

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO FIRST KING 2

This chapter gives an account of the charge David gave to his son Solomon, a little before his death, to walk in the ways of the Lord, (^{<1111>}1 Kings 2:1-4); and of some instructions delivered to him concerning some particular persons he should either show favour to, or execute justice on, (^{<1115>}1 Kings 2:5-9); and the next account in it is concerning his death and burial, and the years of his reign, (^{<1120>}1 Kings 2:10,11); after which it relates an address of Bathsheba to Solomon in favour of Adonijah, which was refused, and the issue of it was his death, (^{<1122>}1 Kings 2:12-25); and the deposition of Abiathar from the priesthood, (^{<1125>}1 Kings 2:26,27); and the putting of Joab to death for his treason and murders, (^{<1128>}1 Kings 2:28-34); in whose post Benaiah was put, as Zadok was in the place of Abiathar, (^{<1125>}1 Kings 2:35); and lastly the confinement of Shimei in Jerusalem, who had cursed David, (^{<1126>}1 Kings 2:36-38); who upon transgressing the orders given him was put to death, (^{<1129>}1 Kings 2:39-46).

Ver. 1. *Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die*, etc.] The number of his days fixed and determined by the Lord, (^{<845>}Job 14:5); and which might be perceived as drawing nigh, both by himself and others, through the growing infirmities of old age, decline of nature, and various symptoms of an approaching dissolution which were upon him; (see ^{<1472>}Genesis 47:29). Abarbinel observes, that he is called only David, not King David; because Solomon his son was now anointed king, and reigned in his stead; so in (^{<1010>}1 Kings 1:10,11); but there is another reason given by some Jews ^{f20}, that no man, even a king, has power in the day of death; he is no king then, he has no rule over that, but that rules over him:

and he charged Solomon his son; gave him his last and dying charge: *saying*; as follows.

Ver. 2. *I go the way of all the earth*, etc.] A path which is the path of death ^{f21}, which all pass in, kings and peasants, high and low, rich and poor, great and small, good and bad; none are exempted, all must die, and do; it is the appointment of God, a decree which can never be reversed; all experience

confirms it: this same phrase is used by Joshua, from whom David seems to have borrowed it, and shows that that book was written in his days, (^{<f234>}Joshua 23:14);

be thou strong therefore; not discouraged at my death, being a common thing, and to be expected; nor at being left alone, the Lord can give thee wisdom and counsel, assistance and strength, protection, and defence; take heart therefore, and be of good courage:

and show thyself a man; in wisdom and understanding, and in fortitude of mind, though so young a man; which were necessary for the government of so great a people, and to guard against the secret intrigues of some, and the open flatteries of others, and the fear of attempts against his person and government, and the temptations he might be liable to, to do wrong things; and especially they were necessary to enable him to keep the commands of God, as follows; which required great strength of mind and of grace, considering the corruptions of nature, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of men; (see ^{<f007>}Joshua 1:7).

Ver. 3. *And keep the charge of the Lord thy God*, etc.] Which may in general respect his whole walk and conversation, and his obedience to the law and will of God; and in particular his just government of Israel committed to his charge:

to walk in his ways; directed to in his word:

to keep his statutes and his judgments; his laws, ceremonial, moral, and judicial:

and his testimonies; as the above laws, which testify of his mind, and declare what he would have done and observed:

as it is written in the law of Moses; which a king of Israel was obliged to write a copy of, keep by him, and read it, and rule according to it, (^{<f178>}Deuteronomy 17:18-20):

that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself; to reign in righteousness, and according to the law of God, is the only way to have a prosperous and happy reign: or “that thou mayest act wisely”^{f22}; the law of God furnishing out the best rules of government and maxims of policy; (see ^{<f006>}Deuteronomy 4:6,7).

