiness, and of the goodness of God, and a recital of favours conferred on him and the people of Israel, David proceeds to petitions:

*the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish [it] for ever*: he prays for the sure performance of the promise of God respecting himself and his family, and the stability and perpetual continuance of the kingdom in it, and has, no doubt, a special regard to the Messiah, the promised seed that should spring from him:

*and do as thou hast said*: for though God had purposed and promised to do those several things, and would do them, yet it was expected by him, and it was right in David to pray for the performance of them; (see <sup><1637></sup>Ezekiel 36:37).

**Ver. 26.** *And let thy name be magnified for ever*, etc.] David desired the performance of the above things not so much for his own sake, and for the sake of his family, as for the glory of God; his great concern was, that God might be magnified, and his greatness displayed, in making him and his family great; and particularly that he might be magnified and glorified in that famous Son of his, the Messiah, as he has been, (<sup><1631></sup>John 13:31,32); and by all his people in succeeding ages:

*saying, the Lord of hosts [is] the God over Israel*; the Lord of armies above and below, is God over all, and in a special and peculiar manner God over Israel, literal and spiritual, that takes care of them, supplies, protects, and defends them:

*and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee*; as he had promised, (<sup><1076></sup>2 Samuel 7:16).

**Ver. 27.** *For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel*, etc.] As he is called in (<sup><1076></sup>2 Samuel 7:26):

*hast revealed to thy servant*; which he otherwise could not have known:

*saying, I will build thee an house*; (see <sup><1071></sup>2 Samuel 7:11);

*therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee;* found his heart disposed to this service, or found freedom and boldness in him to put up this prayer to God; what encouraged and emboldened him to do it was the gracious promise of God, that he would build up his family, and establish his kingdom; or otherwise he could not have taken such liberty, and used such boldness with God in prayer, as to have requested it of him.

**Ver. 28.** *And now, O Lord God, thou [art] that God,* etc.] Who is the Lord of hosts, and the God of Israel, that has promised and is able to perform, and is faithful to his promise:

*and thy words be true;* are truly, punctually, and faithfully performed, never fail:

*and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant;* concerning building and establishing his house. David repeats this promise as being greatly affected with it, and fully assured of the performance of it.

**Ver. 29.** *Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant,* etc.] Not according to the merits of him or his family, but according to the sovereign will and pleasure of God; the Targum is, begin and bless; let the promised blessings begin to descend, that there may be some appearance of the performance of the promise, which may give encouragement that the whole will be fulfilled:

*that it may continue for ever before thee;* under his care and protection:

*for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken [it];* whose words never fall to the ground, but have a sure accomplishment:

*and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever;* even both with temporal and spiritual blessedness.

# CHAPTER 8

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 8

This chapter gives a relation of the wars of David with his enemies, and his victories over them, particularly the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and Edomites, and of the spoils he took from them, and of the presents made to him by others, (<sup><108E></sup>2 Samuel 8:1-14); and of his righteous administration of government, and of the principal officers in his court and camp, (<sup><108S></sup>2 Samuel 8:15-18).

**Ver. 1.** *And after this it came to pass*, etc.] After David had rest from his enemies for a time, and after the conversation he had had with Nathan about building the house of God, and after the message sent to him from the Lord by that prophet, forbidding him to build, and David's prayer to the Lord upon it, the following events happened; and which are recorded to show that David's rest from his enemies did not last long, and that he had other work to do than to build the house of God:

*that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them*; these had been long and implacable enemies of Israel; Samson began to weaken them in his days; a war was waged between them and Israel in the times of Samuel and Saul, and the battle sometimes went on one side and sometimes on the other; but now David made an entire conquest of them: before they had used to come into the land of Israel, and there fight with Israel, but now David entered into their land, and took it from them:

*and David took Methegammah out of the hands of the Philistines*; the name of a province in Palestine, and from the parallel place in (<sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 18:1), it appears to be Gath, and its adjacent towns; but why that was called the bridle of Ammah, or the bridle of a cubit, as it may be rendered, is not easy to say. The conjecture of Kimchi is, that there was a pool or river of water, so Ammah is thought to signify; and Aquila renders it a water course, which passed through the city, having been brought from without it into it, the communication of which from place to place it may be David cut off, by stopping or turning its stream; but interpreters more generally suppose that Gath was built upon an hill called Ammah, (see <sup><1024></sup>2

Samuel 2:24); thought to be the same with the Amgaris of Pliny<sup>f129</sup> though that is sometimes read Angaris, a mountain he places in Palestine; and that it was called Metheg, a bridle, because being a frontier city, and being very strong and powerful, erected into a kingdom, it was a curb and bridle upon the Israelites; but now David taking it out of their hands, opened his way for the more easy subduing the rest of their country: or the word may be rendered Metheg and her mother, that is, Gath, the metropolis, since that and her daughters, or towns, are said to be taken, (~~4380~~1 Chronicles 18:1); and Metheg might be one of them.

**Ver. 2.** *And he smote Moab*, etc.] He next went against that, and invaded it, the people of it being always troublesome and distressing to the children of Israel; and though the king of it had shown some favour to David, yet it was when he considered him as an enemy to Saul, and Saul to him; but things having taken a different turn, his and his people's enmity against David and his people appeared; wherefore he went and fought them, and made them his subjects, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy of Balaam, (~~0247~~Numbers 24:17); as it referred to David:

*and measured them with a line*: either their country and fields, to distribute among his people, or rather the soldiers he took prisoners; which, as Procopius Gazaeus says, were so numerous that they could not be told, and therefore they were ordered to lie prostrate on the ground, and they were measured with a line, as it follows:

*casting them down to the ground*; or ordering them to lie down; though some understand this of casting down their cities, towers, and strong holds, and levelling them with the ground:

*even with two lines measured he*; with one, so it may be supplied, as the Vulgate Latin,

*to put to death, and with one full line, to keep alive*; that is, in measuring them with his lines, he divided them into two parts, one he put to death, and the other, the full line, which contained the most, he saved alive; though it seems according to our version, and so most understand it, that David slew two thirds, and saved one, and so Josephus<sup>f130</sup>. This must be understood of the army of the Moabites that fell into his hands, so Josephus, who persisted and refused to submit, not of all the inhabitants of the land. The Jews say<sup>f131</sup>, that the reason of this severe treatment of them was because they slew the father, and mother and brethren of David, whom

he left to the care and custody of the king of Moab, when he fled from Saul, (see <sup><027B></sup>1 Samuel 22:3); since after that they are heard no more of; though it should rather be imputed to their enmity against the people of Israel. The phrase of “meting out the valley of Succoth” seems to be an allusion to this fact, (<sup><1016></sup>Psalm 60:6), the psalm being written on occasion of the victories here related:

*and [so] the Moabites became David’s servants*; the inhabitants of the land who were left in it, perhaps that part of the soldiers preserved alive were brought home captives:

*[and] brought gifts*; paid a yearly tribute to King David, as they afterwards did to Solomon and to Rehoboam, until the revolt of the ten tribes, and then they paid it unto the kings of Israel, to the times of Ahab, (see <sup><120E></sup>2 Kings 3:4,5), though these gifts may be distinct from, and besides the tribute paid, which is supposed in their being servants, (see <sup><471></sup>2 Chronicles 17:11). Thus the Arabians <sup>f132</sup> carried gifts to the king of Persia besides tribute.

**Ver. 3.** *And David also smote Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah,* etc.] Called sometimes Aramzobah, and was a part of Syria, as its name shows. Benjamin, of Tudela <sup>f133</sup> takes it to be the same with Haleb or Aleppo; Josephus <sup>f134</sup> calls it Sophene; but that is placed by Ptolemy <sup>f135</sup> beyond the Euphrates; whereas this country must be between that river and the land of Israel, and was contiguous to it, and near Damascus; and it was so near the land of Israel, and being conquered by David, that it became a controversy with the Jews, whether it was not to be reckoned part of it, and in several things they allow it to be equal to it <sup>f136</sup>. Rehob was the first king of this part of Syria, and then his son the second and last; he is called Hadarezer in (<sup><138B></sup>1 Chronicles 18:3); the letters **d** “D” and **r** “R”, being frequently changed in the Hebrew tongue: him David fought with, and overcame,

*as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates*; which some understand of Hadadezer, so Jarchi and Kimchi, who attempted to recover part of his dominions that had been taken by some one or another from him, which lay upon the river Euphrates; or he endeavoured to enlarge his dominions, and carry them as far as the river, and establish the borders of them; and while he was doing this, or attempting it, David fell upon him, and routed him; or rather this refers to David, who considering that the

ancient border of the land of Israel, as given to Abraham, reached to the river Euphrates, (<sup><0158></sup>Genesis 15:18); he set out on an expedition to recover this border, and whereas the country of this king lay in his way, he invaded that; upon which Hadadezer rose up against him, and was conquered by him, and by this means the border was recovered to the kingdom of Israel, and reached so far, as is plain it did in Solomon's time, (<sup><1021></sup>1 Kings 4:21-24).

**Ver. 4.** *And David took from him a thousand [chariots], and seven hundred horsemen*, etc.] “Chariots” are not in the text here, it is only 1700 “horsemen”; but it is supplied from (<sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 18:4); where the word is expressly mentioned, and there the horsemen are said to be seven thousand as in the Septuagint version here, and in Josephus<sup>f137</sup>; which may be reconciled by observing, with Kimchi and Abarbinel, that here the chief officers are meant, there all the chariots and horsemen that were under their command are mentioned, which together made up that large number; or else here are meant the ranks and companies of horse David took, which were seven hundred; and these having ten in a company or rank, made seven thousand; and there the complement of soldiers in those companies and ranks are intended:

*and twenty thousand footmen*; the same as in (<sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 18:4); and so in Josephus<sup>f138</sup>:

*and David houghed all the chariot [horses]*; or hamstrung them, as Joshua was ordered to do with respect to the Canaanites, (<sup><0610></sup>Joshua 11:6); he did not kill them, which might seem cruel and unmerciful to the brute creatures, but hamstrung them, that they might be useless for war; and the reason of it was, that horses might not be multiplied in Israel for that purpose, that so their trust and confidence might not be placed in them; (see <sup><0576></sup>Deuteronomy 17:16);

*but reserved of them [for] an hundred chariots*; for his own use, not for war, but for grandeur; which accounts in some measure for the number of chariots and horses Solomon had, (<sup><1026></sup>1 Kings 4:26 <sup><4014></sup>2 Chronicles 1:14); the number of horses reserved is supposed to be four hundred, four horses being used in a chariot, which Jarchi gathers from (<sup><4017></sup>2 Chronicles 1:17).

**Ver. 5.** *And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah*, etc.] These seem to have had no king at this time, or, if they had, Hadadezer was their king, which is not improbable; and Nicholas of

Damascus <sup>f139</sup>; an Heathen writer, is clear for it, whom he calls Adad, who, he says, reigned over Damascus, and the other Syria without Phoenicia, who made war with David king of Judea, and was routed by him at Euphrates: and he seems to be the first king of Damascus, which he joined to the kingdom of Zobah, and all the kings of Damascus afterwards were called by the same name; though Josephus <sup>f140</sup>, who also speaks of Adad being king of Damascus and of the Syrians, yet makes him different from this Hadadezer, to whose assistance he says he came:

*David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men*; that is, of the Syrians of Damascus.

**Ver. 6.** *Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus*, etc.] Which was Coele-Syria, and lay between Libanus and Antilibanus, the chief city of which was Damascus; which Curtius <sup>f141</sup> calls Damascus of Syria, being the head of it, (<sup><2308></sup>Isaiah 7:8); in the principal places of which he put garrisons of soldiers to keep the country in subjection to him; or he put commanders or governors, as the Targum, in the, chief cities, and so Ben Gersom and R. Isaiah interpret it:

*and the Syrians became servants to David, [and] brought gifts*; or paid him tribute by way of homage, acknowledging themselves his subjects:

*and the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went*; he covered his head in the day of battle, and saved him from the hurtful sword.

**Ver. 7.** *And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer*, etc.] That were found with them, which they had in their hands; these must be supposed to be with the principal officers of his army; or golden chains, as Aquila, or golden bracelets on their arms, as the Septuagint; the Syriac version is “quivers of gold”, such as they put arrows into, and so Jarchi and R. Isaiah understand it of such, and refer to (<sup><2511></sup>Jeremiah 51:11); and so Josephus <sup>f142</sup>:

*and brought them to Jerusalem*; where they were laid up, and converted to the use of the sanctuary Solomon built; (see <sup><2408></sup>Song of Solomon 4:4).

**Ver. 8.** *And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer*, etc.] Which, in (<sup><1388></sup>1 Chronicles 18:8), are called Tibhath and Chun, they having different names; or their names might be changed upon this conquest of them, and the one might be the names they went by with the Syrians, and the other the Israelites called them by; the latter is the same with Berothah

in (<sup>257/6</sup>Ezekiel 47:16); and the Barathena of Ptolemy <sup>f143</sup>, placed by him near Mesopotamia; in the Arabic version of (<sup>1388</sup>1 Chronicles 18:8), they are called Emesa and Baalbec, the former was a city of Coele-Syria, the latter was at the foot of Mount Lebanon; (see Gill on “Amos 1:5”);

*King David took exceeding much brass*; whereby he was furnished and able to give the large quantity he did for the service of the temple, (<sup>1397</sup>1 Chronicles 29:7). The Septuagint version adds here what is expressed in (<sup>1388</sup>1 Chronicles 18:8),

“wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the layers, and all the vessels.”

**Ver. 9.** *When Toi king of Hamath*, etc.] Which was another small kingdom in Syria, perhaps lately erected to defend themselves against Hadadezer, and this the first king of it, at least the first we hear of; his name is Tou in (<sup>1389</sup>1 Chronicles 18:9); where in the Targum he is called king of Antioch. Hamath lay to the north of the land of Canaan; (see Gill on “<sup>0848</sup>Numbers 34:8”): it is said <sup>f144</sup> to be three days’ journey from Tripoli, and that it stands in the midway to Aleppo, on a very goodly plain, replenished with corn and cotton wool, but very much in ruins, and falls more and more to decay: at this day (says my author, who travelled in those parts in the beginning of the seventeenth century) there is scarce one half of the wall standing, which hath been very fair and strong. The king of this place

*heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer*; the news of which soon reached him, he being in the neighbourhood.

**Ver. 10.** *Then Toi sent Joram his son unto King David*, etc.] Who is called Hadoram in (<sup>1380</sup>1 Chronicles 18:10); though the Syriac and Arabic versions read Joram there:

*to salute him*: to inquire of his welfare after his fatigue in the battles he had had with the Moabites and Syrians, and to wish him all happiness and prosperity for the future:

*and to bless him*; to congratulate him on his victory, and to wish him success in all after wars he might be engaged in; and particularly to give him thanks for delivering him from so great an enemy as Hadadezer had been to him, as also to bring a present to him, which is sometimes called a blessing; (see <sup>0331</sup>Genesis 33:11);



*because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him*; that is, David had, which had endeared him to Toi:

*for Hadadezer had wars with Toi*; was an enemy of his, sought to take his kingdom from him, and had had many battles with him: and though he could not conquer him, he sadly harassed him, being too mighty for him:

*and [Joram] brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass*; as a present to David, in gratitude for his deliverance from his enemy by him, and as a token of his homage and subjection to him; at least as a sign that he put himself under his protection, and desired to be his friend and ally. The word “Joram”, though not in the Hebrew text, is rightly supplied; for none else can be supposed to bring the present.

**Ver. 11.** *Which also King David did dedicate unto the Lord*, etc.] He devoted it to sacred uses, particularly to the building of the house of the Lord, as he also had the gold and the brass he took from Hadadezer: together

*with the silver and the gold he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued*; who are after particularly mentioned; he did not convert the spoils he took to his own use, but observed the law God gave to the kings of Israel, that they should not greatly multiply to themselves silver and gold, (<sup><1377></sup>Deuteronomy 17:17). He set it apart, and laid it up for the service of the sanctuary; and this accounts for the abundance of gold, silver, and brass, which David had amassed together, and left to his son Solomon to build the temple with; (see <sup><1380></sup>1 Chronicles 28:1-29:30).

**Ver. 12.** *Of Syria*, etc.] Of Syria of Damascus, as distinct from Syriazobah, Hadadezer was king of, after mentioned; this is omitted in (<sup><1381></sup>1 Chronicles 18:11);

*and of Moab*: who brought him gifts and presents, and were tributaries to him, (<sup><1382></sup>2 Samuel 8:2);

*and of the children of Ammon*; who very probably joined the Moabites, and were conquered and spoiled at the same time:

*and of the Philistines*; when Methegammah was taken from them, (<sup><1383></sup>2 Samuel 8:1);

*and of Amalek*; for though we have no account of any war of his with that people, since he was king, yet he doubtless had, and had been victorious and spoiled them; (see <sup><980></sup>Psalm 83:7);

*and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah*; (see <sup><408></sup>2 Samuel 8:3-6). These conquests of David, are confirmed by the testimony of Eupolemus, an Heathen writer, who says that he overcame the Syrians by Euphrates, and the Assyrians in Galadene (or Gilead), and the Phoenicians; that he fought against the Idumeans (or Edomites), the Ammonites, Moabites, Ituraeans, Nabathaeans, and Nabdaeans; also against Syron king of Tyre and Phoenicia; all of whom he obliged to pay tribute to the Jews <sup>f145</sup>.

**Ver. 13.** *And David gat [him] a name*, etc.] Fame and reputation in the several nations of the world for valour and courage, for the many and signal victories that he obtained; the Jewish writers generally refer this to his humanity in burying the dead bodies of his enemies slain in war, which gained him great esteem among all, and even his very enemies; but nothing of that kind is pointed at here, but his conquests: or “he made himself a name”; erected a triumphal arch <sup>f146</sup> in memory of his victories:

*when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, [being] eighteen thousand [men]*; in the relation of this fact in different places some difficulties arise, both as to the people smitten, and their numbers, and by whom; in this place they are said to be Syrians, but in (<sup><382></sup>1 Chronicles 18:12), and in the title of (<sup><961></sup>Psalm 60:1), which was composed on account of these victories, they are called Edomites, and said to be of Edom; which may be reconciled by observing, that the Syrians and Edomites were confederates in this war; and that whereas the latter were auxiliaries to the former, the whole body of the army might be called Syrians, of which twenty two thousand were slain that were properly Syrians, and eighteen thousand Edomites, in all forty thousand; which was a very great slaughter: or the sense is, that when he had smitten the twenty two thousand Syrians, and was upon the return, he met with a body of Edomites, who came to the assistance of the Syrians, and he slew eighteen thousand of them; and the Jews say, as Jarchi observes, there were two battles; and if so, this would remove all the difficulties started; as for the numbers slain, here eighteen thousand, and (<sup><961></sup>Psalm 60:1), twelve thousand, it is reconciled by observing, that Abishai first began the attack upon the Edomites, and slew six thousand of them; and then Joab fell upon

them, and slew twelve thousand more, in all eighteen thousand; in (~~1382~~ 1 Chronicles 18:12), this slaughter is ascribed to Abishai, because he began it, even the whole number; and in (~~3900~~ Psalm 60:1), to Joab, the twelve thousand slain by him, who seconded Abishai; and the whole is here attributed to David, because he was king, under whom Abishai and Joab served as generals: and no less difficult is it to ascertain the place where this slaughter was made, called “the valley of salt”: it seems by our text that it was in Syria, but in other places as if it was in Edom; (see ~~1240~~ 2 Kings 14:7) (~~4251~~ 2 Chronicles 25:11); but in Edom itself is no such valley to be found, though there is in Syria; one traveller <sup>f147</sup> tells us, that in the way from Aleppo to the banks of Euphrates are many villages, among which is one of note, called Tedith, famous for a synod held here by the Jews, in the year from the creation 3498, of which Ezra was the scribe; when were placed the books of the Old Testament in the order in which they now are; and near this town, he says, is the valley of salt, memorable for the victory here recorded: others say <sup>f148</sup> about three or four hours’ journey from Aleppo is the valley of salt, near which is a salt spring, whose waters running over the place leave, when dried by the sun, a great quantity of excellent salt; this salt is thrown together in the Gabboul, or salt house; but by others <sup>f149</sup> we are informed, that near about an hour’s distance from the city of Tadmor, (see ~~1098~~ 1 Kings 9:18) (~~4488~~ 2 Chronicles 8:3,4), is to be seen a large valley of salt, affording great quantities thereof; and it is thought that this is more probably the valley of salt mentioned here, than another which lies about four hours from Aleppo, and has sometimes passed for it; and which the above accounts show: but a modern writer <sup>f150</sup>, in his account of Palmyra, the same with Tadmor, speaks of a great plain, all covered with salt, from whence the whole country round is supplied. This plain is about a league from Palmyra, and extends itself towards the eastern part of Idumea (or Edom) the capital city of which was Bozra; and indeed this valley being both in Syria, and reaching to the borders of Edom, bids fair to be the valley here spoken of.

**Ver. 14.** *And he put garrisons in Edom,* etc.] To keep the inhabitants in subjection to him; as their forts and strong holds came into his hands, he placed companies of soldiers in them for the said purpose; or governors, as the Targum, men of his own nation, into whose hands he put their principal cities, who governed them for him, and under him. Jarchi interprets it of officers appointed to collect the tribute he exacted of them:

*throughout all Edom put he garrisons*; which is observed to show that the whole country was brought into subjection to him:

*and all they of Edom became David's servants*; and hereby were fulfilled the oracle delivered to Rebekah, and the prophetic blessing of Isaac, (<sup><1223></sup>Genesis 25:23 27:40);

*and the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went*; (see Gill on "<sup><1085></sup>2 Samuel 8:6").

**Ver. 15.** *And David reigned over all Israel*, etc.] Not only over Judah, but over all the tribes of Israel, and over the whole land of Canaan, as promised to Abraham, (<sup><1158></sup>Genesis 15:18); reaching to the river Euphrates, as Syria did, now conquered by David:

*and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people*; when he returned from his wars, he heard and tried all causes impartially, brought before him, and gave sentence according to the law of God, and administered righteous judgment without any respect to persons; all had justice done them that applied unto him, whether high or low, rich or poor; and indeed during his wars he was not negligent of the civil government of his subjects, and the distribution of justice to them by proper officers, in which he was a type of Christ; (see <sup><2115></sup>Isaiah 11:5) (<sup><2435></sup>Jeremiah 23:5,6).

**Ver. 16.** *And Joab the son of Zeruiah [was] over the host*, etc.] Which was not only owing to his relation to David, being his sister's son, but to his promise that whoever smote the Jebusites first should be chief and captain; that is, should have the command of the army under him; this Joab did; and so was entitled to this office, and was put into it, and continued in it, (<sup><3106></sup>1 Chronicles 11:6);

*and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud [was] recorder*; of memorable events, who kept a diary of whatsoever remarkable happened, which were digested into a chronicle, history, or annals; (see <sup><7061></sup>Esther 6:1); so the Targum, he

“was appointed over the memorials;”

or book of memorials, as Kimchi interprets it; that is, to take care of it, and see that everything worthy of notice was inserted in it; or was “remembrancer”<sup>f151</sup>; one that put the king in mind what was to be done every day, or in certain cases, and so R. Isaiah explains it, the king's counsellor; some take him to be chancellor, as Luther and others<sup>f152</sup>.

**Ver. 17.** *And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, [were] the priests,* etc.] Not high priests, as Josephus<sup>f153</sup> suggests, for there was only one high priest at a time; indeed there was a “sagan”, or deputy priest, on occasion; and so Abarbinel says that Zadok was the high priest, and Ahimelech his second or deputy; but the truth of the case was this, Abiathar was high priest only, and continued so until the time of Solomon, when he was thrust out of his office, and Zadok put into it; and Ahimelech his son and Zadok were the principal priests under him, the one of the family of Ithamar, the other of Eleazar; so the Targum on (~~1386~~1 Chronicles 18:16) calls them “sagans”, or deputies of the high priesthood. Zadok is mentioned first, though Ahimelech was the son of the present high priest, because he was in great favour with David, as afterwards with Solomon, in whose days the high priesthood was translated to him; the family of Eli being now upon the decline, and near being removed from the high priesthood, as was foretold by Samuel it should:

*and Seraiah [was] the scribe;* or secretary of state; in (~~1386~~1 Chronicles 18:16) he is called Shavsha; he seems to have had two names.

**Ver. 18.** *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada [was] over both the Cherethites and Pelethites,* etc.] These, according to Josephus<sup>f154</sup>, were the king’s bodyguards, and this man is expressly said to be set over his guards, (~~1022~~2 Samuel 23:22,23); and which some think were of the nation of the Philistines, famous for archery, and slinging of stones; and so the Targum renders it,

“was appointed over the archers and slingers;”

so “choriti” in Virgil<sup>f155</sup> are quivers for arrows; the great use of which in fighting David had observed, and therefore got a select company of these men, partly to teach Israel, and partly to guard himself: but others are of opinion that David would never suffer such as were Heathens to be so near his person, and therefore take them to be Israelites; and so some Jewish writers say they were two families in Israel; which is much better than to interpret them as others do of the sanhedrim, and even of the Urim and Thummim, as in the Targum on (~~1387~~1 Chronicles 18:17); (see Gill on ~~3005~~Zephaniah 2:5”); and it is most probable that they were Israelites, who were David’s guards, and consisted of the chiefs that were with him in Philistia, and particularly at Ziklag, which lay on the south of the Cherethites, (~~0304~~1 Samuel 30:14); and so had their name from thence; and among the chief of those that came to him at Ziklag there was one named

Peleth, from whence might come the Pelethites, and they were all of them archers; (see <sup><312></sup>1 Chronicles 12:2,3);

*and David's sons were chief rulers*; princes, princes of the blood, or “chief about the king”, as in (<sup><317></sup>1 Chronicles 18:17); they were constant attendants at court, waiting on the king, ready at hand to do what he pleased to order; they were the chief ministers, and had the management of the principal affairs at court. Abarbinel thinks that this respects not only David's sons, but Benaiah, and the family of the Cherethites and Pelethites, who had none of them particular posts assigned them, which were settled and known, as those before mentioned had, but were always near at hand, to do whatsoever the king commanded them; and which seems better to agree with the literal order and construction of the words; which are,

*and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and Pelethites, and the sons of David, [were] princes*, or chief rulers; or priests, who according to Gussetius <sup>f156</sup> brought the offerings or presents to the king, and did that to him the priests did to the Lord.

# CHAPTER 9

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 9

This chapter relates David's inquiry after the posterity of Saul, whether any were living and where they were, (<sup><1000></sup>2 Samuel 9:1-4); and on inquiry being informed of one, he sent for him, and kindly received him, (<sup><1005></sup>2 Samuel 9:5-8); and restored to him the land of his fathers, and appointed a person to till it for him, and bring him the fruits of it, and maintained him at his own table, (<sup><1009></sup>2 Samuel 9:9-13).

**Ver. 1.** *And David said*, etc.] To some of his courtiers:

*is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul?* which question was put by him, not in order to destroy them, lest they should disturb his government, as was usual with other princes, and especially such who got their crowns by usurpation; but to prevent any suspicion of that kind in the persons he inquired of, he adds,

*that I may show him kindness, for Jonathan's sake?* not for Saul's sake, who had been his implacable enemy, though he had sworn to him that he would not cut off his seed; but for Jonathan's sake, his dear friend, whose memory was precious to him. Some of the Jewish writers have thought, because this follows upon the account given of the officers of David, both in his camp and court, that this question was occasioned by a thought that came into his mind, while he was appointing officers, that if there were any of Saul's family, and especially any descendant of Jonathan, that was fit for any post or office, he would put him into one; but this seems to be a long time after David had settled men in his chief offices; for Mephibosheth, after an inquiry found out, was but five years of age when his father was slain, and so but twelve when David was made king over all Israel, and yet now he was married, and had a young son, (<sup><1012></sup>2 Samuel 9:12); so that it was a long time after David was established in the kingdom that he thought of this; which is to be imputed to his being engaged so much in war, and having such a multiplicity of business on his hands.

**Ver. 2.** *And [there was] of the house of Saul a servant whose name [was] Ziba*, etc.] Or there was a servant that belonged to Saul's family; not that

any of Saul's family was a servant; and this servant the Jews commonly say was a Canaanitish servant, and who upon the death of his master was not made free, but became the inheritance and possession of his children after him, (<sup>482546</sup>Leviticus 25:46); though Josephus <sup>f157</sup> says he was made free by Saul:

*and when they had called him unto David;* who it seems was now at court, or in Jerusalem, on some account or another; or was in David's service, in some inferior post or another; however, having been a quondam servant of Saul, it was thought he could give the best intelligence of his family, and whether any were living, and therefore was sent for; and when he was come into the king's presence,

*the king said unto him, [art] thou Ziba?* for he had been told before by some of his courtiers what his name was:

*and he said, thy servant [is he];* or my name is Ziba, and I am at thy command.

**Ver. 3.** *And the king said, [is] there not yet any of the house of Saul;* that is, remaining or living:

*that I may show the kindness of God unto him?* great kindness, some large favour or benefit; for the word God added to things, as to trees, mountains, etc. serves to set forth the excellency of them; and this kindness is in imitation of God, or such as he had sworn in the presence of God to show; and that is expressed in the same language, (<sup>40014</sup>1 Samuel 20:14);

*and Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son;* a son still living;

*[which is] lame on [his] feet;* on both his feet, as the Targum; of which occasion, (see Gill on "<sup>40004</sup>2 Samuel 4:4").

**Ver. 4.** *And the king said unto him, where is he?* etc.] In what part of the land, city, or town, does he dwell?

*and Ziba said unto the king, behold, he [is] in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel;* a descendant of Machir, the son of Manasseh, to whom the land of Gilead was given, which lay on the other side Jordan:

*in Lodebar;* a place in that country, perhaps the same with Debir in (<sup>48335</sup>Joshua 13:26). Here it may be his mother's relations lived, and here he might dwell in obscurity, and lie hid from the knowledge of David; who, it



might be feared by his friends, would have dispatched him, had he known where he was. Some take it to be an appellative, and render it, as Abarbinel observes, “without anything”; as if he was so poor that he had not anything to support himself with. No mention as yet is made of his name, perhaps because the historian had given it before, (<sup><3004></sup>2 Samuel 4:4).

**Ver. 5.** *Then King David sent*, etc.] Messengers; it may be Ziba, none being more proper than he that knew him, and where he was:

*and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar*; they demanded him in the king’s name, and being delivered to them, they brought him from thence to Jerusalem.

**Ver. 6.** *Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul*, etc.] For that was his name, though sometimes called Meribbaal, (<sup><3384></sup>1 Chronicles 8:34); and this was his relation to Jonathan and Saul, the son of the one, and grandson of the other:

*was come unto David*; to his court and palace in Jerusalem, being thither brought; for he could not go of himself, being lame:

*he fell on his face, and did reverence*; to him as a king, in a civil way, and in the best manner he could, considering that he was lame on his feet:

*and David said, Mephibosheth*; is it he? having learnt what his name was, this he expressed with great vehemency and affection, as glad that he had found one of Jonathan’s posterity: and

*he answered, behold thy servant!* he answered to his name, and owned his subjection to David, and was ready to take the oath of allegiance to him, and give him homage, and serve him in what way he could.

**Ver. 7.** *And David said unto him, fear not*, etc.] He might observe a dejection in his countenance, a trembling in his limbs, and might discover signs of fear lest David should cut him off, because he was of the seed royal:

*for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father’s sake*; whom he loved as his own soul, and to whom he had sworn that he would not cut off his kindness from his house for ever, and now remembering his oath was determined to observe it:

*and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father*; his grandfather, such sometimes being called fathers; which David had taken to him, as crown lands, or in the right of his wife; or as being confiscated by Ishbosheth's rebellion:

*and thou shall eat bread at my table continually*; he gave him an apartment in the court, a place at his table, admitted him to be a guest with him as long as he should live; which was a very great favour and high honour, and showed what an unshaken friendship he had for his father, and would maintain with him. This was the kindness of God he meant to show to him.

**Ver. 8.** *And he bowed himself*, etc.] In token of gratitude, and as a sign of humility, and of the sense he had of his unworthiness to enjoy such a favour:

*and said, what [is] thy servant, that thou shouldest look on such a dead dog as I [am]*? one so mean, and base, and worthless; which he might say with respect to the infirmities of his body, the rejection of his family by the Lord, their attainder of high treason for rebellion against David, and the low circumstances he was brought into and now under; though one of the royal family, the son of a prince, and grandson of a king; such was his humility, and the sense he had of his being undeserving of any favour from the king, and says this with admiration and astonishment.

**Ver. 9.** *Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant*, etc.] Who had been his servant:

*and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son*; meaning either, as some, the son of Mephibosheth, Micha after mentioned; or rather Mephibosheth himself, the grandson of Saul, whose servant Ziba had been:

*all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house*; all his paternal estate, or what he had acquired, or in any wise belonged to him and his family; which David had in possession, and which he readily and cheerfully delivered up to Mephibosheth, having so great a regard to the memory of his father.

**Ver. 10.** *Thou therefore, thy sons, and thy servants*, etc.] Which were many, and whose numbers are after given:

*shall till the land for him*; manure it, plough it, sow it, and reap it:

*and thou shall bring in [the fruits];* the corn, and oil, and wine, the land produces:

*that thy master's son may have food to eat;* meaning either Micha, the son of Mephibosheth, since Mephibosheth seems to be distinguished from him, and opposed to him in the next clause: and who would stand in no need of food from any other quarter, being a guest at the king's table continually; or else Mephibosheth, who by this means would have a sufficiency for his son and servants, and in which Ziba's family and servants would have a share:

*but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat always at my table;* wherefore the land was to be tilled not for him personally, but for his family, and for what uses he should think fit to put the produce of it to:

*now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants:* who were enough to cultivate a considerable quantity of land.

**Ver. 11.** *Then said Ziba unto the king, according to all the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do,* etc.] Till the land, and bring the fruits of it to Mephibosheth, for the support of his family; he promised very fair, had he been as faithful to his trust:

*as for Mephibosheth, [said the king], he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons;* which is repeated, for the confirmation of it, and to show that he should be treated with equal respect, and fare as the king's sons themselves did; though the clause "said the king" is not in the original text, and the words are thought by Abarbanel and others to be the words of Ziba continued; who promised to do what the king had ordered, though Mephibosheth had eaten at his table, as one of the king's sons, and needed not anything, and needed not to eat at the king's table; and if it was his pleasure, he would maintain him out of this estate like the son of a king; but the phrase "my table" seems to be too arrogant for Ziba to say, and rather fits the mouth of David the king.

**Ver. 12.** *And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name [was] Micha,* etc.] What his age was is not said from him sprung a progeny of several generations, (~~1388~~ 1 Chronicles 8:34-40);

*and all that dwelt in the house Ziba [were] servants to Mephibosheth;* his sons and his servants.

**Ver. 13.** *So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem*, etc.] Either in some apartments in the king's palace, or in some house in the city provided for him; for he returned not to Lodebar, nor to any mansion house upon the estate, of Saul restored unto him:

*for he did eat continually at the king's table*; to which he was invited, and he accepted of:

*and was lame on both his feet*; or "though" he was <sup>f158</sup>, yet this was no objection to David, he admitted him notwithstanding his infirmity; nor any obstruction to Mephibosheth, who found ways and means to be carried to the king's table daily.

# CHAPTER 10

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 10

This chapter gives an account of the ill treatment of David's messengers to the king of Ammon, who were sent to condole the death of his father, and were basely used by him, which David resented, (<sup><3000></sup>2 Samuel 10:1-5); which the Ammonites perceiving prepared for war, and got the Syrians to be confederates with them; of which David being informed, sent Joab and Abishai into their country, (<sup><3006></sup>2 Samuel 10:6-8); who divided the army between them, and attacked the Ammonites and Syrians with great courage, and routed them both, and returned to Jerusalem, (<sup><3009></sup>2 Samuel 10:9-14); after which the Syrians gathered together again to fight with David, who went out to meet them, and got an entire conquest over them, and made them servants to him, (<sup><3005></sup>2 Samuel 10:15-19).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass after this,* etc.] After the wars with the Moabites, Syrians, and Edomites, being friendly with the children of Ammon, David sent an embassy to their king, after related; by which it appears what is said concerning the spoils of the children of Ammon, (<sup><3082></sup>2 Samuel 8:12), is by anticipation; for these spoils were not taken until the following war with them, the occasion of which is here told:

*that the king of the children of Ammon died;* whose name was Nahash, as is clear from (<sup><3002></sup>2 Samuel 10:2), and probably might be the same that came against Jabeshgilead, from whom Saul delivered the inhabitants of that place, (<sup><3900></sup>1 Samuel 11:1);

*and Hanun his son reigned in his stead;* who, being his son, was heir to his crown, and succeeded him in his kingdom.

**Ver. 2.** *Then said David, I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash,* etc.] Send him a friendly compliment of condolence on the death of his father:

*as his father showed kindness unto me;* when David was persecuted by Saul, he sent him aid, and invited him into his country for protection it may be, and some way or other showed respect unto him; though not out of

real love and friendship to David, but in enmity to Saul, who had defeated him at Jabeshgilead, and had often wars with him: the Jews say<sup>f159</sup> the particular kindness was, that when David left his father, mother, and brethren, with the king of Moab, he slew all but one, who fled to the king of the children of Ammon, and was by him saved alive:

*and David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father;* for the death of his father; to condole the loss of him, which was the custom of kings in friendship and alliance in former times, and still continues:

*and David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon;* even to Rabbah, the metropolis of the nation, and the royal city, where the king kept his court.

**Ver. 3.** *And the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun their lord,* etc.] His nobles and prime ministers, the courtiers that were about him:

*thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee?* could he imagine that David was sincere, and that he really meant to do honour to the memory of his father, and comfort him under the loss of him, by sending his ambassadors to him on such an errand? there was no reason, they thought, to believe this, since an Israelite was forbidden to seek their peace and prosperity, or ask of it, nor might Ammonite enter into their congregation unto the tenth generation, (<sup>(~~123B~~)</sup>Deuteronomy 23:3,6); and indeed some have thought that David did not do a right thing in sending this embassy, and was justly requited; but it is certain he acted according to the laws of friendship, and was cordial and sincere in what he did, though these courtiers of Hanun put an ill construction on his conduct, their minds being filled with enmity against the Israelites:

*hath not David [rather] sent his servants unto thee to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?* to reconnoitre the place, to observe, as they walked about in it, which were the weakest and most defenceless parts of it, and what avenues there were to it, and which were most accessible, that they might the better know how to attack it, and destroy it; these surmises and suspicions they endeavoured to fill the king's head with, to set him against them, and treat them ill.

**Ver. 4.** *Wherefore Hanun took David's servants,* etc.] His ambassadors:

*and shaved off one half of their beards*; that is, he ordered them to be shaved off; than which a greater indignity could not have been well done to them and to David, whom they represented, since the Israelites shaved not their beards, and were very careful of preserving them; for had it been the custom to shave, they might have shaved off the other half, and then they would not have appeared so ridiculous; and with other people it has been reckoned a very great punishment as well could be inflicted, and as great an affront as could well be offered, to mar a man's beard, or shave it off in whole or in part <sup>f160</sup>. The Lacedemonians, as Plutarch <sup>f161</sup> relates, when any fled from battle, used, by way of reproach, to shave off part of their beards, and let the other part grow long; and with the Indians, as Bishop Patrick observes from an ancient writer, the king used to order the greatest offenders to be shaven, as the heaviest punishment he could inflict upon them; but what comes nearest to the case here is what the same learned commentator quotes from Tavernier, who in his Indian Travels tells us, that the sophi of Persia caused an ambassador of Aurengzeb to have his beard shaved off, telling him he was not worthy to wear a beard, and thereupon commanded it should be shaved off; which affront offered him in the person of his ambassador was most highly resented by Aurengzeb, as this was by David:

*and cut off their garments in the middle, [even] to their buttocks*; and as they wore long garments in those countries, without any breeches or drawers under them, those parts by these means were exposed to view which modesty requires should be concealed <sup>f162</sup>; so that they must be put to the utmost shame and confusion:

*and sent them away*; in this ridiculous manner, scoffing and leering at them no doubt; that since they came with compliments of condolence, it was proper they should appear in the habit of mourners, with their beards shaved, and their garments rent; cutting of garments, and standing in them from morning tonight, was a punishment of soldiers with the Romans, when they offended <sup>f163</sup>.

**Ver. 5.** *When they told [it] unto David*, etc.] Not the ambassadors, for they were not yet arrived, but some of their servants, perhaps, they sent before them to acquaint David of the usage they had met with:

*he sent to meet them*: he sent men to meet them with proper garments to put on, and to assure them how much he resented the indignity done to

them and him, and would avenge it in due and proper time, and to direct them where to go for the present, as follows:

*because the men were greatly ashamed:* to proceed on their journey, and come to court in the condition they were:

*and the king said;* gave orders by the messengers he sent to them:

*tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown,* or “bud”<sup>f164</sup>,

*and [then] return;* that is, to Jerusalem; Jericho, though not yet built, might have some cottages at or near the spot on which it had stood, for the convenience of shepherds, and gatherers of fruit, in the plains of it; here the ambassadors were directed to go, it being the first place they came to when they had passed over Jordan, from the country of Ammon; and being a place where there were scarcely any inhabitants, or very few, was very proper for them in their present circumstances; and this confirms what is before observed, that it was now the custom of the Israelites not to shave their whole beards; or otherwise it was but shaving off the other half, and being now provided with other clothes, they would have had no need to have stayed at Jericho, but might have proceeded on in their journey.

**Ver. 6.** *And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David,* etc.] Or had made themselves odious to him, as it is rendered in (<sup><1396></sup>1 Chronicles 19:6); were abominable to him, that he was incensed against them, and enraged at them, and was determined to be avenged on them for the affront given, of which they had certain information: but instead of seeking to appease him, and give him satisfaction for the affront,

*the children of Ammon sent, and hired the Syrians of Bethrehab;* a place near Hamath, (<sup><4132></sup>Numbers 13:21); there was a city of this name in the tribe of Asher, out of which the Canaanites could not be driven, and perhaps now inhabited by Syrians, or by a people so called, (<sup><4928></sup>Joshua 19:28 <sup><4003></sup>Judges 1:31);

*and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen:* that is, out of both places; this place Hadadezer was king of, with whom David had fought before, and beat, and who owed him a grudge on that account, and was ready to assist the Ammonites against him, (<sup><4082></sup>2 Samuel 8:3-5),

*and of King Maacah a thousand men;* that is, of the king of Maacah, which was a place in the tribe off Manasseh, from whence the inhabitants



could not be expelled, (<sup><f131E></sup>Joshua 13:11,13); and seems now to have been inhabited by Syrians, and therefore is called Syriamaachah, (<sup><f390E></sup>1 Chronicles 19:6);

*and of Ishtob twelve thousand men*; which is thought to be the same with the land of Tob, whither Jephthah fled, and dwelt in it, when ill used by his brethren, (<sup><f710E></sup>Judges 11:3,5); these mercenary soldiers were in all thirty three thousand men; (<sup><f390E></sup>1 Chronicles 19:6,7), it is said, chariots and horsemen, even thirty two thousand; these were hired with a thousand talents of silver.

**Ver. 7.** *And when David heard of [it]*, etc.] Of the preparation made by the Ammonites to fight with him:

*he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men*: he sent out Joab his general, and an army under his command, consisting of men of strength, valour, and courage; or all the host and the mighty men, as Kimchi and Ben Melech, the famous mighty men mentioned in (<sup><f102E></sup>2 Samuel 23:8); he did not think it advisable to wait for the Ammonites, but carried the war into their own country, and, instead of suffering them to invade his dominions, he invaded theirs.

**Ver. 8.** *And the children of Ammon came out*, etc.] Either out of Rabbah their metropolis, as Josephus <sup>f165</sup>; or rather out of Medeba, as it seems from (<sup><f390E></sup>1 Chronicles 19:7); a city that lay on the borders of their country, and was a frontier town, (see <sup><f023E></sup>Numbers 21:30);

*and put the battle in array, at the entering in of the gate*; of the city of Medeba; they were first within the city, but, upon the approach of Joab and his army, they came out and drew up in a line of battle at the gate of it:

*and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ishtob, and Maacah, [were] by themselves in the field*; at some distance from the city, the Ammonites not choosing to trust mercenaries in it; and perhaps they placed these ambush in the field, to get Joab between two fires, as we now express it.

**Ver. 9.** *When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind*, etc.] Or “the face” of it <sup>f166</sup>; armies appeared both before and behind, about to attack him both in front and rear; the Targum is,

“and Joab saw that the warriors, or those that made war, were strong against him before and behind:”

*he chose of all the choice [men] of Israel*; the most eminent for strength, and valour, and military skill, who had been tried, and were famous for warlike exploits, the flower of the army:

*and put [them] in array against the Syrians*; who might be the strongest party, and the best soldiers; though being but mercenaries, if hard beset, would sooner give way, as he might suppose, upon which the Ammonites would do the same.

**Ver. 10.** *And the rest of the people he delivered into the hands of Abishai his brother*, etc.] Who was a commander under him, and a very valiant man; and thus, as his enemy had two armies, he divided his into two parts, that he might the better attack them:

*that he might put [them] in array against the children of Ammon*: draw them up in a line, place them rank and file to meet the children of Ammon, and give them battle.

**Ver. 11.** *And he said, if the Syrians be too strong for me*, etc.] Which he might perceive by Joab's forces giving way, or by some signal agreed on between them

*then thou shall help me*; detach a part of his army to his support and assistance:

*but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee*; in the same manner.

**Ver. 12.** *Be of good courage, and let us play the men*, etc.] This Joab said, not only to encourage Abishai and himself, but in the hearing of the rest of the officers of the army, and of many of the people, to hearten them to the battle; who might be somewhat intimidated with the number of their enemies, and the position they were in, being before and behind them; and therefore he thought proper to make such a speech to them to animate them to light:

*for our people, and for the cities of our God*; that the people of Israel might not be carried captive, and their cities spoiled and plundered; and instead of being cities where the people of God dwelt, and he was worshipped, would, if taken, become the habitations of idolatrous Heathens, and where temples would be erected to idols, and the worship of

them; these were the arguments he used to engage them to fight manfully for their country, the liberties and religion of it:

*and the Lord do that which seemeth him good:* tacitly suggesting that victory was of the Lord, and that it became them to do their part in fighting courageously, and leave the issue to the Lord, on whom alone success depended.

**Ver. 13.** *And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians,* etc.] Fell upon them; attacked them first, began the battle with them; rightly judging, that if they, being hired soldiers, were closely pressed, they would give way, which would discourage the Ammonites, who depended much upon them; and the fight, according to Josephus<sup>f167</sup>, lasted some little time, who says, that Joab killed many of them, and obliged the rest to turn their backs and flee, as follows:

*and they fled before him:* the Syriac and Arabic versions in this verse, and in all others in this chapter where the word “Syrians” is used, have “Edomites”, reading “Edom” instead of “Aram”, the letters ר “R” and ד “D” in the Hebrew tongue being very similar.

**Ver. 14.** *And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled,* etc.] In whom they put great confidence:

*then they fled also before Abishai;* without engaging at all with him, as it seems:

*and entered into the city;* out of which they came, either Rabbah or Medeba, for their safety:

*so Joab returned from the children of Ammon;* did not stay to lay siege to their city, the season of the year not being proper for it, winter drawing near; (see ~~2~~ 2 Samuel 11:1);

*and came to Jerusalem;* in triumph, to report to David the victory he had obtained.

**Ver. 15.** *And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel,* etc.] Considered it in their minds, and conversed with one another about it, and fearing what would be the consequence of it:

*they gathered themselves together;* not only the forces got together again, that fled before Joab, but all the kings of Syria united their forces together,

as appears from (<sup><1009></sup>2 Samuel 10:19); supposing that David would avenge himself on them for assisting the Ammonites against him; and therefore judged it advisable to raise a large army, that they might be in a condition to receive him.

**Ver. 16.** *And Hadarezer sent*, etc.] The same with Hadadezer, (<sup><1008></sup>2 Samuel 8:3), who was at the head of this confederacy, and to whom the rest of the kings of Syria were servants, (<sup><1009></sup>2 Samuel 10:19);

*and brought out the Syrians that [were] beyond the river*; the river Phrat or Euphrates, as the Targum; so the Arabic version and Josephus <sup>f168</sup>, who says, that he hired them:

*and they came to Helam*; which, according to the same writer, was king of the Syrians beyond Euphrates; but it seems to be the name of a place, where was the general rendezvous of the Syrian army. Junius conjectures that it is the same with the Alamatha of Ptolemy <sup>f169</sup>, which he places with the Trachonite Arabs near the Euphrates:

*and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer [went] before them*: before the whole combined army, which according to Josephus <sup>f170</sup>, consisted of eighty thousand foot, and ten thousand horse: this general is called Shophach, (<sup><13916></sup>1 Chronicles 19:16) the letters “B” and “P” being of the same pronunciation in the Hebrew tongue, as Kimchi observes, though it is there read “Shobach”, in the Syriac and Arabic versions; he was no doubt a very able, valiant, and skilful general, since he is particularly mentioned by name, and whose name was then famous; the Arabic version calls him a spear bearer of Hadarezer.

**Ver. 17.** *And when it was told David*, etc.] What preparations the Syrians were making to fight him, and where they were:

*he gathered all Israel together*; all the fighting men in the country:

*and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam*: which, according to Bunting <sup>f171</sup>, was twenty miles from Jerusalem. David seems to have gone himself in person to this war:

*and the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him*; they formed themselves in a line of battle, and attacked him first, being eager to fight, and perhaps confident of victory, because of their numbers.

**Ver. 18.** *And the Syrians fled before Israel*, etc.] After an obstinate and bloody fight between them:

*and David slew [the men of] seven hundred chariots of the Syrians*; the word “men” is rightly supplied, for chariots could not be said to be slain, but the men in them; in (<sup><1397></sup>1 Chronicles 19:17), they are said to be seven thousand, here seven hundred; which may be reconciled by observing, that here the chariots that held the men are numbered, there the number of the men that were in the chariots given, and reckoning ten men in a chariot, seven hundred chariots held just seven thousand men; though Kimchi takes another way of reconciling the two places, by observing that here only the choicest chariots are mentioned, there all of them, but the former way seems best:

*and forty thousand horsemen*; in (<sup><1397></sup>1 Chronicles 19:17); it is forty thousand “footmen”, and so Josephus<sup>f172</sup>; and the same may be called both horse and foot, be cause though they might come into the field of battle on horseback, yet might dismount and fight on foot; and so one historian calls them horsemen, and the other footmen; or the whole number of the slain, horse and foot mixed together, were forty thousand; Kimchi makes use of another way of removing this difficulty, and which perhaps is the best, that here only the horsemen are numbered that were slain, and there the footmen only, and both true; an equal number of each being slain, in all eighty thousand, besides the seven thousand in the chariots:

*and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there*; of his wounds upon the spot.

**Ver. 19.** *And when all the kings [that were] servants to Hadarezer*, etc.] That were subject to him, and at his beck and command, at least were hired by him into his service:

*saw that they were smitten before Israel*; could not stand their ground against them, being too powerful for them;

*they made peace with Israel, and served them*; became tributaries to them, whereby the promise of the land of Canaan made to Abraham and his seed, as reaching to the river Euphrates, had its accomplishment, (<sup><0158></sup>Genesis 15:18);

*so the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more*; who standing by themselves, they were soon and easily conquered by David's forces, as recorded in the following chapters.

