

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, (^{<10121>}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, (^{<10127>}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, (^{<10124>}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, (^{<10124>}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, (^{<10126>}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, (^{<10124>}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, (^{<10311>}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, (^{<10501>}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^{f185} 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^{f186}, 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 (^{<0221>}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^{f187} 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^{f188}:

thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel; that is, ordered Samuel to anoint him, who did, (^{<0961>}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 “^{<1085>}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, (^{<1213>}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, (^{<1213>}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, (^{<1213>}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^{f189} 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, (¹⁰⁶²2 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, (¹⁵¹⁰Psalm 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, (³⁰²²2 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”^{f190} 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 (¹⁰²³2 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 ²¹³Joel 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, (¹1 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, (~~3074~~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, (~~4187~~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 (~~3000~~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^{f191} 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 ^{f192} 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 ^{f193} 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 ^{f194} 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^{f195} says it had in it a very precious stone, a sardonyx; and this, according to the Talmud^{f196} was of the value of a talent of gold. A talent was equal to three thousand shekels, as appears from (^{<125>}Exodus 38:25,26); and was in value, according to Breewood^{f197} of our money, 4500 pounds; but according to Bishop Cumberland^{f198} 5067 pounds, three shillings and ten pence. This crown was of the same value with the golden candlestick in the tabernacle, (^{<125>}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^{f199}, 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^{f200} 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^{f201} 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^{f202}, 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^{f203}, in token of that monarchy being translated to him: though, after all, the phrase, “from off”, may be rendered “from above” or “over”^{f204} 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^{f205} 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, (^{<3010>}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, (^{<4181>}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 ^{f206}, or their flesh torn to pieces, and they put to extreme pain and agony, and so died most miserably; (see ^{<4311>}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, (^{<4116>}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 ^{f207}, signifies an army, or a battalion of men drawn up in a quadrangular form, like a brick; and in the same sense Josephus ^{f208} uses it; hence a learned man ^{f209} 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, (⁰⁹¹⁰1 Samuel 11:2 ³⁰⁰⁰Amos 1:13). Which may be observed in other instances, (⁰⁰⁸⁶Judges 8:6,7 ⁰⁹⁵³1 Samuel 15:33); but the charge of cruelty in David will be easily removed by following the translation of a learned ^{f210} 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.