

# CHAPTER 18

## INTRODUCTION TO SECOND SAMUEL 18

In this chapter is an account of David's review of his army, preparing it for battle with Absalom, and those with him, (~~2 Samuel 18:1-5~~); and of the defeat and flight of the rebels, (~~2 Samuel 18:6-8~~); and of the death of Absalom, and the manner of it, and of his burial, (~~2 Samuel 18:9-18~~); and of the news of it brought to David by different persons, (~~2 Samuel 18:19-32~~); and of his great grief and sorrow on that account, (~~2 Samuel 18:33~~).

**Ver. 1.** *And David numbered the people that [were] with him*, etc.] Which Josephus says <sup>f302</sup> were four thousand; but one would think there should be more by what follows:

*and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them*; he divided his army into companies, which consisted some of a thousand and others of a hundred; over each of which he set captains, to lead them on, direct, and command them in battle.

**Ver. 2.** *And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab*, etc.] Very likely that which made the centre of the army, since Joab was the general of the army; though this distribution was made when David thought to have headed the army himself, and so made with respect to that:

*and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother*; who was next to Joab in the army, and fought with him against the Syrians and Ammonites, (~~2 Samuel 10:10,11~~);

*and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite*; of whom (see ~~2 Samuel 15:19~~); of these two parts consisted the right and left wings of the army:

*and the king said unto the people*; the soldiers, and particularly the officers:

*I will surely go forth with you myself also*; in which he seemed very resolute and peremptory; and this he proposed to do, not merely to animate

the soldiers with his presence, and to show that he was willing to hazard his life with them, but chiefly for the sake of Absalom, to preserve his life, if possible.

**Ver. 3.** *But the people answered, thou shalt not go forth*, etc.] They were as resolute as David:

*for if we flee away, they will not care for us*; to pursue after us;

*neither if half of us die, will they care for us*; they will make no account of the victory; but if they could slay David, or get him into their hands, it would be more to them than if the whole army was routed:

*but now [thou art] worth ten thousand of us*; not only in our own esteem, but in the account of the enemy, who had rather thou shouldst fall into their hands than ten thousand of us; and as the advantage to them, so the loss to us would be more than ten thousand men:

*therefore now [it is] better that thou succour us out of the city*; either by sending them provisions or recruits, that might be there in reserve, if necessary; or by being ready to receive them into it should they be repulsed; or rather by his prayers to God for them; so the Targum,

“now it is better that thou pray for us out of the city;”

that is, that the Lord would help us; and so most of the Jewish commentators understand it of helping them by his prayers and counsels.

**Ver. 4.** *And the king said unto them, what seemeth you best I will do*, etc.] Which was an instance of great condescension in him; and it was his wisdom and prudence to yield to them at such a time as this, and especially as their sentiments were founded on affection and loyalty to him:

*and the king stood by the gate side*; of the city of Mahanaim:

*and all the people came out by hundreds, and by thousands*; and passed by him, to whom no doubt he gave his blessing and best wishes; and, as Abarbinel thinks, now it was he composed and said the twentieth psalm, “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble”, etc. (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 20:1-9).

**Ver. 5.** *And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai*, etc.] His three generals, to whom he had committed his army divided into three parts:

*saying, [deal] gently for my sake with the young man, [even] with Absalom*; he does not call him his son, being in rebellion against him, but the young man, who was young, and rash, and foolish, and so to be pitied; his request is, that they would spare him, and not take away his life, when in their power; that they would not aim at him, and push him hard, and fall upon him with wrath and fury; but if he fell into their hands, to take him alive, and bring him away, and not put him to death. This flowed from a natural affection to him, and a concern for the welfare of his soul, that he might not die in this sin; and also from a consciousness that it was for his own sins that he was raised up to rebel against him; and he seems to speak as if he was certain that the battle would go for him, and against Absalom; and which he might conclude from the answer of prayer he had in defeating the counsel of Ahithophel:

*and all the people heard when he gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom*; not only the three generals, but all the captains of hundreds and thousands, and this was heard by the common soldiers as well as by the people of the city that were spectators on this occasion, (see <sup><01812></sup>2 Samuel 18:12).