# CHAPTER 11

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 11

This chapter begins with the destruction of the Ammonites, and the siege of Rabbah their chief city, (<sup><0100></sup>2 Samuel 11:1); and enlarges on the sins of David in committing adultery with Bathsheba, (<sup><0102></sup>2 Samuel 11:2-5); in contriving to conceal his sin by sending for her husband home from the army, (<sup><0106></sup>2 Samuel 11:6-13); in laying a scheme for the death of him by the hand of the Ammonites, (<sup><0114></sup>2 Samuel 11:14-25); and in marrying Bathsheba when he was dead, (<sup><0126></sup>2 Samuel 11:26,27).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass, that after the year was expired*, etc.] Or at the end of the year, as the Targum, which concluded with the month Adar or February, the spring of the year:

*at the time when kings go forth [to battle]*; in the month Nisan, as the Targum on (<sup><0300></sup>1 Chronicles 20:1); adds, the same with Abib, which was the first month of the year, (<sup><0202></sup>Exodus 12:2 13:4), a fit time to go out to war; when, as the Jewish commentators observe, the rains were over, and there were grass in the fields, and fruit on the trees, and corn ripe, and so food for horse and men. This month was called Nisan, as some think <sup>f173</sup>, from **ןִּסָּן**, the military banners then erected; so by the Romans it is called Martius, and by us March, from Mars, the god of war; though some <sup>f174</sup> take this to be the month Tisri, answering to part of September, and part of October, when all the fruits of the earth were gathered in, and supposed to be a fit time for war, when the heat of the year was declining:

*that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel*; his whole army under Joab as general; in (<sup><0300></sup>1 Chronicles 20:1); it is “the power of the army”; the whole body of it: and they destroyed the children of Ammon; burnt their cities, and slew the inhabitants of them, and laid their land waste wherever they came:

*and besieged Rabbah*; their chief city, called Rabathamana by Polybius <sup>f175</sup>, that is, Rabbah of Ammon, and afterwards. Philadelphia, from Philadelphus, king of Egypt, as it was in the times of Jerom <sup>f176</sup>:

*but David tarried still at Jerusalem*; which is observed for the sake of the following history; it would have been well for him if he had gone forth with the army himself, then the sin he fell into would have been prevented.

**Ver. 2.** *And it came to pass in an eveningtide*, etc.] Some time in the afternoon, when the sun began to decline; not in the dusk of the evening, for then the object he saw could not have been seen so distinctly by him:

*that David arose from off his bed*; having taken a nap in the heat of the day after dinner; indulging himself more than he used to do to sloth and luxury, which prepared him, and led him on the more eagerly to the lust of uncleanness:

*and walked upon the roof of the king's house*; to refresh himself after his sleep, it being the cool of the day, and the roof of the house being flat and fit to walk upon, as the houses of Judea were; (see <sup><RB></sup>Deuteronomy 22:8);

*and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself*; in a bath in her garden, or in an apartment in her house, the window being open:

*and the woman [was] very beautiful to look upon*; of a fine shape and good complexion, and comely countenance; all which were incentives to lust, at which his eye was attracted to, and his heart was ensnared with her.

**Ver. 3.** *And David sent and inquired after the woman*, etc.] Who she was, what her name, and whether married or unmarried; if the latter, very probably his intention was to marry her, and he might, when he first made the inquiry, design to proceed no further, or to anything that was dishonourable; but it would have been better for him not to have inquired at all, and endeavoured to stifle the motions raised in him at the sight of her:

*and [one] said, [is] not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam*; who in (<sup><RB></sup>1 Chronicles 3:5); is called Bathshua, and her father Ammiel, which is the same with Eliam reversed:

*the wife of Uriah the Hittite*? who either was of that nation originally, and became a proselyte; or had sojourned there for a while, and took the name or had it given him, for some exploit he had performed against that people, as Scipio Africanus, and others among the Romans; this was said by one that David inquired of, or heard him asking about her, and was sufficient to have stopped him from proceeding any further, when he was informed she



was another man's wife: some say<sup>f177</sup> she was the daughter of Ahithophel's son; (see ~~1034~~ 2 Samuel 23:34).

**Ver. 4.** *And David sent messengers*, etc.] To invite her to his palace:

*and took her*; not by force, but through persuasion:

*and she came in unto him*; into the apartment where he was:

*and he lay with her*; she consenting to it, being prevailed upon, and drawn into it through the greatness and goodness of the man, which might make the sin appear the lesser to her. This is recorded to show what the best of men are, when left to themselves; how strong and prevalent corrupt nature is in regenerate persons, when grace is not in exercise; what need the saints stand in of fresh supplies of grace, to keep them from falling; what caution is necessary to everyone that stands, lest he fall; and that it becomes us to abstain from all appearance of sin, and whatever leads unto it, and to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation; and such a record as this is an argument for the integrity of the Scriptures, that they conceal not the faults of the greatest favourites mentioned in them, as well as it serves to prevent despair in truly penitent backsliders:

*for she was purified from her uncleanness*; this clause is added in a parenthesis, partly to show the reason of her washing herself, which was not for health and pleasure, and to cool herself in a hot day, but to purify herself from her menstruous pollution, according to the law in (~~1859~~ Leviticus 15:19); the term of her separation being expired; and partly to give a reason why she the more easily consented, and he was the more eager to enjoy her; and in this he sinned, not that he did not lie with an unclean person; but, then, as some observe, he did that which was much worse, he committed adultery; also this may be added to observe, that she was the more apt for conception, as Ben Gersom notes, and to account for the quickness of it, with which the philosopher<sup>f178</sup> agrees:

*and she returned unto her house*; whether that evening, or next morning, or how long she stayed, is not said.

**Ver. 5.** *And the woman conceived*, etc.] Whereby the sin would be discovered, and shame, and disgrace, or worse, would follow upon it:

*and sent and told David, and said, I [am] with child*; this message she sent to David, that he might think of some ways and means to prevent the

scandal that would fall both upon him and her, and the danger she was exposed unto; fearing the outcries of the people against her, in acting so unfaithful a part to her husband, so brave a man, who was now fighting for his king and country; and the rage and jealousy of her husband when he should come to the knowledge of it, and the death which by the law she was guilty of, even to be stoned with stones, (see ~~4485~~ John 8:5).

**Ver. 6.** *And David sent to Joab*, etc.] Who was with the army besieging Rabbah, which, according to Bunting<sup>f179</sup>, was sixty four miles from Jerusalem:

*[saying], send me Uriah the Hittite*; the scheme David had contrived in his mind was to get Uriah home to his wife for a few days, that it might be thought the child she had conceived was his, whereby the sin of David, and her own, might be concealed:

*and Joab sent Uriah to David*; not knowing his business, and besides it was his duty to obey his command.

**Ver. 7.** *And when Uriah was come unto him*, etc.] To David, to whom he came first, before he went to his own house, desirous of knowing what was the special business of the king with him:

*David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered*; he asked of the welfare of Joab the general, and of the common soldiers, and of the warriors, as the Targum, the mighty men that went along with Joab, (~~3000~~ 2 Samuel 10:7 11:1). David seems to have been at a loss what to say to him. These questions were so mean and trivial, that it might justly give Uriah some suspicion that it could never be on this account, that he was sent for; since David could not want intelligence of such things, expresses being daily sending him.

**Ver. 8.** *And David said to Uriah, go down to thy house, and wash thy feet*, etc.] For his refreshment, and to prepare for bed, which was what he wanted to get him to:

*and Uriah departed out of the king's house*; in order as it might seem to the king to go to his own:

*and there followed him a mess [of meat] from the king*: no doubt a delicious dish, to eat with his wife before he went to bed, to excite him the more to desire the enjoyment of her this mess consisted, according to

Abarbinel, of bread, wine, and flesh; and who also observes, after Ben Gersom, that the word may be interpreted of a torch to light him home to his house, being night.

**Ver. 9.** *But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house, with all the servants of his lord,* etc.] The bodyguards, which were placed there to watch the palace in the night season; Uriah first fell into a conversation with these as is highly probable, to whom he was well known, and who might inquire of one and another of their friends in the army; and he being weary, laid himself down among there, and slept:

*and went not down to his house;* whether the trifling questions David asked him, or the information the guards might give him of his wife being sent for to court; made him suspect something, and so had no inclination to go to this own house; or however so it was ordered by the providence of God, which directed him to act in this manner, that the sin of David and Bathsheba they studied to hide might be discovered.

**Ver. 10.** *And when they had told David,* etc.] The next morning, either those that went with the mess of meat, or the guards with whom he slept all night:

*saying, Uriah went not down to his house;* as the king had ordered him; which those persons being acquainted with, informed him of it, as an act of disobedience to him:

*David said unto Uriah;* having sent for him upon the above information:

*camest thou not from [thy] journey?* and which was a long one of sixty four miles, as before observed and therefore might well be weary, and want refreshment and rest, and his own house was the most proper place for it; for which reason David suggests he had sent him thither, and did not require nor need his service among his guards:

*why [then] didst thou not go down unto thine house?* which was the fittest place for him in such circumstances.

**Ver. 11.** *And Uriah said unto David,* etc.] As an apology for this conduct:

*the ark, and Israel and Judah, abide in tents;* meaning not the people of Israel and Judah in the land of Canaan; for they did not now dwell in tents, though indeed the ark of the Lord did, (<sup>XXII</sup>2 Samuel 7:2), which some think is here referred to; but the armies of Israel and Judah besieging

Rabbah, with whom it seems the ark was, which sometimes was carried with them when they went out to war, (<sup>900b</sup>1 Samuel 4:4 14:18), though Abarbinel thinks this was not the ark in which were the two tables of stone, and therefore is not called the ark of the covenant, but an ark which was made to put the ephod, and Urim and Thummim in that they might upon occasion inquire of the Lord by them:

*and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields:* around Rabbah they were besieging; he calls Joab his lord, because he was the chief general under whom he served and the rest of the commanding officers he calls the servants of his lord as distinguished from the common soldiers. The Jews, who are for excusing David from blame in the case of Uriah, observe <sup>f180</sup>, that he was guilty of rebellion against David, and so worthy of death not only because he disobeyed his command, in not going to his house when he ordered him but by calling “Joab my lord” in his presence: but this was only a respectable character of his general and no overt act of treason to his king; nor did David so understand it, nor in the least resent it: now seeing such great men, who were far superior to him in rank and office were obliged to lie on the bare ground, he argues:

*shall I then go into mine house to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife?* if he had any suspicion of David’s crime, he might purposely add the last clause; and if not, it was enough to awaken the conscience of David, and cut him to the quick had he not been greatly hardened through the deceitfulness of sin to observe, that a faithful subject and a soldier of his would not allow himself the enjoyment of lawful pleasures, when his fellow soldiers were exposing their lives to danger for their country; and yet he under such circumstances indulged to sinful lusts and criminal pleasures:

*[as] thou livest and [as] thy soul liveth I will not do this thing;* he swears to it for the confirmation of it; this he did to prevent any further solicitations from the king, or his wife unto it, who were both anxiously desirous of it; for though no mention is made of his wife, yet no doubt she did all she could to prevail upon him to come to his house but all to no purpose; his mind was so bent to the contrary through the overruling providence of God to which it must be ascribed.

**Ver. 12.** *And David said to Uriah, tarry here today also,* etc.] In his court, when he found he could not persuade him to go to his own house:

*and tomorrow I will let thee depart:* after he had tried one method more with him:

*so Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow;* not in his own house, but the king's palace.

**Ver. 13.** *And when David had called him,* etc.] Invited him to sup with him:

*he did eat and drink before him;* very freely and plentifully:

*and he made him drunk:* this was another sin of David's, done in order to make him forget his oath and vow, and that being inflamed with wine, desires might be excited in him to go home and lie with his wife; but even this scheme did not succeed:

*and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord:* in the guard room, where he had lain before:

*but went not down to his house;* for he was not so drunk but he remembered his oath, and kept his resolution not to go down to his own house; the Lord no doubt working upon his mind and disinclining him to it.

**Ver. 14.** *And it came to pass in the morning,* etc.] When David was informed that Uriah did not go to his own house, but slept with his servants, Satan put it into his head and heart to take the following wicked and cruel method:

*that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent [it] by the hand of Uriah;* to have him cut off by the sword of the enemy. If Uriah suspected David's criminal conversation with his wife, he was so true and trusted a servant to him, that he would not open his letter to Joab, which had he, it would have betrayed the base design. No one that knows the story of Bellerophon can read this without thinking of that, they are so much alike; and indeed that seems to be founded upon this, and taken from it with a little alteration. Bellerophon rejecting the solicitations of Sthenobaea, who was in love with him, she prevailed upon her husband Praetus to send letters by him to Jobates (a name similar to Joab), the general of his army, which contained instructions to take care that he was killed; who sent him upon an expedition for that purpose<sup>f181</sup>.

**Ver. 15.** *And he wrote in the letter, saying,* etc.] Giving the following orders to Joab:

*set ye Uriah is the forefront of the hottest battle*: over against that part of the city where the enemy was strongest, and the battle the fiercest, and the stones and arrows were cast the thickest:

*and retire ye from him*; leave him to himself to combat the enemy alone; who seeing him deserted, would sally out upon him, and the few that might be with him, and slay him:

*that he may be smitten, and die*; thus he sought to add murder to adultery, and that in the basest manner, and which he accomplished; and this is often the case, that murder follows adultery, either by way of revenge for it, or in order to cover it, as here.

**Ver. 16.** *And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city*, etc.] Where lay its greatest strength, and where it was best defended; or besieged it, as the Targum:

*that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men [were]*; who would not easily give way, and when they saw an opportunity would sally out, Joab cannot be excused from sin, unless he thought that Uriah had been guilty of death, and that David took this way of dispatching him for some political reason; however David was king, and to be obeyed.

**Ver. 17.** *And the men of the city went out*, etc.] Made a sally out, as Joab expected they would, when they appeared before them at that part of the city where valiant men were:

*and fought with Joab*; at least with part of his army posted with Uriah:

*and there fell [some] of the people of the servants of David*: which made David's sin the more heinous, that several lives were lost through the stratagem he devised to procure the death of Uriah; who could not be placed in a dangerous post alone, and therefore others must be sacrificed with him, as were:

*and Uriah the Hittite died also*; which was the thing aimed at, and the end to be answered by this scheme.

**Ver. 18.** *Then Joab sent*, etc.] Messengers to David, as soon as Uriah was killed:

*and told David all the things concerning the war*; how the siege had been carried on; what success they had had, good or ill; what their advantages

and disadvantages; what men they had lost, and especially in one sally of the enemy upon them, for the sake of which the express was sent.

**Ver. 19.** *And charged the messenger*, etc.] Gave him a particular direction and instruction what he should say at the close of his narrative, according as he should observe the king's countenance to be:

*saying, when thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king*; giving an account of all the events that happened since the siege was begun to that time.

**Ver. 20.** *And if so be that the king's wrath arise*, etc.] Which might be seen in his countenance, or expressed in his words:

*and he say, wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight?* as to expose the king's troops to the enemy on the wall, who by stones or darts greatly annoyed them, or sallied out on them, and killed many of them:

*knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?* they must have known that, and therefore should have kept out of the reach of their shot.

**Ver. 21.** *Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth?* etc.] The same with Jerubbaal, who was Gideon, (<sup><0062></sup>Judges 6:32); Baal, one part of his name, was the name of an idol, and sometimes called Bosheth or Besheth, which signifies shame, being a shameful idol; Gideon had a son called Abimelech, who was smitten, and it is here asked, by whom?

*did not a woman cast a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez?* which should have been a warning not to go too near the wall of an enemy; the history is recorded in (<sup><0062></sup>Judges 9:52,53);

*why went ye nigh the wall?* exposing your lives to so much danger, and by which so many lives were lost:

*then say thou, thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also*; the whole has not been told, the worst of all is, as the messenger was to represent it, that brave gallant soldier Uriah is dead; this Joab ordered to be told last, as knowing very well it would pacify the king's wrath, and was the agreeable news he wanted to hear.

**Ver. 22.** *So the messenger went*, etc.] From Joab, from the army before Rabbah:

*and came*; to David in Jerusalem, a course of sixty four miles:

*and showed David all that Joab had sent him for*; all the events of the war hitherto.

**Ver. 23.** *And the messenger said unto David*, etc.] The particulars of his account follow:

*surely the men prevailed against us*; the men of the city of Rabbah, the besieged there, in one onset they made upon them:

*and came out unto us in the field*; the besiegers that lay encamped there; they sallied out upon them:

*and we were upon them, even unto the entering of the gate*; rallied upon them, and drove them back, and pursued them to the gate of the city.

**Ver. 24.** *And the shooters shot from off of the wall upon thy servants*, etc.] Arrows out of their bows, or stones out of their engines; the Israelites following them so closely to the gate of the city, came within the reach of their shot from the wall:

*and [some] of the king's servants be dead*; killed in the sally upon them, and by the shot from the wall:

*and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also*; the messenger did not entirely obey the orders of Joab to wait and observe if the king's wrath arose, but was in haste to tell him the last piece of news; perhaps he had some suspicion, from the manner of Joab's telling him what he should say, that this would be acceptable to the king.

**Ver. 25.** *Then David said to the messenger*, etc.] Whom he dispatched again to Joab upon the delivery of his message:

*thus shall thou say to Joab*; in the name of David:

*let not this thing displease thee*; be not grieved, and cast down, and intimidated at the repulse he had met with, and the loss of so many brave men, and especially Uriah;

*for the sword devours one as well as another*; officers as well as soldiers the strong as well as the weak, the valiant and courageous as well as the more timorous; the events of war are various and uncertain, and to be submitted to, and not repined at, and laid to heart. David's heart being



hardened by sin, made light of the death of his brave soldiers, to which he himself was accessory; his conscience was very different now from what it was when he cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, and his heart in a different frame from that in which he composed the lamentation over Saul and Jonathan:

*make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it*; more closely besiege it, more vigorously attack it; assault it, endeavour to take it by storm, and utterly destroy it, razing the very foundations of it: and encourage thou him; which words are either said to the messenger to encourage and animate Joab in David's name, which is not so likely that a messenger should be employed to encourage the general; or rather the words of David to Joab continued, that he would "encourage it", the army under him, who might be disheartened with the rebuff and loss they had met with; and therefore Joab is bid to spirit them up, to carry on the siege with vigour.

**Ver. 26.** *And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead*, etc.] The news of which were soon sent her by David, though it is very probable she knew nothing of the plot to take away his life; and, besides, David chose to have his death published abroad as soon as possible, the more to hide his sin:

*she mourned for her husband*; expressed tokens of mourning by shedding tears, putting on a mourning habit, seeing no company, and this continued for the space of seven days, it may be, (<sup><0813></sup>1 Samuel 31:13); as little time as possible was spent in this way, and the marriage hastened, that the adultery might not be discovered.

**Ver. 27.** *And when the mourning was past*, etc.] The seven days were at an end, or sooner; for he stayed not ninety days from the death of her husband, which the Jews in later times enjoined <sup>f182</sup>, that it might be known whether with child by her former husband, and so to whom it belonged; and because David did not wait this time, Abarbinel charges it upon him as an additional sin:

*David sent, and fetched her to his house*; took her home to his palace to live with him:

*and she became his wife*; he married her according to the usual form of marriage in those days:

*and bare him a son*; begotten in adultery:

*but the thing that David had done displeased the Lord*; or “was evil in the eyes of the Lord”<sup>f183</sup>; for though it was not done in the eyes of men, being scarcely or very little known, yet was in the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro throughout the earth, and sees all things that are done: the adultery he had been guilty of with another man’s wife was abominable to the Lord, and for which, according to the law, both he and she ought to have been put to death, (<sup><OR00></sup>Leviticus 20:10); the murder of her husband, which he was accessory to, as well as the death of many others, and the marriage of her under such circumstances, were all displeasing to God, and of such an heinous nature, that his pure eyes could not look upon with approbation: the Jews<sup>f184</sup> endeavour to excuse David from sin; from the sin of murder, by making Uriah guilty of rebellion and treason, as before observed; and from the sin of adultery, by affirming that it was the constant custom for men, when they went out to war, to give their wives a bill of divorce; so that from the time of giving the bill they were not their wives, and such as lay with them were not guilty of adultery; but for this there is no foundation: it is certain David was charged with it by the Lord; he himself owned it, and bewailed it, both that and his blood guiltiness, and the following chapter abundantly proves it.

# CHAPTER 12

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 12

Nathan is sent to David to charge him with his sin, and convince him of it by a parable, (<sup><10121></sup>2 Samuel 12:1-6); which being accommodated and applied to David's case, brought him to a conviction and acknowledgment of it, and repentance for it, which was forgiven him, (<sup><10127></sup>2 Samuel 12:7-13); though he is told the child begotten in adultery should die, and it was quickly struck with sickness and died; and David's behaviour during its sickness and at its death is recorded, (<sup><10124></sup>2 Samuel 12:14-23); after which Solomon was born to him of the same woman, and had the name of Jedidiah given him by the Lord, which signifies the beloved of the Lord, and as a token of reconciliation, and a confirmation of his sin being forgiven him, (<sup><10124></sup>2 Samuel 12:24,25); and the chapter is concluded with the taking of the city of Rabbah, and the spoil in it, and the usage of the inhabitants of it, (<sup><10126></sup>2 Samuel 12:26-31).

**Ver. 1.** *And the Lord sent Nathan unto David*, etc.] Quickly after the child was born begotten on Bathsheba, and when it was known and became the public talk of people, and the enemies of religion were full of it, and blasphemed on account of it, (<sup><10124></sup>2 Samuel 12:14); so that David was nine months or more without any true sense of his sin, his heart hardened, his graces dormant, the joys of salvation taken from him, and he without any communion with God, and having little concern about it; though perhaps he might have some pangs at times, which quickly went off; though some think he exercised repentance in a private way before; acknowledged his sin to the Lord, and had a sense of pardon, and before this time penned the thirty second and the hundred thirtieth psalms on this occasion, (<sup><10311></sup>Psalm 32:1-11 130:1-8); but Nathan is sent to awaken and arouse him, to express a sense of his sin, and repentance for it in public, which he did by penning and publishing the fifty first psalm after Nathan had been with him, (<sup><10501></sup>Psalm 51:1-19); for though the Lord may leave his people to fall into sin, and suffer them to continue therein some time, yet not always; they shall rise again through the assistance of his Spirit and grace, in the acts of repentance and faith, both in private and public:

*and he came unto him, and said unto him:* he came as if he had a case to lay before him, and to have justice done, and he told the story as if it was a real fact, and so David understood it:

*there were two men in one city:* pointing at David and Uriah, who both lived in Jerusalem:

*the one rich and the other poor;* David the rich man, king over all Israel; Uriah a subject, an officer in his army, comparatively poor.

**Ver. 2.** *The rich [man] had exceeding many flocks and herds.*] In which the wealth of men lay in those times and countries; these in the parable signify David's wives and concubines, which were many; he had six wives in Hebron, and he took more wives and concubines out of Jerusalem, when he was come from Hebron, (~~2~~ Samuel 3:2-5 5:13); and besides his master's, or Saul's wives, given to him, (~~2~~ Samuel 12:8).

**Ver. 3.** *But the poor [man] had nothing, save one little ewe lamb,* etc.] Uriah had but one wife, who was much younger than he, called a lamb, an ewe lamb, a little one. Abarbinel thinks Uriah had been a widower; and had children by another wife, supposed in the parable, and was much older than Bathsheba:

*which he had bought;* for men in those times and countries did not receive portions with their wives, but gave dowries to them, and for them:

*and nourished up;* as his own flesh, as husbands should their wives, (~~4~~ Ephesians 5:29);

*and it grew up together with him, and with his children;* which Kimchi also supposes Uriah had by a former wife:

*it did eat of his own meat, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter;* all which are expressive of the care, kindness, love, and tenderness of a loving husband, whose affections are endeared to his wife, making her partaker of all he has, and to share in whatever he eats and drinks, and in his dearest embraces; and as there were instances of creatures, lambs and others, particularly tame or pet lambs, used in this way in a literal sense, to which the reference in the parable is, David had no suspicion of its being a parable. Bochart<sup>f185</sup> has given many instances of creatures nourished and brought up in such a familiar manner.

**Ver. 4.** *And there came a traveller unto the rich man*, etc.] By which some understand Satan, who came to David, and stirred up his lust by the temptations that offered; who is a walker, as the word used signifies, that goes about seeking whom he may devour, and is with good men only as a wayfaring man, who does not abide with them; and whose temptations, when they succeed with such, are as meat and drink to him, very entertaining but the Jews generally understand it of the evil imagination or concupiscence in man, the lustful appetite in David, that wandered after another man's wife, and wanted to be satiated with her:

*and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that came unto him*; when his heart was inflamed with lust at the sight of Bathsheba, he did not go as he might, and take one of his wives and concubines, whereby he might have satisfied and repressed his lust:

*but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that came to him*; sent for Bathsheba and lay with her, for the gratification of his lust, she being a young beautiful woman, and more agreeable to his lustful appetite. The Jews, in their Talmud<sup>f186</sup>, observe a gradation in these words that the evil imagination is represented first as a traveller that passes by a man, and lodges not with him; then as a wayfaring man or host, that passes in and lodges with him; and at last as a man, as the master of the house that rules over him, and therefore called the man that came to him.

**Ver. 5.** *And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man*, etc.] That had done this, taking it for a real fact:

*and he said to Nathan, [as] the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this [thing] shall surely die*; which he said in the transport of his wrath and fury; otherwise a thief, according to the law of Moses, was not to be put to death, but to make restitution; and if he was not able to make it, then to be sold, but he was not to die for it; but David thought the crime was so greatly aggravated by being done by a rich man, and by the loss the poor man sustained, it being his all, and the fact, in all its circumstances, so cruel and barbarous, that the guilty person ought to die: how much more vehemently, and indeed with justice, would he have passed the sentence of death on him, or condemned him to it, had it been put in the parable, that the rich man not only took the poor man's ewe lamb, but killed the poor man himself? but this Nathan left out, that David might not take his meaning, as Abarbinel thinks, who then would have been upon his guard,

and not have condemned himself; and hereby also Nathan had this advantage against him, that if this man deserved to die, who had only taken the poor man's ewe lamb, then how much more ought he to die, who had not only committed adultery with Bathsheba, but had slain Uriah?

**Ver. 6.** *And he shall restore the lamb fourfold*, etc.] Which was according to the law in (<sup><0221></sup>Exodus 22:1); but Kimchi thinks, because the word is of the dual number, it signifies double the number, and that the sentence was to restore eight lambs, because he being a rich man stole from the poor man; so Mr. Weemse<sup>f187</sup> renders it, twice four, twice as much as was commanded in the law; for the Hebrews, he observes, double in the dual number till they come to seven:

*because he did this thing*; committed this theft:

*and because he had no pity*; on the poor man, but took his all. The Jews observe, that accordingly David was punished with the loss of four of his children, that which was born of Bathsheba, Ammon, Tamar, and Absalom; so most of the commentators, but Ben Gersom, instead of Tamar, has Adonijah.

**Ver. 7.** *And Nathan said to David, thou [art] the man*, etc.] The rich man, or who is designed by him in the parable, and answers to him<sup>f188</sup>:

*thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel*; that is, ordered Samuel to anoint him, who did, (<sup><0961></sup>1 Samuel 16:1,12,13); to which this chiefly refers; and after that he was anointed first by the tribe of Judah, and then by all the tribes of Israel, by the appointment and providence of God; and this was great dignity he designed for him, and raised him to:

*and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul*; when he persecuted him, and sought to take away his life.

**Ver. 8.** *And I gave thee thy master's house*, etc.] Not his palace at Gibeah, but rather his family, his wives, servants, wealth, and riches, all being confiscated through the rebellion of Ishbosheth; or rather his kingdom he succeeded him in:

*and thy master's wives into thy bosom*; though we read of no more than one that belonged to Saul, if he is meant by his master, excepting Rizpah his concubine, nor ever of David taking them into his bosom and bed;

wherefore this can be understood only of his having them at his disposal, to give them to whom he pleased; the word may be rendered his “women”, as well as his “wives”, and may design his daughters, Merab and Michal, who were both given to David, though taken again and given to others: the Jews say, that Eglah, David’s sixth wife, was the wife of Saul, (see Gill on “<sup><1085></sup>2 Samuel 3:5”);

*and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah;* the kingdom of both; gave him to be king over all the tribes of Israel:

*and if [that had been] too little;* either his wives too few, as the Jews interpret it, or his kingdom too small:

*I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things;* more and greater favours; and indeed such he had promised him, as a firm or stable house or kingdom, and that the Messiah should spring from him.

**Ver. 9.** *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight?* etc.] The commandment referred to is the law of God, particularly the sixth and seventh precepts of it, (<sup><1213></sup>Exodus 20:13,14); which David had shown no regard unto, and by his breaking them had slighted and despised them:

*thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword;* and so had despised and broken the sixth command, (<sup><1213></sup>Exodus 20:13); for though he had not taken away his life with his own hand, he had plotted and contrived it, and had given orders to put him in such a position as would issue in it:

*and hast taken his wife [to be] thy wife;* after he had defiled her, being another man’s wife, and had taken such unlawful methods to make her his wife, whereby he had despised and broken both the sixth and the seventh commands, (<sup><1213></sup>Exodus 20:13,14):

*and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon;* though he had not put him to death with his own sword, he had done that which was as bad or worse in some respects, he had exposed him to the sword of the Ammonites, by which it was taken away; and not his only, but that of some of the Israelites also, which gave that uncircumcised people reason to triumph over the children of Israel, and even to blaspheme the God of Israel.

**Ver. 10.** *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house,* etc.] During his life, and as appeared in the slaughter of his sons Ammon and Absalom before his death, and of Adonijah quickly after, and in his posterity through their wars with the children of Israel, and other nations:

*because thou hast despised me;* his commandments, and that in effect was despising him the lawgiver:

*and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife;* which being repeated shows that it was very displeasing to God, and a very heinous crime in his sight.

**Ver. 11.** *Thus saith the Lord,* etc.] For what he said was not of himself, but under a spirit of prophecy:

*behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house:* that is, evil persons, who should be guilty of evil things, and that as a chastisement of him for the sins he had committed, and those out of his own family, as Amnon and Absalom:

*and I will take thy wives before thine eyes;* which is so expressed, because it was done in his lifetime, and he knowing it, but not able to hinder it, though he did not, strictly speaking, see it with his eyes:

*and give [them] unto thy neighbour;* or friend, meaning his son Absalom, as they were:

*and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun;* pointing to the sun in the firmament, and which might be then shining in the room where they were: and which is represented by Homer<sup>f189</sup> as seeing all things, “and eyes” are ascribed to it here in the original; the meaning is, that this fact should be done in the daytime, openly and publicly, and was fulfilled, when by the advice of Ahithophel a tent was spread on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel, (<sup>1062</sup>2 Samuel 16:22).

**Ver. 12.** *For thou didst [it] secretly,* etc.] Committed adultery with Bathsheba privately, and endeavoured to conceal it, by getting her husband killed in battle, and then marrying her as soon as he could to hide the shame of it:

*but one will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun;* as the above fact was; that is, he would suffer it to be done, and so order it in his



providence, that everything should concur to the doing of it; as David's leaving his wives behind him, Ahithophel's wicked counsel he was suffered to give, and the lustful inclination Absalom was left unto, and not any of the people of Israel having religion, spirit, and courage enough to remonstrate against it.

**Ver. 13.** *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord,* etc.] Which confession, though short, was a full one, arising from a thorough conviction of the evil of the sin he had been guilty of, accompanied with real brokenness of heart, sincere humiliation, and a sorrow after a godly sort, as the fifty first psalm, that penitential psalm composed upon this occasion shows, (<sup>1510</sup>Psalm 51:1-19):

*and Nathan said unto David;* being fully satisfied with the sincerity and genuineness of his repentance, of which he gave proof by words and deeds, and being under the direction and impulse of the Spirit of God:

*the Lord hath put away thy sin;* would not charge it upon him, impute it to him, or punish him for it, but freely and fully forgive it, cast it behind his back, and into the depth of the sea; cause it to pass from him and never more bring it against him, and which is the Lord's act, and his only, against whom sin is committed:

*thou shall not die;* though he should die a corporeal death, yet not by the immediate hand of God, or by the sword of justice as a malefactor, a murderer, and adulterer, as he, according to the law, deserved to die; nor should he die a spiritual death, though his grace had been so low, and his corruptions had risen so high; nor an eternal death, the second death, the lost wages of sin.

**Ver. 14.** *Howbeit, because by this deed,* etc.] This complicated wickedness, adultery with Bathsheba, and the murder of her husband, and occasioning the death of others:

*thou hast given great reason to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme;* to insult over Israel, and the God of Israel, and to magnify their own idols on account of the advantage they got when Uriah and other Israelites were slain; and to speak ill of God as a respecter of persons, who had cast off Saul and his family from the kingdom, and yet established David in it, guilty of crimes the other was not; and of the word, ways, and worship of God, and of the true religion, as all hypocrisy and deceit, when men that made such pretensions to it were guilty of such atrocious crimes;

wherefore to let such see and know that the Lord did not approve of and countenance such actions, but abhorred and resented them:

*the child also [that is] born unto thee shall surely die*; which would be a visible testimony of God's displeasure at his sin, to all men that should hear of it, and know it; and being taken away in such a manner would be a great affliction to him, and the more as his affections were much towards the child, as appears by what follows; or otherwise the removal of it might have been considered as a mercy, since its life would have kept up the remembrance of the sin, and have been a standing reproach to him.

**Ver. 15.** *And Nathan departed unto his house*, etc.] His own house, which probably was in the city of Jerusalem, having delivered his message, and brought David to a sense of his sin, and declared to him from the Lord the forgiveness of it; yet for the honour of religion, and the stopping of the mouths of blasphemers, the death of the child is threatened and foretold, and then Nathan took his leave of him, having nothing more from the Lord to say to him:

*and the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David*; for so she was, and not David's wife, when this child was begotten of her; and, as a mark of God's displeasure at the sin of adultery, the child was struck with a sore disease by the immediate hand of God:

*and it was very sick*; even unto death, as the event showed.

**Ver. 16.** *David therefore besought God for the child*, etc.] Perhaps went into the tabernacle he had built for the ark, and prayed to the Lord to restore the child, and spare its life; for though the Lord had said it should die, he might hope that that was a conditional threatening, and that the Lord might be gracious and reverse it, (<sup>3022</sup>2 Samuel 12:22);

*and David fasted*: all that day:

*and went in*; to his own house from the house of God:

*and lay all night upon the earth*; would neither go into, nor lie upon a bed, but lay on the floor all night, weeping and praying for the child's life, and especially for its eternal welfare: he having through sin been the means of its coming into a sinful and afflicted state.

**Ver. 17.** *And the elders of his house arose, [and went] to him, to raise him up from the earth*, etc.] To persuade him to rise up, and sit upon a seat,

and go to bed, after having taken some food; these were some of the chief officers at court, and had the management of the affairs of his household:

*but he would not*; they could not persuade him to it:

*neither did he eat bread with them*; that evening, as he had used to do; they being the princes of his court, who were wont to sit at table with him.

**Ver. 18.** *And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died*, etc.] Not the seventh day from its being taken ill, but from its birth; for it cannot be thought that David should fast seven days:

*and the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead*; lest he should be overwhelmed with too much sorrow:

*for they said, behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him*; to rise from the ground, and eat food:

*and he would not hearken unto our voice*; we could not prevail upon him to do the one nor the other:

*how will he then vex himself if we tell him that the child is dead?* or should we acquaint him with it, “he will do mischief”<sup>f190</sup> to himself, to his body; he will tear his flesh to pieces, and cut and kill himself; this they were afraid of, observing the distress and agony he was in while it was living, and therefore they concluded these would increase upon hearing of its death.

**Ver. 19.** *And when David saw that his servants whispered*, etc.] For they said the above to one another with a low voice, that he might not hear them, though in the same room with them:

*David perceived the child was dead*; he guessed it was, and that this was the thing they were whispering about among themselves:

*therefore David said unto his servants, is the child dead? and they said, he is dead*; for putting the question to them so closely, they could not avoid giving the answer they did, and which he was prepared to receive, by what he had observed in them.

**Ver. 20.** *Then David arose from the earth*, etc.] From the floor on which he lay:

*and washed, and anointed [himself], and changed his apparel*; neither of which he had done during his time of fasting:

*and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped*; went into the tabernacle he had built for the ark of God, and then in prayer submitted himself to the will of God, and acknowledged his justice in what he had done; gave thanks to God that he had brought him to a sense of his sin, and repentance for it, and had applied his pardoning grace to him, and given him satisfaction as to the eternal welfare and happiness of the child, as appears from (<sup>1023</sup>2 Samuel 12:23);

*then he, came to his own house*; from the house of God, having finished his devotion there:

*and when he required*; ordered food to be brought in:

*they set bread before him, and he did eat*: whereas before, while the child was living, he refused to eat.

**Ver. 21.** *Then said his servants unto him, what thing [is] this that thou hast done?* etc.] Or what is the reason of such conduct and behaviour? they knew what was done, but they did not know the meaning of it, which is what they inquired after:

*thou didst fast and weep for the child, [while it was] alive*; prayed with fasting and weeping for it, that it might live and not die:

*but when the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread*; and appeared cheerful; this seemed strange to them, when they expected his sorrow would be increased.

**Ver. 22.** *And he said, while the child was yet alive*, etc.] And so there was hope it might be continued:

*I fasted and wept*; or sought the Lord by prayer, and fasting, and weeping, that the threatening might not take place, that the child's life might be spared:

*for I said*; within himself, thus he reasoned in his own mind:

*who can tell [whether] God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?* and in hope of this he kept praying, fasting, and weeping; he could not tell but God might repent of the evil he had threatened, as in some cases he has done; (see <sup>213</sup>Joel 2:13,14 Jon 3:9,10). Abarbinel thinks that David fasted and wept to hide this matter from his wife, and his servants,

and did not let them know that this was in his punishment, that the child should die.

**Ver. 23.** *But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast?* etc.] And pray; it is to no purpose, no end can be thought to be answered by it:

*can I bring him back again?* from the state of the dead, bring him to life by fasting, and praying, and weeping; that is not to be expected:

*I shall go to him;* to the state of the dead, to the grave, where his body was, or would be; to heaven and eternal happiness, where his soul was, as he comfortably hoped and believed: from whence it appears, that the Old Testament saints did not suppose an annihilation at death; but believed the immortality of the soul, a future state after death of eternal life and bliss:

*but he shall not return to me;* in the present mortal state, though at the resurrection they should meet again.

**Ver. 24.** *And David comforted Bathsheba his wife,* etc.] Which is the first time she is so called, Uriah being dead, and David having married her; which though at first displeasing to the Lord, because the circumstances attending it, was afterwards confirmed by him. Bathsheba no doubt was very much distressed, and greatly disconsolate, on account of the sin she had committed, and because of the wrath and displeasure of God, and because of the death of the child, which was a token of it; and she might have some scruples in her mind whether it was lawful to continue cohabiting with David. Now David comforted her, by telling her that God had pardoned that iniquity they had been guilty of, and that he would give them another son, who should succeed him in the throne, and build an house for his name:

*and went in unto her, and lay with her,* as his wife:

*and she bare a son;* at the proper time:

*and he called his name Solomon;* either the Lord called him so, or David by his direction; for this name was given before his birth, ([1](#) 1 Chronicles 22:9); the Keri or marginal reading is, “and she called his name”, etc. that is, Bathsheba, who had been informed by David that this was the name the Lord would have him called by, which signifies “peaceable”; and the birth of this son was a confirmation of the peace and reconciliation between God and them, and which his name carried in it; as well as pointed to the

peaceable times that should be during his reign, and in which he was a type of Christ, the Prince; of peace; who is the author of peace between God and men by the blood of his cross, and from whom spiritual peace flows, and by whom eternal peace and happiness is:

*and the Lord loved him*; and was to him a father, and he to him a son, as was promised, (<sup>3074</sup>2 Samuel 7:14). This love and affection of the Lord to Solomon was signified to David by Nathan, as follows.

**Ver. 25.** *And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet*, etc.] Either David did; he sent by him to Bathsheba, to acquaint her with the name of the child, that it was to be Solomon; which is not so likely: or “he, David, delivered it into the hand of Nathan the prophet”; to educate it, instruct it, and bring it up in the nurture of the Lord; or rather the Lord sent a message by Nathan the prophet to David, that he loved Solomon:

*and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord*: that is, David also called him by this name, because of the love of the Lord unto him; for Jedidiah signifies “the beloved of the Lord”; a name and character which well agrees with the Messiah, Solomon’s antitype, (<sup>4187</sup>Matthew 3:17 17:5).

**Ver. 26.** *And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon*, etc.] Of his being sent against it, and of his besieging it, we read in (<sup>3000</sup>2 Samuel 11:1); but it can hardly be thought that he had been so long besieging it, as that David had two children by Bathsheba; but the account of the finishing of it is placed here, that the story concerning Bathsheba might lie together without any interruption:

*and took the royal city*; or that part of it in which the king’s palace was, and which, as Abarbinel observes, was without the city, as the palaces of kings now usually are.

**Ver. 27.** *And Joab sent messengers to David*, etc.] To acquaint him how he had proceeded, and what success he had had:

*and said, I have fought against Rabbah*; laid siege to it, and skirmished with parties that sallied out upon them:

*and have taken the city of waters*; the same with the royal city, and so the Targum here renders it; so called because situated by the waterside; Adrichomius says<sup>f191</sup> the river Jabbok flowed round about it: or it

abounded with fountains of water, from whence the other part of the city, or what was properly the city Rabbah, was supplied with water; and which communication being cut off, it could not hold out long, which Joab being sensible of, therefore sent for David. Junius and Tremellius render the words, “I have intercepted the water from the city”; with which the account of Josephus <sup>f192</sup> agrees, who says, that he cut off the water from them, and precluded other supplies, so that they were in great distress for want of food and drink; and in like manner it was taken by Antiochus some hundreds of years later; for that; historian says <sup>f193</sup> the siege by him lasted long, and they could not prevail, because of the multitude of men it, until one of the prisoners showed them a subterraneous passage, through which they came and fetched water; which they stopped up with stones and such like things, and then through want of water yielded.

**Ver. 28.** *Now therefore gather the rest of the people together*, etc.] The rest of the soldiers in the land of Israel, and come to Rabbah:

*and encamp against the city*; invest it in form:

*and take it*; upon a surrender or by storm; for it could not hold out long:

*lest I take the city, and it be called after my name*; so great a regard had Joab, though an ambitious man, to the fame and credit of David his king: so Craterus <sup>f194</sup> at the siege of Artacacna, being prepared to take it, waited the coming of Alexander, that he might have the honour of it.

**Ver. 29.** *And David gathered all the people together*, etc.] The soldiers that were with him, or near him; which was done partly to recruit Joab’s troops, who, by the continuance of the siege, and the sallies of the enemy on them, might be greatly diminished; and partly to make conquests of other cities of the Ammonites, and to carry off the spoil of them:

*and went to Rabbah*; which must be after the death of Uriah, and very probably during the time of Bathsheba’s mourning for him:

*and fought against it, and took it*; by assault.

**Ver. 30.** *And he took their king’s crown from off his head*, etc.] The crown of Hanun the king of the Ammonites, who now fell into his hands, and whom he stripped of his ensigns of royalty, who had so shamefully abused his ambassadors, (~~3000~~ 2 Samuel 10:4):

*(the weight whereof [was] a talent of gold with the precious stones):* or, “and a precious stone”; there might be more, as our version suggests, but there was one in it remarkably large and valuable; Josephus<sup>f195</sup> says it had in it a very precious stone, a sardonyx; and this, according to the Talmud<sup>f196</sup> was of the value of a talent of gold. A talent was equal to three thousand shekels, as appears from (<sup><125></sup>Exodus 38:25,26); and was in value, according to Breewood<sup>f197</sup> of our money, 4500 pounds; but according to Bishop Cumberland<sup>f198</sup> 5067 pounds, three shillings and ten pence. This crown was of the same value with the golden candlestick in the tabernacle, (<sup><125></sup>Exodus 25:39); and some think that value here is meant, and not the weight, a talent of gold being very heavy; according to Bishop Cumberland<sup>f199</sup>, ninety three and three quarter pounds; some say an hundred thirteen pounds ten ounces, and more; too great a weight to be borne on the head by Hanun or David; but, what with the gold and precious stones about it, it might be equal in value to a talent of gold; but weight is expressly mentioned, and the crowns of the eastern princes were of great bulk and weight, as well as value: Athenaeus<sup>f200</sup> makes mention of one made of ten thousand pieces of gold, placed on the throne of King Ptolemy, and of some of two cubits, of six, yea, of sixteen cubits. Some<sup>f201</sup> are of opinion that this crown was not the crown of the king of Ammon, but of Milcom or Molech, their idol, and that the proper name should be retained in the version, and that David had a crown made of it he could bear; but if, as others<sup>f202</sup>, the Syriac talent is meant, which was but the fourth part of an Hebrew one, the difficulty is greatly lessened; for it seems to be the same crown David afterwards wore, as follows:

*and it was [set] on David's head;* to show that the kingdom was translated to him, or was become subject to him; as Alexander, on the conquest of Darius, put the Persian diadem on his own head<sup>f203</sup>, in token of that monarchy being translated to him: though, after all, the phrase, “from off”, may be rendered “from above” or “over”<sup>f204</sup> his head, and so it was set “above” or “over” the head of David, being supported by some means or other, that its weight did not bear thereon however, Paschalius, who wrote a learned work, “De Coronis”, must be mistaken when he says<sup>f205</sup> this seems to be the first use of a crown in the kingdom of Judah, there being no mention of a crown before, either of Saul or David, only of anointing; since express mention is made of Saul's crown, (<sup><3010></sup>2 Samuel 1:10); though his observation may be just, that this crown, allowed to be worn by



David, was a pledge of the renewal of his royal dignity, and of his acceptance with God upon his repentance for his above sins:

*and he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance*; which, or at least part of it, was dedicated to the building of the sanctuary, (<sup><4181></sup>2 Samuel 8:11,12).

**Ver. 31.** *And he brought forth the people that [were] therein*, etc.] Not all the inhabitants of the place, but the princes of the children of Ammon, the counsellors of Hattun, who advised him to use David's ambassadors in so shameful a manner, and others that expressed their pleasure and satisfaction in it:

*and put [them] under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron*; whereby they were cut asunder, as some were by the Romans and others <sup>f206</sup>, or their flesh torn to pieces, and they put to extreme pain and agony, and so died most miserably; (see <sup><4311></sup>1 Chronicles 20:3);

*and made them pass through the brickkiln*; where they burnt their bricks, by which they were not only scorched and blistered, but burnt to death; so the word in the "Keri", or margin, signifies, which we follow; but in the text it is, they caused them to pass through Malcem, the same with Milcom or Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon, (<sup><4110></sup>1 Kings 11:5,7); unto which they made their children pass through the fire, and burnt them; and now in the same place they themselves are made to pass through, and be burnt, as a righteous punishment of them for their barbarous and wicked idolatry. The word used in the Greek version, according to Suidas <sup>f207</sup>, signifies an army, or a battalion of men drawn up in a quadrangular form, like a brick; and in the same sense Josephus <sup>f208</sup> uses it; hence a learned man <sup>f209</sup> conjectures that David's army was drawn up in the like form, through which the Ammonites were obliged to pass, and as they passed were assailed with darts, and killed; a like punishment to which is what the Italians call "passing through the pikes":

*and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon*; to the inhabitants of them; that is, the chief, who had expressed their joy at the ill usage of his ambassadors: this he did to strike terror into other nations, that they might fear to use his ambassadors in such like manner. This action of David's showing so much severity, is thought by most to be done when under the power of his lust with Bathsheba, in an hardened and impenitent state, when he had no sense of mercy himself, and so showed none; which

is too injurious to his character; for this was a righteous retaliation of this cruel people, (<sup>0910</sup>1 Samuel 11:2 <sup>3000</sup>Amos 1:13). Which may be observed in other instances, (<sup>0086</sup>Judges 8:6,7 <sup>0953</sup>1 Samuel 15:33); but the charge of cruelty in David will be easily removed by following the translation of a learned <sup>f210</sup> man, and which I think the words will bear, “and he obliged the people that were in it to go out, and put them to the saw”, to cut stones; “and to the iron mines”, to dig there; “and to the axes of iron”, to cut wood, with; “after he had made them to pass with their king” out of the city.

*So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem;* in triumph, and with great spoil.

# CHAPTER 13

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 13

This chapter relates some of the evils that were to arise out of David's house, and which were similar to the evils committed by him; the deflowering of his daughter, and the murder of his eldest son: the story is this; Amnon falls in love with Tamar, his sister, and grew thin upon it, which being observed by a friend of his, inquires the reason of it, which having got out of him, forms a scheme for obtaining his desire, and which succeeded; for by it he had the opportunity of ravishing his sister, (~~10133~~ 2 Samuel 13:1-14); the consequences of which were extreme hatred of her, hurrying her out of doors, lamentation and mourning on her part, grief to David, and enmity in the heart of Absalom to Amnon, which put him upon meditating his death, (~~10135~~ 2 Samuel 13:15-22); and which was brought about after this manner. Absalom had a sheep shearing, to which he invited the king and all his sons, and to which they all came excepting the king, (~~10133~~ 2 Samuel 13:23-27); when Absalom gave orders to his servants to observe Amnon when he was merry, and at his word smite him and kill him, as they did, (~~10135~~ 2 Samuel 13:28,29); tidings of which soon came to the ears of David, and these aggravated, that all the king's sons were killed, which threw the king into an agony; but Jonadab endeavoured to pacify him, by assuring him that only Amnon was dead, the truth of which soon appeared by the coming of the king's sons, (~~10133~~ 2 Samuel 13:30-36); but Absalom fled to Geshur, where he remained three years, when David's heart began to be towards him, and to long for him, who was to bring more evil against him, (~~10137~~ 2 Samuel 13:37-39).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass after this*, etc.] After the sin of David with Bathsheba, his repentance for it, and pardon of it, and the birth of Solomon as a token of reconciliation; yet after all this the divine threatenings must take place; they had begun already in the death of the child begotten in adultery, and others here follow:

*that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name [was] Tamar*; she was his sister both by father and mother's side; the mother o, f

them was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; she was a very comely person, her name signifies a palm tree:

*and Amnon the son of David loved her*; not in an honourable way, to make her his wife, but in a lustful manner, to make an harlot of her; he was David's eldest son by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, (~~1~~2 Samuel 3:2).

**Ver. 2.** *And Amnon was so vexed*, etc.] Distressed, straitened, and perplexed in his mind through unruly and unbridled lusts that raged in him:

*that he fell sick for his sister Tamar*; as Antiochus son of Seleucus did for his mother in law Stratonice, who, to cure him of it, was delivered to him by his father<sup>f211</sup>:

*for she [was] a virgin*; and so kept very recluse from the company of men, that he could not come at her; so Philo<sup>f212</sup>, speaking of the Jewish women, and particularly virgins, says, that they were shut up in their chambers, and through modesty shun the sight of men, even those of their own house; hence they are called **twml** [ , from a word which signifies to hide; and Phocylides<sup>f213</sup> the poet advises to the shutting of them up in like manner:

*and Amnon thought it hard for him to do anything to her*; that it was difficult to have access to her, almost impossible, what he despaired of, and what, if attained to, would be wonderful and amazing; he was at his wits' end how to contrive any scheme to get at her, and obtain his desire.

**Ver. 3.** *But Amnon had a friend*, etc.] Though in the issue his friendship proved his ruin:

*whose name [was] Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother*; so that they were own cousins, the same with Shammah, (~~1~~1 Samuel 16:9);

*and Jonadab [was] a very subtle man*; a very penetrating man into the dispositions of men, and could judge by their countenances what they were, and the affections of their minds, and had a talent in forming schemes; he was wise to do evil and was wickedly cunning.

**Ver. 4.** *And he said unto him, why [art] thou, [being] the king's son, lean from day today?* etc.] Or "morning by morning",<sup>f214</sup>; he was the king's eldest son, heir to the crown, fed at his table, had everything to make him gay and cheerful, and yet pined away; his flesh wasted<sup>f215</sup>, his countenance waxed wan and pale, and especially in the mornings; in the daytime he met with diversions which, in some measure, took off his thoughts from the

object his mind was impressed with, but in the night season they were continually employed about it; so that he could have no rest and sleep, which made him look ruefully in the morning; and this man had a suspicion of his case, and therefore put this and the following question to him:

*wilt thou not tell me?* who am so nearly related to thee, and who have such a particular value and affection for thee:

*and Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister;* he does not call her his sister, but Absalom's sister, to lessen his sin of unlawful love to her, which, being thus closely pressed, and by a friend, he could not conceal.