Ver. 4. *That the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me*, etc.] his word of promise concerning the kingdom of David, and the succession of it, and confirm and establish it:

saying, if thy children take heed to their way; they are directed to walk in, even the way of the Lord, and not turn to the right hand or the left:

to walk before me in truth: in the sincerity and integrity of their hearts, according to the word of truth, and under the influence of the spirit of truth:

with all their heart, and with all their soul; in the most cordial manner, with the strongest affection and zeal; with all eagerness and earnestness; with their whole hearts engaged in every duty performed by them: then the Lord said,

there shall not fail thee a man on the throne of Israel; one to succeed him in the throne; this, with respect to his throne, literally considered, was conditional; but, spiritually considered, was absolute, and had its fulfilment in the Messiah, whose throne is for ever; see (⁴¹³Luke 1:32,33).

Ver. 5. *Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did unto me*, etc.] In slaying Absalom, contrary to his orders, and in behaving insolently towards him on account of his mourning for him, and at other times; but as these things might not be personally known to Solomon, only by hearsay, this may respect his disloyalty towards him, in joining with Adonijah, who set himself up for king in his lifetime, and without his knowledge and consent; or it may respect the instances next mentioned, in which he did injury to the interest, honour, and character of David:

[*and*], or “even”,

what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew; to Abner who was under Ishbosheth, and Amasa under David, who had not only the promise of the post, but was actually in it when Joab slew him; and indeed out of envy to him for it:

and shed the blood of war in peace; when they were at peace with him, as if they had been in open war; and even under a pretence of friendship to them, asking of their peace and welfare, as if he meant nothing less than to behave peaceably towards them; hence the Targum is,

“whom he slew in craftiness:”

and put the blood of war upon the girdle that [was] about his loins, and in his shoes that [were] in his feet; which particularly respects the affair of Amasa, whose blood he shed with his sword, that dropped out of its scabbard, girded upon his loins, and into which he put it again, all over bloody, and wore it girded upon his loins; and which he also stooped for when it fell, as if he was going to unloose or buckle his shoes, and into which the blood ran down when he stabbed him; and after this barbarous action marched on without any shame or remorse, with his bloody sword on his loins, and the blood of the murdered in his shoes.

Ver. 6. *Do therefore according to thy wisdom,* etc.] Which though young began to appear in him, even in the life of his father; he therefore exhorts him to use the wisdom he had, and take the first and fittest opportunity to cut him off for his former murders and late treason, as a dangerous man to his government and the peace of it:

and let not his hoary head go down to the grave in peace; that is, let him not die a natural, but a violent death; and let not his grey hairs be any argument for sparing him, or any reason for delaying the taking of him off, because he would in course die quickly; for he must be now an old man, as old as David, or perhaps older; since he had been his general forty years, even all the time of his reign; (see ^{<1023>}2 Samuel 2:13).

Ver. 7. *But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite,* etc.] Who perhaps was now dead, and therefore he would have kindness shown to his posterity for his sake:

and let them be of those that eat of thy table; as Mephibosheth had at his, who also perhaps was dead, since no notice is taken of him; and as David would have had Barzillai, but he desired to be excused on account of his age:

for so they came to me, when I fled because of thy brother, Absalom; that is, they came to him, not only Barzillai, but his sons it seems; and fed him or furnished him with provisions, when he was obliged to fly to the other side Jordan, because of the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Ver. 8. *And behold [thou hast] with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim,* etc.] Of whom, and of his native place, (see Gill on ^{<1065>}2 Samuel 16:5”); he was now at Jerusalem, and so with Solomon, or

near at hand; and was on his side, and of his party; (see ^{<1008>}1 Kings 1:8); but not to be trusted, or looked upon as a real friend:

which cursed me with a grievous curse, when I went to Mahanaim; a place on the other side Jordan, of which place, and the curses this man cursed David, with, (see ^{<1007>}2 Samuel 16:7,8 17:24);

but he came down to me at Jordan; after the defeat of Absalom, and when David was returning, and humbled himself to him, and begged his pardon:

and I swear unto him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword; but this oath was not binding upon his successor, and especially should he commit a new crime.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hold him not guiltless*, etc.] Do not look upon him as an innocent person; and if he commits an offence against thee, as he has against me, do not acquit him as I have done:

for thou [art] a wise man; so it seems he was before the appearance of the Lord to him at Gibeon, even before his father's death he had given some proofs of it to David himself:

and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; to watch and observe him, and, if found offending, to punish him according to the rules of justice, and the laws of the land:

but his hoary head bring thou down to the grave with blood; spare him not on account of his age, but put him to death whensoever he shall be found guilty, let him not die a natural death.

