

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, (¹⁰⁶²2 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” ^{f280}; 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 ^{f281}, when it ranges about in the field, and in its fury attacks whomsoever it meets with; (see Gill on “²⁸¹⁸Hosea 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 ^{f282}, (~~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 ^{f283}, and others also; though Leo Africanus ^{f284} 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 ^{f285}, 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”,^{f286}, 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 ^{f287}:

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, (^{<10704>}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 ^{<10921>}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, (^{<10535>}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, (^{<1057>}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 "^{<1657>}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 ^{f288}, 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, (^{<1064>}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 ^{f289}, 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 ^{f290} 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 ^{f291} 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 ^{f292} 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 ^{<3172}John 17:12); and now perhaps David penned the forty second and forty third psalms, (^{<3901}Psalm 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, (^{<10512}2 Samuel 15:12);

and put his household in order; made his will, and disposed of his estates, (see ^{<2301}Isaiah 38:1); or “commanded his house” or “household” ^{f293}; 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 ^{f294}, 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 ^{f295}, 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 ^{f296} 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, (^{<0573>}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, (^{<0326>}Joshua 13:26,30), famous for its being the place where the angels of God met Jacob, (^{<0331>}Genesis 32:1,2); and was for some time the seat of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, (^{<0108>}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, (^{<1327>}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, (^{<1326>}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, (^{<1072>}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 ^{<1095>}2 Samuel 9:5);

and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim; a place that lay under the hills of Gilead ^{f297}; 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 ^{f298}, (see ^{<3176>}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 ^{f299} coffee is meant, but without reason.

Ver. 29. *And honey and butter*, etc.] Honey was much in use with the ancients; Homer ^{f300} 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 ^{f301}; and this and butter were pretty much the food of the people in Judea; (see ^{<3175>}Isaiah 7:15-22);

and sheep; with which and goats the land of Gilead abounded; (see ^{<3171>}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.