**Ver. 5.** *And Jonadab said unto him,* etc.] Being a subtle man, he presently formed a scheme to relieve him, and open a way for the enjoyment of what he desired:

*lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick;* feign thyself sick, pretend that thou art so, by lying down on the bed, and making complaints of one kind or another:

*and when thy father cometh to see thee;* as he quickly would, after hearing of his illness, being very affectionate to his children:

*say unto him, I pray thee let, my sister Tamar come, and give me meat;* here he is directed to call her not Absalom's sister, but his own, the more to cover his ill design upon her:

*and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see [it], and eat [it] at her hand;* pretending that his stomach was very weak and squeamish, that he could not eat anything which his servants dressed for him, and which he did not see done with his own eyes.

**Ver. 6.** *So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick,* etc.] Took the advice of his cousin Jonadab, and acted according to it:

*and when the king was come to see him;* as he quickly did, after he had heard of his illness:

*Amnon said unto the king;* who perhaps inquired of his appetite, whether he could eat anything, and what:

*I pray thee let my sister Tamar come;* he calls her sister, as Jonadab had directed, the more to blind his design; though it is much that so sagacious a

man as David was had not seen through it; but the notion he had of his being really ill, and the near relation between him and Tamar, forbid his entertaining the least suspicion of that kind:

*and make me a couple of cakes in my sight*; heart cakes, as the word may be thought to signify; called so either from the form of them, such as We have with us, or from the effect of them, comforting and refreshing the heart:

*that I may eat at her hand*; both what is made by her hand, and received from it.

**Ver. 7.** *Then David sent home to Tamar*, etc.] Who perhaps was not in the king's palace, but at her brother Absalom's house, (~~1033~~ 2 Samuel 13:20);

*saying, go now to thy brother Amnon's house*; who also had a separate house and equipage, being the king's son, and his eldest son:

*and dress him meat*; such as he may desire, and his stomach will bear.

**Ver. 8.** *So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house*, etc.] In obedience to the king's commands, and in affection to her brother, with an innocent breast, having no suspicion of any design upon her chastity:

*(and he was laid down)*; upon a couch or bed in his chamber, as being sick as was pretended, into which she was introduced:

*and she took flour, and kneaded [it]*; made it into a paste:

*and made cakes in his sight*; a kind of fritters of them, as in the Talmud <sup>f216</sup>.

*and did bake the cakes*: or fried them in a frying pan, in oil.

**Ver. 9.** *And she took a pan, and poured [them] out before him*, etc.] Out of the frying pan, in which they were, into another dish; and all this was done in his presence, that he might see and know of what, and in what manner it was made, that his stomach might not recoil at it:

*but he refused to eat*: for that was not what he wanted:

*and Amnon said, have out all men from me*; as if company was troublesome to him, and he wanted rest, etc.

*and they went out every man from him*; at his orders, that he might get some sleep, as he seemed desirous of it.

**Ver. 10.** *And Amnon said unto Tamar, bring the meat into the chamber,* etc.] An inner chamber, at a greater distance, where they might be more secret, and out of the reach of the hearing of any of his domestics:

*that I may eat of thine hand*; this he pretended, though his design was of another kind:

*and Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought [them] into the chamber to Amnon her brother*; being quite innocent herself, and having no suspicion of a brother having any ill design upon her, she made no scruple of going into an inner chamber alone with him.

**Ver. 11.** *And when she had brought [them] unto him to eat,* etc.] Not only into the chamber, but to the side of the bed or couch where he had laid himself, or sat, in a proper position to answer his purpose:

*he took hold of her*; by the arm, or threw his hands about her:

*and said unto her, come, lie with me, my sister*; one would think the relation he observes she stood in to him would have checked him from making so vile a motion.

**Ver. 12.** *And she answered him, nay, my brother,* etc.] Which carried in it a reason sufficient for her denial, that he was her brother, and she his sister, and therefore should not offer such an indignity to her:

*do not force me*; which was another forbidding expression, signifying she would never freely yield to his will; and to force her, to defile her against her will, to commit a rape upon her, would be very criminal indeed:

*for no such thing ought to be done in Israel*; among God's professing people, who were better taught and instructed; and to give into such impure practices would bring a dishonour upon them, and upon the religion they professed; she urges the honour of religion, and the reputation of Israel, and the glory of the God of Israel:

*do not thou this folly*: as all sin is, especially such an impure and indecent action as this.

**Ver. 13.** *And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go?* etc.] She desires him to consider her reputation, which would be lost; was she to go into a

corner, into a place the most private and retired, yet she would blush at the thought of the crime committed; and still less able would she be to lift up her face in any public company; nor could she ever expect to be admitted into the matrimonial state; in short, her character would be entirely ruined:

*and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel*; as the vilest and basest and most abandoned in the nation; who ought of all men to be most careful of his reputation, being a prince in Israel, and heir apparent to the throne:

*now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king*: to give me to thee in marriage:

*for he will not withhold me from thee*; this she said, either as ignorant of the law, which forbids such marriages, or as supposing the king had a power to dispense with it, and, rather than he should die for love, would; though she seems to say this, and anything that occurred to her mind, to put him off of his wicked design for the present, holding then she should be delivered from him; besides, she was not his sister by the mother's side, and, as the Jews say, was born of a captive woman before she was proselyted and married to David, and so was free for Ammon<sup>f217</sup>; and others say<sup>f218</sup> she was the daughter of Maacah by a former husband, and not by David.

**Ver. 14.** *Howbeit, he would not hearken unto her voice*, etc.] His lust was so inflamed and enraged, that he could not attend to any arguments, though ever so forcible, that were offered to him:

*but being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her*; whether she cried out or not, as the law directs in such cases, (<sup>f225</sup>Deuteronomy 22:25-27); is not said; she might, and nobody hear her and come to her assistance; or she might not choose to expose her brother to his servants.

**Ver. 15.** *Then Amnon hated her exceedingly*, etc.] Having gratified his lust, his conscience stung him for it, that he could not bear the sight of the object that had been the instrument of it; and it may be the sharp words she had used, representing him as one of the fools in Israel, and perhaps she used sharper words still after he had abused her, filled him with hatred to her:

*so that the hatred wherewith he hated her [was] greater than the love wherewith he had loved her*; a like instance of love being changed into



hatred, after the gratification of lust, we have in Honorius towards his sister Placidia <sup>f219</sup>:

*and Amnon said unto her, arise, be gone*; without calling her by her name, or owning the relation she bore to him, using her as the basest and vilest of creatures. This conduct was very brutish, as well as imprudent, and foolish to the last degree; had he had any regard to his own reputation, he would never have turned her out of doors so soon, and in such a public manner; but so it was ordered by divine Providence, that his sin might be made known, and so the murder of him for it by Absalom was brought on, and both were suffered as a correction and chastisement to David for his sins of adultery and murder, (<sup><1021></sup>2 Samuel 12:11).

**Ver. 16.** *And she said unto him, [there is] no cause*, etc.] For such treatment as this:

*this evil in sending me away [is] greater than the other that thou didst unto me*; not that this was a greater sin, but it was a greater evil or injury to her, that being done secretly, this openly; being turned out in that open manner, it might look as if she was the aggressor, and had drawn her brother into this sin, or however had consented to it; had it been kept a secret, she would not have been exposed to public shame and disgrace, and she might have been disposed of in marriage to another; it would not have been known to the grief of her father, to the revenge of Absalom, and to the dishonour of religion; besides, the sin of Amnon might have been more easily excused, if any excuse could be made for it, as that it arose from the force of lust, and a strong impure affection, but this from barbarity and inhumanity:

*but he would not hearken unto her*; but insisted upon her immediate departure.

**Ver. 17.** *Then he called his servants that ministered unto him*, etc.] His domestic servants that waited on him:

*and said, put now this [woman] out from me*; she not willing to depart at once, he ordered her to be put out immediately by force; using her and speaking of her in a very rude and scandalous manner, calling her this, leaving it to be supplied, as they would understand it, this base woman, this strumpet, etc.

*and bolt the door after her*; that she might not return; this was more disgraceful still.

**Ver. 18.** *And [she had] a garment of divers colours upon her*, etc.] Of embroidered work, which made her the more observable, and her shame the more manifest. Whether this was interwoven with threads of various colours, or embroidered with figures of flowers, animals, etc. and wrought with the needle, or was painted with different colours, or made up of pieces of various colours, is not certain. (See Gill on “<sup>Q137B</sup>Genesis 37:3”); but according to Braunius <sup>f220</sup> it was neither, and so the coat of Joseph, but was a garment with sleeves, reaching down to the ankles, and pieced at the borders with fringe; and, indeed, garments of flowers and various colours were such as in other nations, as in Athens, harlots wore <sup>f221</sup> and not virgins, as follows:

*for with such robes were the king’s daughters [that were] virgins apparelled*; which they wore to distinguish them both from common people, and from married persons of the same quality:

*then the servants brought her out, and bolted the door after her*; laid hold on her, and brought her out by main force; thrust her out of doors, and turned the key upon her.

**Ver. 19.** *And Tamar put ashes on her head*, etc.] In token of sorrow and distress; (see <sup>Q106B</sup>Joshua 7:6);

*and rent her garment of divers colours that [was] on her*; signifying that her virginity was rent from her in a forcible manner, or that she was ravished:

*and laid her hand on her head*; through grief and shame; (see <sup>Q425B</sup>Jeremiah 2:37);

*and went on crying*; from Amnon’s house to her brother Absalom’s, as one abused and injured.

**Ver. 20.** *And Absalom her brother said unto her*, etc.] Either meeting her in the street, or rather when come to his house:

*hath Amnon thy brother been with thee?* been rude with thee, and lain with thee, which is the meaning of this modest expression; which he guessed at, having heard of her being sent to his house, and knowing his lustful disposition, and seeing her in such a forlorn condition: he calls him

Aminon, for so it is in the Hebrew text, and not Amnon, by way of contempt, as Kimchi observes:

*but hold now thy peace, my sister*; be silent, take no notice of this matter, say nothing of it to the king, nor any other, keep it in thine own breast, and make thyself easy:

*he [is] thy brother, regard not this thing*; it is thy brother that has done it, and not so disgraceful as a meaner person, done in the heat of lust, and a youthful one, and should be forgiven; besides, to divulge it would bring disgrace upon the whole family, and no recompence would be obtained by telling the king of it, since he was his son, his firstborn, and heir to the crown; this he said not out of love of Amnon, but as desirous of gratifying private revenge upon him for it when opportunity should serve.

*So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house*; not seeing any company, being filled with grief and shame, and none applying to her as a suitor, knowing she was vitiated; how long she continued here, or lived after this, is not certain; no mention is made of her afterwards.

**Ver. 21.** *But when King David heard of all these things*, etc.] Of Amnon's ravishing Tamar, and turning her out of doors in that inhuman manner he did, and of her distress upon it:

*he was very wroth*; with Amnon; but we read not of any reproof he gave him, nor of any punishment inflicted on him by him. Abarbinel thinks the reason why he was not punished was because his sin was not cognizable by a court of judicature, nor was punishable by any way, or with any kind of death inflicted by the sanhedrim, as stoning, burning, etc. nor even by scourging, because there were no witnesses; but the punishment of it was cutting off, i.e. by the hand of God. The Jews say<sup>f222</sup> a law was made on this, that virgins or unmarried persons should not be alone; for if this was done to the daughter of a king, much more might it be done to the daughter of a private man; and if to a modest person, much more to an impudent one.

**Ver. 22.** *And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad*, etc.] That is, said nothing at all to him about the rape of his sister; not that he was sulky with him, and would not converse with him at all; for then Amnon would have mistrusted that he was meditating revenge, and therefore would have been upon his guard; but on the contrary he talked

freely, and in appearance friendly, on other things, the better to conceal his hatred of him, and his design to avenge the injury of his sister:

*for Absalom hated Amnon*; or, “though” <sup>f223</sup> he hated him, yet he behaved in this manner towards him:

*because he had forced his sister Tamar*: who was so by father and mother’s side, and so near and dear unto him, and therefore resented the injury done her.

**Ver. 23.** *And it came to pass after two full years*, etc.] Two complete years after the rape was committed; so long Absalom kept it in his mind, and was contriving how to avenge it; he let it alone so long, that it might be thought by the king and Amnon, and all the family, that it was quite worn out of his mind, and entirely forgotten by him, and therefore might the more safely confide in him:

*that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which [is] beside Ephraim*; though a prince, the son of a king, he had his flocks, and attended to the care of them, and had shearers to shear them at the proper time of the year, which it now was. The Chinese shear their sheep three times a year, the spring, summer, and autumn; but the first time of shearing yields the best wool <sup>f224</sup>. The place of shearing them was, no doubt, near where they were kept in Baalhazor, in the plain of Hazor, as the Targum, and so some versions; which was a city in the tribe of Judah, (<sup><6852></sup>Joshua 15:25); and near to Ephraim; not that it was a city in the tribe of Ephraim, as Josephus says <sup>f225</sup>; but it was near to another city called Ephraim, perhaps the same as in (<sup><4439></sup>2 Chronicles 13:19) and in (<sup><6154></sup>John 11:54); it lay to the northeast of Jerusalem, as you go to Jericho, and is thought by Reland <sup>f226</sup> to lie between Bethel and Jericho; and, according to Eusebius <sup>f227</sup>, it was eight miles from Jerusalem; though Jerom <sup>f228</sup>, through mistake, says twenty; and both these places, according to Bunting <sup>f229</sup>, were eight miles from Jerusalem; it seems to be the same place that was spoken of in the Misnah <sup>f230</sup>, called Ephraim in the valley, and which is said to be the second place in the land of Israel for fine flour, and might have its name from its fruitfulness:

*and Absalom invited all the king’s sons*; to the sheepshearing: that is, to the feast which was usually made at such times, and still is; (see <sup><1832></sup>Genesis 38:12 <sup><4921></sup>1 Samuel 25:2,8,11,36).

**Ver. 24.** *And Absalom came to the king,* etc.] At Jerusalem, to invite him in person:

*and said, behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers;* persons employed in shearing his sheep: and this being a time of entertainment and joy,

*let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants, go with thy servant;* he invited the king and the whole royal family to go with him to Baalhazor, and partake of the sheepshearing feast; for by “his servants” are not meant the king’s domestic servants, his guard and retinue, but his sons, as appears by what follows.

**Ver. 25.** *And the king said to Absalom, nay, my son, let us not all now go,* etc.] He did not object to the invitation entirely, he was willing some of the family should go, but not all; it seems probable that he particularly excepted himself and his eldest son, the heir to his crown, for the reason following:

*lest we be chargeable unto thee;* one or two persons more, supposing them to be private persons, would have added but little to the expense, if any; but as David was a king, he must have come with the retinue of a king, with a large number of servants and guards, and must be entertained as such; and Amnon, his eldest son, and heir apparent to the crown, must make a figure suitable to his quality, which would have considerably raised the expense; and perhaps Absalom’s estate he had to live upon might be but small, which David knew, and therefore chose not to be burdensome to him:

*and he pressed him;* urged him to go; not that he expected he would, or really desired he should, but this he did to hide his intention, that he might have no suspicion of his design against Amnon; or otherwise he might think he would not have been so pressing upon him to go with him:

*howbeit he would not go, but blessed him;* thanked him for the invitation he gave him, and wished him much happiness and pleasure at his entertainment with his friends.

**Ver. 26.** *Then said Absalom, if not,* etc.] If it is not thy pleasure to go with me, if I cannot have the honour of thy company:

*I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us;* let me have the next mark of honour that can be given me, the presence of the king’s eldest son, and heir

to the crown; he seems to express affection for him, and a particular desire of his company, as if all ill will towards him was removed from him, and this would be a public declaration of reconciliation between them:

*and the king said unto him, why should he go with thee?* he particularly, he more than any other; David seems to have suspected some design, and it is strange he should not; and yet if he had, it is much, notwithstanding the pressing arguments used, he should let him go; or he might think it would be more expensive to have him than the rest, and therefore asks why he should desire his company above all others.

**Ver. 27.** *But Absalom pressed him,* etc.] Which one would think would have increased his suspicion, if he had any, or have raised it in him; but his mind was blinded, that Amnon's incest might be punished and the threatening to David and his house be fulfilled on account of the affair of Uriah and Bathsheba:

*that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him;* if he had any suspicion at all, he might choose they should all go, that they might protect and defend him, if any attempt was made upon him; or, as others think, that no exceptions might be taken, as might be, if Amnon had gone alone.

**Ver. 28.** *Now Absalom had commanded his servants,* etc.] Before he and his guests were set down to the entertainment:

*saying, mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine;* as he was determined to make him if possible, and as he supposed he would be, knowing his inclination to drink:

*and when I say unto you, smite Amnon, then kill him;* smite him that he die, and be sure he is dead before you leave him:

*fear not, have not I commanded you?* who am your lord, the king's son, and will then be heir to the crown; fear not, I will protect you; let all the blame be laid to me, if any; I will be answerable for it, you have nothing to do but to obey my commands:

*be courageous, and be valiant;* show yourselves to be men of courage and valour, not fearing the king's sons, or any in company, or what will be the consequences of it; do your business effectually, and leave all with me; it is very reasonably supposed that Absalom had not only in view to revenge the rape of his sister, but to get himself next heir to the crown.

**Ver. 29.** *And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded,* etc.] They smote him, and killed him, when he gave the word:

*then all the king's sons arose;* from the feast, imagining they were all designed to be slain:

*and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled;* creatures much used in Judea instead of horses, which, though they might not be bred, might be used<sup>f231</sup>.

**Ver. 30.** *And it came to pass while they were in the way,* etc.] On their road homewards, before they got to Jerusalem:

*that tidings came to David;* perhaps brought by one who was at the entertainment, who upon seeing Amnon smitten, immediately rose up and fled with the news of it to David:

*saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left;* which he might suppose was the design of Absalom, and was done before that time; however, so it was ordered in Providence, that David, that rejoiced at the news of the death of Uriah, might be terrified with the tidings of the death of all his sons; and for a while it was as if it was really so, which occasioned the following behaviour in him.

**Ver. 31.** *Then the king arose, and tore his garments,* etc.] In token of extreme grief and sorrow, as Jacob did when he was shown the coat of Joseph, supposing him to have been slain, as David thought all his sons were, (<sup><01534></sup>Genesis 37:34);

*and lay on the earth;* on the bare ground, another token of mourning; so Job did on hearing the death of his sons, (<sup><01020></sup>Job 1:20);

*and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent:* did as David did, in imitation of him, joining with him in expressions of sorrow; these were his courtiers, ministers of state, and principal officers in his household.

**Ver. 32.** *And Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother,* etc.] The same that advised Amnon to feign himself sick, to get Tamar sent to him, that he might enjoy her, (<sup><01038></sup>2 Samuel 13:3);

*answered and said;* said in answer to the report brought to the king, which threw him into such an agony:

*let not my lord suppose [that] they have slain all the young men the king's sons;* he did not believe it himself, and would not have the king entertain such a thought, and distress himself with it:

*for Amnon only is dead;* he is very positive, and speaks with great assurance; it looks as if he was in the secret, and knew of the plot against Amnon's life; and, if so, he must be a very wicked man, first to form a scheme whereby Amnon might come at Tamar to ravish her, and then be accessory to the murder of him, as he must, if he knew of the design against his life, and did not acquaint him and the king of it; and this seems to be confirmed by what follows:

*for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined, from the day that he forced his sister Tamar;* that is, the slaying of Amnon; the meaning is, either that Absalom had given orders to his servants to slay him, whenever they had an opportunity; or it was "in the mouth of Absalom"<sup>f232</sup>, as it may be rendered; he used to declare it to his intimate friends, that it was the purpose and resolution of his heart to kill Amnon some time or another; and this he had taken up from the time of his sister Tamar's being forced, and because of that, of which Jonadab had intelligence by some means or another; and who speaks of this rape without any seeming emotion, as if he had no concern at all in it.

**Ver. 33.** *Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart,* etc.] Neither suppose it, nor be troubled for it:

*to think that all the king's sons are dead:* which was not to be thought, nor could any good reason be given for such a supposition

*for Amnon only is dead;* he repeats it again with great assurance, which seems to confirm the suspicion of him before suggested; though some think he said this not from certain knowledge, but by conjecture.

**Ver. 34.** *But Absalom fled,* etc.] He who promised his servants protection could not protect himself, and who no doubt fled with him; he knew what he had done was death by law, and that there was no city of refuge for such sort of murder as this, and he had no reason to hope the king would suffer so foul a crime as this to pass unpunished:

*and the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked:* to the way that led from Absalom's house to Jerusalem, to see if he could spy any other messenger on the road from thence:



*and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him*; that is, behind the watchman, who, looking round him, saw them; these people were the king's sons and their attendants, who, being at some distance, the young man could not discern who they were; they did not come the direct road from Absalom's house, but came a round about way, for fear, as R. Isaiah rightly conjectures, lest Absalom should pursue, or send pursuers after them, and slay them; though others, as Kimchi, think this refers to the hill, and that the sense is, that the watchman saw them coming from the way which was behind the hill, and began to see them when they came to the side of it, which was the way that led to the city, surrounded by mountains, (see <sup>49</sup>Psalm 125:2).

**Ver. 35.** *And Jonadab said to the king, behold, the king's sons come*, etc.] For as they came nearer, it was plainly discovered that they were the king's sons, seen on the side of the hill:

*as thy servant said, so it is*; he seems to applaud himself, and exult at his penetration and foresight.

**Ver. 36.** *And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking*, etc.] As soon as the above words were out of his mouth:

*that, behold, the king's sons came*: into the palace, and into the apartment where the king was:

*and lifted up their voice and wept*; not being able to tell the sorrowful news with their mouths, but declared it by gestures:

*and the king also and all his servants wept very sore*; they joined the king's sons in weeping, and were the more moved to it by their weeping, and the rather, since hereby the news of Amnon's murder was confirmed.

**Ver. 37.** *But Absalom fled*, etc.] As before related, but here repeated for the sake of what follows:

*and went to Talmi, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur*: his mother's father, (see <sup>410B</sup>2 Samuel 3:3), where he might hope for protection and safety:

*and [David] mourned for his son every day*; or "all the days"<sup>f233</sup>, i.e. of the three years Absalom was in Geshur, about the end of which he was comforted concerning Amnon, as the following verses show. Some think it was for Absalom he mourned, but rather for Amnon. The reason why he

mourned for him, when he did not for his child by Bathsheba, who died, because that was an infant, this a grown man, and heir to his crown, and was slain by the sword of his brother, and so fulfilled a threatening to himself on account of his own sin, which, hereby no doubt, was brought fresh to his mind.

**Ver. 38.** *So Absalom fled*, etc.] This is the third time it is mentioned, and the reason of it here Abarbinel thinks is, that when he first fled to his grandfather, he used to stand openly in the court of his palace, and go with him wherever he went from place to place; but when he understood that his father mourned so for the death of Amnon, he was afraid he would send some person to lay hold on him, and take vengeance on him; and therefore he would go no more with the king from place to place, but went and abode in Geshur always, which was a fortified city, as it follows:

*and went to Geshur, and was there three years*: and never went out of it, until he was fetched by Joab, as (<sup><10423></sup>2 Samuel 14:23) relates; nor is there anything in (<sup><1037></sup>2 Samuel 13:37,38) disturbed and mutilated, as Spinosa <sup>f234</sup> intimates, but the whole is very expressive and emphatic.

**Ver. 39.** *And [the soul of] King David longed to go forth unto Absalom*, etc.] In like manner it is supplied and paraphrased in the Targum, because the word rendered “longed” is feminine; though it may be used to denote the effeminateness of David’s disposition and carriage on this occasion. Aben Ezra thinks the word “wife”, should be supplied, and then the sense is, that the wife of King David, the mother of Absalom, made supplication to him to send forth one of the young men to fetch Absalom, and that by her importunity to him she stirred up a longing desire in David after him. Abarbinel observes, from another writer of theirs, that all the three years David was mourning for his son, he went out continually to seek to take vengeance on Absalom; but after that time, the mother of Absalom, or Tamar his sister, or his daughter, was importunate with the king, and restrained him from going forth to seek vengeance on Absalom; and when he was comforted concerning Amnon, that woman found means to restrain him from going out, and he restrained his servants from going forth against Absalom; and so he observes the word is used for withholding or restraining in (<sup><1900></sup>Psalm 40:10); and this agrees with several ancient versions, as the Vulgate Latin,

“King David ceased to persecute Absalom;”

and the Septuagint,

“King David ceased to go out to Absalom;”

and the Syriac version,

“and King David abstained from going out after Absalom:”

*for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead;* and could not be brought back from the grave, though Absalom might be from his exile, to which he had an inclination; but he knew not how to do it, consistent with justice and his own honour.

# CHAPTER 14

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 14

This chapter relates that Joab, perceiving David's inclination to bring back Absalom, employed a wise woman of Tekoah to lay before him a feigned case of hers, drawn up by Joab, whereby this point was gained from the king, that murder might be dispensed with in her case, (<sup><1040></sup>2 Samuel 14:1-20); which being applied to the case of Absalom, and the king finding out that the hand of Joab was in this, sent for him, and ordered him to bring Absalom again, though as yet he would not see his face, (<sup><1042></sup>2 Samuel 14:21-24); and after some notice being taken of the beauty of Absalom's person, particularly of his head of hair, and of the number of his children, (<sup><1045></sup>2 Samuel 14:25-27); it is related, that after two full years Absalom was uneasy that he might not see the king's face, and sent for Joab, who refused to come to him, till he found means to oblige him to it, who, with the king's leave, introduced him to him, (<sup><1048></sup>2 Samuel 14:28-33).

**Ver. 1.** *Now Joab the son of Zeruiah*, etc.] The general of David's army:

*perceived that the king's heart [was] towards Absalom*; and longed to have him returned, though he knew not how to bring it about with credit to himself, his crime being so foul, and worthy of death. This Joab perceived by some words he now and then dropped, and by his conduct, not seeking by any ways and means to bring him to justice, and being now reconciled to the death of Amnon; wherefore Joab devised a way to make known to him his own mind, and the sense of the people, which would serve to encourage him to restore him; and the rather Joab was inclined to take such a step, as he knew it would establish him in the king's favour, and ingratiate him into the affection of Absalom, the next heir to the crown, as well as please the people, whose darling he was. Though Abarbinel is of opinion that Joab proceeded upon another view of things, not because he saw the heart and affection of David were towards Absalom, but the reverse; that though David restrained himself and his servants from going out after Absalom, yet Joab knew that the heart of the king was against him, and that his heart was to take vengeance on him, though he did not go out to seek him; he perceived there was still enmity and hatred in his heart

to take vengeance on Absalom, and therefore he took the following method to remove it, and reconcile his mind to him; and so the Targum,

“and Joab the son of Zeruiah knew that the heart of the king was to go, out against Absalom;”

and it may be observed, that when Joab had so far prevailed upon him as to admit him to bring him back to Jerusalem, he would not suffer him to see his face, nor did he for two years after.

**Ver. 2.** *And Joab sent to Tekoah*, etc.] Which Kimchi says was a city in the tribe of Asher, and others in the tribe of Benjamin, but it seems rather to be in the tribe, of Judah, (<sup>4115</sup>2 Chronicles 11:5,6); according Jerom <sup>f235</sup>, it was twelve miles from Jerusalem, though in another place <sup>f236</sup> he says it was but nine; of this place was Amos, and some think <sup>f237</sup> the woman after mentioned was his grandmother. It was proper to lay the scene of the affair to be proposed to the king at some distance, that it might not soon and easily be inquired into:

*and fetched thence a wise woman*; one much advanced in years, as Josephus says <sup>f238</sup>, whose years had taught her wisdom by experience; a woman of good sense, and of a good address, apt at expression and reply, and knew how to manage an affair committed to her; and among other things, perhaps, was famous for acting the part of a mourner at funerals, for which sometimes women were hired; however, she was one that was talked of for her wisdom and prudence, and Joab having heard of her, sent for her as one for his purpose. The Jews <sup>f239</sup> say, that Tekoah was the first place in the land of Israel for oil, and because the inhabitants were much used to oil, wisdom was found among them:

*and said unto her, I pray thee feign thyself to be a mourner*; a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and in great distress, and show it by cries and tears:

*and put on now mourning apparel*; black clothes, such as mourners usually wore:

*and anoint not thyself with oil*; as used to be done in times of feasting and rejoicing, to make them look smooth, and gay, and cheerful, and of which there might be much use at Tekoah, if so famous for oil:

*but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead;* her countenance pale and foul with weeping, her mourning clothes almost worn out, etc.

**Ver. 3.** *And come to the king,* etc.] At his palace, in the above condition and circumstances:

*and speak on this manner unto him;* something to the following purpose he dictated to her:

*so Joab put the words in her mouth;* the substance of what she should say; the fable she was to deliver as her own case might be framed by Joab, and which she delivered word for word exactly as he put it, and the application of it; but as he knew not what questions the king would ask her, so he could not dictate to her what to reply, unless he supposed this and the other, and so formed answers; but this he left to her prudence, and for the sake of which he chose a wise woman to manage this affair.

**Ver. 4.** *And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king,* etc.] Or after she had spoken to him, being introduced by Joab, as is probable; when she had saluted him with God save the king, or May the king live, or some such like expressions:

*she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance;* to him as her king, in reverence of his majesty:

*and said, help, O king;* signifying that she was in great distress, and came to him for assistance and deliverance.

**Ver. 5.** *And the king said unto her, what aileth thee?* etc.] Or what is thy case? What is the condition, and what the circumstances, that thou art in, which require help and assistance? intimating that he was ready to grant it on knowledge thereof; however, he was ready to hear what she had to say:

*and she answered, I [am] indeed a widow woman;* of a truth a widow, as the Targum; she was really one, a widow indeed, as in (<sup>518B</sup>1 Timothy 5:3,5); not one that was separated from her husband, he being alive, or divorced from him on any account; and therefore she adds,

*and mine husband is dead;* and has been a long time; this she said to move the pity and compassion of the king, who, as the supreme magistrate in God's stead, was a Father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widow.

**Ver. 6.** *And thy handmaid had two sons,* etc.] Two are observed, that her case might suit with Amnon and Absalom:

*and they two strove together in the field;* they quarrelled, and fought in the field, where there were no witnesses of what they did to each other; whereby she would suggest that Amnon was killed in the field, of which there were no witnesses, and therefore Absalom ought not to die; whereas it was in Absalom's house, at his table, and where the rest of the king's sons were present, and witnesses of it:

*and [there was] none to part them;* which, had there been, might have prevented the sad disaster; this, as Abarbinel thinks, is pointed at David, who when Amnon forced Tamar, did not correct him for it, nor seek to make peace between the brethren, and hence followed what had happened:

*but the one smote the other, and slew him;* as say the accusers of him that is living; for the fable supposes there was none with them; however, she suggests, as the above writer observes, that one gave the first blow, and so was the aggressor; and that he that was smitten rose up in his own defence, and in his passion slew him that smote him; which is observed to lessen the crime, and to intimate that Amnon was the aggressor, who first began the sin and quarrel, in ravishing Tamar, and so reproaching Absalom; and therefore his blood was upon his own head.

**Ver. 7.** *And, behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid,* etc.] Who had sheltered her son, that slew his brother, from the avenger of blood; and not only the next akin, the avenger of blood, but even all the kindred and relations of the deceased, those of her husband's family rose up as one man, demanding justice:

*and they said, deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he slew;* pretending great regard to the deceased, and a zeal for justice, when the main thing aimed at was to get the inheritance into their own hands, as appears by what follows:

*and we will destroy the heir also;* and hereby she would insinuate to the king, that the reason why the rest of the king's sons spake against Absalom to him, and stirred him up to punish him with death, was because he was heir to the crown, and they thought by removing him to make way for themselves:

*and so they shall quench my coal that is left*; she had but one son, as she represents her case, who was like a coal left among ashes, in the ruins of her family; the only one to support her, keep alive her family, and bear up and continue her husband's name; and, as the Targum,

“they seek to kill the only one that is left;”

and so the family be extinct:

*and shall not leave to my husband [neither] name nor remainder upon the earth*; should he be delivered up to them and slain; but herein the fable or apologue differed greatly from the case it was intended to represent; for had Absalom been put to death, as the law required, David had sons enough to inherit his throne, and keep up his name.

**Ver. 8.** *And the king said to the woman, go to thine house*, etc.] Go home and make thyself easy:

*and I will give charge concerning thee*; intimating that he would inquire into her case; and if it was as she had represented it, he would give orders that she should not be disturbed, or be obliged to deliver up her son, and that he should be safe from those that sought his life.

**Ver. 9.** *And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, my lord and king*, etc.] With much vehemence, and yet with great respect, fearing an inquisition into her case; which it would not bear, being a fable, and being very desirous of having sentence on it immediately pronounced:

*the iniquity [be] on me and on my father's house*; let the crime be imputed to me and my family, and punishment inflicted on us for it, if I have misrepresented the case, told lies, and deceived the king:

*and the king and his throne [be] guiltless*; let neither he nor his kingdom be charged with any sin, or suffer any damage on that account: or else the sense is, supposing that the king through much business should forget and neglect this affair; and her son should be put to death, through the violence and rage of the family; then she wishes that the fault and punishment of such neglect might not fall upon the king and his kingdom, but upon her and her family: in this form she put it, for the honour of the king, and because she would not be thought to wish ill to him and his kingdom; yet tacitly suggests, that should this be the case, he and his kingdom must expect to answer and suffer for it.



**Ver. 10.** *And the king said, whoever saith [ought] unto thee,* etc.] Demanding her to deliver up her son to justice, and reproaching her for not doing it:

*bring him to me;* give him in charge to a proper officer to be brought before me, and I shall chastise him for it:

*and he shall not touch thee any more;* give her any further trouble, by words or deeds.

**Ver. 11.** *Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God,* etc.] Who is a God gracious and merciful, and imitate him in showing mercy to the distressed; pitying their case, having compassion upon them, and relieving them, as she hoped he would commiserate her case, and provide for the safety of her son. Some think she desires not only to give his word, but his oath, for her son's safety: "remember the Lord thy God"; i.e. make mention of him, as men do when they swear by him; swear to me by the Lord thy God:

*that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son,* or, "from multiplying the avenger of blood"<sup>f240</sup>; that there might not rise one after another to destroy her son: her meaning is, that the king would swear to her, and give out a general prohibition, an universal edict, that no one should slay her son; otherwise if only the avenger of blood that was next of kin was forbidden, others would rise up one after another, so that he would never be in safety:

*and he said, [as] the Lord liveth;* if she desired an oath, he granted her request, and swore by the living God:

*there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth;* so far shall his life be from being touched, or taken away, that the least hurt shall not be done him, as this proverbial expression signifies.

**Ver. 12.** *Then the woman said, let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak [one] word unto my Lord the king,* etc.] Having gained her point, and gotten a decree from him confirmed by an oath, that her son though he had killed his brother should not die; she proceeds to accommodate the parable, and apply it to the case of Absalom, and improve it in his favour:

*and he said, say on;* gave her leave to say what she had further to observe to him; (see <sup><474></sup>Luke 7:40).

**Ver. 13.** *Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God?* etc.] That they would be so wicked as to slay my son, or that they are the people of God that would slay Absalom; people so cruel could not be reckoned such, as the king's sons; so Abarbinel; who gives it as the sense of Ephodaeus, that by the people of God are meant Absalom, and his men; or Absalom only, one man being sometimes called people, (<sup><1218></sup>Exodus 21:8); and she expostulates with the king how he could entertain such a thought, as to seek to take away his life, when he had so fully expressed himself in her case on behalf of her son, who had slain his brother; or rather the meaning is, why he should think of doing such a thing as this, so contrary to the will of the people of Israel, the people of God, who would be greatly offended and grieved at it; so contrary to their wishes, which were to see him fetched back from an Heathenish court and country, where he was in danger of being corrupted, and to be restored to his father's favour and to his country, that he might be upon the spot at his death, to succeed in the throne and kingdom; for the provocation that Absalom had to kill Amnon had greatly lessened the evil in the esteem of the people:

*for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty:* he contradicts and condemns himself, in swearing that her son who had killed his brother should not die, nor an hair of his head be hurt, but should be in the utmost safety; and yet he sought to put his own son to death for a like crime, as the next clause explains it:

*in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished;* meaning Absalom, who was in a foreign country, an exile, (<sup><1034></sup>2 Samuel 13:34), and in danger of falling into idolatry; not daring to come home, lest his father should order him to be put to death; and which he might justly fear he would, should he return without leave, since he sought not by any means to fetch him back.

**Ver. 14.** *For we must needs die,* etc.] As all must, herself, the king, and his sons, and indeed all men; this is the common case and lot of men; particularly she insinuates that David must die, and that there must be a successor named, and perhaps a dispute would arise about one; which might be fatal, if Absalom was not recalled in his lifetime; and that Amnon must have died in a little time if he had not been killed by his brother; and Absalom, he must die also quickly, and therefore what signifies taking

away his life? he may as well live a little longer; this, however plausible, was but bad reasoning in the case of a malefactor:

*and [are] as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again;* which sinks into the earth, and cannot be got out of it again; so men, when they die, are buried in the earth, and cannot be gathered or restored to life again, until the resurrection of the dead; and since Amnon is dead, and he cannot be brought to life again, it is best to be easy, and not seek to take away the life of another; which is to bring him into the same irrecoverable state and condition:

*neither doth God respect [any] person;* the words in the original are, “God doth not take away the soul or life”<sup>f241</sup>; of every offender, but spares them notwithstanding the crimes they have committed; and therefore it became the king to be sparing and merciful to offenders, and particularly to his own son; and perhaps she any tacitly have respect to David himself who had been guilty both of murder and adultery, either of which deserved death; and yet God had not taken away his life, but in his great mercy had spared him; and therefore, since he had received mercy, he should show it: or “God hath not taken away [his] soul or life”; the life of Absalom; he had not cut him off himself by his immediate hand, nor suffered the king’s sons to take away his life, nor any other to seize upon him, and bring him to justice, whom David might have employed; but had by his providence protected and preserved him; so that it seemed to be his will and pleasure that he should not be put to death:

*yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him;* from his word, worship, and ordinances, as Absalom was; and by protecting him by his providence, it looked as if it was his will, and he would find out ways and means for bringing him back to his country, his father’s court, and the sanctuary of the Lord; even as, by the law concerning the cities of refuge for the manslayer, provision was made that at the death of the high priest the exiled person might return to his country.

**Ver. 15.** *Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king,* etc.] Of the case of Absalom, under a feigned one of hers:

*[it is] because the people have made me afraid;* having heard of their whisperings, murmurings, and uneasiness among them, because Absalom was not sent for home, fearing there would be an insurrection in the nation, or an invasion of it by Absalom at the request of his friends; in which he

might be supported by the king of Geshur; or however that disputes would arise about the succession, at the death of David; on these accounts she determined to speak to the king, and him them to him in the manner she had done; though some understand this of the discouragement the people laid her under, telling her the king would not hear her; nevertheless she was resolved to make trial:

*and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be the king will perform the request of his handmaid;* not only with respect to her own son, as feigned; but with respect to Absalom, the grand thing in view.

**Ver. 16.** *For the king will hear,* etc.] She was fully persuaded of it, as now he had heard her:

*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;* he had given his word and his oath that he would deliver her son from the avenger of blood, that neither he nor any other should destroy him; which would have been the destruction of her and her whole family out of the land of Israel, the land which God had chosen for his inheritance, and had given to the of Israel to be theirs; and since the king had heard her, and granted her this favour, she doubted not but that he would deliver his own son from death, and restore him to the inheritance of the land, where he might worship the Lord God of his fathers, of which he was now deprived.

**Ver. 17.** *Then thine handmaid said, the word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable,* etc.] Or, “for rest”<sup>f242</sup>; what will give ease and satisfaction not only to her, but to all the people of Israel, when they shall hear of the king’s intention and resolution to bring back Absalom:

*for as an angel of God, so [is] my lord the king;* as they are very wise, knowing, and understanding creatures, so was David:

*to discern good and bad;* to hear both the one and the other, and to discern the difference between them, and choose and pursue what is right, as in all other things, so in the present case:

*therefore the Lord thy God shall be with thee;* as to counsel and advise, so to assist in performance, and to prosper and succeed; the Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord thy God shall be for thine help.”

**Ver. 18.** *Then the king answered and said unto the woman, etc.]*

Understanding plainly what she meant by all this, that the case she brought was a feigned one, and that the intention of it was to let him know the sense of the people with respect to Absalom, and the recall of him:

*hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee;* he suspected that this was not a scheme of her own, but some considerable person had formed it, and made use of her to execute it, which was what he desired to know:

*and the woman said, let my lord the king now speak;* ask what question he pleases, I am ready to answer.

**Ver. 19.** *And the king said, [is not] the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* etc.] That is, is not this done by the advice, assistance, and direction of Joab? did not he form this scheme for thee, and direct thee to this method, and put thee upon prosecuting it?

*and the woman answered and said, [as] thy soul liveth, my lord the king;* what I am about to say is as sure as thou art alive; though this may be only a wish that he might long live and be happy; nothing is more desirable than thy valuable life:

*none can turn to the right hand or the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken;* he has hit upon the truth of the matter; there is no dissimulation or prevarication to be used; the thing cannot be denied; for thy servant Joab he bade me, and put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid: he sent for me, and laid his commands on me, and directed me what to say to the king, and how to conduct this affair.

**Ver. 20.** *To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing, etc.]* Feigned a story in such form and manner as had been delivered to the king, that it might be accommodated and applied to the case of Absalom, and to transfer it in a figure to the king, to use the apostle's phrase, (~~4008~~ 1 Corinthians 4:8);

*and my lord [is] wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God;* as not only to understand the design of this fable or parable, but of such sagacity and penetration as to find out the author of it; and even

*to know all [things] that [are] in the earth;* either in the whole world, or rather in the land of Israel; and it is to be understood not of all actions

natural and moral done by men in it, which would be to ascribe omniscience to him; but of all political things, all things respecting civil government; that he had such a spirit of discerning of men and things, that nothing could be said or done, or scheme formed, but he got intelligence of it, and insight into it; and which was carrying the compliment to a great height.

**Ver. 21.** *And the king said unto Joab*, etc.] Who was present, or but at a little distance, waiting the issue of this affair:

*behold now I have done this thing*; have agreed to recall Absalom, at the suit of this woman, which thou hast put her upon; or, according to the textual reading, “thou hast done this thing” <sup>f243</sup>; contrived this scheme, to let me know the mind of the people with respect to Absalom, or to represent to me the propriety of sending for him home:

*go, therefore, bring the young man Absalom again*; I give my consent to it, and you may send for him, or fetch him as soon as you please; it is thought he calls him a young man, to extenuate his crime, that it was done in youthful heat and passion, and therefore he should pass it over.

**Ver. 22.** *And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself*, etc.] Or bowed so low as to the ground, in reverence of the king:

*and thanked the king*; for giving him leave to fetch Absalom home, as if it was a favour done to himself: or “blessed” <sup>f244</sup> him; wished all happiness and prosperity might attend him, in consequence of this grant, which he knew would be acceptable to the people:

*and Joab said, today thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant*; he might presume upon this, that as the king had given orders at his request to recall Absalom, who had murdered his brother, which was tacitly giving him a pardon; so he would forgive him the murder of Abner, (~~1030~~ 2 Samuel 3:30), and think no more of it; since he perceived now, which he had not so clearly perceived before from that time, that he found grace in his sight, or shared in his favour and good will, as now he saw he did.

**Ver. 23.** *So Joab arose and went to Geshur*, etc.] Where Absalom was with his grandfather, the king of the place; (see ~~1035~~ 2 Samuel 13:37,38);

*and brought Absalom to Jerusalem*; from thence, which, according to Bunting<sup>f245</sup>, was the distance of eighty eight miles from it.

**Ver. 24.** *And the king said*, etc.] Very probably to Joab, when he informed him of Absalom's being come to Jerusalem:

*let him turn to his own house*; depart from the king's palace, where Joab had brought him, and go to his own house, which was in Jerusalem; for here he had one before he fled to Geshur; (see ~~<033>~~ 2 Samuel 13:20);

*and let him not see my face*; which he ordered, partly to show his detestation of the crime he had been guilty of, and some remaining resentment in his mind at him on account of it; and partly for his credit among some of the people at least, who might think it was a crime so great as not to go unpunished, though others were of a different mind; and also for the greater humiliation of Absalom, who, the king might think, had not been sufficiently humbled for his sin, or had not truly repented of it:

*so Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face*; in obedience to his father's orders.

**Ver. 25.** *But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty*, etc.] Which is observed to account in some measure for the interest he had in the affections of the people, both now and hereafter:

*from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him*; not any spot, freckle, wart, scurf, or scab; nothing deficient or superfluous in him; no disproportion of parts, nor any disagreeable feature; but an entire symmetry, and perfect comeliness, which made him very respectable. The Talmudists<sup>f246</sup> make him to be of a gigantic stature.

**Ver. 26.** *And when he polled his head*, etc.] Or cut off the hair of it; for that was one thing, a good head of hair which he had, that made him look very comely and beautiful:

*for it was at every year's end that he polled [it]*; or cut it off once a year; but the Jews say<sup>f247</sup> he was a perpetual Nazarite:

*because [the hair] was heavy upon him, and therefore he polled it*; it grew so very thick and long in one year's time, that he was obliged to cut it; and what might add to the weight of it, its being oiled and powdered; and, as some say, with the dust of gold, to make it look yellow and glistening:

*he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels, after the king's weight*; and a shekel being the weight of half an ounce of avoirdupois weight, as Bishop Cumberland<sup>f248</sup> has shown from various writers, the weight of his hair must be an hundred ounces; which was a very great weight indeed on his head. Some think that the price it was sold at, and not the weight of it, is meant; which they suppose was sold to women for ornament about their temples, and the money given either to the poor, or for the use of the sanctuary; and reckoning a shekel at two shillings and sixpence, as some do, the value of it came to twenty five pounds of our money; but the above mentioned writer<sup>f249</sup> reduces it to about two shillings and four pence farthing; which makes the value somewhat less; but inasmuch as it is not so probable that a person of such rank should sell his hair, nor does it appear that any, such use was made of hair in those times as suggested; and this being said to be according to the king's weight or stone, by which all weights were to be regulated, it is best to understand this of the weight, and not of the price of his hair; which, according to Josephus<sup>f250</sup>, was five pounds; but, according to the above account, it must be six pounds and a quarter. The Jews say<sup>f251</sup> this weight was according to what the inhabitants of Tiberias and Zippore used, but do not tell us what it was.

**Ver. 27.** *And unto Absalom there were born three sons*, etc.] Who very probably died young; and the rather it may be thought so, since their names are not given, and more especially since it is said that Absalom had no sons, and therefore erected a pillar to keep up the remembrance of his name; unless it can be thought that that was set up before he had any sons, which is not so likely; (see ~~10818~~ 2 Samuel 18:18);

*and one daughter, whose name [was] Tamar*; and whom he named after his sister Tamar, who was ravished by Amnon; the Septuagint version in some copies adds,

“and she became the wife of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and bore to him Abia;”

and so says Josephus<sup>f252</sup>; (see ~~1152~~ 1 Kings 15:22 ~~4413~~ 2 Chronicles 11:20);

*she was a woman of a fair countenance*; as was her aunt, after whom she was named, (~~1033~~ 2 Samuel 13:1); by this it appears that she lived to a woman's estate, though the sons of Absalom died young.



**Ver. 28.** *So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem,* etc.] After his return from Geshur:

*and saw not the king's face;* all that time; which was owing either to the king's resentment of the fact committed by him, or to state policy.

**Ver. 29.** *Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king,* etc.] To introduce him into his presence, being uneasy to be thus confined at his own house, and not suffered to come to court:

*but he would not come to him;* knowing the king's mind, and being unwilling to disoblige him by a troublesome solicitation:

*and when he sent again the second time, he would not come;* knowing his business with him; and perhaps between the first time of his sending and this he had sounded the king about it, and found it was not agreeable to him to admit him to access to him as yet.

**Ver. 30.** *Therefore he said unto his servants,* etc.] That did his business for him in the field, in keeping his flocks, and tilling his ground:

*see Joab's field is near mine:* for great personages in those days attended to husbandry:

*and he hath barley there, go and set it on fire;* it being ripe, and so capable of being fired, and therefore must be some time in March or April, when barley harvest began; he served Joab as Samson did the Philistines, (~~1015~~Judges 15:4); which shows him to be a bold, and revengeful, and ungrateful man, to use his friend, and the general of the king's army, after this manner:

*and Absalom's servants set the field on fire;* as their master had bid them, and which is no wonder; for as they murdered Ammon at his command, they would not stop at burning Joab's field, when he bid them do it; (see ~~1015~~2 Samuel 13:28,29).

**Ver. 31.** *Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto [his] house,* etc.] Provoked at what he had done, and to know the reason of it; and which was answering Absalom's end:

*and said unto him, wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?* which was not only injurious to his property, but a malicious action.

**Ver. 32.** *And Absalom answered Joab*, etc.] Neither denying the fact, nor being ashamed of it, nor asking pardon for it; but endeavouring to vindicate it, by giving a reason as he thought sufficient for it:

*behold, I sent unto thee, saying, come hither, that I may send thee to the king*; which was assuming great authority over a person in such an high office as Joab was; had he been king, he could not have used more, to send for him, and command his attendance, and send him on what errand he thought fit, as here:

*to say, wherefore am I come from Geshur?* why did the king send for me? why did not he let me alone where I was? to what purpose am I brought hither, since I am not admitted to court?

*[it had been] good for me [to have been] there still*; and better, where he lived in a king's court, and had honour and respect shown him, suitable to his rank; and where he had his liberty, and could go where he pleased; and where this mark of his father's displeasure, not suffering him to see his face, would not be so manifest as here, and so less disgraceful to him:

*now therefore let me see the king's face*; that is, speak to the king, and intercede for me, that I may see his face; which he was so importunate for, not from affection to the king; but that being at court, he might be able to ingratiate himself among the courtiers and others, and carry the point which his ambition prompted him to, supplant the king, and seize the crown:

*and if there be [any] iniquity in me, let him kill me*; signifying he chose to die, rather than to live such a life he did: but of being put to death he was not much afraid; presuming partly upon his innocence, thinking that the killing of his brother was no crime, because he was the aggressor, had ravished his sister, and for it ought to die; and since justice was delayed, and not done him, he had committed no iniquity in putting him to death; and partly on his father's affection to him, which he was sensible of; at least he had reason to believe he would not now put him to death; for had he designed that, he would have ordered it before now, since he had had him so long in his hands.

**Ver. 33.** *So Joab came to the king, and told him*, etc.] What Absalom had said to him:

*and when he had called for Absalom;* sent messengers to his house to order him to come to him:

*he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king;* made a very reverend bow to him, according to the custom of those times, throwing himself at his feet in great submission to him:

*and the king kissed Absalom;* in token of his reconciliation to him; which laid the foundation of his after troubles from him, related in the following chapters.