Ver. 10. *So David slept with his fathers*, etc.] Died as his ancestors before him did; for, buried with them he was not; and therefore cannot be understood of his lying with them in the grave, but in the state of the dead; he died according as the Jews say ^{f23} on the day of Pentecost, and according to Bishop Usher ^{f24} A. M. 2990, and before Christ 1014;

and was buried in the city of David; not at Bethlehem, in the sepulchre of Jesse, who was a private man; but being a king, in his own city, the hold of Zion he took from the Jebusite, and which afterwards was called by his name, (^{<1007>}2 Samuel 5:7); and his sepulchre remained unto the times of the apostles, upwards of a thousand years, (see Gill on "^{<4029>}Acts 2:29").

Ver. 11. *And the days that David reigned over Israel [were] forty years,* etc.] So says Eupolemus¹²⁵, an Heathen writer, which are thus reckoned:

seven years reigned he in Hebron; the six months over are omitted, (~~1085~~2 Samuel 5:5); this part of his reign was over Judah only:

and thirty three years reigned he in Jerusalem; over the twelve tribes, in all forty, which round number is only given; though in fact he reigned six months more.

Ver. 12. *Then sat Solomon on the throne of David his father,* etc.] So he did in his lifetime, with his consent, and by his order, and now by the agreement of the whole people:

and his kingdom was established greatly; all submitting to it, and none opposing it.

Ver. 13. *And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon,* etc.] Into her apartment; Abarbinel thinks it was a few days after the death of David:

and she said, comest thou peaceably? in a friendly manner, with no ill design, only to pay a friendly visit; for she might fear he came to avenge himself on her, and destroy her, because she had been the instrument of disappointing him of the kingdom, and of getting her son Solomon set upon the throne, and established in it; and therefore could not tell what envy, rage, and disappointment, might prompt him to:

and he said, peaceably; he meant no harm unto her.

Ver. 14. *He said, moreover, I have something to say unto thee,* etc.] Signifying that he came upon business:

and she said, say on; intimating her readiness to hear what it was.

Ver. 15. *And he said, thou knowest that the kingdom was mine,* etc.] Belonged to him by virtue of his birthright; he was heir to it, being the eldest son:

and [that] all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign; which was not true; for, as Bathsheba says, the body of the people were in suspense, their eyes being on David, waiting to hear whom he would declare his successor; and when Solomon was declared and anointed, vast numbers attended him; unless Adonijah thought that the high priest, and general of

the army, with the captains, represented the whole people; however this he observes by way of preface, to show how unhappy he was, being disappointed, and to move the compassion of Bathsheba, that she might be the more easily prevailed upon to seek to obtain so small a favour as he was about to ask:

howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's; things had taken another turn, and what was his, and he thought himself sure of the other day, was now become his brother's; such were the uncertainty and vicissitude of human affairs:

for it was his from the Lord; by the appointment of the Lord, by a promise of his, and a prophecy concerning it; which if he knew of, it was both vain and sinful in him to act contrary thereunto; or it was brought about by the overruling providence of God, which he now plainly saw and submitted to; this he said to show that he had laid aside all hopes of the kingdom, and was fully satisfied of the disposition of it in Providence, and so to hide his real design in the petition he was about to make.

Ver. 16. *And now I ask one petition of thee*, etc.] And but one, and a small one too, as Bathsheba herself after calls it:

deny me not, or “turn not away my face”^{f26}; with shame and sorrow, which would be the case should he be denied:

and she said unto him, say on; let me hear it.