# CHAPTER 15

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 15

This chapter relates how that Absalom by various artful methods stole away the hearts of the people of Israel, (<sup><10151></sup>2 Samuel 15:1-6); that pretending a vow he had made, he got leave of the king to go to Hebron to perform it, (<sup><10157></sup>2 Samuel 15:7-9); where he formed a considerable conspiracy, (<sup><101510></sup>2 Samuel 15:10-12); of which David having information, thought it advisable to depart from Jerusalem, both for his own safety, and the good of the city, which he did with his family, and guards, and much people, (<sup><101513></sup>2 Samuel 15:13-18); though he would have persuaded Ittai the Gittite to have returned, but could not prevail upon him, (<sup><101519></sup>2 Samuel 15:19-23); however, he sent back the priests and the Levites with the ark, lest any harm should come to that, (<sup><101524></sup>2 Samuel 15:24-29); and as he and the people went up the mount of Olives weeping, it was told him that Ahithophel was among the conspirators, on which he put up a prayer that his counsel might be infatuated, (<sup><101530></sup>2 Samuel 15:30,31); and Hushai the Archite coming to him at that juncture, he sent him back to Jerusalem to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, and to send him word by the priests what he should hear there from time to time, (<sup><101532></sup>2 Samuel 15:32-37).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass after this,* etc.] After the reconciliation of David and Absalom, and the latter was admitted to court again:

*that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses;* to make himself look grand and respectable among the people; perhaps he got these from his grandfather at Geshur in Syria:

*and fifty men to run before him;* which added to his pomp and magnificence; and such great personages in later time have had; Nero the Roman emperor never went on a journey with less than a thousand calashes or chariots, and a great number of men that ran before him <sup>f253</sup>; and this was tacitly setting himself up for king, at least preparing for it, as Adonijah afterwards did in the same way and manner, (<sup><10106></sup>1 Kings 1:5).

**Ver. 2.** *And Absalom rose up early,* etc.] Every morning, to show how diligent and industrious he should be, and closely apply himself to business,

was he in any office trader the king, and especially when he should be king himself; this he did to ingratiate himself into the affections of the people:

*and stood beside the way of the gate*; either of the king's palace, so Josephus<sup>f254</sup>, or of the city, where courts of judicature are held: the former seems most probable by what follows:

*and it was [so], that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment*; that had a controversy with another man on any account, and came to the king to have it decided according to law, or the rules of justice and equity:

*then Absalom called unto him, and said, of what city [art] thou?* which question he asked, only to lead on to some further discourse:

*and he said, thy servant [is] of one of the tribes*; that is, of one of the cities of the tribes of Israel, and not of a city of another nation.

**Ver. 3.** *And Absalom said unto him*, etc.] After some further talk, and finding he had a suit at law to bring on, and either seeing it drawn up in writing, or hearing his account of it, at once declared, without hearing the other party:

*see, thy matters [are] good and right*; thy cause is a good cause, and if it could be heard by proper persons there is no doubt but things would go on thy side, and thou wouldest carry thy cause:

*but [there is] no man [deputed] of the king to hear thee*; the king is grown old himself and his sons are negligent, and do not attend to business, and there are none besides them appointed to hear causes; and he suggested, as appears by what follows, that he was not in commission, but if he was, or should he appointed a judge, he would attend to business, and people should not go away after this manner, without having justice administered unto them,

**Ver. 4.** *Absalom said, moreover*, etc.] To the same persons, at the same time:

*oh that I were made judge in the land*; by which it appears that he had no office under the king; partly either because of his crime, and so not thought fit, and partly because he appeared to be an ambitious aspiring man, and so it was thought not safe to put him into any office:

*that every man that hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice;* at once, without any further trouble, or coming often, and in vain, and to no purpose.

**Ver. 5.** *And it was [so], that when any man came nigh [to him] to do him obeisance,* etc.] To pay his respects, and bow to him, as being the king's son, a prince of the blood, and heir to the crown, as was supposed:

*he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him;* he put out his hand and shook hands with him, or took him about the neck and kissed him, and by this free, familiar, affable, and courteous manner, strangely won upon and gained the affections of the people, as follows. Fortunatus Schacchus <sup>f255</sup> thinks he put forth his hand to be kissed by them, and then kissed them, which was more than was usual.

**Ver. 6.** *And in this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment,* etc.] Told them there was none to be had, wished that he was in office to administer it to them, and behaved in the above loving manner towards them:

*so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel;* got the affections of the people in a private and clandestine manner, and robbed the king of them, who had the best right unto them.

**Ver. 7.** *And it came to pass after forty years,* etc.] Or four years; so long it was from the reconciliation of Absalom to David, as Josephus <sup>f256</sup> says; and so read Theodoret on the place, the Syriac and Arabic versions: but some say it was either forty years from the time Israel first had a king; and which might be an era of reckoning with the Jews, as the era of Seleucidæ was with the Greeks, on the like account; or from the time Saul slew the priests at Nob, as Jerom <sup>f257</sup>; or from the time of David's being anointed by Samuel; or this was the year of Absalom's age, or of David's reign: but these, and other attempts made to account for this passage, are not entirely satisfactory; and therefore one may be tempted to conclude there must be a mistake in the copy, of "arbaim" for "arba", forty for four; which makes it quite easy, and confirms the first sense:

*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;* not what he vowed in Hebron; for according to his own account he had vowed it in Geshur, as in (~~1018~~ 2 Samuel 15:8); but his request is, that he might pay it in Hebron; which place he fixed upon, being his native place, and where David was

anointed king; and which, being about twenty miles from Jerusalem, was at a proper distance to lay the scene of his conspiracy in, and bring it to perfection.

**Ver. 8.** *For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria,* etc.] When at his grandfather's court there:

*saying, if the Lord will bring me again indeed to Jerusalem;* which he might be sincerely desirous of:

*then I will serve the Lord;* but it is a question whether he ever made a vow to this purpose, or concerned himself about serving the Lord; but it rather may be, this was a lie of his, now framed in order to get leave of the king to go to Hebron.

**Ver. 9.** *And the king said unto him, go in peace,* etc.] He gave him leave to go, and wished happiness and prosperity might attend him:

*so he arose and went to Hebron;* with a company of men, whose number is after mentioned.

**Ver. 10.** *But Absalom sent spies throughout all the land of Israel,* etc.] To sound the disposition of the people towards him, to insinuate things into their minds in favour of him, and to improve every opportunity of recommending him to their esteem and affections:

*saying, as soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet;* in any place; and which it is probable he employed men to sound in many places:

*then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron:* which is the cause of the trumpet's sounding; and by this means they would learn how the people stood affected to him, whether the news was grateful or not.

**Ver. 11.** *And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, [that were] called,* etc.] Invited by him to go with him and partake of his peace offerings, as the payment of his vow in Hebron; part of which was made a feast of for his friends, whomsoever he should think fit to invite, as he did to the number of two hundred, and for the entertainment of whom a large provision ought to be made; the Jews<sup>f258</sup> have a tradition, that he had leave of his father only to invite two to go with him, and that he asked two more unknown to the first, and so on, two after two, until they amounted to two hundred:

*and they went in their simplicity*; to partake of the feast of the peace offerings, to which they were invited; being quite harmless and upright in their intentions, having no thought of disloyalty and rebellion in their breasts:

*and they knew not anything*; of an intended conspiracy; howbeit, doubtless many of them were drawn into it when got thither; and as these may be supposed to be some of the principal men of Jerusalem, it was a great weakening of David's interest, and laid a considerable foundation for Absalom to begin upon.

**Ver. 12.** *And Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gilonite, David's counsellor*, etc.] To advise with about this treasonable affair he was engaged in, and to get out of him David's secrets, who was reckoned the best counsellor in the land; and he might rather hope he would come to him, if he was the grandfather of Bathsheba, as say the Jews, (<sup><0118></sup>2 Samuel 11:3 23:34); since he might be disgusted with and resent David's adultery with Bathsheba his granddaughter, and the murder of her husband Uriah: him he sent for,

*from his city, [even] from Giloh*; a city in the tribe of Judah, in the mountainous part of it, near to Hebron, where Absalom now was; and, according to Bunting <sup>f259</sup>, twenty miles from Jerusalem, (see <sup><0658></sup>Joshua 15:48,51,54);

*while he offered sacrifices*; not Ahithophel, but Absalom, his peace offerings at Hebron, to which he invited Ahithophel to come and partake of:

*and the conspiracy was strong*; or there was a great number in the conspiracy, who were assembled together:

*for the people increased continually with Absalom*; being drawn to him by the comeliness of his person, his affable behaviour, the pomp and magnificence in which he appeared, the great number of the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and he the king's eldest son, and so heir to the crown; whereas it might begin to be rumoured about, that David designed Solomon, a son of Bathsheba, a young prince, to be his successor, which did not meet with general approbation at first.

**Ver. 13.** *And there came a messenger to David*, etc.] Perhaps one of the two hundred that went with Absalom, ignorant of his design; which, when



discovered, he disapproved of, and got away from him, and came to David, and informed him how things were:

*saying, the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom;* to make him king.

**Ver. 14.** *And David said unto all his servants that [were] with him at Jerusalem,* etc.] His courtiers and ministers of state, the officers of his household, as many of them as were with him in the city; for some of them very probably were in the country, as Ahithophel was, and some might be along with Absalom, whom he had invited to his peace offerings:

*arise, and let us flee;* it is much that a man of such courage and valour as David should be so intimidated at once as to make a flight as soon as he heard of a conspiracy forming against him:

*for we shall not [else] escape from Absalom;* his fears ran so high, that he fancied he would be upon them presently:

*make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly;* which still more clearly shows the panic he was in:

*and bring evil upon us;* kill them, or make them prisoners:

*and smite the city with the edge of the sword;* the inhabitants of it, should they make resistance.

**Ver. 15.** *And the king's servants said unto the king,* etc.] In answer to him, and to show that they were quite conformable to his pleasure:

*behold, thy servants [are ready to do] whatsoever my lord the king shalt appoint;* or “choose”<sup>f260</sup>, whether to prepare to fight, and defend him and the city, or to depart and make their escape.

**Ver. 16.** *And the king went forth,* etc.] Which determined the case:

*and all his household after him family and his court;* they followed his example, and attended him in his flight:

*and the king left ten women, [which were] concubines, to keep the house;* not to defend it, which they were unable to do, but to look after the household goods and furniture, that they were not damaged by the conspirators; though one would think they could be of little service, and may wonder what he should leave them behind for; but this seems to be

ordered by the overruling providence of God, to bring about what was threatened him, (<3021>2 Samuel 12:11); and it is much he had not thought of it; but it was hid from his eyes, that it might be fulfilled.

**Ver. 17.** *And the king went forth*, etc.] From Jerusalem; which is repeated, that it might be observed in what a hurry and fright he was:

*and all the people after him*; his family, court, and servants, and as many of the people of Jerusalem as chose to go with him:

*and tarried at a place that was afar off*; when they had got at some distance from the city, they stopped and stayed a while; it could not be a great way from it, for they had not as yet passed over the brook Kidron, (<3053>2 Samuel 15:23).

**Ver. 18.** *And all his servants passed on beside him*, etc.] Or at his hand or side; his household servants walking perhaps some on one side of him, and some on the other, (see <3066>2 Samuel 16:6);

*and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites*; which were his bodyguards, (see <3088>2 Samuel 8:18);

*and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath*; which either came with him from Gath, when he conquered that city, and took it out of the hands of the Philistines, (<3086>2 Samuel 8:1); compared with (<3386>1 Chronicles 18:1); and who might become proselytes, and be incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel, and into David's army, a troop of men, of which Ittai, after mentioned, was captain, (<3052>2 Samuel 15:22); or else these were Israelites, so called, because with David they sojourned in Gath a while, when he fled from Saul; and so Josephus <sup>f261</sup> says, they were companions of him in his first flight, when Saul was living; and this number is just the number of the men that were with him at Gath, (<3027>1 Samuel 27:2,3); and it may be David kept a troop of men always of the same number, to whom he gave this name in memory of them, having been a set of trusty and faithful men to him: these, with the Cherethites and Pelethites,

*passed on before the king*: in this form and manner David and his men marched in their flight.

**Ver. 19.** *Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite*, etc.] Who was over the band of Gittites, the six hundred men, (<3052>2 Samuel 15:22);

*wherefore goest thou also with us?* one should think the king should not have discouraged any from joining and following him, when his numbers were not very large, and the in such fear on account of Absalom:

*return to this place;* to Jerusalem, where his station was:

*and abide with the king;* with Absalom, who set himself up for king, and whom the people perhaps had proclaimed as such in Hebron, where the conspiracy began:

*for thou [art] a stranger, and also an exile;* not a native of Israel, but of another nation, and at a distance from it, and therefore not altogether under the same obligations to attend David in his troubles as others were; and by this it seems that he was a Gittite by nation, whatever the six hundred men were, and rather favours the first sense given of them in (<sup><DOLISIS></sup>2 Samuel 15:18).

**Ver. 20.** *Whereas thou camest [but] yesterday,* etc.] From Gath, or from an expedition he and his men had been on:

*should I this day make thee, go up and down with us?* wander up and down from place to place with David, when he was but just come off a journey, weary and fatigued:

*seeing I go whither I may;* where it will be most safe for me, I know not where; may be obliged to flee here and there, which would be very inconvenient to Ittai in his circumstances:

*return thou, and take back thy brethren;* the six hundred men under him, and whom David could ill spare at this time, and yet, consulting their ease, advises to return to Jerusalem with them:

*mercy and truth [be] with thee;* the Lord show mercy and kindness to thee, in that thou hast shown favour and respect to me, and make good all his promises to thee, who hast been true and faithful to me.

**Ver. 21.** *And Ittai answered the king, and said,* etc.] With an oath, as follows:

*[as] the Lord liveth, and [as] my lord the king liveth;* which he took to confirm what he after says, and to put an end to the debate between them:

*surely, in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be*; signifying that he would attend him wherever he went, hazard his life in his cause, and live and die with him.

**Ver. 22.** *And David said unto Ittai, go, and pass over*, etc.] It being his resolution to abide with him, he urged him no more to depart, but bid him pass over the brook Kidron before him:

*and Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men*; the six hundred Gittites that were under his command:

*and all the little ones that [were] with him*; that belonged to him and his men, and no doubt their wives also.

**Ver. 23.** *And all the country wept with a loud voice*, etc.] The people that came out of the country villages round about, upon the report of the king's leaving Jerusalem, because of his son's conspiracy against him; these wept when they saw him in the circumstances in which he was, obliged to fly from a rebellious son:

*and all the people passed over*; the people that were with David passed over Kidron, and so the Cherethites, and Pelethites:

*the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron*; this explains what place it was they passed over, which is not before mentioned, but is particularly named in the account of the king's passing over it; over which same brook the Messiah, his antitype, passed a little before his sufferings and death; of which brook, (see Gill on "~~4310~~ John 18:1"). It is often by Josephus <sup>f262</sup> called a valley, sometimes a brook, it having little water, except in winter; Mr. Maundrell <sup>f263</sup> says, it ran along the bottom of the valley of Jehoshaphat, a brook in the wintertime; but without the least drop of water in it all the time, says he, we were in Jerusalem; and so Reland <sup>f264</sup>, that in summertime it ceases to be a river, and has the name of a valley; and Leviticus Bruyn says <sup>f265</sup>, it is at present dried up; it runs along the valley of Jehoshaphat, and is not above three paces broad; it has no other but rain water, which flows from the adjacent hills:

*and all the people passed over to the way of the wilderness*; which lay between Jerusalem and Jericho.

**Ver. 24.** *And, lo, Zadok also*, etc.] The priest, as he is called, (~~1057~~ 2 Samuel 15:27);

*and all the Levites [were] with him:* with Zadok, or with David, and indeed with both; but the former is rather meant here, being the immediate antecedent:

*bearing the ark of the covenant of God:* these were the Kohathite Levites, whose business it was to bear the ark when carried from place to place, (<sup><4083></sup>Numbers 3:31 4:15 7:9); called the ark of the covenant, because the law which was the covenant between God and the people, was put into it:

*and they set down the ark of God:* from off their shoulders, on which they carried it:

*and Abiathar went up;* who was the high priest, and whose business it was to attend the ark, and inquire before it, as occasion required; he went up very probably to the mount of Olives, later mentioned, (<sup><4053></sup>2 Samuel 15:30):

*until all the people had done passing out of the city;* for from the top of that mountain he could see the city of Jerusalem, and the people as they passed out of it, and observe when they were all come out, or however ceased coming, and so knew when it was a proper time to march forward.

**Ver. 25.** *And the king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark of God into the city,* etc.] The reason of which is not easy to account for, since being carried back it would fall into the hands of the conspirators; and now the priests were with it to take care of it, and there might be occasion to inquire at it before the Lord; but David thought it being a sacred thing would not be violated by Absalom and his men, and that it would be safest in its own habitation or tabernacle, which David had built for it; for, that the reason of it should be, what Procopius Gazaeus suggests, cannot be given into, that he could not bear to carry about him the law, which accused of adulteries and murders:

*if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord:* if he will appear for me, be on my side, and deliver me from those who have risen up against me:

*he will bring me again:* to Jerusalem, and to his palace there:

*and show me [both] it and his habitation;* the ark, and the tabernacle he had erected for it, (<sup><4067></sup>2 Samuel 6:17).

**Ver. 26.** *But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee,* etc.] As a king, or in his temporal prosperity, though he might and had delight in him as a

chosen vessel of salvation, as a saint and child of God, and in his spiritual and everlasting welfare:

*behold, [here am] I*; his humble servant, ready to be, and do and suffer whatever is his pleasure:

*let him do to me as seemeth good unto him*; strip me of all the ensigns of royalty, dispossess me of my crown and kingdom, and dispose of me as seems good in his sight; who is a sovereign Being, and has a right to do with his creatures what he pleases.

**Ver. 27.** *And the king said unto Zadok the priest, [art not] thou a seer?* etc.] A prophet, as well as a priest; (see <sup><000></sup>1 Samuel 9:9); or a seeing, knowing, man; one that can penetrate into men and things, and so might be of more service to David at Jerusalem than with him: wherefore he said to him,

*return into the city in peace*; to the city of Jerusalem with peace, quietness, and satisfaction of mind; where he doubted not, at least hoped and wished, he would be in safety and prosperity, being one of the Lord's priests:

*and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar*; the one was of the line of Eleazar, and the other of the line of Ithamar.

**Ver. 28.** *See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness*, etc.] Towards the way of which David and the people went when they came over Kidron, (<sup><0523></sup>2 Samuel 15:23);

*until there come word from you to certify me*; of the truth of the conspiracy, of the number of the conspirators, and who they are, what progress they have made, whether come to Jerusalem, and how they behave there, if come; or of anything relative hereunto he could get intelligence of.

**Ver. 29.** *Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem*, etc.] That is, ordered it to be carried, and took care that it was carried, by the Kohathite Levites, and they themselves attended it:

*and they tarried there*; at Jerusalem; though their two sons that went with them entered not into the city, but stayed at a place called Enrogel, at some little distance from it, (<sup><0077></sup>2 Samuel 17:17).

**Ver. 30.** *And David went up by the ascent of [Mount] Olivet*, etc.] So called from the olive trees that grew upon it, which is often mentioned in the New Testament, and where our Lord Jesus Christ, the antitype of David, often was, in his state of humiliation, (<sup><4151></sup>Matthew 26:30 <sup><4145></sup>Mark 14:26) (<sup><4223></sup>Luke 22:39), and from whence he ascended to heaven after his resurrection, (<sup><4012></sup>Acts 1:12); it was about a mile from Jerusalem, to the east of it:

*and wept as he went up*; thinking perhaps of the wickedness and rebellion of his son, of his own hard case, to be obliged to quit his metropolis and palace, and make his flight afoot; and perhaps also of his own sins, which were the cause of his calamities:

*and had his head covered*; with his mantle, with which he enwrapped himself as a mourner, (<sup><1094></sup>2 Samuel 19:4); so the Egyptians used to cover their heads in mourning, and the Romans in later times <sup>f266</sup>; so Megara in sorrowful circumstances is represented as having her head covered with a garment <sup>f267</sup>:

*and he went barefoot*; in token of mourning also, and like one forlorn, and going into captivity, (see <sup><3012></sup>Isaiah 20:2 <sup><3001></sup>Micah 1:8);

*and all the people that [was] with him covered every man his head*; as David did, and in imitation of him, and sympathizing with him; and which was sometimes done when men were ashamed and confounded, (<sup><3443></sup>Jeremiah 14:3,4);

*and they went up, weeping as they went up*; the mount of Olivet, grieved for their king, and the distresses and calamities that were coming upon them.

**Ver. 31.** *And [one] told David*, etc.] That came either from Hebron or from Jerusalem:

*Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom*; Absalom sent for him, and it seems he came to him, and continued with him, (see <sup><10512></sup>2 Samuel 15:12);

*and David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness*; either suffer him to give foolish counsel, or confound the schemes projected by him, and let them not be carried into execution; for God can, and sometimes does, disappoint crafty counsellors, that they

cannot perform what they devise, but they are taken in their own craftiness, and their counsel is carried headlong, (<sup><K&B2></sup>Job 5:12,13); this prayer was answered, (<sup><O174></sup>2 Samuel 17:14,23).

**Ver. 32.** *And it came to pass, that [when] David was come to the top [of the mount],* etc.] Of the mount of Olives:

*where he worshipped God;* by prayer and praise; here very probably he composed and sung the third psalm (<sup><B&B2></sup>Psalm 3:1-8), which, as the title shows, was made when he fled from Absalom:

*behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him, with his coat rent, and earth upon his head;* in token of mourning, and as a bringer of bad tidings, (see <sup><O102></sup>2 Samuel 1:2); perhaps he was an inhabitant of Archi, at least originally, which lay on the borders of the tribe of Ephraim, (<sup><B&B2></sup>Joshua 16:2); from whence he had his name.

**Ver. 33.** *Unto whom David said,* etc.] After he had heard what he had to say, and what tidings he brought:

*and if thou passest on with me;* in his march and flight:

*then thou shalt be a burden to me;* being to be maintained by him; and David having but scanty provisions, and so could not receive useless persons, as Hushai might be, perhaps an old man, that could be of no service to him, and unfit for travelling, and so would rather be an hinderance than an help unto him.

**Ver. 34.** *But if thou return to the city,* etc.] To the city of Jerusalem, from whence it seems he came:

*and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king;* as he was by usurpation, and by the proclamation of the people with him. David directs him to address him thus, that he might have no suspicion of him, having been an old friend of his:

*[as] I [have been] thy father's servant hitherto;* perhaps in the character of a counsellor, as it should seem, since as such he was afterwards employed by Absalom:

*so [will] I now also [be] thy servant;* in whatsoever thou shall please to employ me under thee:



*then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel*; for being taken into Absalom's service, and made one of his counsellors, he would be privy to the advice of Ahithophel, and so be able to work against him.

**Ver. 35.** *And [hast thou] not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests?* etc.] To assist in forming schemes directly opposite to Ahithophel's, or to whom he could communicate the secrets of Absalom's court:

*therefore it shall be [that] what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house*; Absalom's, who had now, at possession of the house and palace of David:

*thou shalt tell [it] to Zadok and Abiathar the priests*; to whom he might have recourse without suspicion, pretending he had business with them as priests, on religious accounts, to offer sacrifices for him, etc.

**Ver. 36.** *Behold, [they have] there with them two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's [son], and Jonathan, Abiathar's [son],* etc.] As in (<sup><10152></sup>2 Samuel 15:27); not that they were in the city with them, but they were near it, (<sup><10172></sup>2 Samuel 17:17); with whom they had a communication:

*and by whom ye shall send unto me everything that ye can hear*; that is, by the sons of the priests; he telling the priests how things were at court, and they sending their sons with messages to David; which was a good scheme to get intelligence, and easy to be put into execution.

**Ver. 37.** *So Hushai David's friend came into the city,* etc.] The city of Jerusalem, by the direction and persuasion of David, and in obedience to him, in order to serve him to the uttermost:

*and Absalom came into Jerusalem*: just at the same time; so that he knew not that Hushai had been out of it, and been with David, and which also appears from what he said to him, (<sup><10167></sup>2 Samuel 16:17).

# CHAPTER 16

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 16

In this chapter is an account of Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, getting his inheritance by misrepresentation of him, and by presents to David, (<sup><106E></sup>2 Samuel 16:1-4); and of Shimei's cursing David as he passed along, which David bore patiently, and would not suffer others to avenge it on him, (<sup><106E></sup>2 Samuel 16:5-14); and of Hushai's offer of his service to Absalom, who admitted him to be of his privy council, (<sup><106E></sup>2 Samuel 16:15-19); and of the counsel which Ahithophel gave, (<sup><106D></sup>2 Samuel 15:20-23).

**Ver. 1.** *And when David was a little past the top [of the hill],* etc.] Of the mount of Olives, the ascent of which he is said to go up by, and to come to the top of it, (<sup><106D></sup>2 Samuel 15:30,32);

*behold, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him;* of whom (see <sup><106E></sup>2 Samuel 9:2);

*with a couple of asses saddled:* and so fit to ride on, but for the present he used them to another purpose:

*and upon them two hundred [loaves] of bread;* an hundred on each ass very probably:

*and an hundred bunches of raisins;* or dried grapes, as the Targum:

*and an hundred of summer fruits:* not in number, but in weight, as apples, pears, plums, apricots, etc. so the Targum, an hundred pounds of figs:

*and a bottle of wine:* a cask or flagon of wine; for a bottle, such as is in use with us, would have signified nothing in such a company.

**Ver. 2.** *And the king said unto Ziba, what meanest thou by these?* etc.] Are they to be said, or are they presents?

*and Ziba said, the asses [be] for the king's household to ride on;* for himself, his wives, and children, his courtiers, and the principal officers of

his house; it being usual in those times and countries for great personages to ride on asses, (see <sup><1750></sup>Judges 5:10);

*and the bread and summer fruits for the young men to eat*; the king's menial servants, his guards and his soldiers:

*and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink*; where no water was to be had, that their fainting spirits might be revived, and they be able whether to fight or march.

**Ver. 3.** *And the king said, and where [is] thy master's son?* etc.] The son of Saul, who was Ziba's master, meaning Mephibosheth:

*and Ziba said unto the king, behold, he abideth at Jerusalem*; as there was reason for it, since he was lame of both his feet, (<sup><1093></sup>2 Samuel 9:13), though he could have rode upon an ass, and followed the king, as he proposed to do; but his servant deceived him, and carried off the asses to serve a purpose for himself, (see <sup><1025></sup>2 Samuel 19:26);

*for he said, today shall the house of Israel restore unto me the kingdom of my father*; his father Saul; which was far from his thoughts; and a most wicked suggestion of his servant to blacken his character, and get his estate from him; nor was there the least probability of the kingdom coming to him, but all the reverse; for let it go how it would with David, Absalom, and not Mephibosheth, stood fair for the kingdom.

**Ver. 4.** *Then said the king to Ziba, behold, thine [are] all that [pertaineth] to Mephibosheth,* etc.] Being forfeited to the king by an overt act of treason as they had been before by the rebellion of Ishbosheth, but had been graciously restored to Mephibosheth; and had it been true what Ziba suggested, it would have been a righteous thing to have taken them from him; though it seems to be too hasty a step in David to take and give them away without further inquiry:

*and Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee [that] I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king*; he had found favour already, but seems not to be sufficiently thankful for it, and satisfied with it, but craved more and other favours, when opportunity should serve.

**Ver. 5.** *And when King David came to Bahurim,* etc.] The Targum is, Alemath, perhaps the same that is said to be a city of the Levites, given unto them out of the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><1310></sup>1 Chronicles 6:60) for the man

next described, who was of this place, was a Benjaminite, (<sup>10916</sup>2 Samuel 19:16); (see Gill on "<sup>10816</sup>2 Samuel 3:16"); David was not yet come to the city itself, but into the neighbourhood of it, the fields adjacent to it: and

*behold, thence came out a man of the family of Saul*; a descendant of a branch of his family, who had entertained a private grudge and secret enmity against David, to whom he imputed the fall of the family of Saul:

*whose name [was] Shimei, the son of Gera*: which might be a name common in the tribe of Benjamin, one of Benjamin's sons being named Gera, (<sup>04421</sup>Genesis 46:21). Some say <sup>f268</sup> he was the same with Nebat, the father of Jeroboam; but he was of the tribe of Ephraim, this of Benjamin:

*he came forth, and cursed still as he came*; he came out of Bahurim, of which place he was, and all the way he came continued cursing David, until he came near unto him.

**Ver. 6.** *And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of King David*, etc.] Not that he was within the reach of them, or could hurt them, by casting them at them; but this he did to show his contempt of them, and to intimate that they deserved to be stoned, and especially David, at whose adultery he might point by it:

*and all the people, and all the mighty men [were] on his right hand, and on his left*; that is, of David; which is observed, not so much to indicate the safety of David's person, as the impudence and madness of Shimei, to cast stones at David when so guarded.

**Ver. 7.** *And thus said Shimei, when he cursed, come out, come out*, etc.] Or rather, "go out, go out" <sup>f269</sup>; that is, out of the nation, where he deserved not to live, as he judged, and out of the kingdom, which he had usurped, as he supposed; and the repeating the words not only denotes his vehement desire to have him gone, but the haste he should make to get out, or he was liable to be overtaken by Absalom and his forces; upbraiding him also with the hurry he was in, and the speedy flight he was making:

*thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial*; or wicked man; perhaps referring by these characters in the one to the murder of Uriah, and in the other to his adultery with Bathsheba; and these crimes coming fresh into David's mind hereby, might make him more mild and humble under his reproaches.

**Ver. 8.** *The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul,* etc.] Which he would suggest was shed by David, or, however, that he was the cause of its being shed; as if he had stirred up the Philistines to that battle in which Saul and his sons were slain, and had an hand secretly in the deaths of Ishbosheth and Abner, all which were false insinuations; and it may be the seven sons of Saul before this time, though after related, were delivered into the hands of the Gibeonites to be hanged, to which respect may be had:

*in whose stead thou hast reigned;* not by right, but by usurpation he suggests:

*and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son;* in this he seems to contradict himself; for if David had got the kingdom by usurpation, it would rather have, been delivered by the Lord into the hand of one of Saul's family, and not of David's:

*and behold, thou [art taken] in thy mischief;* punished for his sins; the mischief he had brought on others was retaliated to him:

*because thou [art] a bloody man;* guilty of slaying, as the Targum of shedding innocent blood, and so worthy of death.

**Ver. 9.** *Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king,* etc.] A sister's son of his, and a general in the army, who could not bear to hear the king abused in this manner:

*why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?* be suffered to do it with impunity; a "dog" he calls him, because of his vileness and baseness, and because of his impudence, and on account of his reproachful and abusive language, aptly signified by the snarling and barking of a dog; and a "dead" dog, as being useless, detestable, and abominable:

*let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head;* go over the plain where David and his men were, to the hill on which Shimei was, and strike off his head with his sword; which he could easily do, and soon put an end to his cursing.

**Ver. 10.** *And the king said, what have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?* etc.] It seems as if Joab, the brother of Abishai, joined with him in this request to have leave to take off the head of Shimei; and though David had to do with them as his relations, his sister's sons, and as they

were generals in his army; yet in this case he would have nothing to do with them, would not take their advice, nor suffer them to take revenge on this man for his cursing him: or “what [is it] to me, [or] to you”<sup>f270</sup>? what signifies his cursing? it will neither hurt me nor you:

*so let him curse*; go on cursing after this manner; do not restrain him from it, or attempt to stop his mouth: or, “for he will curse”<sup>f271</sup>; so is the textual reading; you will not be able to restrain him, for the following reason:

*because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David*; not by way of command, or a precept of his; for to curse the ruler of the people is contrary to the word and law of God, (<sup>(1228)</sup>Exodus 22:28), nor by any operation of his spirit moving and exciting him to it; for the operations of the Spirit are to holiness, and not to sin; but by the secret providence of God ordering, directing, and overruling all circumstances relative to this affair. Shimei had conceived enmity and hatred to David; God left him to the power of this corruption in his breast, opened a way in Providence, and gave him an opportunity of exercising it on him: it was not a bare permission of God that Shimei should curse David; but it was his will, and he ordered it so in Providence, that he should do it; which action was attended with the predetermined concourse of divine Providence, so far as it was an action; though, as a sinful action, it was of Shimei, sprung from his own heart, instigated by Satan; but as a correction and chastisement of David, it was by the will, order, and appointment of God, and as such David considered it, and quietly submitted to it:

*who shall then say, wherefore hast thou done so?* for though Shimei might justly be blamed, and reproved for it, yet the thing itself was not to be hindered or restrained, it being according to the will and providence of God, to answer some good end with respect to David.

**Ver. 11.** *And David said to Abishai, and all his servants*, etc.] In order to make them easy, and reconcile them to this usage of him:

*behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life*; meaning Absalom:

*how much more now [may this] Benjamite [do it]?* who was not only of the same tribe that Saul was, but of the same family, and so bore an ill will to David because of his succession in the throne:

*let him alone, and let him curse*; do nothing to restrain him, not even by words, and much less by any violent actions, and still less by taking away his life:

*for the Lord hath bidden him*; in the sense explained in (~~1060~~ 2 Samuel 16:10).

**Ver. 12.** *It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction*, etc.] Through the rebellion of his son, and now aggravated by the cursing of Shimei; that is, with an eye of pity and commiseration, and deliver him out of it: or “look upon my eye”<sup>f272</sup>; for there is a various reading; the tear of mine eye, as the Targum; so Jarchi and R. Isaiah; the tears in it, which fell plentifully from it, on account of his troubles, and particularly the curses and reproaches of Shimei:

*and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day*; he does not speak with assurance, yet with hope; he knew his sins deserved such treatment, but also that God was gracious and merciful, and pitied his children, and resented all ill usage of them; and therefore hoped he would favour him with such intimations of his love as would support him, comfort, refresh him, and do him good, (see ~~4188~~ Romans 8:28).

**Ver. 13.** *And as David and his men went by the way*, etc.] In the high road that led to Bahurim, taking no notice of the cursing of Shimei, which made him bolder and more impudent; here is a large pause in the Hebrew text, in the midst of this verse:

*Shimei went along on the hill side over against him*; as David and his men walked in the plain, he went on a range of hills that ran along right against them:

*and cursed as he went*; continued his curses and imprecations, to which he was the more emboldened by the behaviour of David and his men:

*and threw stones at him, and cast dust*; in a way of contempt, though the stones recoiled on his own head, and the dust flew in his own face, as the consequence of things showed; and now David composed and penned the seventh psalm, (~~1900~~ Psalm 7:1-17).

**Ver. 14.** *And the king, and all the people that [were] with him, came weary*, etc.] With their journey, and through grief and trouble at what they met with:

*and refreshed themselves there*: that is, at Bahurim, with food and rest; which revived their spirits, and put as it were new life and soul into them, as the word used signifies. Josephus <sup>f273</sup> says, when David came to Jordan, he refreshed his weary men.

**Ver. 15.** *And Absalom, and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem,* etc.] At the same time that David and his people came to Bahurim; which, as Josephus <sup>f274</sup> says, was a place near to Jerusalem; and, according to Bunting <sup>f275</sup>, was little more than a mile from it; though elsewhere <sup>f276</sup> he makes it three miles; so that had not David made the hasty flight he did, he had fallen into the hands of Absalom:

*and Ahithophel with him*: a famous counsellor, and who had been of David's privy council, and chief in it, (see ~~<10152>~~ 2 Samuel 15:12,31) and whom David refers to in (~~<10152>~~ Psalm 55:12-14).

**Ver. 16.** *And it came to pass that when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom,* etc.] Who came into Jerusalem at the same time that Absalom did, and who, no doubt, took the first opportunity to make his court to him, (~~<10157>~~ 2 Samuel 15:37);

*that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king;* or "may the king live" <sup>f277</sup>, live long, and his kingdom be permanent; these words are very ambiguous, he might mean David, who was true and lawful king, though he would have them understood of Absalom, who was king by usurpation, in which he used great deceit and flattery; and that he might not be suspected of it, but be thought to be sincere and truly loyal to Absalom, he repeats the wish.

**Ver. 17.** *And Absalom said to Hushai, [is] this thy kindness to thy friend?* etc.] Meaning to David; though he would not mention his name, nor his title, nor even the relation of a father he stood in to him, only speaks of him as Hushai's friend: Hushai had professed great friendship to David, and David had been a friend to Hushai, had raised him to great honour in making him a counsellor, and had bestowed many favours and benefits on him, as Absalom knew full well; and therefore, to try his integrity, he puts this question, not as displeased with him, but overjoyed that such a trusty friend of David, and a wise counsellor of his, had deserted him, and come over to him and his party; nor does he mean to charge him with ingratitude, which he could not do without reproaching himself; on whom it might be



justly retorted, is this thy kindness to thy father that begot thee, and has always expressed such a strong affection for thee, as to rebel against him?

*why wentest thou not with thy friend?* with David, when he went out of Jerusalem; for Absalom knew not that Hushai had been with David, but thought he stayed behind at Jerusalem, when David fled, which made him less suspicious of him.

**Ver. 18.** *And Hushai said to Absalom,* etc.] In answer to his questions:

*nay, but whom the Lord, and his people, and all the men of Israel choose:* here again he speaks very ambiguously; for this circumlocution, or descriptive character of the king of Israel, better agrees with David, whom he might bear in mind, than with Absalom; for the Lord had chosen David, and he was anointed by his order, and all the people of Israel had chosen and anointed him likewise; but as for Absalom, it was only a part of them that had declared for him, nor was there any evidence of the Lord's choosing him; though Hushai undoubtedly would be understood of him, and as interpreting the voice of the people to be the voice of God:

*his will I be, and with him will I abide;* though he designed no such thing, which was a great piece of dissimulation and hypocrisy; and if he meant David, it was a piece of deceit and equivocation: there is a various reading in the first clause; we follow the marginal reading, **wl** , “to him” or “his”, but the textual reading is **al** , “not”: and both may be taken in by rendering the words by an interrogation, “shall I, or should I not be his”<sup>f278</sup>? I will; that is, be his servant, faithfully obey his commands, be closely attached to him, and continue with him as a loyal subject.

**Ver. 19.** *And again, whom should I serve?* etc.] Or “secondly”<sup>f279</sup> , a second reason is here given for serving Absalom: the first was the choice of God and the people, the second follows:

*[should I] not [serve] in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence:* he signifies, that as the kingdom was not translated into another family, but continued in succession in David's house, the alteration made was of no great consequence; it was indifferent to him whom he served, the father or the son; and he could as freely, and would as faithfully serve the son as the father; nor did he think it any breach of friendship to David, nor would David resent it, that he should serve his son, and do the best offices, and

give him the best counsel he could; and he seems to bespeak the office of a counsellor, in which he had been to David, that he might be admitted into the presence of Absalom, and be of his privy council, and have the opportunity of giving his best advice.

**Ver. 20.** *Then said Absalom to Ahithophel*, etc.] Having two such able counsellors as he and Hushai, he directs his speech to Ahithophel, as being his first and chief counsellor:

*give counsel among you what we shall do*; he orders them to form a counsel, consult among themselves what was proper to be now done at Jerusalem, whether it was right to stay here or pursue after David and his men. Absalom did not send to the high priest to ask counsel of God, by Urim and Thummim before the ark, but wholly confided in his privy council.

**Ver. 21.** *And Ahithophel said unto Absalom*, etc.] Either immediately of himself, without consulting with others; or after a consultation had been held between them, he as the president of it, and their mouth, gave the following advice; though the former seems most correct:

*go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left, to keep the house*; and lie with them; there were ten of them, (<sup><0056></sup>2 Samuel 15:16);

*and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father*; this fact will be so abominable to him, and he will so highly resent it, as never to forgive thee, and be reconciled unto thee:

*then shall the hands of all that [are] with thee be strong*; he intimates that they were now weak, and did not act with spirit; they were fearful that David and Absalom would be reconciled, and then they should be reckoned traitors, and fall a sacrifice to David's vengeance, for their treason against him: but by Absalom's taking such a step as this, which would make him for ever the object of his father's hatred, their hands and hearts would be strengthened, and their fears removed, and they would not have the least jealousy of a reconciliation between them, and of their being left to the resentment of David. Some think this was not his only reason for giving this counsel, but also to revenge David's abuse of Bathsheba, his son's daughter, as she is supposed to be, (see Gill on "<sup><0052></sup>2 Samuel 15:12"); however, it was so ordered in Providence, that this advice should be given and taken, to fulfil the prophecy of the Lord to Nathan, (<sup><0021></sup>2 Samuel 12:11).

**Ver. 22.** *So they spread Absalom a tent on the top of the house,* etc.] On the top of his father's palace; this, as houses in Jerusalem and Judea were, was built flat, (<sup><1628></sup>Deuteronomy 22:8); and it was on the very spot from whence David had a sight of Bathsheba, and conceived an impure lust after her. The Targum renders it, a canopy; which Kimchi describes as consisting of four pillars, upon and round about which curtains were hung:

*and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel;* they saw the tent or canopy erected, and saw him go into it, and might reasonably conclude he lay with his father's concubines, or half wives, in it; and this being done in so public a manner fulfilled the prophecy, which said it should be done in the sight of the sun, and of all Israel, (<sup><1021></sup>2 Samuel 12:11,12); this shows how corrupt the people of Israel were at this time, at least those that were with Absalom, that there should be none to object to the counsel Ahithophel gave, nor any to remonstrate against the execution of it, but all seemed to look upon it with pleasure; nor even did Hushai, David's friend, oppose it; perhaps he saw it was to no purpose.

**Ver. 23.** *And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he had counselled in those days,* etc.] Both in the days of David, and in the days of Absalom, before and since the rebellion:

*[was] as if a man had inquired of the oracle of God;* such an opinion was entertained of it, so well satisfied were they with it, and as confident of success in taking it, as if the Lord himself had been consulted by Urim and Thummim; this is a very great exaggeration of Ahithophel's counsel, and is observed as a reason why it was so readily taken, though so bad in the preceding instance:

*so [was] all the counsel of Ahithophel, both with David and with Absalom;* Ahithophel was a crafty man, a time server, that temporized with princes, and knew how to suit his counsels with their tempers and interests: to David he gave good counsel, what was acceptable with him, and to Absalom bad counsel, which was pleasing to him.

# CHAPTER 17

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 17

This chapter relates the advice Ahithophel gave to march out speedily with a number of men in pursuit of David, which at first seemed agreeable, (~~2~~ Samuel 17:1-4); but Hushai's opinion being asked, and he giving counsel to raise a larger army, which required time, and was taken to, hereby the counsel of Ahithophel was defeated, (~~2~~ Samuel 17:5-14); upon which he hanged himself, (~~2~~ Samuel 17:23); these different counsels being communicated by Hushai to the priests, they found means to transmit them to David, with an instruction to him to pass over Jordan immediately; which he did, and pitched in Gilead, and whither he was followed by Absalom, (~~2~~ Samuel 17:15-26); and where he met with a supply of provisions for his army from some eminent persons in and near that place, (~~2~~ Samuel 17:27-29).

**Ver. 1.** *Moreover, Ahithophel said unto Absalom,* etc.] Either at the same time, or quickly after he had given the foregoing advice:

*let me now choose out twelve thousand men:* out of those that were with Absalom, which shows their number to be large; and twelve thousand are pitched upon with respect to the twelve tribes of Israel, a thousand from every tribe; Josephus has only ten thousand;

*and I will arise and pursue after David this night;* he took upon him to be general of the army, as well as a counsellor; or this he said to show how confident he was of the success of his counsel, that if Absalom, or any other, should decline the conduct of the army upon it, as a hazardous attempt, he would undertake it himself; or rather it may be, he was not willing that Absalom should go out in person with the army, not so much for his own safety, as lest through his affection for the king he should spare him, when he fell into his hands, or they two should be reconciled; he proposed to do it that night, partly for expedition, no time being to be lost, and partly for the greater surprise of David and his men.

**Ver. 2.** *And I will come upon him while he [is] weary,* etc.] With travelling, and with grief, and when endeavouring to get some rest by

sleep, and so surprise him unawares, when not on his guard, and in no posture of defence:

*and weak handed*; while the number of men with him is small, and before the people from different parts can come to his assistance:

*and will make him afraid*; strike terror into him and his then, by surprising them suddenly in the night with such a number of men:

*and all the people that [are] with him shall flee*; one one way, and another another, for their own security, and leave David alone:

*and I will smite the king only*; dispatch him, and let the people flee without pursuing them.

**Ver. 3.** *And I will bring back all the people unto thee*, etc.] Meaning not the people only that were with David, that he would make them prisoners, and bring them with him; for he before proposed to let them make their escape; but to reduce all Israel to the obedience of Absalom at once, by executing this scheme which he had formed:

*the man whom thou seekest [is] as if all returned*; meaning David, whom he speaks of contemptibly, and whose life it seems Absalom sought, as well as his crown; and he being dead, it would be all over at once with the people; they would immediately return to their own habitations, and yield obedience to Absalom as the rightful heir and successor; all depended on his death, he intimates: from whence it appears that Abarbinel is wrong in suggesting that Absalom did not design to take away the life of his father, only to secure the kingdom to himself in his father's lifetime, who he understood had disposed of it by his will to Solomon; but here Ahithophel plainly declares the intention of Absalom, nor would he have proposed in plain terms to take away the king's life, had Absalom been averse to it; and it is plain by what follows that the thing was pleasing to him:

*[so] all the people shall be in peace*; both parties coalesce under the government of Absalom, and live peaceably under it, and so an entire end of the war.

**Ver. 4.** *And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all elders of Israel.*] That were of the privy council; for it was a well contrived scheme to surprise David his men by night, in the condition they were in; nothing like seizing an opportunity, and making quick dispatch in executing a villainous

design; only it is strange that Absalom could so easily come into a scheme to take away the life of so indulgent a father, which is only to be accounted for by his ambition; but it is stranger still that the elders of Israel should be pleased with it, and agree to and determine upon the death of a prince, who had so many years ruled them with justice and equity, clemency and mercy; and fought their battles for them, and raised their nation to such a pitch of glory it never had before.

**Ver. 5.** *Then said Absalom, call now Hushai the Archite also,* etc.] For it seems he was not at the council board at this time; whether he was as yet admitted to it is not certain: there is something very remarkable in the providence of God, to incline Absalom to have the opinion of Hushai upon this point, when the counsel of Ahithophel was so universally approved of; and Hushai also being well known to have been an intimate friend and confidant of David's, and not so settled and established in the interest of Absalom, and such a sworn friend of his as Ahithophel was; this can only be ascribed to the will of God, to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, and the wisdom of divine Providence in blinding the mind of Absalom with respect to his counsel, and inclining it to take the opinion of Hushai:

*and let us hear likewise what he saith;* which he might say without any diffidence about the "counsel" given, but knowing that in the multitude of counsellors there is safety; and Hushai being a wise and good counsellor, he might hope and expect that he would give the same advice, and so strengthen and confirm it.

**Ver. 6.** *And when Hushai was come to Absalom,* etc.] Into the council chamber, very probably:

*Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner;* and then related the counsel he had given as before:

*shall we do [after] his saying?* is it right to proceed on this scheme, and carry it into execution?

*if not, speak thou;* thy mind freely, without any reserve, or fear of giving any offence.

**Ver. 7.** *And Hushai said to Absalom,* etc.] Having leave to give his opinion freely:

*the counsel that Ahithophel hath given [is] not good at this time*; he owns that Ahithophel was a good counsellor, and that the counsel he gave was for the most part, if not always, good, but what he gave at this time was not so; the wisest of men may sometimes be mistaken. Abarbinel thinks he respects his former counsel, particularly that that was good, advising him to defile his father's bed, (<sup>1062</sup>2 Samuel 16:21); but this was not, for which he gives the following reasons.

**Ver. 8.** *For (said Hushai) thou knowest thy father and his men, that they [be] mighty men*, etc.] Men of courage and valour, and not such weak-handed and weak-hearted men, and so easily intimidated, as Ahithophel suggests:

*and they [be] chafed in their minds*; or “bitter in soul” <sup>f280</sup>; not merely filled with trouble and anguish, and depressed in their spirits, on account of that, as the phrase sometimes signifies; but enraged and full of wrath at the rebellion raised against their prince, which obliged them with him to leave their habitations; and now being desperate, their all lying at stake, their wives and children, their families and estates, they would fight furiously in the defence of the king and themselves, and not so soon flee as Ahithophel had represented:

*as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field*; a bear is a very furious creature, especially a she bear, and the more when it has whelps, and more so when deprived of them <sup>f281</sup>, when it ranges about in the field, and in its fury attacks whomsoever it meets with; (see Gill on “<sup>2818</sup>Hosea 13:8”);

*and thy father [is] a man of war*; not only bold and courageous, but expert and skilful in all the arts of war and not easy to be surprised and circumvented, as Ahithophel intimated:

*and will not lodge with the people*; in the camp, but at some distance from it; partly to prevent any traitorous design upon him in it, and partly that he might not be surprised by the enemy, knowing that their chief view was to seize his person; and therefore as it would not be easy to find him where he was, he could not be smitten alone, as Ahithophel proposed.

**Ver. 9.** *Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some [other] place*, etc.] Some lurking place, as he was acquainted with many when he fled from Saul, and where he preserved himself from him; so that he could never take him, as he would now from Absalom, as he insinuates: but this is not all; not only by this means he would shelter himself, and be in safety; but lying

thus concealed with others, and in ambush, there would be danger of his staring out of his hiding place when opportunity should offer, and falling on some of Absalom's troops unawares:

*and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the first;* that is, some of Absalom's party, on whom David and his men coming out of an ambush should fall, and make a slaughter among them first, before they could do anything of consequence; and so having got the first advantage, it would serve to animate them, and dishearten their enemies:

*that whosoever heareth it;* at that time, or the next day:

*will say, there is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom;* there has been a defeat of them, and that may cause a defection.

**Ver. 10.** *And he also [that is] valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt,* etc.] That is, whoever should hear of Absalom's forces, or a part of them, being routed, would be intimidated, though ever so courageous, or of such a lion-like temper and disposition; and even Ahithophel himself, notwithstanding all his boasted courage, his heart would fail, he would melt like water <sup>f282</sup>, (~~1076~~ Joshua 7:5); should he meet with such a rebuff at first setting out. A lion is well known for its courage as well as strength, and has not only a fierce countenance, hence we read of lion-like men in their faces, (~~1073~~ 2 Samuel 23:20 ~~1312~~ 1 Chronicles 12:8); but has a courageous heart, and from thence it is thought to have its name Labi, from "leb", which signifies the heart; so Hercules is represented by the poet as having a lion's heart <sup>f283</sup>, and others also; though Leo Africanus <sup>f284</sup> relates of some lions in Africa that are so naturally fearful that they will flee at the cry of children, particularly at a place called Agla; hence it became a proverb with the inhabitants of Fez to call blustering cowards the lions of Agla; and he speaks of great numbers of lions elsewhere <sup>f285</sup>, who are easily driven away with a small stick by the most timorous persons; but for the most part lions are very bold and daring, as well as strong, to which the allusion is here. Some apply this to David himself, who was a valiant man, and whose heart was like that of a lion, and so read the last clause with an interrogation: "shall he utterly melt?" no, he will not; he is not to be made afraid so easily as Ahithophel has intimated:

*for all Israel knoweth that thy father [is] a mighty man, and [they] which be with him [are] valiant men:* this is so universally known that it cannot be denied.



**Ver. 11.** *Therefore I counsel*, etc.] My advice is as follows:

*that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that [is] by the sea for multitude:* not all the inhabitants of the land, but such as are fit to bear arms, or that were soldiers, employed in military affairs, in keeping garrisons, guarding the coasts, etc. even the militia of the nation, from the extreme boundary of it on the north to the extreme boundary of it on the south; in such a direction lay Dan and Beersheba. This is opposed to the counsel of Ahithophel, which was only to select twelve thousand men, and send them against David at once; and this is designed chiefly to gain time, since such a collection could not be made soon, and so David would have more time to get farther off, and to prepare the better for his defence; and this advice might be the more agreeable to Absalom, as it promised a greater certainty of success through numbers, and might feed the vanity and ambition of that prince to have such a large army under him, as well as suggested that all Israel were on his side, and at his command, and might easily be gathered to him:

*and that thou go to battle in thine own person;* this was another part of his advice opposed to the counsel of Ahithophel, who proposed to have the command of the twelve thousand men himself, and to leave Absalom at Jerusalem; now Hushai suggests that it would be more to his interest and his honour to take command of the army himself, and go in person into the field of battle; since this would serve to animate his soldiers, when they saw their prince at the head of them, and he would have the glory of the victory, which he might insinuate hereby Ahithophel sought to deprive him of: it is in the Hebrew text, that “thy face” or “faces go to battle”,<sup>f286</sup>, where he might be seen in person, and have the oversight and direction of things himself; the Targum is,

“and thou shalt go at the head of us all;”

and this advice Hushai was directed to give, and which was taken, that Absalom might fall in battle.