Ver. 17. *And he said, speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king*, etc.] He owns him to be king, and which he the rather did to engage her to take his suit in hand, and to cover his design:

for he will not say thee nay; or turn away thy face, or deny thy request; she being his mother, for whom he had a great affection, and to whom he was under obligation on all accounts:

that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife; which was contrary to the law of God, (^(~~BOOK~~) Leviticus 18:8); which surely Adonijah must have been ignorant of, and Bathsheba likewise; or the one would never have made such a request, nor the other have undertaken to try to obtain it; but perhaps they did not take her to be David's wife, or the marriage to be consummated, because he knew her not: but yet not being returned to her father's house, and being at the dispose of Solomon, prove that she must

be a concubine wife, and which became the property of the next heir and successor; (see ^{<JOB8>}2 Samuel 12:8); nor did Adonijah apply to her or her friends; which, if he was really in love with her, he would have done, if at her own or their disposal; but this he knew, that she was solely at the disposal of Solomon, to whom he did not care to apply himself, but makes use of his mother.

Ver. 18. *And Bathsheba said, well,* etc.] Very well spoken, the thing is good and right:

I will speak for thee unto the king; and use her interest with him, not seeing into his design, but pitying an unfortunate man.

Ver. 19. *Bathsheba therefore went unto King Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah,* etc.] She went from her own house to the palace; for she might not live at court; or however had an apartment to herself, from whence she went to the king with her suit in favour of Adonijah:

and the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her; upon her entrance into the presence chamber, in honour to her as a parent, he rose up from his throne, and made his obeisance to her, as a dutiful son:

and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; a magnificent seat or throne, as the word is, was ordered to be set for her:

and she sat on his right hand; where he placed her in honour to her as his mother; so Nero ^{f27} placed Tiridates king of Armenia at his right hand, to do him honour.

Ver. 20. *Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee,* etc.] It was but one, and a little one, and therefore she hoped it would be granted:

[I pray thee], say me not nay; do not refuse it, or deny it me, or turn away my thee with shame and disappointment:

and the king said, ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay; since it is a small one, as thou sayest, and provided it is fit and lawful to be granted.

Ver. 21. *And she said, let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.*] For so Adonijah was by his father's side; and Bathsheba makes use of the relation, the more to move upon him to grant the request.

Ver. 22. *And King Solomon answered and said unto his mother,* etc.] With as much gentleness and mildness as he could, but inwardly fired at her request, and amazed at it, and could not forbear using some degree of tartness and resentment:

and why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? is this a small petition? is this a fit and lawful one?

ask for him the kingdom also; for this is what he means by it, that by marrying the king's widow he may step into the throne whenever any opportunity offers, as any uneasiness, or insurrection in the kingdom, or the death of Solomon; for none but a king, the Jews say ^{f28}, might marry a king's widow, not any private man; and therefore for Adonijah to ask this was interpreted affecting the kingdom, and aspiring to it, and taking his measures to obtain it; yea, it is said ^{f29}, that none but another king, the successor, might make use of his servants, handmaids, and ministers; and it is observed, that Abishag was free to Solomon, but not to Adonijah:

for he [is] mine elder brother; and has that to plead in his favour, and if he could obtain this, it would strengthen his title, or at least be a plausible pretence, which he might make use of, when opportunity served, to gain the people to his interest:

even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah; she might as well ask for them as for him; whose interest it was, and therefore desirous it might be that he should be king, that so the one might be continued in the office of high priest, and the other as general of the army; who, Solomon knew, bore him no good will, but were secretly his enemies; and he suspected that this was a scheme of theirs, and that it was by their advice Adonijah made this request; so the Targum,

“are not he, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, in the counsel?”

in this counsel; it is what they had consulted among themselves as a preparation to bring about a design they are contriving; probably Solomon had private notice that they were plotting against him, and this confirmed him in the truth of it; and therefore all of them were upon this punished with deprivation of office, or loss of life.

Ver. 23. *Then King Solomon sware by the Lord,* etc.] To prevent his mother pressing him to have her petition granted:

saying, God do so to me, and more also; lay such and such evils upon me, and more than I care to express:

if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life; to his own prejudice, and even to the loss of his life; in which Solomon suggests it would issue, being a fresh overt act of treason; he knew, from what Bathsheba said, that this was his petition, and that he had spoken of this to her, and put her upon making it for him; and who no doubt related to Solomon the whole of the conversation that passed between them, and to which he seems to have some respect in his answer.