**Ver. 12.** *So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found*, etc.] For such a numerous army, which would be spread abroad, could not well fail of finding him out, let him be in what lurking place he would; whereas he might lie concealed, and escape so small a number as twelve thousand men:

*and we will light upon him as the dew falleth upon the ground*; whose drops are innumerable, and cover all the ground where they fall; and the phrase not only expresses their numbers, but the irresistible force they should come with, and the manner, secretly, unawares, opportunely; the Romans had a sort of soldiers, called from the dew “rorarii”, who carried light armour, and fought first in the battle, from whence they had their name, because dew falls before it rains <sup>f287</sup>:

*and of him, and of all the men that [are] with him, there shall not be left so much as one*; so that for the future Absalom would sit easy upon the throne, there being none left to molest him.

**Ver. 13.** *Moreover, if he be gotten into a city*, etc.] A strong fortified place, thinking to secure himself there, where he might hold out against those that were risen against him; the former part of the account supposes him in the field, where he would soon be detected, if hidden in a pit or any other place, or if he appeared openly would quickly be overthrown by the numerous forces of Absalom; and here it suggests, should he betake himself to a city for shelter,

*then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city*; scaling ropes, and thereby get upon and over the walls of it, and take it by storm; or engines worked with ropes, used for the demolishing of cities; so Tacitus speaks of “vincula tormentorum”, the bands or ropes of engines, as Grotius observes; the Targum renders it by “armies”, thus,

“all Israel shall be gathered against the city, and surround it with armies,”

besiege it in form, and so surround it that David could not possibly make his escape out of it, nor could it hold out long against such numerous forces; or this is an hyperbolic expression, as Kimchi calls it, signifying that their numbers would be so many, that they could soon and easily demolish it:

*and we will draw it into the river*; by the side of which it was built, or the ditch or trench around it, or the valley near it, that being built on an hill; and by this boasting, bragging, hyperbolic expression, he signifies that they should be able easily and utterly to destroy its walls, buildings, and towers, as if a number of men were to fasten a rope about anything, and by their main strength, and through their numbers, draw it down whither they pleased:

*until there be not one small stone found there*; and this being the case, David and his men must inevitably fall into their hands, and none escape.

**Ver. 14.** *And Absalom and all the men of Israel said*, etc.] That is, the elders, who before approved of the counsel of Ahithophel, (<sup><10704></sup>2 Samuel 17:4);

*the counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel*; it appeared to them most plausible, and most likely to be attended with success:

*for the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel*; for so it was to Absalom and his party the best and wisest that could be given them; but it was the Lord's will it should be defeated, and therefore the minds of Absalom and of the elders of Israel were blinded:

*to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom*; his person and cause; that his cause might be ruined, and he himself slain in battle; (see <sup><10921></sup>Proverbs 19:21).

**Ver. 15.** *Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests*, etc.] After he was returned from the council board, he immediately went to these priests, who he knew were in the interest of David, and to whom he was to communicate, and by them transmit, what passed at Jerusalem, (<sup><10535></sup>2 Samuel 15:35,36);

*thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel*; relating to them in express words what he advised to:

*and thus and thus have I counselled*; telling them in what manner he had given his counsel.

**Ver. 16.** *Now therefore send quickly and tell David*, etc.] What has been advised to on both sides:

*saying, lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness*; which reached to Jericho; this advice he gave, because he knew not whether his counsel would be abode by, though preferred; Absalom and the elders of Israel might change their minds, and Ahithophel might, by the strength of his oratory, prevail upon them after all to follow his advice; and therefore, to guard against the worst, he judged it most prudential in David to make all the haste he could from that place where he was, and not continue a night

longer in it; for, if Ahithophel's counsel should take place, he would be in pursuit of him that very night:

*but speedily pass over*; the river Jordan:

*lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that [are] with him*: be destroyed by the forces Ahithophel should bring with him, which he would not be able to withstand.

**Ver. 17.** *Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel*, etc.] Who were the sons of the priests; these did not go into the city of Jerusalem with their parents, when they were sent back by David, (<sup><1057></sup>2 Samuel 15:27); but stayed by their direction at this place, which was near Jerusalem, and is called in the Targum the fuller's fountain, where they washed their clothes; and, as Kimchi and Jarchi say, by treading them with their feet, whence it had the name of Rogel, of which (see Gill on "<sup><1057></sup>Joshua 15:7");

*(for they might not be seen to come into the city)*; having been charged by their parents to continue there for the sake of carrying intelligence to David, or because suspected by Absalom's party of carrying on such an intrigue:

*and a wench went and told them*: what Hushai had communicated to the priests, and what was his advice to David; this girl is supposed by Kimchi and Abarbanel to be of the family of Zadok, by whom she was sufficiently instructed to tell her message, and of whom there would be no suspicion:

*and they went and told King David*; the sons of the priests went and related to him all that had been transmitted to them.

**Ver. 18.** *Nevertheless, a lad saw them, and told Absalom*, etc.] Saw them conversing with the girl, and departing for David's army; according to Josephus <sup>f288</sup>, they were some horsemen that saw them about two furlongs or a quarter mile from Jerusalem, and acquainted Absalom with it:

*but they went both of them away quickly*; made all the haste they could with their message to David:

*and came to a man's house in Bahurim*; where very probably they had been informed David had been, whither he came weary, and had refreshment, (<sup><1064></sup>2 Samuel 16:14); or rather, perceiving they were discovered and pursued, they turned in hither, the first place they came to, for safety:

*which had a well in his court*; which they observed, and was the reason of their turning in:

*whither they went down*; to hide themselves from their pursuers, it being dry, as sometimes wells were in the summertime: Josephus says <sup>f289</sup>, a woman let them down by a rope.

**Ver. 19.** *And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth*, etc.] This woman, very probably, was the man's wife of the house, as Abarbanel notes; who took a cloth, and spread it over the well's mouth, that it could not be seen or known that there was a well there:

*and spread ground corn thereon*: just taken out of the mill, before it was sifted, while in the bran; or corn unhusked, or just threshed out, in order to be dried in the sun, and then parched; or wheat bruised for that purpose: Josephus says <sup>f290</sup> they were locks of wool she spread:

*and the thing was not known*; that the young men were in the well.

**Ver. 20.** *And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house*, etc.] Who were sent after then, had intelligence which way they took, and into what house they turned:

*they said, where [are] Ahimaaz and Jonathan?* calling them by their names, being persons well known, and as to them, so to the woman of the house, as they supposed:

*and the woman said unto them, they be gone over the brook of water*; the river Jordan; so the Targum,

“they have already passed over Jordan;”

this was a lie she told them, which is not to be justified; the Vulgate Latin version,

“they passed over hastily, having drank a little water;”

and so Josephus <sup>f291</sup> in some copies:

*and when they had sought and could not find [them]*; not only searched that house, but very probably others in Bahurim:

*they returned to Jerusalem*; to give an account what success they had.

**Ver. 21.** *And it came to pass after they were departed,* etc.] The servants of Absalom:

*that they came up out of the well;* the sons of the priests, being informed by the woman that they were gone; Josephus <sup>f292</sup> says they were drawn up by the woman with a rope:

*and went and told King David;* who was now in the plain of the wilderness, perhaps near Jericho, and not a great way from Jordan, to whom they related the whole of their message:

*and said unto David;* as they were directed:

*arise, and pass quickly over the water;* the river Jordan:

*for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you;* to come with twelve thousand men, and fall upon him that very night; and it was not certain his counsel would be rejected; and therefore it was advisable for David to prepare against the worst.

**Ver. 22.** *Then David arose, and all the people that [were] with him, and passed over Jordan,* etc.] Taking the advice of Hushai:

*by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan;* they travelled all night, and before it was morning they had all passed the river in boats, or through the fords, and not one was lost in the passage, nor any deserted, (see <sup><3172></sup>John 17:12); and now perhaps David penned the forty second and forty third psalms, (<sup><3901></sup>Psalms 42:1-43:5).

**Ver. 23.** *And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed,* etc.] But that of Hushai:

*he saddled [his] ass;* or ordered it to be saddled:

*and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city;* which was Giloh in the tribe of Judah, (<sup><10512></sup>2 Samuel 15:12);

*and put his household in order;* made his will, and disposed of his estates, (see <sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 38:1); or “commanded his house” or “household” <sup>f293</sup>; gave orders and instructions, both relating to himself when dead, where and how he should be buried, and to his family, how they should behave to one another and among their neighbours, and towards their superiors; and particularly, the Jews say <sup>f294</sup>, he gave them this charge, not to rebel against the government of the house of David:

*and hanged himself*; so to his other sins added that of suicide, which was done deliberately, as the preceding clause shows; this he did, partly because his proud spirit could not bear it that his counsel should be slighted, and that of another be preferred to it; and partly because he plainly foresaw that the cause of Absalom would be ruined by neglecting his counsel and following that of Hushai's, whereby he himself would fall into the hands of David, and be put to death by him as a traitor; and he chose to die by his own hand, and not his; and the rather, to prevent the confiscation of his goods and estates as a traitor, and his heirs being deprived of them; though some think he died of a disease, by strangling or suffocation in the throat, was choked through grief and trouble; so R. Elias observes <sup>f295</sup>, that some say that this disease came upon him through the greatness of his grief of mind and trouble of soul, because his counsel was not taken, and he died of strangling; and they say this, because they reckon it an absurdity for so wise and understanding a man as he was to hang himself; but the case seems very clear that he did kill himself; the Jews say <sup>f296</sup> he was but thirty three years of age when he died; for being a bloody and deceitful man, he did not live out half his days, (<sup><0573></sup>Psalm 55:23); which psalm was penned on his account; but one so young could hardly be a counsellor of David, and so famous for his wise counsel; and besides, if so young, could not be the grandfather of Bathsheba, as the Jews say:

*and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father*; though he died an ignominious death, he had an honourable burial; it perhaps not being usual in those times to put any mark of infamy on those that killed themselves, by refusing them interment in the common burying places of their friends and neighbours.

**Ver. 24.** *Then David came to Mahanaim*, etc.] A city on the other side Jordan in the tribe of Gad, (<sup><0136></sup>Joshua 13:26,30), famous for its being the place where the angels of God met Jacob, (<sup><0131></sup>Genesis 32:1,2); and was for some time the seat of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, (<sup><0108></sup>2 Samuel 2:8);

*and Absalom passed over Jordan, he, and all the men of Israel with him*; not directly after David, but some time after, when, according to the counsel of Hushai, he had gathered all the warlike men of Israel to him that he could, and with this army pursued his father; not content to drive him to the other side Jordan, sought to seize his person, and take away his life, and so secure the crown and kingdom to him, of which he made no doubt, having such a numerous army, on which he relied.

**Ver. 25.** *And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab,* etc.] Who was along with David:

*which Amasa [was] a man's son whose name [was] Ithra, an Israelite;* he is called Jether the Ishmaelite, (<sup><1327></sup>1 Chronicles 2:17); either because he was an Ishmaelite by birth, and being proselyted to the Jewish religion, was called an Israelite; or rather he was an Israelite by birth, and having sojourned in the land of Ishmael some time, was called an Ishmaelite, as Uriah the Hittite, and others; and when Amasa is called a "man's son", it means a great man, as Kimchi observes:

*that went in to Abigail, the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother:* so that Joab and Amasa, the generals of David and Absalom, were own cousins, sisters' children, and David uncle to them both; for Abigail and Zeruiah were David's sisters, (<sup><1326></sup>1 Chronicles 2:16); children of Jesse, whose name is here called Nahash, having two names, or this was his surname; though others think Nahash is the name of a woman, the wife of Jesse, and that these two sisters had two mothers, but one father; it seems by this expression, "went in to", as if Amasa was not begotten in the conjugal state, but was illegitimate.

**Ver. 26.** *So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.*] Which belonged to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; here the Israelites that were with Absalom encamped, in order to give battle to David and his men.

**Ver. 27.** *And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim,* etc.] When he first came thither, (<sup><1072></sup>2 Samuel 17:24);

*that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon:* who was either the son, or rather the brother of Hanun king of the Ammonites, that used David's ambassadors in so shameful a manner, whom David overcame and deposed, and set up this brother in his room; who had showed his dislike of his brother's conduct, and now makes a grateful return to David for his favours; though some say this was Hanun himself, as Jarchi, now become a proselyte, which is not so likely; others take this man to be an Israelite that continued in Rabbah, the metropolis of the Ammonites, after it was taken by David:

*and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar;* the same that brought up Mephibosheth, from whom David received him and took him off of his hands, for which now he requited him, (see <sup><1095></sup>2 Samuel 9:5);



*and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim*; a place that lay under the hills of Gilead <sup>f297</sup>; it had its name from the “fullers” who dwelt here for the convenience of fountains of water to wash their clothes in.

**Ver. 28.** *Brought beds*, etc.] For David and his men, who, fleeing from Jerusalem in haste, could bring none with them, and therefore were ill provided while in the plains of the wilderness; the Septuagint version says there were ten of them, and that they were of tapestry, wrought on both sides, and such the ancients used <sup>f298</sup>, (see <sup><3176></sup>Proverbs 7:16); and so ten basins in the next clause:

*and basins, and earthen vessels*; to put their food and liquors in, and eat and drink out of, and for other services:

*and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched [corn]*; or “kali”, which was made of the above corn ground into meal, and mixed with water or milk, and eaten with honey or oil, as there was another sort made of pulse, later mentioned:

*and beans, and lentiles, and parched [pulse]*; or “kali”, made of these in the above manner. Some think <sup>f299</sup> coffee is meant, but without reason.

**Ver. 29.** *And honey and butter*, etc.] Honey was much in use with the ancients; Homer <sup>f300</sup> speaks of it as a part of the provisions at a feast, and as food with which persons were nourished and brought up; and the ancient Scythians lived on milk and honey <sup>f301</sup>; and this and butter were pretty much the food of the people in Judea; (see <sup><3175></sup>Isaiah 7:15-22);

*and sheep*; with which and goats the land of Gilead abounded; (see <sup><3171></sup>Song of Solomon 4:1,2);

*and cheese of kine*: made of the milk of cows, as it commonly is:

*for David, and for the people that [were] with him, to eat*; and no doubt they brought wine with them for them to drink; the men that brought these, some brought one sort, and some another, or however different parcels of the same, and did not join in one present; for they came from different parts:

*for they said, the people [is] hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness*; where they had been some time, and out of which they had just come, and so weary with travelling, and therefore brought beds to lie down and rest upon; and being hungry and thirsty, through want of bread and

water in the wilderness, they brought them both eatables and drinkables; for though the latter is not expressed, it is to be understood, as the word “thirsty” supposes.

# CHAPTER 18

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 18

In this chapter is an account of David's review of his army, preparing it for battle with Absalom, and those with him, (~~2~~ Samuel 18:1-5); and of the defeat and flight of the rebels, (~~2~~ Samuel 18:6-8); and of the death of Absalom, and the manner of it, and of his burial, (~~2~~ Samuel 18:9-18); and of the news of it brought to David by different persons, (~~2~~ Samuel 18:19-32); and of his great grief and sorrow on that account, (~~2~~ Samuel 18:33).

**Ver. 1.** *And David numbered the people that [were] with him*, etc.] Which Josephus says <sup>f302</sup> were four thousand; but one would think there should be more by what follows:

*and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them*; he divided his army into companies, which consisted some of a thousand and others of a hundred; over each of which he set captains, to lead them on, direct, and command them in battle.

**Ver. 2.** *And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab*, etc.] Very likely that which made the centre of the army, since Joab was the general of the army; though this distribution was made when David thought to have headed the army himself, and so made with respect to that:

*and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother*; who was next to Joab in the army, and fought with him against the Syrians and Ammonites, (~~2~~ Samuel 10:10,11);

*and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite*; of whom (see ~~2~~ Samuel 15:19); of these two parts consisted the right and left wings of the army:

*and the king said unto the people*; the soldiers, and particularly the officers:

*I will surely go forth with you myself also*; in which he seemed very resolute and peremptory; and this he proposed to do, not merely to animate

the soldiers with his presence, and to show that he was willing to hazard his life with them, but chiefly for the sake of Absalom, to preserve his life, if possible.

**Ver. 3.** *But the people answered, thou shalt not go forth*, etc.] They were as resolute as David:

*for if we flee away, they will not care for us*; to pursue after us;

*neither if half of us die, will they care for us*; they will make no account of the victory; but if they could slay David, or get him into their hands, it would be more to them than if the whole army was routed:

*but now [thou art] worth ten thousand of us*; not only in our own esteem, but in the account of the enemy, who had rather thou shouldst fall into their hands than ten thousand of us; and as the advantage to them, so the loss to us would be more than ten thousand men:

*therefore now [it is] better that thou succour us out of the city*; either by sending them provisions or recruits, that might be there in reserve, if necessary; or by being ready to receive them into it should they be repulsed; or rather by his prayers to God for them; so the Targum,

“now it is better that thou pray for us out of the city;”

that is, that the Lord would help us; and so most of the Jewish commentators understand it of helping them by his prayers and counsels.

**Ver. 4.** *And the king said unto them, what seemeth you best I will do*, etc.] Which was an instance of great condescension in him; and it was his wisdom and prudence to yield to them at such a time as this, and especially as their sentiments were founded on affection and loyalty to him:

*and the king stood by the gate side*; of the city of Mahanaim:

*and all the people came out by hundreds, and by thousands*; and passed by him, to whom no doubt he gave his blessing and best wishes; and, as Abarbinel thinks, now it was he composed and said the twentieth psalm, “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble”, etc. (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 20:1-9).

**Ver. 5.** *And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai*, etc.] His three generals, to whom he had committed his army divided into three parts:

*saying, [deal] gently for my sake with the young man, [even] with Absalom*; he does not call him his son, being in rebellion against him, but the young man, who was young, and rash, and foolish, and so to be pitied; his request is, that they would spare him, and not take away his life, when in their power; that they would not aim at him, and push him hard, and fall upon him with wrath and fury; but if he fell into their hands, to take him alive, and bring him away, and not put him to death. This flowed from a natural affection to him, and a concern for the welfare of his soul, that he might not die in this sin; and also from a consciousness that it was for his own sins that he was raised up to rebel against him; and he seems to speak as if he was certain that the battle would go for him, and against Absalom; and which he might conclude from the answer of prayer he had in defeating the counsel of Ahithophel:

*and all the people heard when he gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom*; not only the three generals, but all the captains of hundreds and thousands, and this was heard by the common soldiers as well as by the people of the city that were spectators on this occasion, (see <sup><01812></sup>2 Samuel 18:12).

**Ver. 6.** *So the people went out into the field against Israel*, etc.] Josephus <sup>f303</sup> calls it a great field, with a wood behind it:

*and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim*; or near it <sup>f304</sup> rather; not in a wood in the tribe of Ephraim, which lay on this side Jordan; whereas this battle was fought on the other side Jordan, in the land of Gilead, not far from Mahanaim, where was this wood; and which was so called, either from the slaughter of the Ephraimites here in the times of Jephthah, (<sup><07124></sup>Judges 12:4-6); or from the Ephraimites feeding their cattle here and near it; for the Jews say <sup>f305</sup>, that Joshua gave them a grant to feed their cattle in any wood in any of the tribes of Israel; and lying near Jordan, they used to drive their cattle over to this place, from whence it had its name.

**Ver. 7.** *Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David*, etc.] That is, the people of Israel that were under Absalom, these were beaten by David's army:

*and there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand [men]*; including both those that fell in the field of battle, and that were slain in the pursuit; and this is to be understood only of Absalom's party.

**Ver. 8.** *For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country,* etc.] Or the warriors were scattered, as the Targum; Absalom's soldiers, their ranks were broken, and they were thrown into the utmost confusion, and ran about here and there all over the field or plain in which the battle was fought, and into the neighbouring wood:

*and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured;* there were more slain in it the in the field of battle, what by one thing or another; as by falling into pits and on stumps of trees, and being entangled in the bushes, and could make but little haste, and so were overtaken by David's men, and slain; insomuch that, as Josephus<sup>f306</sup> observes, there were more slain fleeing than fighting, and perhaps some might perish by wild beasts; so the Targum,

“and the beasts of the wood slew more of the people than were slain by the sword;”

and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render the words to the same purpose.

**Ver. 9.** *And Absalom met the servants of David,* etc.] When his army was routed, he was in such a fright that he knew not which way to flee, and instead of flying from David's men, he fled in the way of them; but none of them attempted to slay him, nor even to stop him, but let him pass by them, knowing David's charge concerning him:

*and Absalom rode upon a mule;* as was common for great personages to do in those days, (<sup>1033</sup>2 Samuel 13:29);

*and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak;* and running full speed, Absalom could not guide him, nor stop, nor divert him from going under it:

*and his head caught hold of the oak;* either the hair of his head was twisted and entangled in the thick boughs of the oak; or rather his head was jammed into a forked branch of the oak:

*and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth;* hung in the air between both, as unworthy to live in either:

*and the mule that [was] under him went away;* and left him hanging in the oak.

**Ver. 10.** *And a certain man saw [it]*, etc.] Saw him in the above posture, one of David's soldiers:

*and told Joab, and said, behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak*; caught by the neck in one, out of which he could not disengage himself, but there he hung, though alive.

**Ver. 11.** *And Joab said unto the man that told him*, etc.] That gave the above account of him:

*and, behold, thou sawest [him]*; in reality; or, "didst thou see him?" is it a fact?

*and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground*; kill him on the spot, that he might have dropped from the tree to the ground:

*and I would have given thee ten [shekels] of silver*; on the news of it, for doing it, which was near twenty four shillings of our money; Josephus says <sup>f307</sup> fifty shekels; the Arabic version has it ten thousand talents of silver, too great a sum by far:

*and a girdle?* which was a mark of great honour, and a token of a commission under him, and of investing him with a military office; (see ~~1~~ 1 Samuel 18:4); it used to be given as an honorary reward to soldiers that behaved well, as on the contrary it was reckoned a reproach to be ungirt, or the girdle to be taken away <sup>f308</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *And the man said unto Joab*, etc.] Disdaining his proposal:

*though I should receive a thousand [shekels] of silver in mine hand*; or such a sum should be offered to me; the Arabic version is a million;

*[yet] would I not put forth my hand against the king's son*; to smite him, and slay him:

*for in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai*; his three generals:

*saying, beware that none [touch] the young man Absalom*; so as to slay him; they were charged to abstain from it themselves, and to watch and observe others, and keep them from doing it.

**Ver. 13.** *Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life*, etc.] Or "soul"; he should not only have exposed his life to danger, but

acted falsely to the king, by going contrary to his orders; yea, would have done that which was contrary to his own conscience; and if he had buoyed himself up with the hope of impunity, or of a reward, he should have found himself mistaken; the textual reading is, “against his life”<sup>f309</sup>, or “soul”, the life of Absalom, by taking it away:

*for there is no matter hid from the king*; this, though done ever so secretly, would have come to his knowledge by some means or another, and then I should have incurred his displeasure, and suffered for it:

*and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against [me]*; to accuse and bring him to justice; he would have been so far from protecting him, that he would have been the first man that would have insisted on it that he should be punished for it; or why dost not thou thyself set thyself against him, and smite him? thou mayest if thou pleasest, yonder he hangs, go and smite him.

**Ver. 14.** *Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee*, etc.] It is not worth while to talk with thee any longer, nor must I lose time, and neglect my opportunity; I do not desire you to go and smite him, I will go and do it myself:

*and he took three darts in his hand*; or three rods, which were either all iron, or however the tops of them were iron spikes:

*and thrust them through the heart of Absalom*; or through the midst of his body; for if he had thrust through his heart, properly speaking, he must have died instantly, whereas he seems to have lived after this:

*while he [was] yet alive*; Joab found him alive when he came to him, and so he was when he thrust his darts through him; and so he was afterward; for the words may be rendered, “being yet alive”, even after the darts were fixed in him, and even so deeply as to pierce through his body:

*in the midst*, or “heart”,

*of the oak*; into which the darts penetrated.

**Ver. 15.** *And ten young men that bare Joab’s armour*, etc.] That waited upon him in the battle, to carry his armour, and supply him with it as he should have occasion; these, by his orders,



*compassed about, and smote Absalom, and slew him*; they enclosed him that none might rescue him, and smote him with their spears or swords, or whatsoever armour they had, until it was a clear case that he was really dead. Joab in this disobeyed the king's order, but provided for the good of the nation, and the safety of the king. The Jews observe <sup>f310</sup>, that measure for measure was given to Absalom; he was proud of his hair, (<sup><1042></sup>2 Samuel 14:25,26), and therefore was hanged by it, (<sup><1089></sup>2 Samuel 18:9); he lay with ten concubines of his father, (<sup><1062></sup>2 Samuel 16:21,22), and therefore was smitten with ten lances or spears by ten young men; and he stole three hearts, the heart of his father, the heart of the sanhedrim, and the heart of the men of Israel, and therefore three darts were fixed in him, (<sup><1084></sup>2 Samuel 18:14).

**Ver. 16.** *And Joab blew the trumpet*, etc.] As the sign of a retreat:

*and the people returned from pursuing after Israel*; upon the sound of the trumpet, the meaning of which they understood:

*for Joab held back the people*: from shedding any more blood; the head of the conspiracy being removed, the thing would be crushed at once; and Joab neither chose to slay any more, nor take any prisoners, to be tried as traitors, being unawares, without thought, drawn into this rebellion.

**Ver. 17.** *And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood*, etc.] In the wood of Ephraim, near to which the battle was fought, and into which Absalom fled, and where he was slain:

*and laid a very great heap of stones upon him*: his punishment was very exemplary; he was first hanged on an oak, and then thrust through with darts, and swords, and then covered with stones, (<sup><1089></sup>2 Samuel 18:9,14,15), pointing to the death that a rebellious son, according to the law, ought to die, (<sup><1021></sup>Deuteronomy 21:21); though this might be done in honour of him as a king's son; for such "tumuli", or heaps of stones or earth, were used by the ancients as sepulchral monuments, and the larger the more honourable <sup>f311</sup>; (see Gill on "<sup><1072></sup>Joshua 7:26") and (see Gill on "<sup><1089></sup>Joshua 8:29");

*and all Israel fled everyone to his tent*; or to his city, as the Targum; everyone returned to their own house, and to their own business, and so the rebellion ceased.

**Ver. 18.** *Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken*, etc.] Had taken it into his head, had of himself devised it, as Kimchi explains it; he contrived the following scheme to perpetuate his memory:

*and reared up for himself a pillar, which [is] in the king's dale*: or valley, the valley of Jehoshaphat; this pillar was of marble, as Josephus <sup>f312</sup> says, and stood about two furlongs or a quarter mile from Jerusalem. The author of Cippi Hebraici <sup>f313</sup> places it at the bottom of the mount of Olives: this is observed to show how vain are the devices and contrivances of men's hearts; Absalom intended to have been buried under or by this monumental pillar near Jerusalem, and, lo, he was buried in a pit, under an heap of stones, in a wood on the other side Jordan; whether his bones were ever removed hither it is not certain, though a notion has obtained that his grave was near this pillar. Rauwolff <sup>f314</sup> says, that as you go from the valley of Jehoshaphat <sup>f315</sup> to the Mount of Olives, you see below, towards your left hand, near unto the bridge of the river Kidron, an old square building like unto a steeple; this, although it is believed to this day, not only by Christians, but also by Turks and Moors, to be the grave of Absalom, as you shall see them fling stones into it as they go by, to revenge his unfaithfulness to his father, yet was he not buried there. Sandys <sup>f316</sup> says, at the east end of the bridge (over Kidron), and a little on the north, stands the pillar of Absalom, being yet entire, and of a good fabric, rising in a lofty square, below adorned with half columns, wrought out of the sides and corners, of the Doric form; and then changing into a round, a good height higher doth grow to a point in fashion of a bell, all framed of the growing stone; against this there lies a great heap of stones, which increaseth daily, by Jews and Mahometans throwing stones as they pass by; so that the frontispiece of it, which faces the road, as Leviticus Bruyn <sup>f317</sup> says, looks like a mountain of stones; but as to the fabric itself, he says, there is not a finer piece of workmanship to be met with in all those parts; it takes up a compass of ground of eighty two feet and an half square; the body, which is square, with its moulding, is one entire piece; and the coping, which is an ornament to it, and runs up into a point, taken with the rest of the work, is above thirty feet high; twenty columns, cut out of the same rock, add to the beauty of this pile; one sees through a broken window a great many pieces of antiquity that hang up in a chamber. Adrichomius also relates <sup>f318</sup>, from travellers, that in the king's valley is now a tower, and a large heap of stones, which is increased every day more and more; for Heathens and strangers passing by there have a custom to cast everyone a stone at it, as

it were revenging, according to the law, Absalom's rebellion against David his father, and curse him after this manner; let Absalom the parricide be cursed, and whoever unrighteously persecutes their parents are cursed for ever:

*for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance*; for though he had three sons, it seems they were all dead, (see <sup><10047></sup>2 Samuel 14:27);

*and he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called unto this day Absalom's place*; or his "hand"<sup>f319</sup>, the work of his hand; some wrongly think it was in the form of an hand; it was an obelisk, or monument, erected to preserve his name; but since it became so infamous, it would have been better to have had it buried in oblivion. Such sepulchral monuments were used in other nations; so Minerva advised Telemachus<sup>f320</sup> to go in quest of his father Ulysses, and if he could not find him, but was assured of his death, then to raise a signal or monument in memory of him, which he resolved to do.

**Ver. 19.** *Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok*, etc.] To Joab; for it seems he stayed with the army when he with Jonathan brought the message from Hushai to David:

*let me now run, and bear the king tidings how that the Lord hath avenged him on his enemies*; which he thought would be very acceptable to hear of as soon as possible; and to be a messenger with tidings of a victory, as it was honourable, so likewise profitable then as now; though perhaps Ahimaaz might have no respect to the reward, as indeed none could be expected, since the death of Absalom would be so disagreeable to the king; but was desirous of it, that the king might be acquainted with the event of the battle as soon as might be.

**Ver. 20.** *And Joab said unto him, thou shall not bear tidings this day*, etc.] Because Joab knew the tidings of Absalom's death would not be acceptable to the king; and Ahimaaz being a good man, and the son of a priest, for whom Joab had a respect, he would not send the tidings by him, which he was sensible would not recommend him to the king:

*but thou shalt bear tidings another day*; when any salvation is wrought, or victory obtained, the tidings of which will be welcome:

*but this day thou shall bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead;* and thou must carry the news concerning his death, which it is not proper thou shouldst, being a priest, nor will it be to thine advantage.

**Ver. 21.** *Then said Joab to Cush*, etc.] The Ethiopian, or blackamoor; who either was an Ethiopian by birth and proselyted, or he was an Israelite of a black complexion, and therefore so called; and was judged a proper person by the general to carry such dismal news to the king, as he knew it would be. Some Jewish writers<sup>f321</sup> take him to be the same with Cush the Benjaminite, in the title of the seventh psalm, (~~<JOB>~~ Psalm 7:1); and that he is the same that told Joab he saw Absalom hanging in an oak, and declared that, if a thousand shekels of silver were offered him, he would not have put forth his hand against him, (~~<JOB>~~ 2 Samuel 18:10-12); though some think this was one of the ten young men that waited on Joab, and by his orders slew Absalom; but it would have been dangerous for one of these to have carried the tidings, had he been known by David to have done it:

*go tell the king what thou hast seen:* by which it should seem that he was present when Absalom was killed:

*and Cush bowed himself unto Joab;* in reverence to him as his general, and in thankfulness for sending him on this errand:

*and ran;* as fast as he could.

**Ver. 22.** *Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab*, etc.] He could not be easy, even though a messenger was dispatched, but pressed Joab still:

*but howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush;* only permit me to go after him, though not as a messenger:

*and Joab said, wherefore wilt thou run, my son?* having a great affection for him, and concerned that he should take trouble on him to no purpose:

*seeing thou hast no tidings ready;* no news to carry, but what Cush is gone with, and so can have no audience of the king, nor any reward from him.

**Ver. 23.** *But howsoever ([said he]) let me run*, etc.] Be it as it may, I beg I may have leave; and being so very importunate, it was granted:

*and he said unto him, run;* since he would take no denial:

*then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush*; who ran by the way of the mountains; which though the shorter way, that through the plain was easiest, and soonest run, though the longest.

**Ver. 24.** *And David sat between the two gates*, etc.] Of the city of Mahanaim; which being a fortified place had two walls, one within another, and in each wall a gate; and between these David sat, waiting for news of the battle:

*and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall*; the gate to the outward wall, over which was a tower, and on that a flat roof; to which the watchman went to observe if he could see an express coming; no doubt by David's orders:

*and lifted up his eyes and looked*; that is, very diligently and wistfully:

*and, behold, a man running alone*: which made him the more observable, and was the more likely to be a messenger.

**Ver. 25.** *And the watchman cried and told the king*, etc.] Called with a loud voice from the roof of the watchtower to the king, sitting between the gates, and informed him what he saw:

*and the king said, if he [be] alone [there is] tidings in his mouth*; for if the army was routed and fled, and were pursued, there would be more in company, or several running one after another; but being but one, it was highly improbable that he was sent express:

*and he came apace, and drew near*; which was another sign of his being a messenger, the haste he made towards the city.

**Ver. 26.** *And the watchman saw another man running*, etc.] At a further distance:

*and the watchman called unto the porter*; that kept the gate, under which the watchtower was:

*and said, behold, [another] man runneth alone*; as the other, and has the same appearance of a messenger:

*and the king said, he also bringeth tidings*; it being usual then, as now, to dispatch one messenger after another, as fresh accounts coming in made it necessary.

**Ver. 27.** *And the watchman said, me thinketh,* etc.] Or, “I see”<sup>f322</sup>; I perceive, so it appears to me:

*that the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok*; who it seems was well known, and famous for his manner of running and swiftness in it, having been employed in carrying expresses before from Jerusalem to David, and his army, wheresoever they were; and some of these persons thus employed were very swift; we read<sup>f323</sup> of one that was a king’s messenger, that went from Jerusalem to Tyre, on the first of Elul, or August, in a night and a day; which, according to Bunting<sup>f324</sup> was an hundred miles: this watchman must be one of David’s sentinels, who was well acquainted with the people about him:

*and the king said, he [is] a good man, and cometh with good tidings*; he knew he was a man of courage, and therefore was not one that fled, but must be a messenger; and that he was well affected to him, and would never be the messenger of evil tidings to him.

**Ver. 28.** *And Ahimaaz called and said unto the king,* etc.] As soon as he came so near as to be heard by him, before he came up to him, he said with a loud voice:

*all is well*; the king’s army has had success, beat the rebels, and obtained a complete victory: or “peace”<sup>f325</sup>; for it is but one word in the original, which signifies all happiness and prosperity, and this he wished the king; and so it is the same as if he had said, God save the king, may all happiness attend him:

*and he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king*; when he came nearer to him, not only in reverence of him, but in thankfulness to God:

*and said, blessed [be] the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king*; in which he ascribes the victory, not to Joab and his army, but to the Lord, to whom he gives thanks; and this agreeably to his character as a good man, and a priest of the Lord.

**Ver. 29.** *And the king said, is the young man Absalom safe?* etc.] Or, is there “peace”<sup>f326</sup> to him? you say there is peace, and that prosperity and success have attended my army; but what peace has Absalom? is he well, and in safety? David seemed more concerned for him than for his army and

the success of it; and even suggests as if it was nothing if Absalom was not safe, so great were his affections towards him:

*and Ahimaaz answered, when Joab sent the king's servant;* which was Cush, the first messenger, whose office perhaps it was to be one of the king's messengers, and therefore called his servant:

*and [me] thy servant:* Ahimaaz himself who was sent after the other:

*I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what [it was];* he perceived that the tidings of the death of Absalom would be disagreeable to the king, and therefore concealed it from him; and though a good man, he cannot be excused from lying, for certainly he knew that Absalom was dead, as appears from (<sup>1089</sup>2 Samuel 18:19,20); though indeed what he said might be true, that after Joab had sent him and Cush, as the Targum paraphrases it, he saw a company of people gathered together in a tumultuous manner, the meaning of which he knew not; but then this was no other than an evasion.

**Ver. 30.** *And the king said [unto him], turn aside, [and] stand here,* etc.] On the side of him, not far from him, until the other messenger came, that he might learn from them both the true state of the case:

*and he turned aside, and stood still;* saying nothing more to the king, nor he to him.

**Ver. 31.** *And, behold, Cush came,* etc.] A little after:

*and Cush said, tidings, my lord the king;* news is sent and brought by me, and good news it is:

*for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee;* they are either killed or dispersed; there is an entire victory over them, and deliverance from them.

**Ver. 32.** *And the king said unto Cush, is the young man Absalom safe?* etc.] The same question that was put to Ahimaaz, (<sup>1089</sup>2 Samuel 18:29); which shows what lay nearest his heart, and was uppermost in his mind,

*and Cush answered, the enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do [thee] hurt, be as [that] young man [is],* which was tacitly saying he was dead, and so David understood it; and he expressed it

in such a manner, that David could not be displeased with the messenger; though the message was grievous to him.

**Ver. 33.** *And the king was much moved*, etc.] His affections were moved, his passions were stirred up; he was greatly troubled, distressed, and grieved:

*and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept*; got out of sight and company as soon as he could; as his own dwelling was at some distance, he made haste to the chamber in the watchtower, over the gate of the city, where the watchman was, to vent his grief; and could not suppress it till he got thither:

*and as he went*; up the stairs to the chamber:

*thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom!* which repetition expresses the vehemence of his affections, and how inconsolable he was on account of his son's death:

*would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!* some think he said this on account of his eternal state, being satisfied of his own; but it may be it was only the effect of natural affection, indulged to too great a degree, and unbecoming so good a man in such a case; the Targum is,

“I wish I had died for thee, and thou hadst remained this day.”



# CHAPTER 19

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 19

David indulging to too much grief for the death of his son, is rebuked by Joab, and threatened with a revolt of the people from him, if he did not change his conduct, which he accordingly did, (~~1089~~2 Samuel 19:1-8); upon which the men of Israel were the first that moved for the bringing him back to Jerusalem, and the men of Judah were solicited to join with them in it, which was effected, (~~1090~~2 Samuel 19:9-15); and at Jordan, Shimei, that had cursed him, met him, and asked his pardon, and was forgiven, (~~1091~~2 Samuel 19:16-23); and when come to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth excused so well his not going out with him, that he had half his land restored to him, which had been given to his servant, (~~1092~~2 Samuel 19:24-30); and Barzillai, who had very liberally supplied the king, was allowed to return to his own city, and Chimham his son was taken to court, (~~1093~~2 Samuel 19:31-40); and a contention arose between the men of Israel and of Judah about the restoration of the king, which issued in an insurrection, as the next chapter shows, (~~1094~~2 Samuel 19:41-43).

**Ver. 1.** *And it was told Joab*, etc.] When returned to Mahanaim, or on his way to it; perhaps by the messengers he sent; and this report he had before he saw the king:

*behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom*; for the death of him, instead of rejoicing at the victory obtained, and the deliverance from his enemies.

**Ver. 2.** *And the victory that day was [turned] into mourning unto all the people*, etc.] They also mourned too, instead of expressing joy upon the occasion:

*for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son*; this report was spread among them, which damped their joy, and hindered them from giving any tokens of it, as were usual at such times.

**Ver. 3.** *And the people got them by stealth that day into the city*, etc.] Did not march into it in companies, in a public and triumphant manner, as

conquerors used to do; but entered in a private manner, one by one, or a very few together, not caring to be seen or known, at least by the king, as fearing they had incurred his displeasure: but

*as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle*; as if they had been conquered, and not conquerors; nay, had acted a cowardly part, and ran away; and so cared not to be seen, lest they should be reproached, or suffer for their cowardice.

**Ver. 4.** *But the king covered his face*, etc.] And would not see his generals, and thank them for their services: but wrapped himself in his mantle, after the manner of mourners:

*and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!* and this was some time, perhaps some days after he had received the news of his death, since Joab and the army were returned from the battle; had it been a sudden start of passion, upon first hearing thee news, and had continued a few hours, it would have been more excusable; but to continue some days, as it is very probable it did, was very unbecoming.

**Ver. 5.** *And Joab came into the house to the king*, etc.] For by this time he was removed from the chamber over the gate to his own dwelling house or palace, where he continued the same doleful ditty as at first:

*and said, thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants*; they cannot lift up their heads, and look any in the face, nor one another; but behave as if they had committed some very great fault, in fighting with the rebels, and beating them:

*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*; which in all probability would have been taken away if the victory had been on the side of Absalom.

**Ver. 6.** *In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends*, etc.] Which though not strictly true, there was some appearance of it, which is here greatly exaggerated; in that he expressed so much grief and sorrow for Absalom his enemy, who had rebelled against him, and showed so little regard to his friends, that had exposed their lives for him:

*for thou hast declared this day*: by his conduct and behaviour, mourning for his rebellious son, and taking no notice of his faithful servants:

*that thou regardest neither princes nor servants*; neither the officers of the army, the generals and captains, nor the common soldiers: since neither the one were admitted into his presence privately, nor had the other public thanks as they entered the city, as might have been expected: or “that thou hast no princes and servants”<sup>1327</sup>; none that are accounted of as such; they are nothing with thee, in no esteem at all, as if thou hadst none:

*for this day I perceive that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well*; this was carrying the matter too far; for though it would have been agreeable to David if Absalom had lived, and not been slain, yet not that his army should perish, or his people be destroyed; it would have pleased him well if both had lived.

**Ver. 7.** *Now therefore arise, go forth*, etc.] Arise from his couch, he was watering with his tears, and go forth from his house, where he had shut himself up retired from all company, to the gate of the city, where the people passed and repassed, and there was a concourse of them: this he said not by way of command, but by way of advice; though all along he seems to take too much upon him, and to speak unbecoming a subject, and not with that decency as was necessary in, speaking to a king; but it may be observed, that a general of an army had great power over princes in those times; and presumed very much on their interest in the army, which led them sometimes not to behave with that decorum as became them:

*and speak comfortably unto thy servants*; commend them for their courage and faithfulness, thank them for their services, and reward them suitably; at least give them assurance of it:

*for I swear by the Lord*; by the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; this he said to arouse him, and make him bestir himself, and think what was proper for him to do:

*if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night*; signifying that he would use his interest in the army to go off with it, and set up another king; and did not doubt of success, as well knowing what temper and humour the people were in through the king’s conduct:

*and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now*; for when he was persecuted by Saul he had a number of

friends that adhered close to him; and when Ishbosheth was set up against him by Abner as king of Israel, the tribe of Judah cleaved to him, anointed him their king, and abode by him; wherefore, should he now be abandoned by his army, his case would be worse than ever it had been.

**Ver. 8.** *Than the king arose, and sat in the gate*, etc.] Of the city, a public place, where the inhabitants met on divers accounts at times, and where there were always people passing and repassing:

*and they told unto all the people*; or it was reported to the soldiers particularly:

*saying, behold the king doth sit in the gate*; has laid aside his mourning, appears in public, and receives his friends, and attends to business:

*and all the people came before the king*; to congratulate him on the victory obtained, to receive his thanks and his favours:

*for Israel had fled every man to his tent*: or to his city, as the Targum; that is, those that followed Absalom; which is observed not on account of what goes before, but of what follows after; (see <sup><COR17></sup>2 Samuel 18:17).

**Ver. 9.** *And all the people were at strife through all the tribes of Israel*, etc.] Excepting the tribe of Judah; they blamed and reprov'd one another for taking part with Absalom in the rebellion, and especially for their coldness and backwardness in bringing back David to Jerusalem:

*saying, the king saved us out of the hand of our enemies*; exposed his life to danger, fought our battles for us, and gained us victory over our enemies, and saved us from them, especially those next mentioned:

*and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines*; in the times of Saul, and since; which were benefits which ought to have endeared him to them, and were aggravations of the crime of those who had been concerned in the late rebellion; and were such as ought not to be buried in oblivion, and were proper arguments to engage them to return to their allegiance to him, and abide by it:

*and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom*; being obliged to quit Jerusalem, and the land of Judea on this side Jordan, and to pass that river; not from a spirit of cowardice, but from tenderness to his son, he did not choose to fight against; and from a concern for his metropolis Jerusalem, lest that should be hurt, as well as for the safety of his person.

**Ver. 10.** *And Absalom, whom we anointed over us,* etc.] To be king; which either was really done by Absalom's party, or in effect by proclaiming and appointing him king:

*is dead in battle;* which shows the thing was not of God, and by which means they were released from their oath of allegiance to him:

*now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?* nobody speaks of it, gives the least hint of it, or shows any concern about it; but the greatest coldness and indifference, as if it was a matter of no importance.

**Ver. 11.** *And King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests,* etc.] Who were at Jerusalem, and in his interest; perhaps by Ahimaaz and Jonathan their sons:

*saying, speak unto the elders of Judah;* particularly those that were at Jerusalem, with whom they had an interest:

*saying, why are ye the last to bring back the king to his house?* to his palace at Jerusalem, since David was of their tribe, and was first anointed their king: what might make them the more backward to it was their being so deep in the rebellion, which was formed and cherished among them, and brought to the height it was, through their connivance and encouragement, both at Hebron and Jerusalem; and therefore they might fear the resentment of David, and that he would not be easily reconciled unto them:

*seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, [even] to his house:* or he has received invitations from all the tribes of Israel to return to his house or palace at Jerusalem; and so this was a part of the message of David to the priests, to be told to the elders as an aggravation of their backwardness, and as an argument to excite them to their duty; though some think these are the words of the historian, to be inserted in a parenthesis, as in our version.

**Ver. 12.** *Ye [are] my brethren, ye [are] my bones and my flesh,* etc.] Being of the same tribe, and therefore he should deal gently with them, as if they were parts of his body; and not be severe upon them, for the hand they had in the conspiracy, as they might fear:

*and wherefore then are ye the last to bring the king back?* since they were so nearly related to him, and he so ready to forgive them.

**Ver. 13.** *And say ye to Amasa,* etc.] Who was the general of Absalom's army, and who might fear he should never be pardoned, whoever was, and looked upon his case as desperate; who had led on the army with Absalom against the king's threes, and fought them:

*[art] thou not of my bone, and of my flesh?* nearly related to him, being his sister's son:

*God do so to me, and more also:* than he had done to Absalom; or he imprecates the greatest evil upon himself that could be thought of or named:

*if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab;* signifying that he would not only pardon the treason he had been guilty of, but raise him to the highest post in the army; and to assure him of it, of which he might be doubtful, considering what he had done to merit his displeasure, he makes this oath or imprecation. Joab had got his ill will by many instances, as by the murder of Abner, and now by slaying Absalom against his orders; and by his rude and insolent behaviour to him when lamenting the death of his son; he wanted to be rid of him, and now, having an opportunity of putting a valiant man into his place, and thereby attaching him to his interest, he was determined to make use of it.

**Ver. 14.** *And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as [the heart of] one man,* etc.] This the Jewish commentators generally understand of Amasa that he used his interest with the men of Judah, and so wrought upon them, that they agreed as one man to send for the king, and bring him back; but it seems best to understand it of David, who by these gentle methods, kind messages, and affectionate speeches, powerfully inclined and engaged the hearts of the people towards him; so that they were unanimously and affectionately agreed to restore him: in this way David chose to return; he could have come without their leave, or any invitation from them, as he was their lawful king, and a victorious one, the rebellion being crushed; and had it in his power to chastise those concerned in it, and use them with severity; but he chose rather to gain the hearts of his people, and to come in a way peaceable to them, and honourable to himself:

*so that they sent [this word] unto the king, return thou and all thy servants;* perhaps by the same messengers that David sent; or it may be, rather for honour's sake they deputed some of their principal men to wait

on David, and invite him to return to them with all his retinue and army, promising allegiance and fidelity to him.

**Ver. 15.** *So the king returned, and came to Jordan*, etc.] From Mahanaim thither, which according to Bunting<sup>f328</sup> was twenty eight miles:

*and Judah came to Gilgal*; that is, the elders, or principal men of the tribe of Judah, came thither; which place, according to the same writer<sup>f329</sup>, was twelve miles from Jerusalem, and four from Jordan; and was the first place the Israelites came to when they passed that river in Joshua's time; but it seems to be rather more; (see Gill on "~~CHAP~~ Joshua 2:1") and (see Gill on "~~CHAP~~ Joshua 4:19");

*to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan*; but then they must proceed further on, for Gilgal seems to be live or six miles on this side Jordan.

**Ver. 16.** *And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which [was] of Bahurim*, etc.] Of whom (see ~~CHAP~~ 2 Samuel 16:5);

*hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David*: he took the first opportunity to meet the king, and ask his pardon for his ill treatment of him when he fled from Jerusalem; for, hearing: that Absalom was slain, and the victory was on the side of David, who was returning in triumph, he thought it advisable as soon as possible to make his submission, and entreat forgiveness, lest he should fall a just sacrifice to his vengeance; and a better opportunity he could not well have than to go along with the men of Judah, who met the king first of all.

**Ver. 17.** *And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him*, etc.] Of which tribe he was, and these were either a band of soldiers, of which he was the chiliarch; or tenants of his, which showed him to be a great man; or his neighbours, and persons of some figure, whom he prevailed upon to come as intercessors for him:

*and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul*; who had imposed upon David, and got his master's inheritance from him, knowing that David would be undeceived by Mephibosheth his master, when he came to Jerusalem; and therefore that he might be more tenderly dealt with, and come off the better, he was thus forward to meet the king, and pay his respects to him:

*and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him:* which made a considerable appearance; (see <sup><1090></sup>2 Samuel 9:10);

*and they went over Jordan before the king:* to meet him on the other side, both Shimei and his a thousand men, and Ziba with his sons and servants.

**Ver. 18.** *And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household,* etc.] His wives and children, who could not so well ford the river on foot: some will have this to be a bridge of boats, a pontoon; and Abarbinel thinks it might be a company of men, who carried the women and children on their shoulders, one after another:

*and to do what he thought good;* to carry over whatever else the king pleased, besides his family:

*and Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan;* or just as he was about to come over, when he came to Jordan to take the boat in order to come over; for he went over Jordan to meet him, and therefore would take the first opportunity of coming into his presence, and fall down before him, and make his submission to him.

**Ver. 19.** *And said unto the king, let not my lord the king impute iniquity unto me,* etc.] That is, deal with him according to the desert of it, punish him for it, but forgive it: for non-imputation of sin is in effect the pardon of it:

*neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day my lord the king went out of Jerusalem:* he desires that he would not only forgive, but forget it; he owns it was a perverse action, and aggravated by being done at the time when the king was in great trouble and distress:

*that the king should take it to his heart;* and determine to avenge himself on him for it.

**Ver. 20.** *For thy servant doth know that I have sinned,* etc.] He was sensible of it, and sorry for it, and publicly acknowledged it before all the men he brought with him, and before all the servants of David; and as a token of the sincerity of his repentance, and as an earnest of his future fidelity, he made this early submission:

*therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king;* but why does he make mention of the house of Joseph, when he was of the tribe of Benjamin? Kimchi says that



Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, were called the house of Joseph; and it may be observed that it is sometimes used for all Israel, as in (~~881~~ Psalm 80:1); and he was the first of them that came, inasmuch as he came along with the men of Judah, who came first of all to fetch the king back; or Joseph may stand for the tribes of Israel, as distinct from Judah, and he was the first of them; some of the Jewish writers think he makes mention of the name of Joseph, because as the brethren of Joseph used him ill, and he returned good to them; so though he had used David ill, he hoped he would do as Joseph did, return good for evil; and others represent him as suggesting hereby to David, that all Israel had used him ill, and he worse than them all; and now he was come first, and they were all waiting what he would do to him, that if he received him kindly, all would come and make their peace with him.

**Ver. 21.** *But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said,* etc.] The same person that would have taken off the head of Shimei at the time he cursed David, if he would have given him leave, (~~1062~~ 2 Samuel 16:9);

*shall not Shimei be put to death for this?* this humiliation and acknowledgment he has made, shall he be forgiven on that account? shall so small a matter as this atone for so great a crime he has been guilty of, as that he shall not die?

*because* or “though” <sup>f330</sup>

*he cursed the Lord's anointed;* is asking pardon sufficient to expiate so foul an offence, for which according to the law he ought to die? or for this action which he has done, as the Arabic version, in cursing the Lord's anointed.

**Ver. 22.** *And David said, what have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?* etc.] (See Gill on “~~1060~~ 2 Samuel 16:10”);

*that ye should this day be adversaries unto me?* or a Satan unto me, as the word is, by advising him to do what would be prejudicial to his interest; (see ~~4162~~ Matthew 16:22,23); as to use severity at such a time as this would have been; for had he immediately ordered Shimei to be put to death, though he deserved it, who was the first man that came to ask pardon, the Israelites in general, or all however concerned in the rebellion, would have concluded they must share the same fate, and so would not have submitted, but have raised a new rebellion against him; and some think Joab and Abishai had this in view, that they might keep their posts in the army:

*shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel?* there shall not: the glory of this day shall not be sullied by the death of any; nor the joy of it be turned into sorrow in any family in Israel, as would, if any was put to death for what had passed during the rebellion:

*for do not I know that I [am] this day king over Israel?* and can and will do as I please; as he had been driven from his throne and palace, and was now invited back again, and upon his return, it was as if he was made king anew, and afresh inaugurated into his office; and therefore no blood should be split on that day on which he was restored to his kingdom.

**Ver. 23.** *Therefore the king said unto Shimei, thou shalt not die,* etc.] This day by my hands, or order, or by the sword, (<sup><1008></sup>1 Kings 2:8);

*and the king sware unto him;* that he should not die for that offence, or for that only; but if he committed a new one, this oath was no longer binding on him, and not at all upon his heir and successor.

**Ver. 24.** *And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king,* etc.] Not down to Jordan, but Jerusalem; when the king was come thither, he came from his own dwelling to the king's palace; he is called the son of Saul, though he was his grandson, and grandsons are sometimes called sons; though in the Septuagint it is, the son's son of Saul; and the Syriac and Arabic versions are, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul:

*and had neither dressed his feet;* had not cut his nails, as the Septuagint adds, his toenails; or rather had not washed his feet, as the Targum paraphrases it; which was frequently done in those countries, partly for refreshment, and partly to remove the filth of them contracted by walking barefooted, or only with sandals; as also because of the ill smell of them, which was offensive:

*nor trimmed his beard;* or shaved his upper lip, and took no care that the hair of his chin should be in any order; otherwise that was never shaved, to do it would be contrary to the law in (<sup><1027></sup>Leviticus 19:27);

*nor washed his clothes;* his linen clothes, his shirts, or any other that used to be washed; or "whitened" them, as the Targum, he had not sent them, his woollen clothes, to the fuller, to get out the spots, and whiten them. All these were tokens of mourning, and showed him to be a sincere mourner for the king's departure, and the trouble he was in, since it was so long continued:

*from the day the king departed, until the day he came [again] in peace;* which must be a considerable time, and therefore he must be in a most sordid and rueful condition.

**Ver. 25.** *And it came to pass, when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king,* etc.] Perhaps from the place where his estate was; or, as the Arabic version, when he came from Jerusalem, from whence he went a little way to meet the king, as he was coming thither; for it was said he abode at Jerusalem, (<sup><3068></sup>2 Samuel 16:3);

*that the king said unto him, wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?* when he departed from Jerusalem, being obliged to flee from thence because of Absalom; it is very probable David would never have asked him this question, knowing his lameness, had it not been for the suggestion of Ziba his servant, that he stayed at Jerusalem, hoping that the kingdom of his father would be restored to him, (<sup><3068></sup>2 Samuel 16:3).

**Ver. 26.** *And he answered, my lord, O king, my servant deceived me,* etc.] His servant Ziba, who, instead of saddling an ass for him by his order, went off with that and another himself, (<sup><3068></sup>2 Samuel 16:1); for thy servant

*said, I will saddle me an ass;* he not only determined this in his own mind, but gave orders to his servant to saddle one for him:

*that I may ride thereon, and go to the king, because thy servant [is] lame;* and could not walk afoot, being lame of both his feet, (<sup><3068></sup>2 Samuel 4:4 9:3,13).

**Ver. 27.** *And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king,* etc.] By suggesting that he stayed at Jerusalem with a view to the kingdom, hoping that the quarrel between David and Absalom would issue in the restoration of it to his father's family; which was a mere calumny, he having had no such thought, nor was there any foundation for it:

*but my lord the king [is] an angel of God;* for understanding and wisdom, to discern the falsehood of such suggestions:

*do therefore [what is] good in thine eyes;* condemn him or acquit him; reject him or receive him into favour; he entirely submitted himself to him, to do with him as seemed good in his sight.

**Ver. 28.** *For all [of] my, father's house were but dead men before my lord the king,* etc.] Or "men of death"<sup>f331</sup>; worthy of death, not on account of

Saul's persecution, for which his family did not deserve to suffer; rather for the attempt of Ishbosheth to get the kingdom from him, which might be deemed treason, and so the family was tainted for it; though the sense may be only this, that their lives lay at his mercy, and that if he had dealt with rigour and severity towards them, as was usual for princes to do towards the family of their predecessors, who had any claim to the kingdom, put them to death, this would have been their case:

*yet didst thou set thy servant among them that eat at thine own table;* which was showing him great kindness, and doing him great honour:

*what right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?* to ask any favour of him, or make any complaint to him.

**Ver. 29.** *And the king said unto him, why speakest thou any more of thy matters?* etc.] Of his father's family, and the injuries done by them to David, and of the benefits and favours which he had received from David, or of his temporal affairs, of his estate, which David had given away to Ziba:

*I have said, thou and Ziba divide the land;* revoking his last grant to Ziba, which gave him all that belonged to Mephibosheth, (<sup><1060></sup>2 Samuel 16:4); he established his first decree, that Ziba should have half the profit of the land for tilling it, and the other half be given to Mephibosheth; he did not choose to punish Ziba for slandering his master, being inclined to clemency and mercy, and determined to show no severity at that time; and might be in some fear of Ziba, being a considerable man, lest he should raise a new insurrection, if he bore hard upon him; besides, he might have a large share in his affection, having made a present to him in the time of his distress, and was one of the first that came to meet him upon his return, (<sup><1097></sup>2 Samuel 19:17 16:1,2).

**Ver. 30.** *And Mephibosheth said unto the king, yea, let him take all,* etc.] The whole estate, as David had given it to him; he was content that that last grant should stand:

*forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house;* his palace in Jerusalem; which was a strong expression of affection for him, and loyalty to him.

(Solomn used a similar test to determine which woman's baby was alive. (<sup><1036></sup>1 Kings 3:16-28). He purposed the baby be cut in two to reveal who

the real mother was. Likewise, David suggests the property should be divided between Ziba and Miphibosheth to determine the true loyalty of the later. (~~10629~~2 Samuel 19:29,30) Editor.)

**Ver. 31.** *And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim,* etc.] The place of his habitation, to Jordan, (see ~~10722~~2 Samuel 17:27);

*and went over Jordan with the king to conduct him over Jordan;* to accompany him over the river, and then take his leave of him.

**Ver. 32.** *Now Barzillai was a very aged man, [even] fourscore years old,* etc.] Which was ten years beyond the common term of man's life, and reckoned a very great age in David's time, and has been ever since, and still is, (see ~~19000~~Psalm 90:10);

*and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim:* had supported him and his family, furnished him with provisions, and all the necessaries of life, during his stay there:

*for he [was] a very great man;* in wealth and riches, and was a very liberal man, and a man of great wisdom and good sense; and very probably was a man of great grace, which taught him his duty to his prince, and influenced him to show mercy to him in distress.

**Ver. 33.** *And the king said to Barzillai, come thou over with me,* etc.] Over Jordan; Barzillai came with an intent to accompany the king over Jordan; but the king meant not only to go over Jordan, but when over to go further with him, even to Jerusalem:

*and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem;* meaning, that he should dwell with him in his palace, and eat at his table, in return for feeding him at Mahanaim.

**Ver. 34.** *And Barzillai said unto the king,* etc.] In answer to the grateful proposal he made:

*how long have I to live;* that could not be said with exactness by any; but it might be probably conjectured from the age he was of, and the infirmities that attended him, that he could not live long; it was but a short time he had to be in the world:

*that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?* take so long a journey as that, seeing he might die before he got thither; and if he did not, since it

could not be thought he should live long, he could not think of it, or judge it advisable at such an age to take such a journey, change his place of abode, and manner of living.

**Ver. 35.** *I [am] this day fourscore years old*, etc.] Not that that day was precisely his birthday, but that he was about such an age, very little under or over; very probably he was full that age:

*[and] can I discern between good and evil?* signifying, either that his intellectual powers were impaired, and could not distinguish what was right and wrong, and so could be of no service to David in his privy council, or any court of judicature, he was fit for no post or office under him; or that his natural senses were not quick to distinguish between good and bad, particularly between good and bad food, which he could neither discern by smell nor taste, as follows:

*can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink?* have any gust or relish of, or take any delight or pleasure in eating and drinking; so that the most delicious food, and richest wines, and all the dainties of a king's table, would signify nothing to him:

*can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women?* either being so deaf that he could not hear them at all, or however not with any delight; the evil days being come upon him, in which he could take no pleasure in the diversions of a court:

*wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?* he could neither take any pleasure himself, nor be of any service to the king, but on the contrary a burden to him; not only on account of his sustenance, and being obliged to have servants to attend him, which might be the least part of his burden, but his company would be disagreeable and troublesome, through the infirmities of old age upon him.

**Ver. 36.** *Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king*, etc.] That is, go a little way after he was over Jordan with him, and then return to his own city:

*and why should the king recompense it with such a reward?* the sense is, why should the king recompense so trifling a thing as I have done, and which was but my duty, with such a reward, as to maintain me in so grand a manner at his court?

**Ver. 37.** *Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again,* etc.] To his own city, after he is gone over Jordan, and seen the king a little way on his journey:

*that I may die in my own city:* the city of Rogelim, where perhaps he was born, and had lived all his days, and where it is natural for people to desire to die, even in their native place:

*[and be buried] by the grave of my father, and of my mother:* or “in” their grave, as Kimchi and Ben Melech, in the sepulchre of his fathers, where men usually choose to be buried:

*but behold, thy servant Chimham:* who was his son; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions express it, my son Chimham:

*let him go over with my lord the king;* not only over Jordan, but to Jerusalem with him:

*and do to him what shall seem good unto thee;* advance him, and put him into any post or office the king should think fit, or bestow a pension upon him, or give him an estate to live upon, or whatever he pleased.

**Ver. 38.** *And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me,* etc.] He admitted of him instead of his father:

*and I will do unto him that which shall seem good unto thee;* he puts it to Barzillai, and leaves it with him to ask what he would for his son, and he would grant it. We nowhere read what it was that Barzillai asked, or whether he asked anything; only this we read, that some hundreds of years afterward there was a place called the habitation of Chimham near Bethlehem, (<sup><34117></sup>Jeremiah 41:17); which makes it probable that David gave him a paternal estate of his there, since Bethlehem was his city; and the Targum on that place is expressly for it; (see Gill on “<sup><34117></sup>Jeremiah 41:17”):

*and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, [that] will I do for thee;* whatever suit he should make to him, or whatever favour he should ask of him hereafter, when returned to his own city, he would grant it to him, if it could be possibly done; such a sense should he always retain of his kindness to him.

**Ver. 39.** *And all the people went over Jordan,* etc.] That were with David:

*and when the king was come over*; over Jordan, had got to the other side of it, whither Barzillai accompanied him:

*the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him*; took his leave of him with a kiss, as friends were wont to do at parting, thanked him for all his favours, wished him well, and prayed to God to bless him with all blessings temporal and spiritual:

*and he returned to his own place*: his own city Rogelim, having crossed over again the river Jordan.

**Ver. 40.** *Then the king went on to Gilgal*, etc.] Which, according to Josephus<sup>f332</sup>, was fifty furlongs from Jordan, six miles and a quarter:

*and Chimham went on with him*; after Barzillai had left them, and accompanied the king to Jerusalem:

*and all the people of Judah conducted the king*; to Jerusalem; who came to meet him, (<sup><0095></sup>2 Samuel 19:15);

*and also half the people of Israel*; or a part of them, as the word used signifies, and not always an equal half, so Kimchi observes; even such of Israel as went out with David at first, and the a thousand men of Benjamin that came to meet him, (<sup><0097></sup>2 Samuel 19:17).

**Ver. 41.** *And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king*, etc.] A large number of them, the other part that did not come over with David, some of their principal men, who met him upon the road:

*and said unto the king, why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen thee away*; secretly, privately, and unknown to them, and were bringing him back to Jerusalem:

*and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan*? him, and his family, and soldiers.

**Ver. 42.** *And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel*, etc.] Such of them as went down to fetch the king back, replied to the men of Israel that now met them, and objected to their conduct:

*because the king [is] near of kin to us*; being of their tribe, and his palace was within their borders, and therefore they were proper persons to bring him home:



*wherefore then be ye angry for this matter?* for bringing the king back, and being the first in it; for who so proper as they, not only to do their duty, but to show their affection to the king as early as possible?

*have we eaten at all of the king's [cost]?* they had maintained themselves at their own expense, going and returning; they had no self-interest or selfish views to serve, but on the contrary had been at a considerable charge to meet the king, and conduct him home:

*or hath he given us any gift?* no, he had not, nor did they expect any; it was not with a view to any reward that they had taken this step, but purely out of affection to the king, and for the good of their country.

**Ver. 43.** *And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said,* etc.] They replied to them, as follows:

*we have ten parts in the king;* being ten tribes, reckoning Simeon in the tribe of Judah, within which it lay, (<sup><0690></sup>Joshua 19:1);

*and we have, also more [right] in David than ye;* being more numerous than they; or, according to the Targum, they had more affection and good will towards David than the men of Judah, though he was of their tribe, and dwelt among them; since the rebellion was begun, and was cherished and carried on among them:

*why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king?* they were as ready and as desirous as they to fetch the king back; and since they were far the largest body of men, and the far greater part of the nation, they thought they ought to have been consulted in an affair of so much importance, and that doing it without them was slighting them, and casting contempt upon them, and insinuating as if they were enemies to the king; or, as the Targum expresses it,

“was not my word first to bring back my king?”

the first motion was from them, as appears from (<sup><0091></sup>2 Samuel 19:11); and therefore the thing should not have been done without them; they should have been apprized of it, that they might at least have joined them, and shared in the honour with them of bringing the king back:

*and the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel;* not those that are here recorded, but what followed, and are not written, being so very warm and indecent; and David being silent in this hot

dispute between them, which was interpreted taking the part of Judah, the men of Israel were incensed at it; and hence arose a new rebellion, of which more in the next chapter how it began, and was crushed.

# CHAPTER 20

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 20

This chapter gives an account of a new rebellion raised by Sheba, ([2 Samuel 20:1,2](#)); of David's shutting up his concubines unto the day of their death, whom Absalom had lain with, ([2 Samuel 20:3](#)); of Amasa being ordered to assemble the men of Judah to crush the rebellion, but being dilatory, Abishai is sent out with David's servants, and was followed by Joab with the men under him, ([2 Samuel 20:4-7](#)); and of the murder of Amasa by Joab, ([2 Samuel 20:8-13](#)); and of Sheba being shut up in the city Abel, ([2 Samuel 20:14,15](#)); whose head, by the means of a wise woman, was delivered to Joab, and so an end was put to the rebellion, ([2 Samuel 20:16-22](#)); and, lastly, of the chief officers in David's camp and court, ([2 Samuel 20:23-26](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *And there happened to be a man of Belial*, etc.] A wicked man, as the Targum, a lawless, yokeless man, that had cast off the yoke of the law, and was without it, as Belial is by some interpreted; or one unprofitable and useless, yea, noxious and pernicious: this man, though, with respect to second causes, may be said to be there by chance, yet it was so ordered by the providence of God that he should be present at this time for the further fulfilment of the threatening to David, that the sword should not depart from his house:

*whose name [was] Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite*; one perhaps that had been in the rebellion of Absalom, and had a grudge against David for the removal of the kingdom out of that tribe:

*and he blew a trumpet*; which was done to draw off the Israelites from David, and gather a party to himself:

*and said, we have no part in David*; so he interpreted what the men of Judah said, because they claimed kindred to David, the rest of the Israelites had no interest in him; thus they, who just before said they had ten parts in him, now had none at all:

*neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse*; so he calls David by way of contempt, as if he was no king, but a private person, and a descendant from a mean family:

*every man to his tent, O Israel*; there to consider what to do, and whom to choose to be their king, and let Judah take David for their king, and enjoy him alone, since they had so slighted, and dealt so injuriously and roughly with the rest of the tribes.

**Ver. 2.** *So every man of Israel went up from after David*, etc.] Those that met him on the road departed from him, and went no further with him:

*[and] followed Sheba the son of Bichri*; and made him their captain, who was the author of their mutiny and sedition:

*but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan to Jerusalem*: never left him, after they had conducted him over Jordan, until they had brought him safely to Jerusalem.

**Ver. 3.** *And David came to his house at Jerusalem*, etc.] His palace there, which was in that part of the city called the fort of Zion, and city of David:

*and the king took the ten women [his] concubines, whom he had left to keep the house*; when he fled from Jerusalem because of Absalom, (<sup>3016</sup>2 Samuel 15:16);

*and put them in ward*; partly as a punishment for easily yielding to the lust of Absalom, and partly that they might not be seen, which would bring to remembrance his sin:

*and fed them*; he did not put them to death, nor put them away, but kept them thus confined, and made a proper provision for them, not suffering them to marry any other, and be maintained by them:

*but went not in unto them*: into their apartments to lie with them, having been defiled by his son, (<sup>3016</sup>2 Samuel 16:22);

*so they were shut up unto the day of their death*; kept in the ward till they died:

*living in widowhood*; neither used by the king as his concubines, as they had been before, nor suffered to marry any other; or “in the widowhood of life”<sup>f333</sup>, which is so expressed, to distinguish it from widowhood made by

death; this was such sort of widowhood as obtained while their husband was living; so the Targum,

“widows of their husband alive,”

or remaining.

**Ver. 4.** *Then said the king to Amasa*, etc.] Whom he had promised to make general of his army, (<sup>30913</sup>2 Samuel 19:13); and by the following order declared him such:

*assemble me the men of Judah within three days*; which was done by the sound of the trumpet, or by the proclamation of a herald; it seems that the men of Judah, who attended David to Jerusalem, were gone to their respective cities and places of abode, or there would have been no occasion for such a summons; though it is strange they should, when the men of Israel appeared so inclinable to a new rebellion:

*and be thou here present*; to take the command of them.

**Ver. 5.** *So Amasa went to assemble [the men of] Judah*, etc.] To gather, them together out of their several tribes, and bring them to Jerusalem:

*but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him*: than the three days; whether this was owing to the remissness of Amasa, or the unwillingness of the people to serve under him, who had been Absalom's general in the late rebellion, or not having time sufficient allowed him, is not certain.

**Ver. 6.** *And David said to Abishai*, etc.] For it seems he would have nothing to say to Joab, being displeased with him for slaying Absalom, and having removed him from his posts; and therefore speaks to the next officer in his army, Abishai; though Josephus <sup>f334</sup> says, he addressed himself to Joab, contrary to the express words of the text:

*now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than [did] Absalom*; gain a greater party, and give more trouble to subdue him, unless suppressed in time:

*take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him*; without waiting for Amasa, and the troops he was assembling; delays in such a case as an insurrection being dangerous, which ought to be nipped in the bud, and

crushed as soon as possible; in order to which, he bids him take his servants that were about him, his bodyguards, and pursue Sheba:

*lest he get him fenced cities*; where he may secure himself, and hold out a siege a long time, and give a great deal of trouble:

*and escape us*; for the present; or “escape our eyes”, as the “Keri”, or marginal reading is; we shall lose sight of him, and not know which way he is gone, if he is not pursued quickly.

**Ver. 7.** *And there went out after him Joab’s men*, etc.] Who though he was removed from his post as general, yet might still have the command of a regiment:

*and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites*; over whom Benaiah was, (~~2~~ Samuel 20:23); these attended David in his flight, and had now returned with him, (~~2~~ Samuel 15:18);

*and all the mighty men*; the military men that were at Jerusalem as many as could be spared:

*and they went out of Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri*; with Abishai at the head of them; Josephus<sup>f335</sup> says there were six hundred, besides the soldiers at Jerusalem that went on this pursuit.

**Ver. 8.** *When they [were] at the great stone which [is] in Gibeon*, etc.] Which, according to Josephus<sup>f336</sup>, was forty furlongs, or five miles from Jerusalem: what this great stone was, whether an obelisk, or what, is not certain; one of the greatest stones we read of was that which Semiramis cut out of the mountains of Armenia, which was an hundred thirty feet long, and twenty five broad and thick<sup>f337</sup>. This place was appointed for the rendezvous of David’s forces, and hither Amasa came with what he had assembled together, and joined them, and took the command of them: for it follows,

*Amasa went before them*; as the general of them:

*and Joab’s garment that he had put on was girded unto him*; who went along with his brother Abishai at the head of his own men, to which he was obliged by virtue of his commission; or went of himself to serve the common cause, and perhaps chiefly with a design to murder Amasa, whom he envied, because he was put into his post as general, and therefore accoutred himself for it; he put on, not a coat of mail, but a common

garment which he girt about him, that it might be no incumbrance to him or hinderance of him, in doing what he intended, but that he might more expeditiously execute it:

*and upon it a girdle [with] a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof;* the sword in the belt was not on his thigh, but on his loins, on the outside of his clothes, and was put into a sheath too large, and placed in such a position, that with the least motion, when he pleased, it would easily drop out of it, without drawing it, and so give no suspicion of his design:

*and as he went forth;* to meet Amasa, just as he came to him:

*it fell out;* the sword fell out of the sheath to the ground.

**Ver. 9.** *And Joab said to Amasa,* etc.] In a friendly manner, with all the air of pleasantry and good humour:

*[art] thou in health, my brother?* this looked like a friendly salutation to ask of his health, and wish him it, and a loving appellation to call him brother; though they were near of kin, sisters' children, and so own cousins; thus he addressed him, to cover his design:

*and Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him:* as was usual for the eastern people to do when they addressed and saluted one another in an affectionate way, and as the Turks and Arabs do to this day, as travellers relate. Barthius<sup>f338</sup> has collected passages from the Greek poets, which show it to be a custom, that when a man asked a favour of another, he caught hold of his beard with the right hand, and of his knee with the left; and in such a posture Joab might easily do what follows.

**Ver. 10.** *But Amasa took no heed to the sword that [was] in Joab's hand,* etc.] In his left hand, for with his right hand he took him by the beard; he might see the sword drop out of the scabbard, and Joab take it up, which he supposed he did in order to put it into its sheath again, having no suspicion of his wicked design, and therefore not at all upon his guard to prevent it:

*so he smote him therewith in the fifth [rib];* in the same place where Abner smote Asahel, and Joab Abner; (see Gill on "<sup>4023</sup>2 Samuel 2:23") and (see Gill on "<sup>4027</sup>2 Samuel 3:27"): he must strike him, as some observe, on the left side, because he was embracing him; and the stroke must be deadly, because he struck him in the pericardium, which surrounds the heart round

with water, to refrigerate it; for the lower part of the heart reaches to the fifth rib; (see ~~4398~~ John 19:34) <sup>f339</sup>:

*and shed out his bowels to the ground*; which fell out through the incision made by the sword:

*and struck him not again*: he gave him such a home thrust, there was no need to repeat it, he dispatched him at once:

*and he died*; and thus, though he was pardoned by David, and promoted to honour by him, yet the providence of God would not suffer him to go unpunished for joining with Absalom in an unnatural rebellion against his uncle:

*so Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri*: for Amasa being slain, Joab without any ceremony reassumed his post as general, and, with his brother Abishai under him, made all the haste they could in pursuit of the rebel.

**Ver. 11.** *And one of Joab's men stood by him*, etc.] By the body of Amasa; no doubt by the order of Joab, to satisfy the people as they came up, and reconcile them to this fact, and to exhort them not to stop, but to follow after Joab; for though Amasa their general was dead, Joab had taken the command of the army, and the pursuit was carried on with as much rigour as ever:

*and said, he that favoureth Joab, and he that [is] for David, [let him go] after Joab*: he that likes Joab should be general, and is in the interest of David, let him make no stay here, but follow after Joab; Joab and David are put together, as if their interests were the same; though there seems to be an indecency in placing Joab first.

**Ver. 12.** *And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway*, etc.] By which it seems, that though the wound was mortal, and of which he died, that as yet there was life in him, and through the pain he was in, and the pangs of death on him, he rolled himself about in his own blood in the high road, where the fact was committed:

*and when the man saw that all the people stood still*; gazing at the shocking sight, and could not be prevailed upon to go on:

*he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field*; which was adjoining to it:



*and cast a cloth upon him*; that the body might not be seen:

*when he saw that everyone that came by him stood still*; and so retarded the people in their march, to prevent which he took the above method, and it was a very prudent one.

**Ver. 13.** *When he was removed out of the highway*, etc.] Into the field, and covered over with a cloth, that he could not be seen:

*all the people went on after Joab*; made no stop at all, knowing nothing of the matter, or what had happened:

*to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri*; these were the troops that Amasa had been assembling, which followed one another after him; for Joab and Abishai, with their men, were at Gibeon first.

**Ver. 14.** *And he went through all the tribes of Israel*, etc.] That is, Sheba the son of Bichri, last mentioned, (<sup><1013></sup>2 Samuel 20:13), who passed through all the tribes of Israel to get as many to be of his party as he could, and to be proclaimed their king; or finding himself pursued, he passed on as fast as he could from place to place, through all the tribes, until at length he fixed for safety in a place later named; though Josephus<sup>f340</sup> understands this of Joab pursuing Sheba through all the tribes of Israel with the forces under him; and to this sense the Syriac and Arabic versions, and so R. Isaiah interprets it; but the first sense is more generally received, that Sheba is meant, who passing through various tribes, came

*unto Abel, and unto Bethmaachah*; which were two places very near one another, if not one and the same place; since Abel is in (<sup><1015></sup>2 Samuel 20:15) called Abel of Bethmaachah, to distinguish it from any other place: it was a city that lay to the north of Israel near Syria; and from (<sup><1259></sup>2 Kings 15:29), it appears to be in the tribe of Naphtali. There was one city of this name of Abel, six miles from Philadelphia, another twelve miles from Gadara, and a third between Paneas and Damascus, which, of the three, Reland thinks<sup>f341</sup>, is most eligible to be the place here meant; though he rather chooses to look for it in Galilee, to the west or south of Paneas, than to the east or north in the way to Damascus; and so Adrichomius<sup>f342</sup> calls it a city of upper Galilee, sixty furlongs or seven and an half miles from Jordan; and though he also places it in the tribe of Naphtali, in the plain of the country of Berim (from whence perhaps were the Berites next mentioned), not far from Caesarea Philippi; (see <sup><1153></sup>1 Kings 15:20);

*and all the Berites*; the inhabitants of Beeroth, in the tribe of Benjamin, of which tribe Sheba was, they followed him hither, as in the next clause:

*and they were gathered together, and went also after him*; unto Abel; of these, (see <sup>f16825</sup>Joshua 18:25 <sup>f10112</sup>2 Samuel 4:2,3); though perhaps these Berim or Berites were nearer to Abel; or rather that was in their country, as has been observed by Adrichomius.

**Ver. 15.** *And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah*, etc.] That is, Joab and Abishai, with the forces under them, who pursued him hither:

*and they cast up a bank against the city*; which some understand of a warlike machine or engine, with which stones were cast; but it rather seems to be a bank of earth thrown up, for the better working of such engines to more advantage against the city, by throwing from thence darts into the city, or stones against the walls of it, to batter it down; such banks were used in sieges, as that Caesar's soldiers raised in twenty five days, which was three hundred thirty feet broad, and eighty feet high <sup>f343</sup>; Kimchi interprets this of filling up the ditches round about the city with dust and earth, and so making it level, whereby they could come the more easily to the walls and batter them, or scale them, and take the city by storm:

*and it stood in the trench*; the army under Joab stood where the trench round the city had been, now filled up:

*and all the people that [were] with Joab battered the wall to throw it down*; with their engines, or whatever battering instruments they had; so, often, as Hesiod <sup>f344</sup> says, a whole city suffers for one bad man.

**Ver. 16.** *Then cried a wise woman out of the city*, etc.] And such an one as the woman of Tekoah, supposed by some to be the governess of the city; but whoever she was, she well deserved the character of a wise woman; her conduct in this affair shows it: she cried with a loud voice, upon the wall of the city, to Joab's men, who were underneath battering it,

*hear, hear*; which she repeated to make them hear:

*say, I pray you, unto Joab, come near hither, that I may speak with thee*; tell your general I desire to speak with him; which was wisely done, to have nothing to say but to the general himself.

**Ver. 17.** *And when he was come near unto her*, etc.] As he did, upon the information of his men, that a woman on the wall had something to say to him:

*the woman said, [art] thou Joab?* she was willing to be satisfied that he was really the general, before she would impart her mind to him:

*and he answered, I [am he];* the very person you ask after:

*and she said unto him, hear the words of thine handmaid;* though a woman, vouchsafe to hear what I have to say:

*and he answered, I do hear:* am ready to hear, and shall patiently and attentively hear whatever may be spoken; which was giving her leave and encouragement to proceed.

**Ver. 18.** *Then she spake, saying, they were wont to speak in old time*, etc.] It was a common saying, a proverbial expression among the ancient sages:

*saying, they shall surely ask [counsel] at Abel, and so they ended [the matter]*. Abel, it seems, had been a city so famous for wise and prudent men, that it was common for the inhabitants of other cities, in the several parts of the kingdom, when any controversy arose among them, to say to one another, since we cannot agree this matter among ourselves, let us go to Abel, and take advice there, and leave it to their arbitration; and so they did, and things were presently brought to an issue, and happily concluded; nay, when the king had a mind to make a decree or law, as R. Isaiah observes, he used to send to Abel to know whether they would submit to it; and if they agreed to it, then he proceeded in it; for other cities followed their example, so famous was this city, and of so great account: now the woman argues from hence, that surely such a renowned city should not hastily be destroyed; but the Targum directs to another sense, and which perhaps is best, and is followed by Jarchi, Kimchi, and others, paraphrasing the words thus,

“she spake, saying, I remember now what is written in the book of the law, to ask a city first, saying, (will ye make peace?) so shouldst thou have asked of Abel, will ye make peace, or receive terms of peace?”

referring to the law in (~~15200~~) Deuteronomy 20:10-15); signifying, if that had been attended to as it ought (for if such methods were to be taken with

Heathen cities, much more with a city of Israel, as Abel was), things would soon have been agreed and issued; had Joab upon approaching the city proposed his terms of peace, they would have immediately yielded to them, and so the matter would have ended at once; for they were a peaceable people, as it follows: though Dr. Lightfoot<sup>f345</sup> gives another sense of these words, that Sheba and his party when they came to the city,

“they at first certainly said thus, that they would ask Abel of its peace (or on whose side it was), and so they made the matter entire, or made a show of their own integrity:”

by which this woman assured Joab, that the men of Abel had not invited, nor willingly received Sheba and his rebels into the city, but they had deceived them by fawning and false words, pretending only to inquire about the peace and welfare of their city.

**Ver. 19.** *I [am one of them that are] peaceable [and] faithful in Israel,* etc.] Her meaning is, that she was of a city which consisted of peaceable and faithful men, that were peaceable among themselves, and faithful to their king, who never were concerned in any insurrection or rebellion, not in the late one under Absalom:

*thou seekest to destroy a city, and a mother in Israel;* a metropolitan city, which had several towns and villages under its jurisdiction, which were as daughters to it. Some think she means herself, because very old, supposed<sup>f346</sup> to be Serah, the daughter of Asher, a son of Jacob, which is improbable:

*wilt why thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?* a city which is a part of the land, that is the Lord's inheritance.

**Ver. 20.** *And Joab answered and said, far be it from me, far be it from me,* etc.] He repeats these words, to show how detestable it was to him to do what she suggested:

*that I should swallow up or destroy;* any in a violent and unrighteous manner, and especially a city of which she had given such a character for its greatness and worth, and for the peaceableness and fidelity of its inhabitants.

**Ver. 21.** *The matter [is] not so,* etc.] I am not come with the army against this city with any ill will to it, and with an intention to destroy it: the case is this,

*but a man of Mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name;* for though he was by birth a Benjaminite, his dwelling was in Mount Ephraim in that tribe; unless there was a place of this name in the tribe of Benjamin, so called from any memorable event there, as the wood of Ephraim, (~~1086~~ 2 Samuel 18:6). This same man, says Joab,

*hath lifted up his hand against the king, [even] against David;* is in rebellion against the king, even so great and good a king as David; he has lifted up his hand, and blown a trumpet to draw off men from David, and after himself; he has committed acts of hostility and treason; he has drawn his sword, and raised an insurrection and rebellion in the nation:

*deliver him only, and I will depart from the city:* he did not desire any of his followers to be delivered up, only himself, knowing the rebellion would cease upon the delivery of him; and being unwilling that the blood of any Israelite should be shed, whom he had unawares drawn into this rebellion, and who he knew would return to their own cities upon this:

*and the woman said unto Joab, behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall;* she knew the fright the inhabitants of the city were in, and how disposed they were to do anything to save their city; she knew what influence she had among them, and how weak Sheba's party was, and therefore could assure Joab that this should be done.

**Ver. 22.** *Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom,* etc.] Went from the wall of the city into it, and convened the principal inhabitants together, and made so wise a speech to them, and represented things in such a light, and so prudently conducted, that they unanimously agreed to her motion:

*and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast [it] out to Joab;* whose face Joab knew full well, and was satisfied it was his head that was thrown over:

*and he blew a trumpet;* as a sign of retreat:

*and they retired from the city, every man to his tent*; the army under Joab broke up the siege, and departed, every man to his own city, as the Targum:

*and Joab returned unto Jerusalem unto the king*; to give him an account of his success, and how the rebellion was crushed; and this gave him courage and boldness to appear before the king, which one would wonder else he should have, when he had killed his general in cold blood, the king had sent out, and without his leave had reassumed his post as general of the army; but he was a bold daring man, a man of blood, and hardened in sin, and had power in the army, and over David himself, that he could not do what he would with him, but was obliged to be silent, and overlook things, and even to reestablish him in his office, as appears by what follows.

**Ver. 23.** *Now Joab [was] over all the host of Israel*, etc.] Established in the post in which he formerly was; either having been never displaced, which though David thought to do, he was not able to effect it, because of his power and influence with the people; or if he had displaced him, which by some things in this chapter seemed to be the case, yet Amasa being dead, and the rebellion crushed by Joab, which still made him more haughty, and increased his popularity, David saw it most advisable to replace him; and because mention is made of him, as established in his office as general over the whole army, an account is given of the rest of David's officers; and the rather, as it was a sort of beginning his reign anew, after quelling the above rebellions:

*and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada [was] over the Cherethites, and over the Pelethites*; was continued in his post, (see <sup><1088></sup>2 Samuel 8:18).

**Ver. 24.** *And Adoram [was] over the tribute*, etc.] Or over those that collected and brought it, as the Targum; this was a new office, and which respected both the revenue he received from his own people, and the tribute brought him from the nations conquered by him:

*and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud [was] recorder*; who was in this office before, and now continued and established in it, (<sup><1086></sup>2 Samuel 8:16).

**Ver. 25.** *And Sheva [was] scribe*, etc.] Either the same with Benaiah, or he was dead or removed, and Sheva was put in his place, (see <sup><1087></sup>2 Samuel 8:17);

*and Zadok and Abiathar [were] the priests;* as before; (see Gill on “<1087>2 Samuel 8:17”).

**Ver. 26.** *And Ira also the Jairite*, etc.] Which some take to be the same with Ira the Ithrite, (<1038>2 Samuel 23:38); a son of Jether or Ithra the Israelite, (<1072>2 Samuel 17:25); though others suppose he was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, (<1035>2 Samuel 23:26); and so the Targum here calls him Ira the Jairite, which was of Tekoah; and Tekoah being the chief place in Israel for oil olive <sup>f347</sup>, with which the lamps were lighted, Jarchi thinks he had the name of Jairite from Jair, which signifies to enlighten; but rather he was a descendant from Jair the Gileadite, and perhaps was a great friend to David when in Gilead, and from whence he brought him and promoted him: for he

*was a chief ruler about David;* a prime minister, an intimate friend, the chief of his privy council; perhaps he succeeded Ahithophel; it is much we hear nothing of Hushai.

# CHAPTER 21

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 21

A famine being in the land three years, the Lord was inquired of, to know the reason of it; and it being answered, that it was on account of Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites, they were summoned by David to know what satisfaction they required for the cruel usage of them, (<sup><1201></sup>2 Samuel 21:1-3); to which they replied, that they only desired seven of Saul's sons to be delivered up to them, to be hanged by them, which was granted, (<sup><1204></sup>2 Samuel 21:4-9); whose bones, with those of Saul and Jonathan, David buried in the sepulchre of their fathers, (<sup><1210></sup>2 Samuel 21:10-14); and the chapter is closed with an account of the various battles fought with the Philistines, in which four of their generals were slain, (<sup><1215></sup>2 Samuel 21:15-22).

**Ver. 1.** *Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year*, etc.] That is, three years running, one after another; some think this, though here related, was before the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, and not after, and there are several things which may incline to it, as that the sin of Saul should otherwise be so long unpunished, and that the bones of Saul and Jonathan were not sooner removed, here related; and that there should be so many battles the Philistines after they were subdued, as recorded in this chapter; and in one of the Jewish <sup>f348</sup> writings it is said, that this was the year after Saul was slain; though, in other copies of the same book, it is said to be thirty years after; and so in that Abarbinel used, and who is of the mind that what is here related stands in the order in which it was, and of the same opinion are some of our best chronologers <sup>f349</sup>:

*and David inquired of the Lord*; before the high priest by Urim and Thummim, what should be the cause of the famine perhaps suspecting it was some sins of his; the first year he might take no notice of it, hoping for a more fruitful season the next year, it arising, as he might suppose, from some natural cause; the second year he might begin to think it was for some national sins, but might be remiss in his inquiry into them; but the third year he was alarmed, and concluded there was something



extraordinary and special, and feared it was on his account, and this put him on making inquiry:

*and the Lord answered, [it is] for Saul, and for [his] bloody house;* on account of the blood shed by him and his family; which answer must in a good measure relieve the mind of David, if he was fearful it was for his sins:

*because he slew the Gibeonites:* which was contrary to the oath that Joshua and all Israel had given them not to slay them, but save them alive, (<sup><4095></sup>Joshua 9:15). When this was done is not certain; the Jews commonly say <sup>f350</sup> that he slew them when he slew the priests at Nob, they being hewers of wood and drawers of water to them, and were slain with them; or because their maintenance depended on the priests, they being slain, it was in effect slaying them; but rather this refers to another time, and to other action or actions of Saul, who sought by various means to destroy these people, and root them out of the land. The Heathens had a notion that barrenness, unfruitfulness, and famine, were inflicted by God for murder. Philostratus <sup>f351</sup> reports of the Ethiopian Indians, that for the murder of their king, Ganges, their ground was unfruitful, their cattle starved, their wives abortive, and their cities and houses fell to ruin, until the murderers were destroyed.

**Ver. 2.** *And the king called the Gibeonites,* etc.] Sent messengers unto them, and summoned them to come to him,

*and said unto them;* what is expressed in (<sup><4008></sup>2 Samuel 21:3); for what follows is in a parenthesis:

*(now the Gibeonites [were] not of the children of Israel;* originally, though they were proselyted to the Jewish religion, and were employed in the menial services of the sanctuary:

*but of the remnant of the Amorites;* they were the remains of the old Canaanites, who sometimes in general were called Amorites, otherwise the Gibeonites were called Hivites; (see <sup><4007></sup>Joshua 9:7 11:19);

*and the children of Israel had sworn unto them;* by their princes, as Joshua; yet,

*and Saul, contrary to this oath, sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah);* pretending a great concern for them, for

their honour and profit; that these men ought not to live in their cities, and take the bread out of their mouths, and be employed in the service of the sanctuary; but that they ought to be expelled, and even cut off, being the old inhabitants of the land, the Lord ordered to be destroyed; and that though the Israelites had given an oath to the contrary, they were drawn into it by guile and deceit, and therefore not binding upon them; hence he sought by all means to harass and oppress them, and slew many of them, and destroyed them out of their cities, that they might be possessed by Judah and Benjamin; (see <sup><104E></sup>2 Samuel 4:2), compared with (<sup><1097></sup>Joshua 9:17).

**Ver. 3.** *Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, what shall I do for you,* etc.] By way of satisfaction for the injuries done them:

*and wherewith shall I make the atonement;* for the offences committed, that so the wrath that was gone forth against the land in a famine might be appeased:

*that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?* pray for a blessing upon the land which the Lord had chosen for his inheritance, and given as such to the people of Israel, that rain might descend upon it, and make it fruitful.

**Ver. 4.** *And, the Gibeonites said unto him,* etc.] In reply to his motion:

*we will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house;* this shall not be the ransom or atonement; it was not silver and gold Saul took from them, but the lives of their brethren, and therefore they insist upon life for life:

*neither for us shall thou kill any man in Israel;* who were not of the house of Saul; they did not desire any man should die, but who were of that family by whom they had suffered:

*and he said, what you shall say, [that] will I do for you;* whether by inflicting pecuniary fines, or punishing with death, which latter seems to be what they suggested, and afterwards insisted on; whatever, according to law and justice, was required, he was ready to do it for them.

**Ver. 5.** *And they answered the king,* etc.] Declaring expressly what they would have done: the man that consumed us; meaning Saul, who lessened their number by cruel oppressions of some, and by taking away the lives of others:

*and that devised against us, [that] we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel*; who had formed schemes, and published edicts, for banishing them out of the land; perhaps at the same time that he put away wizards and those that had familiar spirits out of the land, under the same pretence for zeal for the glory of God, and the good of the people of the land, (~~OMB~~ 1 Samuel 28:3-9).

**Ver. 6.** *Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us*, etc.] They settled upon this number, either because they were seven, and no more of the Gibeonites, whom Saul slew, as the Jew say <sup>f352</sup>; two hewers of wood, two drawers of water, a keeper (of a synagogue), a scribe, and a servant; but perhaps the true reason was, they knew there were no more besides Mephibosheth, for whom David had a great respect, and therefore required no more:

*and we will hang them up unto the Lord*; not to gratify a revengeful spirit of theirs, but in honour to the justice of God, and to appease his wrath:

*in Gibeah of Saul, [whom] the Lord did choose*; which was Saul's native place, and where he always lived; so that to hang them there was to the greater disgrace of him and his family; and he being chosen of the Lord to be a king of Israel, was an aggravation of his crime in violating the oath made to the Gibeonites

*and the king said, I will give [them]*; for though he had sworn to Saul that he would not cut off his seed, yet as he had a divine direction in this case, as appears by the Lord's being pleased with it, and was entreated for the land by it, this oath of his was dispensed with; nor did he cut them off himself but delivered them to others, according to the will of God.

**Ver. 7.** *But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul*, etc.] As they did not name particular persons, only required seven sons, it was at the option of the king what sons to deliver to them, and therefore kept back Mephibosheth, who is thus described, to distinguish him from a son of Saul's of the same name, after mentioned:

*because of the Lord's oath that [was] between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul*; not merely or only out of affection to Mephibosheth, but because of the oath, that he might not be guilty of the same crime Saul was in slaying the Gibeonites.

**Ver. 8.** *But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah,* etc.] Saul's concubine, (~~1018~~2 Samuel 3:7);

*whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth;* of whom we read nowhere else; after the name of the latter, it is probable, Jonathan's son was called, before mentioned:

*and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite;* Michal had no children to the day of her death, nor was she the wife of Adriel, but Merab her sister, (~~1018~~1 Samuel 18:19); wherefore these sons were not whom she "bare", as the word used signifies, but, as we rightly render it, whom she "brought up" or educated, so the Targum, her sister being dead; and so the Jews say <sup>f353</sup>, Merab brought them forth, and Michal brought them up, therefore they were called by her name; or the words may be supplied thus, "and the five sons [of the sister of Michal]", and, as in (~~1019~~2 Samuel 21:19), is supplied, "[the brother of] Goliath". Barzillai is here called the Meholathite, to distinguish him from Barzillai the Gileadite, spoken of in a former chapter, (see ~~1017~~2 Samuel 17:27 19:31).

**Ver. 9.** *And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites,* etc.] The two sons of Rizpah and the five sons of Merab, two sons of Saul and five grandsons:

*and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord;* in the hill at Gibeah, that they might be seen by all that passed by, and serve to deter from such evils, which brought on them that punishment; gibbetings or crucifixions were commonly made on hills and mountains <sup>f354</sup>: the phrase, "before the Lord", is either the same as "unto the Lord", (~~1016~~2 Samuel 21:6); to make atonement to the Lord, and in his sight; or it denotes that it was done publicly before the sun, and in the sight of it; for it cannot mean before the ark, the symbol of the divine Presence, for that was not there:

*and they fell [all] seven together;* they were hanged together, and died at one and the same time:

*and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first [days], in the beginning of barley harvest;* which began at the passover, the morrow after the first day of the feast, (~~1020~~Leviticus 23:10,11); which was the sixteenth of Nisan, on which day, the Jews say <sup>f355</sup>, these men were hanged, and which must be about the beginning of our April.

**Ver. 10.** *And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, etc.*] Both as a token of mourning for her sons, and as fittest to defend from the weather, the heat by day of cold by night:

*and spread it for her upon the rock;* the hill on which her sons were hanged; this she spread as a canopy or tent to sit under, and be covered with it; not to cover the bodies with it, but herself, and where she sat to mourn the loss of her sons, and to watch their bodies, that they might not be devoured by birds and beasts of prey, as after observed: and here she sat

*from the beginning of harvest until water dropped on them out of heaven;* that is, as the Jews say <sup>f356</sup>, from the sixteenth of Nisan, when barley harvest began, to the seventeenth of Marchesvan, when the former rain fell; that is, from the beginning of April to the beginning of October: but it is not likely that she continued so long watching the bodies, nor would there be any need of it to keep the birds and beasts from them; for after they had hung so many months, there would be nothing left for them; but rather the meaning is, that she continued there until it pleased God to send rain from heaven, which had been restrained, and a famine came upon it, because of the ill usage of the Gibeonites: and very probably the order from the king was, that the bodies should hang till rain came, that it might be observed what was the reason of their suffering; and no doubt Rizpah sat there praying that rain might come, and which, as Abarbinel thinks, came in a few days after, though not usual in summertime; but this was an extraordinary case, as in (<sup><0927></sup>1 Samuel 12:17,18); and was done to show the Lord was entreated for the land; and so Josephus says <sup>f357</sup>, that upon the hanging up of these men, God caused it to rain immediately, and restored the earth to its former fruitfulness. According to the law in (<sup><0922></sup>Deuteronomy 21:22,23), the bodies should have been taken down and buried the same day: but these men suffered not for their own personal, sins, but for the sins of others, and to avert a public calamity, and therefore must hang till that was removed; nor were they executed by men bound by that law; and besides their continuing on the tree was according to the will of God, till he was entreated, who could dispense with this law; to which may be added, the ceremonial and judicial laws, of which this was one, gave place to those of a moral nature <sup>f358</sup>, as this did to that of sanctifying the name of God in a public manner; hence the saying of one of the Rabbins upon this <sup>f359</sup>, which is by many wrongly expressed,

“it is better that one letter should be rooted out of the law, than that the name of God should not be sanctified openly;”

that is, a lesser precept give way to a greater, or a ceremonial precept to a moral one, such as the sanctification of the name of God is:

*and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day*; as it is usual for crows <sup>f360</sup> and ravens, and such sort of birds, to light on bodies thus hung up, and pick their flesh:

*nor the beasts of the field by night*; for it seems it was usual to make the gibbets, and so in some other nations the crosses, so low, that wild beasts could easily come at the bodies and devour them; so Blandina was hung upon a tree so low, that she might be exposed to the wild beasts to feed upon her, but not one of them would touch her body <sup>f361</sup>; now Rizpah, by her servants, had ways and means to frighten away the birds, and beasts from doing any injury to the carcasses.

**Ver. 11.** *And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.*] Whether this was told out of good will or ill will is not certain; however, it was not disagreeable to David, but served to move pity and compassion in him to the woman, and to stir him up to give an honourable interment to Saul and his sons; and which would show that this fact was not done out of personal pique and revenge to his family, but in obedience to the will of God, and the honour of his name.

**Ver. 12.** *And David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of Jabeshgilead,* etc.] Which, according to Bunting <sup>f362</sup>, was fifty two miles from Jerusalem; though perhaps David did not go thither in person to fetch them, but by his messengers, (see <sup><1014></sup>2 Samuel 21:14);

*which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa*; the history of all which see in (<sup><0808></sup>1 Samuel 31:8-13).

**Ver. 13.** *And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son,* etc.] Which had been buried there under an oak, (<sup><1302></sup>1 Chronicles 10:12);

*and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged*; the seven sons of Saul, who had been lately hanged; who either had hung so long that their

flesh was consumed, and the bones dropped upon the ground, from whence they gathered them; or they took them down and burnt the flesh off of them, and took the bones to bury them, which was not usually done <sup>f363</sup>.

**Ver. 14.** *And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son,* etc.] Together with those who had been hanged:

*buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah;* a city in the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><0618></sup>Joshua 18:28);

*in the sepulchre of Kish his father;* the father of Saul, (<sup><0900></sup>1 Samuel 9:1,2); and which, according to Fuller <sup>f364</sup>, and the position of it in his map, was not far from the hill on which the seven sons of Saul were hanged:

*and they performed all that the king commanded;* that is, David's messengers and servants did; they fetched the bones of Saul and Jonathan from Jabeshgilead, and buried them with those of his seven sons hanged, in the burying place of his father Kish, and made a general mourning for them; for the Jews say <sup>f365</sup>, that by David's order Saul's coffin was carried through every tribe, and men, women, and children, came out and expressed concern:

*and after that God was entreated for the land;* not after the burial of the said persons, but after the seven men were hanged up; by this the wrath of God was appeased, which was seen by his sending rain and fruitful seasons, so that the famine ceased.

**Ver. 15.** *Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel,* etc.] Besides what is before recorded in this and the preceding book; being animated to it partly by the number of giants among them, and partly by the decline of David's life, and it may be chiefly by the insurrections and rebellions in Israel; though some think that these battles were not after the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, and the affair of the Gibeonites, though here recorded; but before, and quickly after the war with the Ammonites, next to which they are placed in (<sup><1300></sup>1 Chronicles 20:1-8); but they seem to be placed here in their proper order:

*and David went down, and his servants with him;* to the borders of the Philistines, perceiving they were preparing to make war against him:

*and fought against the Philistines;* engaged in a battle with them:

*and David waxed faint*; in the battle, not able to bear the fatigues of war, and wield his armour as he had used, being in the decline of life; after he had been engaged a while, his spirits began to fail, not through fear, but through feebleness; but, according to Josephus, it was through weariness in pursuing the enemy put to flight, which the following person perceived, and turned upon him <sup>f366</sup>.