Ver. 24. *Now therefore, as the Lord liveth*, etc.] Which is another oath; and one may easily perceive hereby in what a temper and disposition Solomon was, how warm, earnest, and vehement, how resolute against the petition, and how determined he was to punish Adonijah and his confederates:

which hath established me, and set me upon the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised; who had placed him on his father's throne, and established him there, in spite of all his enemies, and had given him a firm and stable kingdom, which was not to be shaken and subverted by the power and policy of conspirators, according to the promise of God by Nathan, (^{<1071>}2 Samuel 7:11-13);

Adonijah shall be put to death this day; both for his former conspiracy, he only having had a reprieve, and which was to continue on his good behaviour, (^{<105>}1 Kings 1:51-53), and for his fresh attempt in forming treasonable schemes to ascend the throne if possible; wherefore, being a dangerous man, and no longer to be trusted, Solomon was determined to dispatch him at once, and being established in his kingdom, he had nothing to fear from those in the conspiracy with him.

Ver. 25. *And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada*, etc.] Orders to execute him, and proper persons to do it; perhaps some of the Cherethites and Pelethites under him, to assist at least in it:

and he fell upon him, that he died; Benaiah rushed in upon him with his men, and thrust his sword into him, and killed him; executions used to be done in those times and countries by great personages, as the instances of Gideon, Doeg, and others, show, and not by common executioners.

Ver. 26. *And unto Abiathar the priest said the king,* etc.] Who was either at court, or he sent for him, and thus addressed him:

get thee to Anathoth; a city of the tribe of Benjamin, given to the priests, (⁴²¹⁸Joshua 21:18); of which place Abiathar might be originally, and whither he is bid to return:

unto thine own fields; which belonged to him there, either by inheritance or purchase; and these he was to mind, and not perform the functions of his office, however as high priest, and at Jerusalem, and the tabernacle there, and still less appear at court, or meddle with state affairs, only to attend to his private domestic concerns:

for thou [art] worthy of death; in joining with Adonijah in the lifetime of David, and setting him up as a king without his knowledge, and in opposition to Solomon, contrary to the will of God, and promise of David, of which he, being high priest, cannot be thought to be ignorant, and for his late confederacy with Adonijah, of which Solomon had knowledge:

but I will not at this time put thee to death; he does not give him a full pardon, only a respite; suggesting, that should he be guilty of any overt act, he would be put to death another time, though not now:

because thou barest the ark of the Lord God before David my father; when he fled from Absalom, (⁴⁰⁵²2 Samuel 15:24);

and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted; shared with him in all his afflictions under the persecutions of Saul, from the time he slew the priests at Nob, and at the rebellion of Absalom; in each of which he accompanied him, and suffered and sympathized with him.

Ver. 27. *So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord,* etc.] He deposed him from his office of high priest, otherwise I suppose he might officiate as a common priest, at least in some of the branches of it; this was done by his own authority as a king, and not as a prophet, as Bellarmine vainly distinguishes; and not by the authority of the college of the priests, at the instance of Solomon, as Fortunatus Schacchus says ^{f30} for which there is no foundation:

that he might fulfil the word of the Lord; which he might do intentionally, having knowledge of it, or however eventually:

which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh; of which house Abiathar was, and which, according to that prophecy, was to be demolished, and the priesthood translated from it, which was in the line of Ithamar, to another house, in the line of Eleazar; the word of the Lord, referred to, is in (~~<4023>~~1 Samuel 2:31-36 3:12-14).

Ver. 28. *Then tidings came to Joab*, etc.] Of the death of Adonijah, and the deposition of Abiathar:

for Joab had turned after Adonijah; publicly appeared at his feast, when he was saluted king by him, and others, and privately gave him advice in the affair of Abishag:

though he turned not after Absalom; did not join with him in his rebellion, but faithfully adhered to David; and yet both in his lifetime, and after his death, acted the traitorous part in favour of Adonijah: Ben Gersom gives these words a different sense, as if he was blameworthy in both cases; that he turned after Adonijah to make him king, without consulting David, and having his consent; and he did not turn after Absalom, to deliver him from death, as David commanded him; but the former sense is best:

and Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord; which was at Gibeon, (see ~~<4003>~~2 Chronicles 1:3); it was four miles from Jerusalem to the north, situated on an hill ^{f31}; according to Josephus ^{f32}, it was forty furlongs, or five miles, from it; though Kimchi thinks it was the altar in Jerusalem he fled to, which was before the ark, in the tent David made for it; but that is never called the tabernacle of the Lord, only that of Moses: Joab's fleeing hither showed guilt, and that he was in the conspiracy of Adonijah, and was conscious he deserved to die, and now expected it, since Adonijah was put to death; while he remained reprieved or pardoned, he thought himself safe, but now in danger, and therefore fled for it:

and caught hold of the horns of the altar; (see Gill on "~~<4053>~~1 Kings 1:50").

Ver. 29. *And it was told King Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord*, etc.] This account was brought him very probably by some of his courtiers:

and, behold, [he is] by the altar; to which he betook himself for refuge, laying hold on the horns of it:

then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, go, fall upon him; slay him; Josephus^{f33} says, the orders were to cut off his head; but perhaps it might be only to lay hold on him, and take him thence, and bring him to Solomon to have judgment passed upon him; for the Targum is,

“exercise your power over him,”

take him into custody; and certain it is that the first orders were not to slay him, at least upon the spot where he was.

Ver. 30. *And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the Lord,* etc.] At Gibeon:

and said unto him; that is, to Joab:

thus saith the king, come forth; meaning, out of the tabernacle; which plainly shows that his orders were not to slay him in it:

and he said, nay, but I will die here; since he must die, he chose to die there; but what was his reason for it is not so clear; the Jews, some of them, say, to save his goods, and that they might come to his heirs, which would have been forfeited to the crown if he had been tried and condemned in a court of judicature; others, that he might be buried with his ancestors, whereas, had he been sentenced to death by the court, he would have been buried in the common place of malefactors; but rather he thought, or at least hoped, he should not die at all; either that, by gaining time, Solomon might be prevailed upon to pardon him; or however that he would not defile that sacred place with his blood; or, if he should die, he chose to die there, as being a sacred place, and so might hope to receive some benefit from it, as to his future state, where sacrifices were offered to atone for sin:

and Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, thus said Joab, and thus he answered me; told me he would not come out, and, if he must die, he would die there.

Ver. 31. *And the king said unto him, do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him,* etc.] Let him die where he is, slay him upon the spot, and then bury him; not by the altar, but in his own sepulchre, as later related, that in, give orders to bury him there; for Benaiah being a priest, could not be concerned in the burial of him, and besides it was below the dignity of his office:

that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father; which had been too long connived at, and had called for vengeance; and now here was a proper opportunity upon fresh sins committed to avenge it, and so remove the guilt, which lay upon him and his father's house, for not inflicting deserved punishment on him for it.

Ver. 32. *And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head,* etc.] By way of retaliation, blood for blood:

who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he; later named; for though they had been in open rebellion against David, yet had submitted, and were reconciled and received into favour; and even their open crimes were not so bad, Solomon judged, as his secret treacherous murders of innocent persons in cool blood; they were men of more honour and integrity than he was, not so cruel and barbarous, though guilty in other respects:

and slew them with the sword, my father not knowing [thereof]; this is observed to remove all suspicion, and which doubtless had been entertained by some, that David had an hand in their death; and that Joab did what he did with his knowledge and consent, and by his advice and order; they having been both concerned in rebellion against him, the one under Ishbosheth, and the other under Absalom:

[to wit], Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah: the reason of the two hosts, of which they were captains or generals, being thus distinguished, is, because the tribes of Israel were on the side of Ishbosheth, whose general Abner was, in opposition to Judah, who made David their king; and, on the other hand, they were the men of Judah that were first and chiefly in the rebellion of Absalom, whose general Amasa was; of the murder of these two men by Joab, (see ^{<10127>}2 Samuel 3:27 20:10).