**Ver. 16.** *And Ishbibenob, which [was] of the sons of the giant*, etc.] Of Goliath, or of a giant, of the race of them:

*the weight of whose spear [weighed] three hundred [shekels] of brass in weight*; which must be understood either of the wood of it, or of the head of it, the flaming point of it, as many interpret it; and if so, it was but half the weight of Goliath's spear, unless there was any difference of the weight of iron and of brass, (see ~~1~~ Samuel 17:7);

*he being girded with a new [sword]*; or rather with a new girdle, as the Targum; and so Jarchi, which might be given him as a mark of honour, or as a token of his having a commission in the army:

*thought to have slain David*; his aim was at him, and perceiving him faint and feeble, thought to take the advantage of it, and dispatch him.

**Ver. 17.** *But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him*, etc.] Observing him in danger, made haste to his relief:

*and smote the Philistine, and killed him*; it seems as if Abishai engaged with the Philistine, and killed him; but inasmuch as it will bear to be interpreted of David, and since the four giants here and hereafter mentioned are said to fall by the hand of David and his servants, (~~1~~ Samuel 21:22), it may be thought that this man fell by his hand; seeing it is clear that all the rest fell by the hands of his servants:

*then the men of David sware unto him*; after they had observed the danger he was exposed unto, and how narrowly he escaped with his life:

*saying, thou shalt go no more with us to battle*; they had persuaded him not to go to the battle with Absalom; they had suffered him to go with them now, he being, no doubt, forward and pressing to it; but now they were resolute, and determined he should never go more:

*that thou quench not the light of Israel*; signifying that their glory and prosperity depended on his life, and that, should he be taken away, they



should be in affliction and adversity, their honour and their happiness would be at an end; the Targum is,

“thou mayest not extinguish the kingdom of Israel,”

the light and glory of it.

**Ver. 18.** *And it came to pass after this*, etc.] After the former battle:

*that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob*; in (<sup><1310></sup>1 Chronicles 20:4) it is called Gezer; either the place had two names, or these two places were near each other; so that the battle may be said to be fought both at the one and at the other, being fought equally near to both:

*then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which [was] of the sons of the giant*; who is called Sippai, (<sup><1310></sup>1 Chronicles 20:4); he had his name from the lintel of a door, being as high as one, so tall that he could scarce go under one. Sibbechai was one of David’s worthies, (<sup><1312></sup>1 Chronicles 11:29); perhaps a descendant of Hushah, who sprung from Judah, (<sup><1304></sup>1 Chronicles 4:4).

**Ver. 19.** *And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines*, etc.] Another battle with them in the same place:

*where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew [the brother of] Goliath the Gittite*; the word “brother” is rightly supplied from (<sup><1315></sup>1 Chronicles 20:5); where his name is said to be Lahmi, for not Goliath himself was slain, though some so interpret it, and take Elhanan to be David; so Jarchi, and with which agrees the Targum; but he was slain not at Gob, but in the valley of Elah, nor had David any such name as Elhanan; he was one of David’s worthies, (<sup><1234></sup>2 Samuel 23:24); where he is called the son of Dodo, and in (<sup><1315></sup>1 Chronicles 20:5), the son of Jair; and Lahmi there may not be the name of Goliath’s brother, but, as here, the country name of Elhanan; for the words <sup>f367</sup> there may be rendered,

“and Elhanan the son of Jair, the Lehemite (i.e. the Bethlehemite), slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite,”

and so perfectly agrees, with this:

*the staff of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam*; not of Goliath’s brother, but of Goliath himself, (<sup><0977></sup>1 Samuel 17:7).

**Ver. 20.** *And there was yet a battle in Gath*, etc.] Besides the battles in the above place or places; for this does not necessarily suppose that one of the said battles had been there, only that this, which was another battle, had been there:

*where was a man of [great] stature*; for so the sense of the word appears to be from (<sup>1306</sup>1 Chronicles 20:6); though here it signifies a man of strife and contention, a man of war, and both were true of him:

*that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number*; twelve fingers on his two hands, and twelve toes on his two feet. Pliny <sup>f368</sup> speaks of one M. Curiatius, a patrician, who had two daughters that had six fingers on an hand, and were called “Sedigitae”, six-fingered; and of Volcatius, a famous poet, called “Sedigitus”, or six-fingered, for the same reason; and elsewhere, from other writers <sup>f369</sup> he makes mention of a people that had eight toes each foot; so Ctesias <sup>f370</sup> speaks of a people in the mountains of India, which have eight fingers on each hand, and eight toes on each foot, both men and women:

*and he also was born to the giant*; a son of a giant.

**Ver. 21.** *And when he defied Israel*, etc.] The armies of Israel, as Goliath had done some years ago, (<sup>970</sup>1 Samuel 17:10);

*Jonathan the son of Shimea the brother of David slew him*; this brother of David is called Shammah, (<sup>969</sup>1 Samuel 16:9); and Shimma, (<sup>1323</sup>1 Chronicles 2:13); this son of his is another man from Jonadab his son, who was famous for his subtlety as this was for his valour, (<sup>1033</sup>2 Samuel 13:3). The Jews say <sup>f371</sup> this was Nathan the prophet, a son of Shammah.

**Ver. 22.** *These four were born to the giant in Gath*, etc.] Not to Goliath, for one of them was his brother, but to some giant or another of that place, for which it was famous; they were all of them of the race of the giants; and so the Septuagint version, they were

“the offspring of the giants in Gath, whose family was Repha;”

and this Repha, or Arepha, as the Vulgate Latin version, according to Abarbinel, was a woman of the daughters of the giants; the Talmudists <sup>f372</sup> make her to be the same with Orpah, (<sup>8004</sup>Ruth 1:4). These giants, it is highly probable, were the descendants of the Anakim which remained in Gath after they were cut off by Joshua in other places, (<sup>6122</sup>Joshua 11:22);

*and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants*; the first, Ishbibenob, fell by the hand of David assisted by Abishai, and the other three by the persons mentioned.

# CHAPTER 22

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 22

This chapter contains a song or psalm, the same with the eighteenth psalm, and which, according to Jarchi, was composed by David in his old age, and, as Kimchi says, at the end or close of his days; but Abarbinel is of opinion that it was written in his youthful time, in the midst of his troubles, and was sung by him as often as he had a deliverance from any; and which may account for the several variations in it from the eighteenth psalm, which, the same writer observes, are seventy four; and are not to be ascribed to the difference of copies, or neglect of copiers: and very probably, towards the close of his days, he revised it, and made it fit for general use, and sent it with the rest of his psalms to the chief musician; but the particular consideration of it, and of the differences in it from (~~1801~~ Psalm 18:1-50) are referred to the exposition of that book in its course.

**Ver. 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.*] (See Gill on "~~1801~~ Psalm 18:1").

**Ver. 2.** *And he said, The Lord [is] my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer.*] (See Gill on "~~1802~~ Psalm 18:2").

**Ver. 3.** *The God of my rock; in him will I trust: [he is] my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.*] (See Gill on "~~1802~~ Psalm 18:2").

**Ver. 4.** *I will call on the Lord, [who is] worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.*] (See Gill on "~~1803~~ Psalm 18:3").

**Ver. 5.** *When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.*] (See Gill on "~~1804~~ Psalm 18:4").

**Ver. 6.** *The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.*] (See Gill on "~~1805~~ Psalm 18:5").

**Ver. 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.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19816</sup>Psalm 18:6”).

**Ver. 8.** *Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19817</sup>Psalm 18:7”).

**Ver. 9.** *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19818</sup>Psalm 18:8”).

**Ver. 10.** *He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness [was] under his feet.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19819</sup>Psalm 18:9”).

**Ver. 11.** *And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19820</sup>Psalm 18:10”).

**Ver. 12.** *And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, [and] thick clouds of the skies.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19821</sup>Psalm 18:11”).

**Ver. 13.** *Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19822</sup>Psalm 18:12”).

**Ver. 14.** *The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19823</sup>Psalm 18:13”).

**Ver. 15.** *And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19824</sup>Psalm 18:14”).

**Ver. 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.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19825</sup>Psalm 18:15”).

**Ver. 17.** *He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19826</sup>Psalm 18:16”).

**Ver. 18.** *He delivered me from my strong enemy, [and] from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19827</sup>Psalm 18:17”).

**Ver. 19.** *They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19828</sup>Psalm 18:18”).

**Ver. 20.** *He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.]* (See Gill on “<sup>19829</sup>Psalm 18:19”).

**Ver. 21.** *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19810></sup>Psalm 18:20”).

**Ver. 22.** *For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19821></sup>Psalm 18:21”).

**Ver. 23.** *For all his judgments [were] before me: and [as for] his statutes, I did not depart from them.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19822></sup>Psalm 18:22”).

**Ver. 24.** *I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19823></sup>Psalm 18:23”).

**Ver. 25.** *Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye sight.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19824></sup>Psalm 18:24”).

**Ver. 26.** *With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, [and] with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19825></sup>Psalm 18:25”).

**Ver. 27.** *With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself unsavoury.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19826></sup>Psalm 18:26”).

**Ver. 28.** *And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes [are] upon the haughty, [that] thou mayest bring [them] down.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19827></sup>Psalm 18:27”).

**Ver. 29.** *For thou [art] my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19828></sup>Psalm 18:28”).

**Ver. 30.** *For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19829></sup>Psalm 18:29”).

**Ver. 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.* (See Gill on “<sup><19830></sup>Psalm 18:30”).

**Ver. 32.** *For who [is] God, save the Lord? and who [is] a rock, save our God?*] (See Gill on “<sup><19831></sup>Psalm 18:31”).

**Ver. 33.** *God [is] my strength [and] power: and he maketh my way perfect.*] (See Gill on “<sup><19832></sup>Psalm 18:32”).

**Ver. 34.** *He maketh my feet like hinds' [feet]: and setteth me upon my high places.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1983></sup>Psalm 18:33").

**Ver. 35.** *He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1984></sup>Psalm 18:34").

**Ver. 36.** *Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1985></sup>Psalm 18:35").

**Ver. 37.** *Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1986></sup>Psalm 18:36").

**Ver. 38.** *I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1987></sup>Psalm 18:37").

**Ver. 39.** *And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1988></sup>Psalm 18:38").

**Ver. 40.** *For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1989></sup>Psalm 18:39").

**Ver. 41.** *Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1990></sup>Psalm 18:40").

**Ver. 42.** *They looked, but [there was] none to save; [even] unto the Lord, but he answered them not.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1991></sup>Psalm 18:41").

**Ver. 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.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1992></sup>Psalm 18:42").

**Ver. 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.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1993></sup>Psalm 18:43").

**Ver. 45.** *Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1994></sup>Psalm 18:44").

**Ver. 46.** *Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places.]* (See Gill on "<sup><1995></sup>Psalm 18:45").

**Ver. 47.** *The Lord liveth; and blessed [be] my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.]* (See Gill on “~~1985~~ Psalm 18:46”).

**Ver. 48.** *It [is] God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me.]* (See Gill on “~~1987~~ Psalm 18:47”).

**Ver. 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.]* (See Gill on “~~1988~~ Psalm 18:48”).

**Ver. 50.** *Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.]* (See Gill on “~~1989~~ Psalm 18:49”).

**Ver. 51.** *[He is] the tower of salvation for his king: and showeth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.]* (See Gill on “~~1990~~ Psalm 18:50”).



# CHAPTER 23

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 23

In this chapter are recorded the last words of David under a divine inspiration, (<sup><1231></sup>2 Samuel 23:1-7); and an account is given of his great men, famous for warlike exploits, particularly of three mighty men who did very marvellous things, (<sup><1232></sup>2 Samuel 23:8-17); and of two others next unto them, which belonged to another class of three, (<sup><1233></sup>2 Samuel 23:18-23); and then of thirty one more, (<sup><1234></sup>2 Samuel 23:24-39); who are all mentioned by name.

**Ver. 1.** *Now these [be] the last words of David*, etc.] Which refer not to the psalm in the preceding chapter, but to what follows; not the last words he spoke, for he said many things afterwards; for the advice he gave to Solomon, and the instructions to him about building the temple, were delivered after this time; but these were the last after he had finished the book of Psalms; or the last that he spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or that he delivered out by way of prophecy; though the Jews <sup>f373</sup> will not allow him to speak by the spirit of prophecy; they own he spoke by the Holy Spirit, which they distinguish from prophecy; but the Targum calls these words a prophecy, and takes them to be a prophecy of the Messiah, and of things to come, as undoubtedly they are, paraphrasing them thus;

“these are the words of the prophecy of David, which he prophesied concerning the end of the world, concerning the days of consolation that should come;”

this is observed to excite attention, the last words of dying men being usually regarded and remembered:

*David the son of Jesse said*; he began with his descent, which was comparatively mean, in order to illustrate the distinguishing goodness of God to him in his exaltation:

*and the man [who was] raised up on high;* from a low estate to an high one, from the sheepfold to the throne, to be king over all the tribes of Israel, and a conqueror, and head of the nations round about him:

*the anointed of the God of Jacob;* who was anointed king by Samuel by the order of the God of Jacob; and which was an instance of his being the God of Jacob or Israel, and of his care of them, and regard unto them, that he anointed such a man to be king over them, as well as it was an honour to David:

*and the sweet psalmist of Israel;* who composed most of the psalms and hymns of praise for the people of Israel; invented and set the tunes to them to which they were to be sung, and the instruments of music on which they were sung; and appointed singers to preside, and lead them in that part of divine worship, singing psalms and hymns; and very sweet were the psalms he composed as to the matter of them, and very sweet and delightful to the ear was the music in the manner of singing them: it may be rendered, who was “sweet” or “pleasant [in the] songs of Israel” <sup>f374</sup>, his warlike exploits and victories being the subject of them, (<sup><D1816></sup>1 Samuel 18:6,7);

*said;* as follows; for all that goes before are the words of the penman of this book, drawing the character of David; in which he was a type of Christ, a branch out of the root of Jesse, highly exalted, and chosen from among the people, anointed to be prophet, priest, and King; and who sweetly expounded the psalms concerning himself, and ordered them to be sung in the churches, and of which he is the subject, and may be said to be sweetly held forth in them, (see <sup><D244></sup>Luke 24:44).

**Ver. 2.** *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me,* etc.] The psalms and songs he composed were not the fruits of his own genius, but were written by him under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; by whom holy men of God, the penmen of the Scriptures, spoke, even as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, of whom David was one, being a prophet; (see <sup><4116></sup>Acts 1:16) (<sup><4120></sup>Acts 2:30); so the Targum here,

“David spoke by the spirit of prophecy of the Lord:”

or spake “in me” <sup>f375</sup>; what he spoke was first internally impressed upon his mind by the Spirit of God, and then he expressed it with his tongue, as follows:

*and his word [was] in my tongue*; not only the matter of his psalms was indited by the Spirit of God, and suggested to his mind; but the very words in which they are delivered were given to him, and he was directed to make use of them, and did.

**Ver. 3.** *The God of Israel said*, etc.] To David, or by him; he who was the covenant God of Israel literally considered, and is the covenant God and Father of the whole spiritual Israel, and who is owned, believed in, and worshipped by them:

*the Rock of Israel spake to me*; the same with the God of Israel in other words, who is the strength and security of Israel; or the second divine Person, the Son and Word of God, is meant, who is often called a rock in Scripture; and is the rock on which the Israel or church of God is built, and in whom it remains safe and firm, the gates of hell not being able to prevail against it; and so here is an instance and proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; the God of Israel, Jehovah the Father; the Rock of Israel, Jehovah the Son; and the Spirit of Jehovah, as in (<sup>103E</sup>2 Samuel 23:2), who is Jehovah the Spirit: now what was said by these three divine Persons to David, and by him, and concerning himself as a type of the Messiah, follows:

*he that ruleth over men [must be] just, ruling in the fear of God*; which is a character every king among men ought to have, administering justice to their subjects; ruling not only according to the laws of the land, but according to the law of God; having his fear before their eyes, and acting with a view to his honour and glory, whose vicegerents they are, and to whom they are accountable; they should rule with gentleness and humanity, considering they are men, and not brutes, they rule over. Agamemnon in Homer is often called “king of men”. This character, in all respects, was found in David, (<sup>108S</sup>2 Samuel 8:15); and may be here given as an instruction to his son and successor, Solomon; and is in all respects applicable to the Messiah, who is a “ruler” or King by the designation of his father; a ruler “over men”, even over all men, yea, over the greatest of men, King of kings, and Lord of lords, and especially, and in an eminent sense, King of saints; and he is “just”, a King that reigns in righteousness, righteous in all his ways and works, and particularly just as a King, as well as in all his other characters, (see <sup>223E</sup>Jeremiah 23:5,6 <sup>300D</sup>Zechariah 9:9); and upon whom, as man and Mediator, the Spirit of “the fear of the Lord”

rests, and under the influence of which, as such, he has acted, (~~2310B~~ Isaiah 11:1,2); so the Targum applies these words to the Messiah thus,

“the true Judge said, he would appoint to me a King, who is the Messiah, who shall arise and rule in the fear of the Lord:”

and they may be rendered, there shall be “a ruler over men, just, ruling in the fear of God”; or ruling, appointing, ordering, and directing the worship of God, and the ordinances of it under the Gospel dispensation, as Christ did, (see ~~418B~~ Matthew 28:18-20).

**Ver. 4.** *And [he shall be] as the light of the morning, [when] the sun riseth, [even] a morning without clouds,* etc.] That is, such a ruler that rules in righteousness, and in the fear of God; he is the light and glory of his people, who guides and directs them, makes them cheerful and comfortable; his administrations are pleasant and delightful, and promise a growing and increasing happiness to them, like the morning light and rising sun; and there are no clouds, nor forebodings of dark times, affliction and distress, coming upon them, but all the reverse: and with Christ these metaphors well suit, who is the true light that shines, (~~400B~~ John 1:9); the morning star, (~~626B~~ Revelation 22:16); the dayspring from on high, (~~417B~~ Luke 1:78); the sun of righteousness, (~~304B~~ Malachi 4:2); and light of the world, (~~48B~~ John 8:2 9:5); his going forth or appearance in human nature, at his incarnation, was as the morning, (~~203B~~ Hosea 6:3); the first discovery him to Adam, after sin had brought a night of darkness on the world, was as the dawn of the morning; and this light like that of the morning increased, fresh and clearer discoveries of him being made to the patriarchs afterwards; and though as yet the sun was not up, and it was not a morning without clouds, yet the discoveries then made brought joy with them, as to Abraham and others, and were a sure sign of the sun rising. When Christ appeared in the flesh, the sun of righteousness then arose, and scattered the darkness of the night, both in the Jewish and Gentile world; introduced the light of the Gospel to a greater degree than it was under the legal dispensation, and made the Gospel day; which was not only like the morning light, growing and increasing, but was as a morning without clouds, without the darkness of the ceremonial law, the shadows of which now disappeared; and without the storms and tempests of the moral law, its curses being bore and removed by Christ; and without the frowns of divine wrath, reconciliation and satisfaction being made by him: and this is all applicable particularly to the government of Christ, which is delightful and grateful to his people,

serviceable and beneficial to them, under which they enjoy great peace and prosperity; and which will more and more increase, and stilt be more glorious and illustrious, (see <sup><5717></sup>Psalm 72:7,8 <sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 30:26). A learned writer <sup>f376</sup> has observed, that in an ancient manuscript the word “Jehovah” is inserted and read thus,

“and as the light of the morning shall arise Jehovah the sun,”

which clearly points to Christ the sun of righteousness; and be it an interpolation, it gives the true sense of the words: a glorious, beautiful, and illustrious person is described in Ovid <sup>f377</sup> by the same figure as here:

*[as] the tender grass [springing] out of the earth by clear shining after rain;* which springs up the faster, and is more flourishing after a shower of rain, and when upon that the sun breaks out and shines clearly: or “from clear shining from rain” <sup>f378</sup>; that is, the springing of the tender grass out of the earth is owing partly to the rain which falls in the night, and partly to the sun rising in the morning, and the clear shine of it: this may denote the fruitful and flourishing estate which a good and righteous ruler over men is the happy instrument of bringing his people into; and may be applied both to the incarnation of Christ, when he grew up as a tender plant, or as the tender grass, mean in his original and descent, weak in himself as man; and yet this fruit of the earth was excellent and comely, beautiful and glorious, and the springing of it owing to the favour and good will of God, and his coming was as the latter and former rain to the earth, (<sup><2018></sup>Hosea 6:3); and to the government of Christ, and the benefits of it to his church and people; who flourish under it the light of his grace and favour, and through rains of Gospel doctrines they are blessed with: or “than clear shining, than rain”; Christ is more beneficial to his people, who are comparable to grass for their meanness, and weakness, and number, than the sun and rain are to the grass in the field.

**Ver. 5.** *Although my house [be] not so with God,* etc.] So bright, and flourishing, and prosperous as the government of the just ruler before described; or is not “right” <sup>f379</sup> with God, meaning his family, in which great sins were committed, and great disorders and confusions brought into it, as the cases of Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah showed; or “not firm” or “stable” <sup>f380</sup>, through the rebellion of one, the insurrection of another, and the usurpation of a third; yet he believed it would be firm and stable in the Messiah that should spring from him, promised in the everlasting covenant; though the Jewish writers understand this of the firmness and stability of

his kingdom and government: “but my house is not so”, etc. like the morning light, which increases by little and little, and like the morning, which sometimes is not cloudy, and sometimes is; sometimes the sun shines clearly, and sometimes not; or like the tender grass, which is sometimes flourishing, and after withers; but so is not my kingdom, it is a perpetual one, given and secured by an everlasting covenant; and such certainly is or will be the kingdom of the Messiah:

*yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all [things], and sure*; or, “for <sup>f381</sup> he hath made”, etc. the covenant by which the kingdom was settled on David and his seed was a covenant that would continue for ever, and would be kept, “observed”, and “preserved” <sup>f382</sup> in all the articles of it, and so be sure to his seed, particularly to the Messiah that should spring from him, in whom it was fulfilled, (~~☞~~ Luke 1:32,33); and the covenant of grace made with David’s antitype, with Christ the head of the church, and the representative of it, and so with all his people in him, is an everlasting one: it was made with Christ from everlasting, as appears from the everlasting love of God, the source and spring of it; the earliness of the divine counsels on which it is formed, and blessings and promises of it, with which it is filled, which were before the world was; and from Christ being set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting: and it will continue to everlasting; it is a covenant that cannot be broken, will never be removed, nor give way to or be succeeded by another: it is “ordered in all things”: to promote and advance the glory of all the three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; to secure the persons of the saints, and to provide everything needful for them for time and eternity: and it is “sure”; it stands upon a sure basis, the unchangeable will and favour of God, and is in the hands of Christ, the same today, yesterday, and for ever; its mercies are the sure mercies of David, and its promises are yea and amen in Christ, and are sure to all the seed. Though things may not be with them God-ward, as they desire, and could be wished for; though they may be attended with many sins and infirmities, the temptations of Satan, divine desertions, and various afflictions, and be guilty of many backslidings, yet covenant interest always continues; and so, though in the kingdom and interest of Christ in the world, there are, and may be, many things disagreeable; it may be attended with persecutions, heresies, scandals, etc. yet it shall continue and increase, and spread, and be an everlasting kingdom:

*for [this is] all my salvation*: all depends upon this covenant; the safety of David’s family, and the security of the kingdom in it, and to his seed, till

the Messiah came, depended on the covenant made with him respecting that; and the spiritual and eternal salvation of the Lord's people depends upon the covenant of grace; which was contrived, formed, and settled in it, in which the Saviour is provided, and the persons to share in his salvation are taken into it and secured, with all blessings both of grace and glory:

*and all [my] desire*; to see it fulfilled; as it is the desire of good men to be led more and more into it, to see their interest in it, to have the blessings and promises of it applied unto them, and to be saved by it, and not by the covenant of works; and there is all that in it that a believer can desire to make him comfortable here, or happy hereafter; and it is what gives him delight and pleasure in all his troubles: it may be supplied he is, as well as "this is", and be applied to Christ, the ruler over men, described, (<sup><del>1</del>2 Samuel 23:3,4); with whom the covenant of grace is made, in whom is the salvation of men; he is the author and the only author of it; in whom it is complete and perfect; "all" salvation is in him, and which they can claim as theirs; to whom is "all [their] desire"; and in whom is "all [their] delight", as it may be rendered; on account of the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, and his suitableness as a Saviour; whom they desire to know more of, and have more communion with:</sup>

*although he made [it] not to grow*; though there may not be at present any growth of outward prosperity, or of inward grace, or even of the produce of the earth, (<sup><del>3</del> Habakkuk 3:17,18); though the horn of David is not yet made to bud, or his family in growing and flourishing circumstances, or the Messiah, the man, the branch, does not yet shoot forth, though he certainly would; or, "for shall he not bud forth" he shall, (<sup><del>2</del> Jeremiah 23:5</sup> <sup><del>3</del> Zechariah 3:8 6:12).</sup></sup>

**Ver. 6.** *But [the sons] of Belial [shall be] all of them as thorns thrust away*, etc.] Not like the tender grass that springs up, and flourishes after rain, and the sunshine upon that; but like thorns, useless, hurtful, and pernicious, and fit only for burning: this is true of wicked men in general, that cast off the yoke of the Lord, and become unprofitable, as Belial signifies; and of wicked governors in particular, who, instead of being helpful, are harmful to a commonwealth; and instead of being the joy and comfort of their subjects, and of giving pleasure to them, and making them cheerful and prosperous, give pain and trouble, and cause grief and sorrow; and are, if possible, to be thrust away, and deposed from government:

*because they cannot be taken with hands*; thorns cannot be handled and gently dealt with, but some instrument must be used to put them away with force; so wicked men, and especially wicked rulers, are untractable, and not to be managed in a gentle way, and therefore violent ones must be taken.

**Ver. 7.** *But the man [that] shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear*, etc.] To remove these thorns, or sons of Belial, out of the way, or to defend himself against them; or weapons of war must be made use of to conquer and destroy them, according to the sense of Ben Gersom, and which De Dieu follows; a man that meddles with them must expect to be as much hurt and wounded by them, all over the body, as if not only the point or iron head of a spear, but the wood or handle of the spear, were thrust up in him; but the former sense seems best:

*and they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the [same] place*: where the thorns grew, or whither they are removed, or are sitting; where persons are sitting to warm themselves by them: and this may be understood of the destruction of wicked rulers, when their kingdom is taken from them, and they are consumed root and branch; and was true not only of Saul, and his posterity, as some apply it, and of Jeroboam, and those like to him, as the above Jewish writer; but of the wicked Jews, and their rulers, those sons of Belial, who rejected the yoke of Christ, and would not have him to rule over them; to whom the Lord sent the Roman armies fenced with swords and spears, and burnt their city, and destroyed them in the same place; and may take in antichrist, and antichristian states, those sons of Belial, of the wicked *ανομος*, and lawless one, the son of perdition, whose city, Rome, shall be burnt with fire; and even all wicked men, at the great day of judgment, to which the Targum refers these words; when they, whose end, like thorns, is to be burnt, will be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

**Ver. 8.** *These [be] the names of the mighty men whom David had*, etc.] Besides Joab his general, who is not mentioned; for these were all military men under him, which are distinguished into three classes; the first and highest consisted of three only, who were general officers; and the second also of three, who perhaps were colonels of regiments; and the third of thirty, who were captains of thousands and hundreds:

*the Tachmonite that sat in the seat, the chief among the captains*: not in the chief seat in the sanhedrim, and was the head of that, and so had the



name of Tachmonite, from his wisdom, as the Jewish writers say; but in the council of war, where he presided under the general, or in his absence, and was, perhaps, lieutenant general, and so over all the captains; and therefore was neither David nor Joab, to whom some of the Rabbins apply these words, as observed by Kimchi; or rather he was the chief of the three to whom he belonged; his name, in (<sup><43111></sup>1 Chronicles 11:11), is Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, or the son of an Hachmonite, the same as in (<sup><4370></sup>1 Chronicles 27:2); and here it may be as well read Josheb-bashebeth the Tachmonite, the same name, with a little variation; which seem to be names given him, taken from his character and office; for his proper name was as follows:

*the same [was] Adino the Eznite*: so called either from the family he was of, or from the place of his birth; though a learned man thinks it should be read as in the following supplement <sup>f383</sup>,

*[he lifted up his spear] against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time*; which, though a very extraordinary exploit, yet not more strange, or so strange as that of Shamgar's slaying six hundred men with an ox goad, (<sup><4083></sup>Judges 3:31), or as that of Samson's killing a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass, (<sup><4755></sup>Judges 15:15): in (<sup><43111></sup>1 Chronicles 11:11), the number is only three hundred, which some attempt to reconcile by observing, that not the same person is meant in both places; here he is called Joshebbashebeth, there Jashobeam; here the Tachmonite, there the son of an Hachmonite; nor is he there called Adino the Eznite; but yet it seems plain that in both places the chief of the three worthies of David is meant, and so the same man: others observe, that he engaged with eight hundred, and slew three hundred of them, when the rest fled, and were pursued and killed by his men; and he routing them, and being the occasion of their being slain, the slaying of them all is ascribed to him; or he first slew three hundred, and five hundred more coming upon him, he slew them also: but what Kimchi offers seems to be best, that there were two battles, in which this officer was engaged; at one of them he slew eight hundred, and at the other three hundred; for so what is omitted in the books of Samuel, and of the Kings, is frequently supplied in the books of Chronicles, as what one evangelist in the New Testament omits, another records. The above learned writer <sup>f384</sup> conjectures, that Ç being the first letter of the words for three and eight, and the numeral letter being here reduced to its word at length, through a mistake in the copier, was written hnmç, "eight", instead of çl ç, "three": the Septuagint version is,

“he drew out his spear against eight hundred soldiers at once,”

and says nothing of slaying them; and seems to be the true sense of the word, as the same learned writer<sup>f385</sup> has abundantly shown.

**Ver. 9.** *And after him [was] Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite*, etc.] Or the son of Ahohi, perhaps the same with Ahoah, a descendant of Benjamin, (~~1388~~1 Chronicles 8:4); this Eleazar was the next to the Tachmonite, the second worthy of the first class:

*[one] of the three mighty men with David*; the second of the three valiant men that were with David in his wars, and fought with him, and for him:

*when they defied the Philistines*; clapped their hands at them, gloried over them, daring them to come and light them; so did David and his mighty men, as Goliath had defied them before:

*[that] were there gathered together to battle*; at Pasdammim, as appears from (~~1311B~~1 Chronicles 11:13);

*and the men of Israel were gone away*; fled when they saw the Philistines gather together to fight them, notwithstanding they had defied them; and so David, and his three mighty men, were left alone to combat with the Philistines.

**Ver. 10.** *He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary*, etc.] He rose up when the Israelites fled, and stood his ground alone, and fought with the Philistines, and smote them with his sword, until his hand was weary with smiting:

*and his hand clave unto the sword*; which was contracted by holding it so long, and grasping it so hard, that it could not easily be got out of it; or through the quantity of blood which ran upon his hand, as it was shed, so Josephus<sup>f386</sup>; and which being congealed, and dried, caused his hand to stick to the hilt of his sword, so that they were, as it were, glued together by it; or the sense may be only, that though weary, he did not drop his sword, but held it fast till he had destroyed the enemy:

*and the Lord wrought a great victory that day*; for to him it must be ascribed, and not to the strength and valour of the man:

*and the people returned after him only to spoil*; they that fled, when they saw what a victory was obtained by him, returned and came after him; not

to help him in smiting, but to spoil those that were slain, and strip them of what they had.

**Ver. 11.** *And after him [was] Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite*, etc.]

One who was of the mountainous country, as the Targum, the hill country of Judea, of Hebron, or the parts adjacent; this was the third of the first three; there was one of this name among the thirty, (<sup><1033></sup>2 Samuel 23:33);

*and the Philistines were gathered together into a troop*; but so they were no doubt at first; R. Isaiah takes it to be the name of a place called Chiyah; as the Targum, Chayatha; and which Kimchi says was a village, an unwalled town; and Ben Melech observes, that it is said in the Arabic language, a collection of houses is called Alchai: it may be the same with Lehi, where Samson slew a thousand with the jawbone of an ass, (<sup><0757></sup>Judges 15:17), whence it had its name; and Josephus <sup>f387</sup> says, the place where the Philistines were gathered together was called “the Jawbone”: but perhaps the sense of Ben Gersom may be best of all, that they gathered together in this place for provision, for food and forage, to support the life of them and their cattle: since it follows,

*where was a piece of ground full of lentiles*; a sort of pulse, which was eaten in those countries, and the pottage of which was delicious food, (see <sup><0231></sup>Genesis 25:30,34);

*and the people fled from the Philistines*; as they did before under Eleazar, (<sup><1031></sup>2 Samuel 23:9).

**Ver. 12.** *But he stood in the midst of the ground*, etc.] The field of lentiles:

*and defended it*; the field, so that the Philistines could not ravage it, and get food and forage from it:

*and slew the Philistines*; made a great slaughter among them, entirely routed them, so that they that escaped his sword were obliged to flee:

*and the Lord wrought a great victory*; to whom the glory of it belonged; a similar fact is ascribed to Eleazar before mentioned in (<sup><3113></sup>1 Chronicles 11:13,14); and, indeed, it seems to be the same, and in which they were both concerned; for it is plain from the account that there were more than one engaged in this action, since it is there said, “and they set themselves in the midst of that parcel”; and though that parcel of ground is said there to be full of barley, it may easily be reconciled by observing, that one part of it

might be sowed with barley, and the other part with lentiles; so the Targum in (<sup><43113></sup>1 Chronicles 11:13); for it was half lentiles and half barley; and Eleazar might be placed to defend the one, and Shammah the other; from whence it appears it was about March when this action was, at the latter end of which barley harvest began.

**Ver. 13.** *And three of the thirty chiefs went down*, etc.] Or three that were chief of the thirty, superior to them; which some understand of the three before mentioned, so Josephus <sup>f388</sup>; and that having related some particular exploits of theirs, here observes one, in which they were all concerned; and others think the three next are meant, of whom Abishai was the chief, Benaiah the next, and the third Asahel; but the first sense is best:

*and came to David in the harvest time, unto the cave of Adullam*; not when he was there, upon his flight from Saul, (<sup><4927></sup>1 Samuel 22:1); but after he was king, when engaged in war with the Philistines; perhaps wheat harvest is here meant:

*and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim*; the army of the Philistines, as the Targum; of the valley of Rephaim, (see Gill on <sup><4658></sup>Joshua 15:8”).

**Ver. 14.** *And David [was] then in an hold*, etc.] In a strong hold; the strong hold of Zion, as Josephus <sup>f389</sup>, or one on a rock near the cave of Adullam, (see <sup><43115></sup>1 Chronicles 11:15);

*and the garrison of the Philistines [was] then [in] Bethlehem*; which was about six miles from Jerusalem; the valley of Rephaim lay between that and Bethlehem; so far had they got into the land of Judea, and such footing in it, as to have a garrison so near its metropolis.

**Ver. 15.** *And David longed, and said*, etc.] It being harvest time, the summer season, and hot weather, and he thirsty:

*oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which [is] by the gate!* which he was well acquainted with, being his native place; and which might make it the more desirable, as well as its waters might be peculiarly cool and refreshing, and very excellent, as Kimchi suggests. This well was about a mile from Bethlehem, now called David's well, as some travellers say <sup>f390</sup>. It is said to be a very large well, with three mouths, and lies a little out of the road <sup>f391</sup>; and that there is now near Rachel's grave a good rich cistern, which is deep and wide; wherefore the

people that go to dip water are provided with small leathern buckets, and a line, as usual in those countries<sup>f392</sup>; but Mr. Maundrell<sup>f393</sup> says it is a well, or rather a cistern, supplied only with rain, without any excellency in its waters to make them desirable; but it seems, he adds, David's spirit had a further aim. Some think he meant by this to get Bethlehem out of the hands of the Philistines, and obtain the possession of it; others, as Jarchi, that he intended to ask some question of the sanhedrim that sat there; and others, that his desire was after the law of God, called waters, as in (~~2801~~ Isaiah 55:1); and some Christian writers, both ancient and modern<sup>f394</sup>, are of opinion, that not literal but spiritual water was desired by him, and that he thirsted after the coming of the Messiah, to be born at Bethlehem, and the living water which he only can give, (~~8040~~ John 4:10).

**Ver. 16.** *And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines*, etc.] Which lay in the valley of Rephaim, between the hold in which David was and the well of Bethlehem; these three men hearing David express himself in the above manner, though without any view that any should risk their lives to obtain it, only in a general way said, oh for a draught of the water of the well of Bethlehem! immediately set out, and made their way through the army of the Philistines to the well:

*and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that [was] by the gate, and took [it], and brought [it] to David*; in a vessel which they probably carried with them for that purpose:

*nevertheless he would not drink thereof*; because, say they who take these words in a spiritual sense, it was not this water, but spiritual water, he desired: but the reason is given in (~~10237~~ 2 Samuel 23:17):

*but poured it out unto the Lord*; as a libation to him, it being rather blood than water, being fetched at the hazard of men's lives, and therefore more fit to be offered as a sacrifice to God than to be drank by him; and this he might do in thankfulness to God for preserving the lives of the men. Gersom thinks it was now the feast of tabernacles, which was the feast of ingathering the fruits of the earth, when great quantities of water were drawn and poured out at the altar, which was done to obtain the blessing of the former rain; (see Gill on "~~4075~~ John 7:37") and (see Gill on "~~4078~~ John 7:38").

**Ver. 17.** *And he said, be it far from me, O Lord, that one should do this*, etc.] Drink of the water these men had brought him:

*[is not this] the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?* who risked the shedding of their blood, and went in danger of their lives to get it:

*therefore he would not drink it:* some compare with this the story of Alexander <sup>f395</sup> to whom a vessel of water was offered when in extreme thirst, which he refused, because he could not bear to drink it alone, and so small a quantity could not be divided among all about him; but the reasons are not the same:

*these things did these three mighty men;* which made them very famous.

**Ver. 18.** *And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among the three,* etc.] Another triumvirate, of which he was the head:

*and he lifted up his spear against three hundred, [and] slew [them];* Josephus <sup>f396</sup> says six hundred; this seems to confirm the reading of (<sup>10238</sup>-2 Samuel 23:8), that the number eight hundred is right, for if it was only three hundred, Abishai would have been equal to one, even the first, of the former three; which yet is denied him in (<sup>10239</sup>-2 Samuel 23:19):

*and had the name among three;* of which he was one; and he had the chief name among them, or was the most famous of them.

**Ver. 19.** *Was he not most honourable of three?* etc.] He was; who, besides the exploit here mentioned, did many other things; he went down with David into Saul's camp, and took away his spear and cruse, which were at his bolster, (<sup>10216</sup>-1 Samuel 26:6-12); he relieved David when in danger from Ishbubenob the giant, (<sup>10216</sup>-2 Samuel 21:16,17); he beat the Edomites, and slew eighteen thousand of them in the valley of salt, (<sup>13182</sup>-1 Chronicles 18:12):

*therefore he was their captain;* of the other two, or was head over them, took rank before them:

*howbeit he attained not unto the [first] three;* for fortitude, courage, and warlike exploits, namely, to the Tachmonite, Eleazar, and Shammah.

**Ver. 20.** *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel,* etc.] A city in the tribe of Judah, (<sup>16521</sup>-Joshua 15:21); the father of this man was a man of great vivacity, valour, and strength, so that it was like father like son. Procopius Gazaeus says Benaiah was David's brother's son, and a grandson of Jesse:

*who had done many acts*; which may refer either to the father of Benaiah or to Benaiah himself; and indeed the Syriac and Arabic versions refer the preceding character, “a valiant man”, not to the father, but the son:

*he slew two lionlike men of Moab*; two princes of Moab, as the Targum, or two giants of Moab, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; men who were comparable to lions for their strength and courage; for this is not to be understood of two strong towers of Moab, as Ben Gersom, which were defended by valiant men like lions, or which had the form of lions engraved on them: nor of Moabitish altars, as Gussetius<sup>f397</sup>, the altar of the Lord, being called by this name of Ariel, the word used; but of men of uncommon valour and fortitude:

*he went down also, and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow*; not Joab, (<sup><1023></sup>1 Kings 2:34), as is the tradition<sup>f398</sup>, but a real lion, the strongest among the beasts; and that in a pit where he could not keep his distance, and turn himself, and take all advantage, and from whence he could not make his escape; and which indeed might quicken his resolution, when he must fight or die; and on a snowy day, when lions are said to have the greatest strength, as in cold weather, or however are fiercer for want of food; and when Benaiah might be benumbed in his hands and feet with cold. Josephus<sup>f399</sup> represents the case thus, that the lion fell into a pit, where was much snow, and was covered with it, and making a hideous roaring, Benaiah went down and slew him; but rather it was what others say, that this lion very much infested the places adjacent, and did much harm; and therefore, for the good of the country, and to rid them of it, took this opportunity, and slew it; which one would think was not one of the best reasons that might offer; it seems best therefore what Bochart<sup>f400</sup> conjectures, that Benaiah went into a cave, for so the word used may signify, to shelter himself a while from the cold, when a lion, being in it for the same reason, attacked him, and he fought with it and slew it; or rather it may be an hollow place, a valley that lay between Acra and Zion, where Benaiah, hearing a lion roar, went down and slew it<sup>f401</sup>.

**Ver. 21.** *And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man*, etc.] A person of good countenance and shape, very large and tall; in (<sup><1312></sup>1 Chronicles 11:28), he is said to be a man of great stature, and five cubits high, and so wanted a cubit and a span of the height of Goliath, (<sup><070></sup>1 Samuel 17:4);

*and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand*; as large as Goliath's; for in (<sup><13123></sup>1 Chronicles 11:23), it is said to be like a weaver's beam, as Goliath's was, (see Gill on "<sup><0900></sup>1 Samuel 17:7"):

*and he went down to him with a staff*; with a walking staff only, having no other weapon:

*and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand*; and therefore must be a man very nimble and dexterous, as well as bold and courageous:

*and slew him with his own spear*; as David cut off Goliath's head with his own sword. This is supposed <sup>f402</sup> to be Shimei, the son of Gera, (<sup><1086></sup>1 Kings 2:46).

**Ver. 22.** *These [things] did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada*, etc.] Slew a lion, and two lion-like men of Moab, and an Egyptian of a gigantic stature, (<sup><1023></sup>2 Samuel 23:20,21):

*and had the name among three mighty men*; of which he was one, and Abishai another, the third Asahel, one of the thirty; or was over them, (<sup><1024></sup>2 Samuel 23:24), since thirty are reckoned without him. Abarbinel thinks that the third was Adina, the son of Shiza, the Reubenite, (<sup><1314></sup>1 Chronicles 11:42); since thirty were with him, and he at the head of them.

**Ver. 23.** *He was more honourable than the thirty*, etc.] Whose names are after recorded:

*but he attained not to the [first] three*; the first triumvirate, Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah; he was not equal to them for fortitude, courage, and military exploits:

*and David set him over his guard*; his bodyguard, the Cherethites and Pelethites, (<sup><1088></sup>2 Samuel 8:18 20:23); who are called in the Hebrew text "his hearing," <sup>f403</sup> because they hearkened to his orders and commands, and obeyed them.

**Ver. 24.** *Asahel the brother of Joab [was] one of the thirty*, etc.] Or rather over the thirty <sup>f404</sup>, who are next mentioned; since there are thirty reckoned besides him, and the Arabic version calls him the prince of the thirty; Joab is not named at all, because he was general of the whole army, and so not to be reckoned in any of the three classes:

*Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem*: a townsman of David.



**Ver. 25.** *Shammah the Harodite*, etc.] Called Shammah the Harorite in (<sup><3127></sup>1 Chronicles 11:27); by a change of the letters **r** “R” and **d** “D”, which is frequent:

*Elika the Harodite*; or who was of Harod, as the Targum; these both were from one place: mention is made of the well of Harod, (<sup><000></sup>Judges 7:1).

**Ver. 26.** *Helez the Paltite*, etc.] Who was of a place called Pater, as the Targum; in (<sup><3127></sup>1 Chronicles 11:27), he is called the Pelonite:

*Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite*; who was of the city of Tekoah, the native place of Amos the prophet, famous for oil, about twelve miles from Jerusalem; (see Gill on “<sup><300></sup>Amos 1:1”).

**Ver. 27.** *Abiezer the Anethothite*, etc.] He was of Anathoth, in the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><6218></sup>Joshua 21:18), the birthplace of Jeremiah the prophet, (<sup><2100></sup>Jeremiah 1:1):

*Mebunnai the Hushathite*; the same with Sibbecai, (<sup><3129></sup>1 Chronicles 11:29 27:11) (<sup><0218></sup>2 Samuel 21:18); this man had two names, and was a descendant of Hushah, who came of Judah, (<sup><3004></sup>1 Chronicles 4:4).

**Ver. 28.** *Zalmon the Ahohite*, etc.] The same with Ilai, (<sup><3129></sup>1 Chronicles 11:29); a descendant of Ahoah, a grandson of Benjamin, (<sup><3004></sup>1 Chronicles 8:4);

*Maharai the Netophathite*, who was of Netophah, a city of the tribe of Judah, mentioned along with Bethlehem, (<sup><1675></sup>Nehemiah 7:26); a place of this name is spoken of in the Misnah <sup>f405</sup>, famous for artichokes and olives.

**Ver. 29.** *Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite*, etc.] Called Heled, (<sup><3130></sup>1 Chronicles 11:30 27:15);

*Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin*: sometimes called Gibeah of Benjamin, (<sup><0210></sup>Judges 20:10 <sup><0132></sup>1 Samuel 13:2,15,16 14:16), and Gibeah of Saul, (<sup><0104></sup>1 Samuel 11:4 15:34 <sup><0206></sup>2 Samuel 21:6 <sup><2309></sup>Isaiah 10:29), being a city in the tribe of Benjamin, and the birth place of Saul king of Israel; and this man is distinguished hereby from Ittai the Gittite, (<sup><0059></sup>2 Samuel 15:19).

**Ver. 30.** *Benaiah the Pirathonite*, etc.] Who was of Pirathon, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, (<sup><0725></sup>Judges 12:15).

*Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash*; which perhaps ran by the hill Gaash, and was also in the tribe of Ephraim, (<sup><0690></sup>Joshua 24:30). This man is called Hurai, (<sup><0313></sup>1 Chronicles 11:32).

**Ver. 31.** *Abialbon the Arbatite*, etc.] A native of Betharabah, either in the tribe of Judah, (<sup><0656></sup>Joshua 15:6,7), or in the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><0688></sup>Joshua 18:18,22); he is called Abiel in (<sup><0313></sup>1 Chronicles 11:32);

*Azmaveth the Barhumite*; or Bachurimite, the letters transposed, an inhabitant of Bachurim or Bahurim, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><0065></sup>2 Samuel 16:5 19:16).

**Ver. 32.** *Eliabha the Shaalbonite*, etc.] Of Shaalboa or Shaiabin, a city in the tribe of Dan, (<sup><0692></sup>Joshua 19:42); perhaps the Silbonitis of Josephus<sup>f406</sup>:

*of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan*; in (<sup><0313></sup>1 Chronicles 11:34), it is, the sons of Hashem the Gizonite: sons are spoken of, though but one, as in (<sup><0463></sup>Genesis 46:23).

**Ver. 33.** *Shammah the Hararite*, etc.] From the mountainous country, as the Targum; the Arabic and Syriac versions say, from the mount of Olives:

*Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite*: from the high mountain, as the Targum; in (<sup><0315></sup>1 Chronicles 11:35), he is called the son of Sacar.

**Ver. 34.** *Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite*, etc.] In (<sup><0315></sup>1 Chronicles 11:35), he is called Eliphai the son of Ur:

*Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite*; David's counsellor, that went off to Absalom, (<sup><0052></sup>2 Samuel 15:12); Eliam his son is supposed, by the Jews, to be the father of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, (<sup><0008></sup>2 Samuel 11:3); according to Hillerus<sup>f407</sup>, he is the same with Ahijah the Pelonite, (<sup><0316></sup>1 Chronicles 11:36).

**Ver. 35.** *Hezrai the Carmelite*, etc.] Of Mount Carmel; or from Carmela, as the Targum, (see <sup><0252></sup>1 Samuel 25:2); he is called Hezro, (<sup><0317></sup>1 Chronicles 11:37);

*Paarai the Arbite*; or from Arab, as the Targum, a city in the tribe of Judah, (<sup><0652></sup>Joshua 15:52); according to Hillerus<sup>f408</sup>, the same with "Naarai the son of Ezbai", in (<sup><0317></sup>1 Chronicles 11:37).

**Ver. 36.** *Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah*, etc.] kingdom in Syria, (<sup><108B></sup>2 Samuel 8:3); according to Hillerus <sup>f409</sup> the same with Joel, (<sup><1318></sup>1 Chronicles 11:38);

*Bani the Gadite*; who was of the tribe of Gad, as the Targum; in the room of this stands “Mibhar, the son of Haggeri”, in (<sup><1318></sup>1 Chronicles 11:38).

**Ver. 37.** *Zelek the Ammonite*, etc.] Who was so either by birth, and became a proselyte; so the Targum says, he was of the children of Ammon; or is so called, because he had sojourned some time in their land, or had done some exploits against them; unless he was of Chepharhaammonai, a city of the tribe of Benjamin, (<sup><6824></sup>Joshua 18:24);

*Naharai the Beerothite*; native of Beeroth, a city in the same tribe, (<sup><6825></sup>Joshua 18:25);

*armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah*; Joab had ten of them, this perhaps was the chief of them, (<sup><1085></sup>2 Samuel 18:15); who was advanced to be a captain, and therefore has a name and place among the thirty, very likely for some military, exploits performed by him; he is in the list of David’s worthies, though not Joab his master, as before observed; the reason of Joab being left out is either because he was over them all, as before noted; according to Josephus <sup>f410</sup>, Uriah the Hittite, after mentioned, was an armourbearer to Joab.

**Ver. 38.** *Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite*.] These were of Jether, as the Targum, a descendant of Caleb, of the tribe of Judah, (<sup><1320></sup>1 Chronicles 2:50,53) (<sup><1345></sup>1 Chronicles 4:15,17).

**Ver. 39.** *Uriah the Hittite*, etc.] The husband of Bathsheba; of whom (see Gill on “<sup><1018></sup>2 Samuel 11:3”);

*thirty and seven all*; reckoning the three mighty men of the first class, the three of the second, and the third class consisting of thirty men, whose names are as above, and Joab the general and head of them all. In (<sup><1314></sup>1 Chronicles 11:41), Zabad the son of Ahlai follows Uriah as one of this catalogue; he succeeding in honour one that soon died, particularly Elika, (<sup><1025></sup>2 Samuel 23:25), who is omitted in Chronicles, where a list of fifteen more is given, (<sup><1314></sup>1 Chronicles 11:42-47); at the head of which stands Adina a Reubenite, “and thirty” are said to be “with him”, according to our version; but should be rendered, as by Junius and Tremellius, “but the

thirty were superior to him”, that is, the above thirty; for these fifteen, though brave men, were of lesser note.

# CHAPTER 24

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 24

In this chapter an account is given of David's numbering of the people, (~~1241~~ 2 Samuel 24:1-9); of the sense he had of his sin, and of his acknowledgment of it; and of the Lord's displeasure at it, who sent the prophet Gad to him, to propose three things to him, one of which he was to choose as a punishment for it, (~~1240~~ 2 Samuel 24:10-13); when he chose the pestilence, which carried off a great number of the people, (~~1244~~ 2 Samuel 24:14-17); and David was directed to build an altar to the Lord in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite, with whom he agreed for it, and built one on it, and offered upon it, and so the plague was stayed, (~~1248~~ 2 Samuel 24:18-25).