Ver. 33. *Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever,* etc.] Not only upon Joab, but upon his posterity as long as there would be any; signifying, that Joab's death would not be a sufficient satisfaction, but the punishment of his murders would be continued to his offspring: (see ^{<10129>}2 Samuel 3:29);

but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the Lord; such traitors and

murderers being removed, peace and happiness might be expected and believed would attend the family and kingdom of David; whether this be considered as a prayer, or a prophecy, it can and will have its full accomplishment only in the kingdom of the Messiah the son of David, of the increase of whose government, and the peace thereof, there shall be no end, (^{<2307>}Isaiah 9:7 ^{<4727>}Psalms 72:7).

Ver. 34. *So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up*, etc.] To Gibeon, which was a great high place, (^{<1004>}1 Kings 3:4);

and fell upon him, and slew him; at the altar; or, dragging him from it at some distance, drew his sword and slew him:

and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness; not in his dwelling house strictly taken, but in a garden or field adjoining to it, which house in the wilderness; not a waste place uninhabited; for, as Kimchi observes, this word sometimes signifies a place uninhabited, though not tilled, but left for pasture of cattle; and in such a place might Joab's house be, at least his country house, where he might have a farm, and fields, and cattle, as it is plain he had, (^{<4040>}2 Samuel 14:30).

Ver. 35. *And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host*, etc.] Advanced him from being captain of his bodyguards to be general of the army:

and Zadok the priest did he put in the room of Abiathar; from a common priest he promoted him to the high priesthood; whereby that office was restored to its ancient line, the family of Eleazar, having been in the line of Ithamar for many years; and the prediction of the destruction of Eli's house, made eighty years ago, began to be fulfilled, (^{<1023>}1 Samuel 2:31-36).

Ver. 36. *And the king sent and called for Shimei*, etc.] Who had cursed his father; he lived at Bahurim, in the tribe of Benjamin, and from thence he sent for him to him, (^{<1065>}2 Samuel 16:5);

and said unto him, build thee an house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and go not from thence any where; the orders were to remove from Bahurim to Jerusalem, where he was to provide himself a dwelling house, and there continue, and never go out of the city, at least not further on any side of it than it was to the brook Kidron, which was not more than half a mile from the city. This Solomon ordered, to prevent this man going about in the country sowing and stirring up sedition; and that he might be under his eye

and notice, that should he commit any evil, and give him an opportunity of punishing him, he might do it as his father had directed him; and he might judge from the temper of the man, and indeed from the nature of men in general, that what they are forbidden they are the most prone unto, that he would transgress in this case, and give him an occasion against him.

Ver. 37. *For it shall be, [that] on the day thou goest out,* etc.] Out of the city of Jerusalem: and passeth over the brook Kidron: which is particularly mentioned, because this lay in his way to Bahurim, his native place; he must cross that to go to it, (see ^{<10152>}2 Samuel 15:23 16:5); and where it might reasonably be supposed he would some time or another be inclined to go, through business, or a desire to see it again:

thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: it may be depended on as what will be most certainly the case; no reprieve nor pardon will be granted:

thy blood shall be on thine own head; fair warning being given, he could blame none but himself, should he be guilty and suffer.

Ver. 38. *And Shimei said unto the king, the saying [is] good,* etc.] It was an act of goodness in the king, and what was good, grateful, and acceptable to him; for being sent for by him, and knowing how he had used his father, and hearing of several traitors being put to death, he expected this would have been his case; and wherefore, instead of being put to death, was only obliged to leave his habitation in the country, and come and live at Jerusalem, a pleasant and delightful city, and the metropolis of the nation, it was very agreeable to him:

as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do; and he not only promised, but swore to it, which Solomon obliged him to, (^{<10152>}1 Kings 2:42);

and Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days; he accordingly built or purchased a house in Jerusalem, and removed from Bahurim to it, where he lived for the space of three years, as follows.

Ver. 39. *And it came to pass, at the end of three years,* etc.] He had dwelt at Jerusalem:

that two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish the son of Maachah king of Gath; and they told Shimei, saying, behold, thy servant [be] in

Gath; he being a churlish, ill-natured man, always cursing or beating them, or imposing too hard service upon them, or not allowing them the necessaries of life; wherefore they broke away from him, and fled to Gath, and put themselves under the protection of the king of that place, who was now at peace with Israel, and a tributary to them: if this Achish was the same that was David's friend, who sheltered him when persecuted by, Saul, he must be an old man; for that was between forty or fifty years ago; and as he seems to be, since he is called the son of Maach, (~~1~~1 Samuel 27:2); which may be thought to be the same with Maachah here.

Ver. 40. *And Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants*, etc.] And demand them; through the passion he was in with his servants, and his hurry to get them home, and the covetous disposition which prevailed on him, he might forget, or be tempted to neglect, the prohibition he was under not to go out of Jerusalem; or he might think Solomon had forgot it; or that he could come and go secretly without his knowledge; or if he should know of it, he might hope he would never punish him with death for so small a fault; however, so it was ordered by the providence of God leaving him to his own lust, and the temptations of Satan, that he might suffer just punishment for cursing David:

and Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath; for the king being at peace with Israel, and a tributary to them also, did not choose to detain them, but delivered them up lest it should be resented, and bring him into trouble.

Ver. 41. *And it was told Solomon*, etc.] By the spies he set to watch and observe his motions, or by some others who had seen him go out and return, and knew that it was contrary to the king's orders:

that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again; which was thirty four miles from Jerusalem^{f34}; whereas his utmost bounds, whither he might go, was the brook Kidron, about half a mile from it.

Ver. 42. *And the king sent and called for Shimei*, etc.] He sent messengers to him, and by them ordered him to come to him, who accordingly came:

and he said unto him, did not I make thee swear by the Lord; which, though not before mentioned, was no doubt done, nor did Shimei deny it:

and protested unto thee; that is, declared before witnesses:

saying, know for certain, that on the day thou goest out; namely, out of the city of Jerusalem:

and walkest abroad any whither; further at most than the brook Kidron, or any other place equally distant from Jerusalem, on any side of it; for when he went to Gath, he did not go over Kidron, but went the road the other way around. Kidron lay to the east, and Gath to the west of Jerusalem: now the protestation made to him was, that if he went out of Jerusalem any way,

that thou shalt surely die; it would be sure and certain death to him:

and thou saidst unto me, the word [that] I have heard [is] good; not only he promised to obey it, and that with an oath, but declared it was agreeable and acceptable to him, and therefore the offence was a very aggravated one.

Ver. 43. *Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord,* etc.] Which was made by him, and in his presence, and in which he was appealed to, and so by not keeping it was guilty of perjury:

and the commandment that I have charged thee with? and so guilty of disobedience to him as his sovereign; for which two reasons he ought to die.

Ver. 44. *The king said moreover to Shimei,* etc.] Not as another reason for his putting him to death, but to remind him of his former sins, and to observe to him the providence of God in suffering him to fall into others, that justice might take place upon him for them also:

thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father; which conscience must bear witness to, and accuse him of, not only of the words and actions themselves uttered and done by him, but of the malice and wickedness from whence they sprung:

therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head; the punishment of it; which though not directly inflicted for that, yet in providence was brought about as a just retaliation for it.

Ver. 45. *And King Solomon [shall be] blessed,* etc.] With a long and peaceable reign, and large dominions, notwithstanding all the attempts to make him unhappy:

and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord for ever; the kingdom of David over Judah for a long time, in his natural line; and the kingdom of Israel, spiritual Israel, for ever in his son the Messiah; and that in the presence of the Lord, he observing, ordering, and succeeding all things to that purpose.

Ver. 46. *So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, which went out*, etc.] From the presence of the king, and took Shimei with him to the proper place of execution, it not being fitting to execute him before the king:

and fell upon him, that he died; put him to death by the sword:

and the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon; Adonijah the usurper, and Joab the general of the army, who took on his side, being both put to death; and Abiathar the high priest deposed, who was in the same conspiracy; and Shimei, a dangerous and troublesome man, dispatched, there remained none to give any disturbance; so that he now sat easy and quiet on his throne, and things with respect to the civil government were on a firm and settled foundation.