**Ver. 1.** *And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel*, etc.] It had been kindled, and appeared before in sending a three years' famine among them for Saul's ill usage of the Gibeonites, (~~1201~~ 2 Samuel 21:1); and now it broke forth again, either for some secret sins committed, as Kimchi suggests, or for the rebellion of Absalom, and the insurrection of Sheba, in which multitudes of them joined; so Abarbinel; no doubt there was cause for it, though it is not expressed:

*and he moved David against them*; not the Lord, but Satan, as may be supplied from (~~1301~~ 1 Chronicles 21:1); or "it moved him"; the anger of the Lord, as the last mentioned writer interprets it; or the heart of David, as Ben Gersom; that is, the evil imagination of his heart, as Kimchi; the Lord left him to the corruption of his nature, sometimes called Satan, (~~1717~~ 2 Corinthians 12:7); which wrought powerfully in him, and stirred him up to take a step contrary to the interest of Israel, and what was prejudicial to them, as the event showed: it moved him to say; to Joab and his captains:

*go, number Israel and Judah*: not all the individuals, but such as were fit for war, able to bear arms, (see ~~1249~~ 2 Samuel 24:9).

**Ver. 2.** *For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which [was] with him*, etc.] Or who was with him, even Joab, who was now at court, and

was a counsellor of David, as well as his general; or which army was with Joab, a standing army he had the command of:

*go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba*; from the northern part of the land of Israel to the southern part of it, and this course was accordingly steered, (<sup>1016</sup>2 Samuel 24:6,7);

*and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people*; so that this appears to be done not through any urgent necessity, but merely out of curiosity, and to gratify the pride of his heart, and please himself with the thought of ruling such a numerous people, and brag of their numbers to other nations, and place his confidence therein; and no wonder it was displeasing to the Lord.

**Ver. 3.** *And Joab said unto the king*, etc.] Not so rudely and insolently as he did on account of his mourning for Absalom, but in a more modest, decent, and polite manner:

*now the Lord thy God add unto the people (how many soever they be) an hundredfold*; he wished his subjects were an hundred times more numerous than they were:

*and that the eyes of my lord the king may see [it]*; that he might live to see with his own eyes so great an increase:

*but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?* he being now old, and therefore it might seem strange to indulge such curiosity, pride, and vanity, and besides quite needless and useless: the numbering of them would not make them more or less; and they were all the king's servants, who were ready to obey him whenever he needed them, whether numbered or not; and it might be prejudicial to them, and bring down the wrath of God upon them, as well as be a troublesome and expensive business; all which, though not expressed here, is hinted at in (<sup>1208</sup>1 Chronicles 21:3).

**Ver. 4.** *Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host*, etc.] Who it seems were of the same mind with Joab, and were against numbering the people, yet their arguments and remonstrances were of no avail with the king; he was determined it should be done, and laid his commands upon them to do it, which they were obliged to comply with:

*and Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel*; seeing him resolute and determined, they submitted, took his orders, and set out to execute them.

**Ver. 5.** *And they passed over Jordan*, etc.] To take the number of the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh first:

*and pitched in Aroer*; for it seems that Joab and the captains had the army with them, and the several captains under their command, partly to assist in numbering the people, and partly to keep them in awe, lest they should oppose them, not knowing what was the design of all this Aroer was a city given to the tribe of Gad, and rebuilt by them, (<sup><0623></sup>Numbers 32:34);

*on the right side of the city*; that is, of Aroer, the south side of it, as the Targum, did Joab and his army pitch:

*that [lieth] in the midst of the river of Gad*; which was the river Arnon, so called now from the tribe of Gad, which possessed it, and so the Targum, in the midst of the river of the tribe of Gad; for in the midst of the river Arnon Aroer lay, (see <sup><0630></sup>Joshua 13:9);

*and toward Jazer*; another city given to the Gadites, (<sup><0630></sup>Numbers 32:3,35); and, according to Bunting <sup>f411</sup>, was sixteen miles from Aroer.

**Ver. 6.** *Then they came to Gilead*, etc.] The land of Gilead, half of which was given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the other half to the half tribe of Manasseh, (<sup><0630></sup>Deuteronomy 3:12,13); which tribes were numbered, and the first of all:

*and to the land of Tahtimhodshi*; or the low lands of a new place; it seems to be a country newly possessed and inhabited; the Targum calls it the southern land of Hodshi; Bunting <sup>f412</sup> calls it the lower country of Hodshi, near to the city Corazin, in the half tribe of Manasseh, fifty two miles from Jerusalem, and towards the northeast, and signifies a new land:

*and they came to Danjaan*; the same that is simply called Dan, and formerly Leshem, (<sup><0634></sup>Joshua 19:47); why Juan is added to it is not easy to say; it lay at the northern border of the land of Israel, and was four miles from Paneas as you go to Tyre <sup>f413</sup>:

*and about to Zidon*; from Dan they went round about to Zidon, to the parts adjacent to it; for with Zidon itself they had nothing to do, of which (see Gill on "<sup><0638></sup>Joshua 11:8").

**Ver. 7.** *And came to the strong hold of Tyre*, etc.] That is, old Tyre, which stood thirty furlongs from new Tyre, the island <sup>f414</sup>; of which (see Gill on “~~230~~ Isaiah 23:1”); this must be understood of the parts near unto it; for that itself was not within the land of Israel, and so its inhabitants not to be numbered:

*and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites*: which were possessed by them, and from whence they were not driven out by the Israelites; to all places contiguous to them, Joab and his captains came to take the number of them:

*and they went out to the south of Judah: [even] to Beersheba*; passing through the western part of the land, they came to the southern part of it, even as far as Beersheba, which was the extreme part of the land to the south.

**Ver. 8.** *So when they had gone through all the land*, etc.] Beginning at the east, and from thence to the north, and then going about to the west, came to the south, which finished their circuit:

*they came to Jerusalem, at the end of nine months and twenty days*: they were ten months wanting ten days in numbering the people; in which they seem to have been very expeditious.

**Ver. 9.** *And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king*, etc.] Having collected from the several captains employed in this work their several particular numbers, he put them together, and gave in the sum total to David:

*and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword*; though many of them might be under the age of twenty, yet being robust and tall, and fit to bear arms, though but sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen years of age, were mustered, contrary to the law; which, according to Cornelius Bertram <sup>f415</sup> was David’s sin, (see ~~1372~~ 1 Chronicles 27:23,24). In (~~1306~~ 1 Chronicles 21:5), they are said to be a million and an hundred thousand, which is three hundred thousand more than the sum here given; several methods are taken to reconcile this; but what seems to be the best solution of the difficulty is what is observed by a Jew <sup>f416</sup>, that here the number of the people in the several parts of the land of Israel was given, which were eight hundred thousand, there along with them, the numbers of the standing army which waited on the king in their courses, which were twenty four thousand every, month, and amounted in



the twelve months to 288,000, and reckoning lo thousand officers to them, they make the sum of three hundred thousand wanted, (see <sup><1370></sup>1 Chronicles 27:1,2), etc.

*and the men of Judah [were] five hundred thousand men.* In (<sup><1306></sup>1 Chronicles 21:5), they are said to be only 470,000, thirty thousand less than here; which may be accounted for by making use of a round number, though something wanting, as is often done; or else the thirty companies, consisting of a thousand each, under the eighty captains mentioned in (<sup><1238></sup>2 Samuel 23:8-39), are taken into the account here, but left out in the book of Chronicles; or there were so many in the sum total of the men of Judah before the plague, but thirty thousand being consumed thereby, are left out in the latter accounts, so Kimchi; but the other solutions seem best: Levi and Benjamin were not counted; it being abominable to Joab, he did not finish it, and especially being displeasing to God, who smote Israel for it, (<sup><1306></sup>1 Chronicles 21:6,7).

**Ver. 10.** *And David's heart smote him, after that had numbered the people,* etc.] For nine or ten months his conscience lay asleep, but now the thing was done, it is awakened, and accuses him for it, and he repents of it; now he began to see the pride and haughtiness of his heart; his vanity and confidence in the creature, which led him to it; aggravated by doing it without seeking to know the mind of God, and without giving him his due, the half shekel, according to the law, (<sup><1232></sup>Exodus 30:12,13); intent only upon increasing his own revenue, as some think, intending to impose a poll tax upon the people when he had numbered them; and attempting to number a people who were not to be numbered; and numbering those who were under the age of twenty, and therefore the plague began before it was finished, (<sup><1373></sup>1 Chronicles 27:23,24);

*and David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done;* he saw and owned his sin to be exceeding sinful, attended with very aggravating circumstances:

*and now I beseech thee, Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant;* the guilt of it from his conscience, which lay heavy there, and suffer not the punishment it deserves to take place on him, but grant an application of pardon to him:

*for I have done very foolishly*; all sin is folly, and some sins are exceeding foolish, and so this appeared to David; or, “though I have done very foolishly”<sup>f417</sup>, yet forgive my sin, (see <sup><4985></sup>Psalm 38:5).

**Ver. 11.** *For when David was up in the morning*, etc.] Which it is probable was very early, he not being able to sleep through the distress of mind he was in; for the words should be rendered, “and David arose in the morning”<sup>f418</sup>, for, as we render them, they seem to imply as if he had no sense of his sin before the prophet came to him next mentioned; whereas it was in the night he had been under the conviction of it, and had acknowledged it, and prayed for the pardon of it; upon which the prophet was sent to acquaint him what was the will of God concerning him:

*the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David’s seer*; with whom he had used to advise about the will of God on various occasions, though in this he had neglected to consult him; the Targum calls it the word of prophecy from the Lord:

*saying*; as follows.

**Ver. 12.** *Go, and say unto David*, etc.] Not my servant David, as Nathan was bid to say to him when it was in his heart to build an house for him, (<sup><4005></sup>2 Samuel 7:5); but now he had sinned and displeased the Lord, and therefore it is only plain David:

*thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three [things]*; or lay them before thee to consider of which thou wouldest have done; the Targum is,

“one of three things I cast upon thee,”

as a burden to bear; one of the three I will certainly inflict upon thee by way of chastisement:

*choose thee one of them, that I may [do it] unto thee*; here is mercy mixed with judgment; the Lord is angry, yet shows great condescension and goodness; a sovereign Being, who could have imposed what punishment he pleased, and even all the three after mentioned, yet resolves but on one, and leaves that to the option of David.

**Ver. 13.** *So Gad came to David, and told him*, etc.] Said nothing to him about his sin, but correction for it; which confirms it that David was made sensible of his sin before he came to him:

*and said unto him, shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land?* in (<sup><13212></sup>1 Chronicles 21:12), only “three years” are mentioned, and so the Septuagint version here; but Josephus <sup>f419</sup>, the Targum, the Syriac and Arabic versions, have the number “seven”; three seems to be more agreeable to the numbers after mentioned, and no more as to come were designed, though seven are here expressed; for the reconciling of which let it be observed, that there had been three years of famine already on account of the sin of Saul, (<sup><13210></sup>2 Samuel 21:1); and in the current year, through the rains not falling in the proper time, the land was barren and unfruitful; or through the penury of the preceding years the famine would be continued at least until the harvest; and then three years more now proposed made seven years; or, if these three years would have immediately followed the other three, the following in course would be a sabbatical year, in which were no ploughing, sowing, nor reaping, or the current year was such an one: and the sense is, shall there be a continuance of seven years of famine, that is, three more added to what had been? which must be most dreadful to think of; but a learned writer <sup>f420</sup> thinks it a mistake of the copier, writing z, “seven”, for g, “three”:

*or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee?* be in such a condition as not to be able to face or fight his enemies, or, if he did, would not be able to stand his ground, but be forced to flee before them, and be pursued by them three months running; during which time a prodigious number might well be thought to be slain, sad devastations made in the land, and great shame and disgrace endured, and what a man of David’s spirit could not bear the thoughts of:

*or that there be three days’ pestilence in thy land?* which in (<sup><13212></sup>1 Chronicles 21:12) is called “the sword of the Lord”, in distinction from the sword of man, it coming immediately from him, and the destroying angel, in all the coasts of the land; being inflicted by means of one:

*now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me;* that is, consult with himself, or with his friends, or both, what answer the prophet must return to the Lord that sent him; for him he means.

**Ver. 14.** *And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait,* etc.] Not knowing well which to choose, each of them being so grievous, and an answer being to be returned immediately; but by his next words, and by the event, it seems he chose the pestilence, though that is not expressly said:

*let us fall now into the hand of the Lord*; the Targum in (<sup><13213></sup>1 Chronicles 21:13), is

“into the hand of the Word of the Lord:”

*(for his mercies [are] great), and let me not fall into the hand of men*; indeed all the three judgments mentioned are by the hand of the Lord whenever they come; but in the pestilence the hand of the Lord is more visible, it coming immediately from his hand, as especially this was to do, and did; it did not arise from second causes, a noxious air, etc. but by means of an angel of God: David chose this, because he and his people would have nothing to do with men, as in famine they must have gone into other countries for food, and in war flee before their enemies, and lie at their mercy, and either of them more disgraceful than this; and which he might the rather choose on his own account, that his people might not be able to say he sought himself and his own interest; for had he chosen famine, as his people had been lately distressed that way already, they might, besides urging that, say, that he could lay up stores for himself and family; or had he chosen war, they might observe he had fortified places to flee to, one after another, and shelter himself; but for the arrows of the pestilence he was as likely a mark as the meanest of his subjects: but what seems to have moved him chiefly to make this choice is, that it would not only be the soonest over, but that it wholly depended on the pleasure of God what use he would make of it in that time; and chiefly because he knew God was gracious and merciful, and it was upon his great mercy he cast himself and his people.

**Ver. 15.** *So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel*, etc.] Upon the land of Israel, the people of the land, directly employing an angel to go through the coasts of it, and empowering him to inflict a pestilential disease:

*from the morning even to the time appointed*: from the morning the prophet Gad came to David with a message from the Lord; that very morning the plague began, and lasted to the time set for it, the three days, or at least unto the beginning of the third, when reaching Jerusalem, the Lord repented of it, and stayed his hand; though many think a much shorter time is intended; some think it lasted no more than half a day, if so much; some say but three hours <sup>f421</sup>; the Septuagint version, until dinnertime; and the Syriac and Arabic versions, until the sixth hour of the day, which was noon; and so Kimchi says, some of their Rabbins interpret it of the half or middle of the day; the Targum is,

“from the time the daily sacrifice was slain until it was burnt;”

and it is the sense of several learned men that it was only from the morning until the time of the evening sacrifice, or evening prayer, about three o'clock in the afternoon, and so lasted about nine hours:

*and there died of the people, from Dan even to Beersheba, seventy thousand men*; so that there was a great diminution of the people in all places where they were numbered; and David's sin may be read in the punishment of it; his heart was lifted up by the numbers of his people, and now it must be humbled by the lessening of them.

**Ver. 16.** *And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it*, etc.] Which, as it was perhaps the last place where the people were numbered, it was the last to which the plague came: this angel appeared in an human form, standing “between the earth and the heaven”; in the midst of the heaven, in the air, right over Jerusalem: “having a drawn sword in his hand stretched over the city”; as is said in (<sup><B216></sup>1 Chronicles 21:16); which was done as a menace, and to inject terror into David and the inhabitants of the city, and to give them notice of what they must expect:

*the Lord repented him of the evil*; he was inflicting, and now threatened Jerusalem with; having compassion on the place where the ark, the symbol of his presence, was, where a temple was to be built to the honour of his name, and where he should be worshipped; and therefore stopped proceeding; as men, when they repent of anything done by them, cease from it, so did the Lord now; otherwise repentance, properly speaking, falls not on him, and so it is next explained:

*and said to the angel that destroyed the people*; not the angel of death, the devil, but a good angel, who had a commission from God for this business:

*it is enough: stay now thine hand*: there is a sufficient number slain no more:

*and the angel of the Lord was by the threshing place of Araunah the Jebusite*; that is, he was in the air, right over the spot, or near it, where was this man's threshingfloor; and was seen by Araunah and his four sons, who upon it hid themselves, perhaps among the sheaves they were threshing, (<sup><B217></sup>1 Chronicles 21:20); and this threshingfloor was on Mount Moriah, (<sup><B218></sup>2 Chronicles 3:1); as threshingfloors commonly were on mountains for

the sake of winnowing the corn when threshed; (see Gill on “~~<1818>~~Ruth 3:2”); who, according to Ben Gersom, though he was by birth a Jebusite, was proselyted to the Jewish religion.

**Ver. 17.** *And David spake unto the Lord*, etc.] In prayer; he and the elders of Israel being clothed in sackcloth, and fallen on their faces, he prayed, not unto the angel, but to Jehovah that sent him; (see ~~<1316>~~1 Chronicles 21:16,17);

*when he saw the angel that smote the people*; in the air over Jerusalem, with a drawn sword in his hand, which made him appear terrible:

*and said, lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly*; in numbering the people:

*but these sheep, what have they done?* he looked upon himself as the only transgressor, and his people as innocent, and as harmless as sheep; he thought of no sins but his own; these were uppermost in his mind, and lay heavy on his conscience; and it grieved him extremely the his people should suffer on his account: but they were not so innocent as he thought and suggests; and it was not only for his, but their sins, this evil came; he was suffered to do what he did, to bring upon them deserved punishment for their rebellion against him, and other sins; however, this shows the high opinion he had of them, the great affection he had for them, and his sympathy with them in this time of distress:

*let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house*; let me and mine die, and not they; a type of Christ, the good Shepherd, willing to lay down his life for the sheep, and suffer in their stead, that they might go free.

**Ver. 18.** *And Gad came that day to David*, etc.] Ordered and directed by the angel of the Lord, (~~<1318>~~1 Chronicles 21:18);

*and said unto him, go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite*: it was too far to go to Gibeon, where the tabernacle was, at such a time of extremity, when the sword of the angel was stretched out over Jerusalem, (~~<1319>~~1 Chronicles 21:29,30); and this was the most proper place, as it was the very spot over and nearest to which the angel was; and was on Mount Moriah, where the Jews say Abraham offered up Isaac; and where the temple was afterwards built, as Kimchi and Ben Gersom observe; and Eupolemus, an Heathen writer<sup>f422</sup>, says, that

when David desired to build a temple for God, and that he would show him the place of the altar, an angel appeared to him, standing over the place where the altar at Jerusalem was to be built.

**Ver. 19.** *And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.*] From the place where he was in a lower part of the city to Mount Moriah, on which was the threshing floor, a place fit for winnowing corn when threshed.

**Ver. 20.** *And Araunah looked,* etc.] Peeped up out of the place in which he had hid himself with his four sons, for fear of the angel, and which they saw, (<sup>[321]</sup>1 Chronicles 21:20);

*and saw the king and his servants coming towards him;* he perceived, by the course they steered, that they were coming to him:

*and Araunah went out;* of the threshingfloor, out of the place where he had hid himself, for he had been threshing wheat, (<sup>[322]</sup>1 Chronicles 21:20); nor was it thought below great personages in those times to be employed in such work; so Gideon was threshing, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, (<sup>[323]</sup>Judges 6:11,12); Boaz winnowed barley in his threshingfloor, (<sup>[324]</sup>Ruth 3:2);

*and bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground;* in reverence of the king.

**Ver. 21.** *And Araunah said, wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant?* etc.] Which both implies admiration in him, that so great a person should visit him in his threshingfloor; that a king should come to a subject his servant, who should rather have come to him, and would upon the least intimation; it was a piece of condescension he marvelled at; and it expresses a desire to know his pleasure with him, supposing it must be something very urgent and important, that the king should come himself upon it: and to this David made answer,

*and David said,* what he was come for:

*to buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be stayed from the people;* for though David had acknowledged his sin, and God had repented of the evil he inflicted for it, and given orders for stopping it; yet he would have an altar built, and sacrifices offered, to show that the only way to have peace, and pardon,

and safety from ruin and destruction, deserved by sin, is through the expiatory sacrifice of Christ, of which fill sacrifices were typical, and were designed to lead the faith of the Lord's people to that.

**Ver. 22.** *And Araunah said unto David, let my lord the king take and offer up what [seemeth] good unto him,* etc.] Build an altar, offer sacrifices of whatsoever he found upon the premises fit for the same, and make use of whatever came to hand proper to perform such service with, as follows:

*behold, [here be] oxen for burnt sacrifice:* which were employed in treading the corn, hence the law in (<sup><1623></sup>Deuteronomy 25:4);

*and threshing instruments;* not flails, such as are used by us, but wooden sledges, drays or carts drawn on wheels, which were filled with stones, and the bottom of them stuck with iron teeth, and were drawn by oxen to and fro over the sheaves of corn; (see <sup><2327></sup>Isaiah 28:27);

*and [other] instruments of the oxen for wood;* as their yokes; these Araunah gave leave to take to burn the sacrifice with; and in (<sup><1213></sup>1 Chronicles 21:23), it is added, "and the wheat for the meat offering", which was upon the threshingfloor; and there always went a meat offering with a burnt offering.

**Ver. 23.** *All these [things] did Araunah, [as] a king, give unto the king,* etc.] The note of similitude as is not in the text; from whence some have thought he was king of the Jebusites before Jerusalem was taken out of their hands, or however was of the royal race, perhaps the son and heir of the then king at that time; or he has this title given him, because of his great liberality, having the spirit of a prince in him, even of a king; so Ulysses addressed Antinous, saying, thou art like a king, and therefore should give more largely than others <sup>f423</sup>:

*and Araunah said unto the king, the Lord thy God accept thee;* thine offering with a good will; with pleasure and delight, as the Targum; that so the plague might be removed, and which no doubt made him the more ready to part with the above things, and all that he had; so dreadful did the calamity appear to him, and especially after he saw the angel with his drawn sword just over him.

**Ver. 24.** *And the king said unto Araunah, nay, but I will surely buy [it] of thee at a price,* etc.] And a full price too, (<sup><1214></sup>1 Chronicles 21:24); that is, give him as much for it as it was worth:



*neither will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing*; which shows an ingenuous spirit, and contrary to the temper of many, who like to serve the Lord in the cheapest manner, or with little cost to themselves:

*so David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver*; which, reckoning a shekel at two shillings and sixpence, made but just six pounds five shillings of our money; though its value is but about two shillings and four pence farthing, which reduces the sum; in (~~1325~~1 Chronicles 21:25), David is said to give six hundred shekels of gold by weight; two ways are proposed by the Jews <sup>f424</sup> for the reconciling of the difficulty; the one is, that fifty shekels were collected out of every tribe, and twelve times fifty make six hundred shekels, and these were of the value or weight of gold; but this seems not likely, that it should be collected out of all the tribes, and since it appears plainly to be the king's purchase, and with his money: the other is, that there were two purchases, the first was of the threshingfloor, oxen, and instruments, which were bought for fifty shekels of silver, as here, and the other was a purchase of the place, as it is called in the book of Chronicles; that large space of ground on which afterwards the temple, and all the courts adjoining to it, were built, and which was now Araunah's farm, and on which were his dwelling house, and other buildings; and for all this David gave him six hundred shekels of gold, which made three hundred ounces <sup>f425</sup> and reckoning gold as twelve times the value of silver, according to Breewood <sup>f426</sup>, it amounted to four hundred fifty pounds of our money; and learned men have not been able to give a better solution of this difficulty; and with this Montanus <sup>f427</sup> agrees. Bochart and Noldius have taken another way, but not so clear and satisfactory; the Septuagint of (~~1325~~1 Chronicles 21:25) has fifty shekels, as here.

**Ver. 25.** *And David built there an altar unto the Lord*, etc.] After he had made the purchase:

*and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings*; the one to expiate the sin or sins committed, the other to give thanks for the intimation given, that the plague would be stayed upon this:

*so the Lord was entreated for the land*; was pacified and prevailed upon to remove the pestilence from it; which was signified by fire descending upon the altar of burnt offering, which showed the sacrifice was accepted, and by

the angel being ordered to put his sword into its sheath, (~~13216~~1 Chronicles 21:26,27); and the Targum is,

“and the Lord received the prayer of the inhabitants of the land:”

*and the plague was stayed from Israel*; no more died of the pestilence, either at Jerusalem, or in any other part of the land Israel.

## FOOTNOTES

- ft1 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2.
- ft2 -- Origin. l. 6. c. 2.
- ft3 -- Alting. Theolog. Hist. loc. 2. p. 86.
- ft4 -- Pesikta in Jarchi in loc.
- ft5 -- Tanchuma in Yalkut in loc. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 lib. Reg. fol. 77. C.
- ft6 -- Antiqu. l. 6. c. 14. sect. 7.
- ft7 -- **byh** “tunica scutulata”, Braunius; “ocellata chlamys”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “thorax villosus seu pelliceus”, Texelii Phoenix, p. 210.
- ft8 -- Vid. Braunium de Vest. Sacredot. Heb. l. 1. c. 17. sect. 9.
- ft9 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 6. c. 14. sect. 7.)
- ft10 -- Vid. Liv. Hist. Decad. 1. l. 10. c. 44.
- ft11 -- T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 26. 1.
- ft12 -- “-----it scissa veste Latinus”. Virgil. Aeneid. 12. prope finem.
- ft13 -- Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 18. sect. 6.
- ft14 -- T. Bab. Yehamot, fol. 25. 2. Maimon. ibid.
- ft15 -- Bedford’s Chronology, p. 245.
- ft16 -- Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
- ft17 -- See Gregory’s Notes and Observations, etc. ch. 1. and Weemse of the Judicial Laws, c. 44. p. 171.
- ft18 -- Trad. Heb. in 2 lib. Reg. fol. 77. D.
- ft19 -- Cippi Heb. p. 34.
- ft20 -- Apud Hottinger not. in ib. see Bunting’s Travels, p. 131.

- ft21 -- Isocrates de Pace, p. 364. Horat. Carmin. l. 2. Ode 7. Tacitus de Mor. German. c. 6. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 13.
- ft22 -- Aelian. Hist. Animal. l. 15. c. 22. Vid. Ciceron. de Divinatione, l. 2. prope finem.
- ft23 -- Ut supra, (Travels etc.) p. 137.
- ft24 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 32. 2. and Sotah, fol. 14. 1.
- ft25 -- יק "licet enim", V. L. "quamvis", Piscator. So Pool and Patrick.
- ft26 -- מגו "tamen", V. L. "nam similiter", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft27 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 13. p. 37.
- ft28 -- Bunting's Travels, p. 146.
- ft29 -- Cornel. Nepos, Epaminond. l. 2.
- ft30 -- ποδαζ ωκυς, Iliad. l. lin. 15.
- ft31 -- Rapin's History of England, vol. 1. p. 128.
- ft32 -- Aelian. Hist. de Animal, l. 14. c. 14.
- ft33 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 49. 1.
- ft34 -- "Transadigit costas, et crates pectoris ensom". Virgil. Aeneod. l. 12. ver. 506.
- ft35 -- Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 3. p. 501.
- ft36 -- Weemse's Portrait of Man, p. 24.
- ft37 -- "Autem", V. L. Tiguriue version; "sed", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Kimchi.
- ft38 -- Travels, etc. p. 145, 146.
- ft39 -- Ibid.
- ft40 -- Diodor. Sic. l. 15. p. 383.
- ft41 -- De civitate Dei, l. 5. c. 23.
- ft42 -- Curtius, l. 3. c. 11.

- ft43 -- Hirtius de Bello African. c. 86.
- ft44 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 3.
- ft45 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 3.
- ft46 -- Pisgah-Sight of Palestine, B. 2. c. 14. sect. 21. p. 301.
- ft47 -- Travels, ut supra. (p. 145, 146.)
- ft48 -- Travels, ut supra. (p. 145, 146.)
- ft49 -- Jarchi, Kimchi, & Abarbinel in loc.
- ft50 -- Tanchuma apud Abarbinel in loc.
- ft51 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 1. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 77. F.
- ft52 -- In Kimchi & Ben Gersom in loc.
- ft53 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft54 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft55 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft56 -- Travels, p. 144.
- ft57 -- *Æwl h Æl yw* “et abiit eundo”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft58 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 5.
- ft59 -- Ibid.
- ft60 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 5.
- ft61 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 6.
- ft62 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 6.)
- ft63 -- *hj mh της κλινης*, Sept. “lectum”, Piscator.
- ft64 -- Salmuth. ad Pancirol. par. 1. tit. 62. p. 343. Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. l. 2. c. 9. p. 375.
- ft65 -- Alstorph. de lect. vet. c. 19. p. 149.
- ft66 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 33. sect. 9.

- ft67 -- Kirchman. ut supra. (de Funer. Roman. l. 2. c. 9. p. 375.)
- ft68 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 3. Maimon in Hilchot Ebel. c. 7. sect. 7. David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 119. 4.
- ft69 -- Cippi Heb. p. 8.
- ft70 -- Pisgah-Sight, etc. in the Map of Judah.
- ft71 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 1. sect. 6.)
- ft72 -- Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Roman, l. 4. c. 5. & 6.
- ft73 -- Misn. ut supra. (Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 3.) David de Pomis ut supra. (Lexic. fol. 119. 4.)
- ft74 -- **rmawy** “nam dixerat”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft75 -- **Ær** “tener”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft76 -- Vid. Valtrinum de re militar. Roman. l. 3. c. 15. p. 236.
- ft77 -- Travels, p. 145, 148.
- ft78 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. in lib. Reg. fol. 77. I.
- ft79 -- Vid. Valtrinum de re militar. Rom. l. 5. c. 5.
- ft80 -- Vid. Macrob. Saturnal. l. 3. c. 9. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 4.
- ft81 -- Cornel. Nepot. Vit. Themistocl. l. 2. c. 7.
- ft82 -- Gregory’s Notes and Observations, etc. ch. 7.
- ft83 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 3. sect. 1.
- ft84 -- **rmal** “dicendo”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft85 -- Phaleg. l. 4. c. 36. col. 304.
- ft86 -- Dr. Kennicott’s Dissert. 1. p. 35.
- ft87 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 3. sect. 1.)
- ft88 -- Hist. l. 66.
- ft89 -- Gregory, ut supra. (Notes and Observations, etc. ch. 7.)

- ft90 -- Dr. Kennicott, ut supra. (Dissert. 1. p. 35.)
- ft91 -- Works, vol. 2. Chorograph. Cent. c. 24. p. 25.
- ft92 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 3. sect. 2.
- ft93 -- **htybw** “et ad domum”.
- ft94 -- See Dr. Kennicott, ut supra, (Dissert. 1.) p. 49, etc.
- ft95 -- Contr. Apion. 1. 1. sect. 17, 18.
- ft96 -- Justin e Trogo, 1. 18. c. 3.
- ft97 -- Bunting’s Travels, etc. p. 138.
- ft98 -- Maundrell’s Journey from Aleppo, etc. p. 87. ed. 7.
- ft99 -- “Omnigenumque Deum”, etc. Virgil. Aeneid. 1. 8.
- ft100 -- **μαçγw και ελαβοσαν αυτους**, Sept. “tulit”, V. L. Tigurine version, Montanus; “sustulit”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft101 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 4. sect. 1.
- ft102 -- Eliac. sive, 1. 5. p. 294.
- ft103 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 4. sect. 1.
- ft104 -- Travels, etc. p. 138.
- ft105 -- Tractat. Theol. Politic. c. 9. p. 176.
- ft106 -- **whaçγw** “quum extulissent”, Piscator.
- ft107 -- **μyhl ah ^wra μ[** “cum arca Dei”, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Piscator.
- ft108 -- Suidas in voce **κυμβαλα**.
- ft109 -- T. Bab Sotah, fol. 35. 2.
- ft110 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. in lib. Paralipom. fol. 83. G.
- ft111 -- Virgil. Aeneid. 10. ver. 261, 262. Vid. Diodor. Sic. 1. 20. p. 787.
- ft112 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 35. 3.

- ft113 -- Travels, etc. p. 138.
- ft114 -- **rqbh wj mç yk** “nam luto haeserunt boves”, Noldius, p. 396. No. 1343. so Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 37. col. 374. ex Arabica Lingua.
- ft115 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 4. sect. 2.
- ft116 -- Lexic. col. 1793.
- ft117 -- Hackman. Praecidan. Sacr. p. 156, 157.
- ft118 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 4. sect. 2.
- ft119 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 36. 3.
- ft120 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 79. M. & in lib. Paralipom. fol. 89. B. F.
- ft121 -- Apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 9. c. 30. p. 447.
- ft122 -- Iliad. 2.
- ft123 -- **wytj t**, “sub se”, Montanus.
- ft124 -- Vid. D. Herbert. de Cherbury de Relig. Gent. c. 7. p. 65.
- ft125 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 2. Maimon & Bartenor. in Misn. Yoma, c. 7. sect. 1.
- ft126 -- Midrash in Abarbinel in loc.
- ft127 -- **bçyw** “et mansit”, Vatablus.
- ft128 -- So Luther and Osiander; or “this is the delineation of the man who is the Lord”, etc. So Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 447.
- ft129 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.
- ft130 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 1.
- ft131 -- Bemidbar Rabba, l. 14. fol. 212. 1.
- ft132 -- Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 97.
- ft133 -- Itinerar. p. 59.
- ft134 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 1.)



- ft135 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 13.
- ft136 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 8. 1. 2. Misn. Demai, c. 6. sect. 11. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
- ft137 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 1.)
- ft138 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 1.)
- ft139 -- Apud Joseph. ib. (l. 7. c. 5.) sect. 2.
- ft140 -- Ibid.
- ft141 -- Hist. l. 3. c. 8.
- ft142 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5.) sect. 3.
- ft143 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 19.
- ft144 -- Cartwright's Preacher's Travels, p. 6.
- ft145 -- Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 30. p. 447.
- ft146 -- So Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 78. D.
- ft147 -- Cartwright's Preacher's Travels, p. 11.
- ft148 -- Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 347.
- ft149 -- See Lowthorp's Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. 3. p. 504.
- ft150 -- Halifax apud Calmet's Dictionary in the Word "Salt".
- ft151 -- **rykzm** "commemorans", Montanus; "commemorator", Syr. Ar. "memorans, sive reducens in memoriam", Vatablus.
- ft152 -- Vid. Beckium in Targ. 1 Chron. xviii. 15.
- ft153 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5.) sect. 4.
- ft154 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect.4.)
- ft155 -- Aeneid. 10.
- ft156 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 366.
- ft157 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5.) sect. 5.

- ft158 -- **awhw** “quamvis esset”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Patrick.
- ft159 -- Tanchuma apud Jarchium in loc.
- ft160 -- Apollon. Vit. Philostrat. l. 7. c. 14.
- ft161 -- In Agesitao.
- ft162 -- “Dimidiasque nates Gallica palla tegit”. Martial.
- ft163 -- Valer. Maxim. l. 2. c. 2.
- ft164 -- **j mxy** “germinet”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft165 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 6. sect. 2.
- ft166 -- **ynp** “facies”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft167 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 6. sect. 2.)
- ft168 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 6.) sect. 3.
- ft169 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.
- ft170 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 6. sect. 3.)
- ft171 -- Travels, etc. p. 140, 141.
- ft172 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 6. sect. 3.)
- ft173 -- Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 50. col. 557.
- ft174 -- Weemse of the Judicial Law, c. 28. p. 106.
- ft175 -- Hist. l. 5. p. 414.
- ft176 -- De loc. Heb. fol. 94. C.
- ft177 -- Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 8. 2.
- ft178 -- Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 7. c. 2.
- ft179 -- Travels, etc. p. 146.
- ft180 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 1.
- ft181 -- Apollodorus de Deorum Orig. l. 2. p. 70.
- ft182 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 11. sect. 6.

- ft183 -- hwhy yny[ b [ ry “malum in oculis Domini”, Montanus.
- ft184 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 1. Gloss. in ib.
- ft185 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 46. col. 521, 522.
- ft186 -- T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 2. Jarchi, Kimchi, & Abarbanel in loc.
- ft187 -- Of the Moral Law, l. 2. ch. 10. p. 252. Vid. Gusset. Ebr. Comment. p. 776.
- ft188 -- “----- mutato nomine, de te Fabula narratur -----”. Horat. Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 1. ver. 69,70.
- ft189 -- Odyss. 11. ver. 119. & 12. ver. 380.
- ft190 -- h[r hç[w και ποιησει κακα, Sept. “faciat malum”, Pagninus, Montanus; “malum [sibi] inferet”, Syr. Ar.
- ft191 -- Theatrum T. S. p. 34.
- ft192 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 7. sect. 5.
- ft193 -- Polyb. Hist. l. 5. p. 414.
- ft194 -- Curt. Hist. l. 6. c. 6.
- ft195 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 7. sect. 5.)
- ft196 -- T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, fol. 44. 1.
- ft197 -- De Ponder. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 4.
- ft198 -- Of Scripture Weights and Measures, c. 4. p. 121.
- ft199 -- Ib. p. 119.
- ft200 -- Apud Paschalium de Coronis, l. 9. c. 8. p. 587.
- ft201 -- Vid. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 78. H. & in Paralipom. fol. 83. M. Weemse of Jewish Weights, p. 141.
- ft202 -- Pfeiffer. Difficil. Script. Loc. cent. 2. loc. 87.
- ft203 -- Diodor. Sic. l. 17. p. 549.
- ft204 -- l [ m “desuper”, Montanus, “supra caput David”, Munster.

- ft205 -- Ut supra, (Apud Paschaliū de Coronis) l. 10. c. 10. p. 695.
- ft206 -- Suetonius in Vita Caii, c. 27. Vid. Herodot. l. 2. c. 139.
- ft207 -- In voce [πλινψιον](#).
- ft208 -- Antiqu. l. 13. c. 4. sect. 4.
- ft209 -- Menochius de Repub. Heb. l. 8. c. 3. col 752.
- ft210 -- Danzii Commentat. de miligat. David in Ammon. crudel. Jenae 1710, apud Michael. in 1 Chron. xx. 3. Vid. Stockium, p. 392.
- ft211 -- See the Universal History, vol. 3. p. 519. Ed. fol.
- ft212 -- In Flaccum, p. 977.
- ft213 -- Poem. admon. v. 203, 204.
- ft214 -- [rqbb rqbb](#), “in mane in mane”, Montanus.
- ft215 -- “Fecit amor maciem -----”. Ovid Metamorph. l. 11. Fab. 11. v. 793.
- ft216 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 1.
- ft217 -- Maimon. Hilchot Melacim, c. 8. sect. 8. Kimchi in 2 Sam. xiii. 1.
- ft218 -- R. Moses Kotzensis, pr. affirm. 122.
- ft219 -- Olympiodorus apud Grotium in loc.
- ft220 -- De Vest. Sacerdot. Heb. l. 1. c. 17. sect. 21.
- ft221 -- Suidas in voce [εταίρων](#).
- ft222 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 1.
- ft223 -- [yk](#), “quamvis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Pool, & Patrick.
- ft224 -- Samedo’s History of China, part 1. ch. 3.
- ft225 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 8. sect. 2.
- ft226 -- Palestina Illustrat. tom. 1. p. 377.
- ft227 -- Apud Reland, ib. & p. 490. & tom. 2. p. 765.
- ft228 -- De loc. Heb. fol. 91. A.

- ft229 -- Travels, etc. p. 143, 363.
- ft230 -- Menachot, c. 8. sect. 1.
- ft231 -- Vid. Misn. Celaim, c. 8. sect. 1.
- ft232 -- **μwl çba yp l [** “in ore Absalom”, V. L. Vatablus.
- ft233 -- **μymyh l k** “cunctis diebus”, V. L. “omnibus diebus”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft234 -- Tractat. Theolog. Politic. c. 9. p. 176.
- ft235 -- Proem. in Amos, & Comment. in Jer. vi. 1.
- ft236 -- De loc. Heb. in. voce “Elthei”, fol. 91. B.
- ft237 -- In Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 78. 1.
- ft238 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 8. sect. 4.
- ft239 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 2.
- ft240 -- **μdh l ag twbrhm** “a multiplicando redemptorem sanguinis”, Montanus; so the Tigurine version.
- ft241 -- **çpn μyhl a açy al w** “et non tollet Deus animam”, Montanus; so the Tigurine version.
- ft242 -- **hj nml** “ad requiem”, Pagninus, Montanus; “ad tranquillitatem”, Tigurine version; “ad quietem”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft243 -- **tyç[** “fecisti”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft244 -- **Ærbyw** “et benedixit”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft245 -- Travels, etc. p 146, 148.
- ft246 -- T. Bab. Niddah, fol. 24. 2.
- ft247 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Nazir, c 1. sect. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 194. 3. Gloss. T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 10. 2.
- ft248 -- Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 103.

- ft249 -- Ibid. p. 104.
- ft250 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 8. sect. 5.
- ft251 -- T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 10. 2.
- ft252 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 8. sect. 5.)
- ft253 -- Suetonius in Vit. Neron. c. 30. Vid. Senecae, Ep. 87. & 123.
- ft254 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 1.
- ft255 -- Eloeocharism. Myrothec. 1. 3. c. 34. col. 964.
- ft256 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 1.
- ft257 -- Trad. Heb. in 2 lib. Reg. fol. 78. M.
- ft258 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 194. 4.
- ft259 -- Travels, etc. p. 149.
- ft260 -- **rj by** “elegerit”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft261 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9.) sect. 2.
- ft262 -- Antiqu. 1. 8. c. 1. sect. 5. & 1. 9. c. 7. sect. 3. De Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 2. sect. 3. c. 4. sect. 2. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft263 -- Journey from Aleppo, etc. p. 102.
- ft264 -- Palestin. Illustrat. tom. 1. p. 294, 351.
- ft265 -- Voyage to the Levant, ch. 48. p. 188.
- ft266 -- Vid. Solerium de Pileo, sect. 2. p. 14, 19.
- ft267 -- Senec. Hercul. furens, act. 2.
- ft268 -- Hieron. Trad. Helb. in 2. Reg. fol. 79. B.
- ft269 -- **ax ax** “egredere, egredere”, Pagninus, Montanus, etc.
- ft270 -- **μkl w yl hm** “quid mihi et vobis”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft271 -- **yk** “quia”, Moatanus.

- ft272 -- **yny[ b** “in oculum meum”, Montanus; “oculum meum lachrymantem”, Munster.
- ft273 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft274 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft275 -- Travels, etc. p. 144.
- ft276 -- Ib. p. 150.
- ft277 -- **Æl mh yj y** “vivat rex”, Pagninus. Montanus, etc.
- ft278 -- **hyha al** “non ero”, Montanus; “non essem ejus?” Junius & Tremellius.
- ft279 -- **tynçh** “secunda”, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus; “secundo”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft280 -- **çpn yrm** “amari animo”, Pagninus, Montanus; “amaro animo”, V. L. Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft281 -- Aristot. Hist. Animal. 1. 6. c. 18. & 9. 1.
- ft282 -- ----**ηυτε λειβεαι υδωρ**, Moschi Idyll 2. ver. 45.
- ft283 -- **ψυμολεοντα** Homer. Iliad. 5. ver 639. Iliad. 7. ver. 228. Odys. 11. ver. 279. Vid. Hesiod. Theogoniam prope finem.
- ft284 -- Descriptio Africae, l. 3. p. 400.
- ft285 -- Ib. p. 474.
- ft286 -- **μykl h Æynp** “facies tuae euntes”, Montanus, “facies tua vadat”, Pagninus.
- ft287 -- Valtrinus de Milit. Roman. 1. 3. c. 3.
- ft288 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft289 -- Ibid.
- ft290 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft291 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 7. Hudson. not. in ib.
- ft292 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 7. Hudson. not. in ib.

- ft293 -- wtyb l a wxy “praecepit ad domum suam”, Montanus.
- ft294 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1.
- ft295 -- In Tishbi, p. 129. & David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 148. 2.
- ft296 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2.
- ft297 -- Fuller’s Pisgah-View, B. 2. c. 3. sect. 10. p. 94.
- ft298 -- Vid. Aristophan. in Pluto, p. 55.
- ft299 -- Sterringa, Animadv. Philol. Sacr. p. 48.
- ft300 -- Iliad. 11. ver. 630. Odys. 10. ver. 245. & Odys. 20. ver. 72.  
Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 11. Sueton. Vita Nero. c. 27.
- ft301 -- Justin e Trogo, l. 2. c. 2.
- ft302 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 10. sect. 1.
- ft303 -- Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 10.) sect. 2.
- ft304 -- r [yb “ad sylvam”, Junius & Tremellius; “prope sylvam”, Piscator.
- ft305 -- In Jarchi, Kimchi, & Abarbinel, in loc.
- ft306 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 10. sect. 2.)
- ft307 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 10. sect. 2.)
- ft308 -- Vide Lydium de re militare, l. 3. c. 6.
- ft309 -- wçpnb εν τη θυχη αυτου, Sept. “contra animam illius”, Piscator.
- ft310 -- Misn. Sotah, c. 1. sect. 8.
- ft311 -- Homer. Iliad. 23. ver. 245, 257.
- ft312 -- Antiqu l. 7. c. 10. sect. 3.
- ft313 -- P. 26. Ed. Hotting.
- ft314 -- Travels, part 3. c. 21. p. 310, 311. Ed. Ray.
- ft315 -- So Benjamin. Itinerar. p. 43.
- ft316 -- Travels, l. 3. p. 147. Ed. 5.



- ft317 -- Voyage to the Levant, c. 48. p. 188.
- ft318 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanctae. p. 174.
- ft319 -- **dy χειρ**, Sept. “manus”, V. L. Montanus.
- ft320 -- Homer. Odys. 1. ver. 297. Odys. 2. ver. 243.
- ft321 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 53.
- ft322 -- **har yna εγω ορω**, Sept. “ego videns”, Montanus; “video”, Tigurine version.
- ft323 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 68. 3.
- ft324 -- Travels, p. 200.
- ft325 -- **μwl ζ ειρηνη**, Sept. “pax”, Montanus, Pagninus; “salus”, Tigurine version; “salve rex”, V. L.
- ft326 -- **r [nl μwl ζ** “estne pax puero?” V. L. “pax puero”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft327 -- **μydb [w μyρζ Æl `ya** “non tibi principes et servi”, Pagninus, Montanus; “nihil tibi sint principes et servi”, Piscator.
- ft328 -- Travels, etc. p. 142.
- ft329 -- Travels, etc. p. 142, 143.
- ft330 -- **yk**, “quamvis, vel cum tamen”, Piscator.
- ft331 -- **twm yçna** “viris mortis”, Montanus.
- ft332 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft333 -- **twyj twnml a** “in viduitate vitae”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft334 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 11. sect. 6.
- ft335 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 11. sect. 7.
- ft336 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 11. sect. 7.
- ft337 -- Diodor. Sic. 1. 2. p. 100. Vid. ib. p. 53. Herodot. Euterpe, c. 111.

- ft338 -- Animadv. ad Claudian. de Raptu Proserp. l. 1. ver. 50. vid. Homer. Iliad. ver. 500, 501. Iliad. 8. ver. 371. & Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 19.
- ft339 -- Weemse's Portrait of Man, p. 25.
- ft340 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 7. c. 11. sect. 7.)
- ft341 -- Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 519.
- ft342 -- Theatrum Terrae S. p. 101.
- ft343 -- Caesar. Comment. l. 7. c. 24.
- ft344 -- Opera & Dies, l. 1. ver. 236.
- ft345 -- Works, vol. 2. p. 367.
- ft346 -- Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 79. L.
- ft347 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 3.
- ft348 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 17.
- ft349 -- Usser. Annal. Vet. Test. p. 55. Bedford's Scripture Chronology, p. 558.
- ft350 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 119. 1.
- ft351 -- Vita Apollon. Tyanei, l. 3. c. 6.
- ft352 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 65. 2.
- ft353 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2.
- ft354 -- Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 3. c. 13.
- ft355 -- Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 190. 1.
- ft356 -- Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 190. 1.
- ft357 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 12. sect. 1.
- ft358 -- See Stillingfleet's Origines Sacr. p. 140.
- ft359 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 79. 1.
- ft360 -- "---- non pasces in cruce corvos", Horat. Epist, l. 1. Epist. 16. ver. 48.

- ft361 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 1. Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 3. c. 11. & l. 3. c. 13.
- ft362 -- Travels, etc. p. 122, 143.
- ft363 -- Lipsins de Cruce, l. 2. c. 16.
- ft364 -- Pisgah-Sight, B. 2. c. 12. p. 258.
- ft365 -- Bemidbar Rabba, ut supra. (fol. 190. 1.)
- ft366 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 12. sect. 1.
- ft367 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Anticritic. par. 2. c. 2. p. 421.
- ft368 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 43.
- ft369 -- Megasthenes apud ib. l. 7. c. 2.
- ft370 -- In Indicis, c. 31.
- ft371 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. fol. 76. D.
- ft372 -- T. Bab. Sotah. fol. 42. 2.
- ft373 -- Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45.
- ft374 -- **twrmz** **μy[n]** “jucundus psalmis”, Montanus; “suavis in canticis”, Vatablus; “amoenus psalmis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft375 -- **yb** “in me”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft376 -- Dr. Kennicott’s State of the Hebrew Text, Dissert. 1. p. 468.
- ft377 -- “Talisque apparuitilli”, etc. Metamorph. l. 14. Fab. 16. ver. 767.
- ft378 -- **rj mm hgnm** “a splendore, a pluvia germen de terra”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft379 -- **ˆk al** “non recta”, Cocceius.
- ft380 -- “Non est re firma”, Vitranga in Jesaiam, c. xi. 1.
- ft381 -- **yk** “quia”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.
- ft382 -- **hrmç** “scrvatum”, Tigurine version, Vatablus; “conservatum”, Junius & Tremellius.

- ft383 -- Kennicott's Dissert. 1. so Hillerus in Onomastic. Sacr. p. 230, 231, renders it, "the glory of the spear or spearmen stood against eight hundred", etc. and Weemse, "his delight was to lift up his spear". Exercitat. 16. p. 137.
- ft384 -- P. 96.
- ft385 -- P. 103.
- ft386 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.
- ft387 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.
- ft388 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.
- ft389 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.
- ft390 -- Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 1. p. 363.
- ft391 -- Leviticus Bruyn's Voyage to the Levant, ch. 52. p. 204.
- ft392 -- Rauwolff's Travels, part 3. p. 317, 318.
- ft393 -- Journey from Aleppo, etc. p. 90.
- ft394 -- Ambros. Apolog. David 1. 1. c. 7. gloss. ordinar. & Schmidt in loc. Pfeiffer. Difficil. Loc. Script. cent. 2. loc. 91. Horn. Dissert. de desiderio David. sect. 10.
- ft395 -- Curt. Hist. 1. 7. c. 5.
- ft396 -- Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.
- ft397 -- Ebr. Comment p. 95.
- ft398 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 80. C.
- ft399 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 7. c. 12. sect. 4.)
- ft400 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. 1. 3. c. 4. col. 758.
- ft401 -- See the Universal History, vol. 4. p. 227.
- ft402 -- Hieron. Trad. Heb. ut supra. (in. 2 Reg. fol. 80. C.)
- ft403 -- wt [mçm l a "ad auditum suum", Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft404 -- μυçyl çb "supra triginta istos", Junius & Tremellius.

- ft405 -- Misn. Peah, c. 7. sect. 1. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 5.
- ft406 -- De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 3. sect. 3.
- ft407 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 906.
- ft408 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 499.
- ft409 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 856.
- ft410 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 7. sect. 1.
- ft411 -- Travels, etc. p. 147.
- ft412 -- Travels, etc. p. 147.
- ft413 -- Hieron. de loc. Heb. fol. 90. H.
- ft414 -- Strabo. Geograph. l. 16. p. 521.
- ft415 -- Lucubrat. Frauktall, c. 2.
- ft416 -- R. Eliezer in Halicot Olam, tract. 4. c. 3. p. 181.
- ft417 -- **yk** “quamvis”, so Goassius notes it may be rendered; so Pool.
- ft418 -- **μqyw** “et surrexit”, Pagninus, Montanus, etc.
- ft419 -- Antiqu. l. 7. c. 13. sect. 2.
- ft420 -- Dr. Kennicott’s Dissert. 1. p. 474.
- ft421 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 43.
- ft422 -- Apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 9. c. 30. p. 447.
- ft423 -- Homer. Odyss. 17. ver. 335.
- ft424 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 2.
- ft425 -- Vid. Gronov. de Pecunia Vet. l. 3. c. 7. p. 369.
- ft426 -- De Ponder. & Pretiis, c. 5.
- ft427 -- Tubal-Cain, p. 15. So Hieron. Trad. Heb. fol. 80. F.