**Ver. 6.** *So the people went out into the field against Israel*, etc.] Josephus <sup>f303</sup> calls it a great field, with a wood behind it:

*and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim*; or near it <sup>f304</sup> rather; not in a wood in the tribe of Ephraim, which lay on this side Jordan; whereas this battle was fought on the other side Jordan, in the land of Gilead, not far from Mahanaim, where was this wood; and which was so called, either from the slaughter of the Ephraimites here in the times of Jephthah, (<sup><07124></sup>Judges 12:4-6); or from the Ephraimites feeding their cattle here and near it; for the Jews say <sup>f305</sup>, that Joshua gave them a grant to feed their cattle in any wood in any of the tribes of Israel; and lying near Jordan, they used to drive their cattle over to this place, from whence it had its name.

**Ver. 7.** *Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David*, etc.] That is, the people of Israel that were under Absalom, these were beaten by David's army:

*and there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand [men]*; including both those that fell in the field of battle, and that were slain in the pursuit; and this is to be understood only of Absalom's party.

**Ver. 8.** *For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country,* etc.] Or the warriors were scattered, as the Targum; Absalom's soldiers, their ranks were broken, and they were thrown into the utmost confusion, and ran about here and there all over the field or plain in which the battle was fought, and into the neighbouring wood:

*and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured;* there were more slain in it the in the field of battle, what by one thing or another; as by falling into pits and on stumps of trees, and being entangled in the bushes, and could make but little haste, and so were overtaken by David's men, and slain; insomuch that, as Josephus<sup>f306</sup> observes, there were more slain fleeing than fighting, and perhaps some might perish by wild beasts; so the Targum,

“and the beasts of the wood slew more of the people than were slain by the sword;”

and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render the words to the same purpose.

**Ver. 9.** *And Absalom met the servants of David,* etc.] When his army was routed, he was in such a fright that he knew not which way to flee, and instead of flying from David's men, he fled in the way of them; but none of them attempted to slay him, nor even to stop him, but let him pass by them, knowing David's charge concerning him:

*and Absalom rode upon a mule;* as was common for great personages to do in those days, (<sup>1033</sup>2 Samuel 13:29);

*and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak;* and running full speed, Absalom could not guide him, nor stop, nor divert him from going under it:

*and his head caught hold of the oak;* either the hair of his head was twisted and entangled in the thick boughs of the oak; or rather his head was jammed into a forked branch of the oak:

*and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth;* hung in the air between both, as unworthy to live in either:

*and the mule that [was] under him went away;* and left him hanging in the oak.

**Ver. 10.** *And a certain man saw [it]*, etc.] Saw him in the above posture, one of David's soldiers:

*and told Joab, and said, behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak*; caught by the neck in one, out of which he could not disengage himself, but there he hung, though alive.

**Ver. 11.** *And Joab said unto the man that told him*, etc.] That gave the above account of him:

*and, behold, thou sawest [him]*; in reality; or, "didst thou see him?" is it a fact?

*and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground*; kill him on the spot, that he might have dropped from the tree to the ground:

*and I would have given thee ten [shekels] of silver*; on the news of it, for doing it, which was near twenty four shillings of our money; Josephus says <sup>f307</sup> fifty shekels; the Arabic version has it ten thousand talents of silver, too great a sum by far:

*and a girdle?* which was a mark of great honour, and a token of a commission under him, and of investing him with a military office; (see ~~1~~ 1 Samuel 18:4); it used to be given as an honorary reward to soldiers that behaved well, as on the contrary it was reckoned a reproach to be ungirt, or the girdle to be taken away <sup>f308</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *And the man said unto Joab*, etc.] Disdaining his proposal:

*though I should receive a thousand [shekels] of silver in mine hand*; or such a sum should be offered to me; the Arabic version is a million;

*[yet] would I not put forth my hand against the king's son*; to smite him, and slay him:

*for in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai*; his three generals:

*saying, beware that none [touch] the young man Absalom*; so as to slay him; they were charged to abstain from it themselves, and to watch and observe others, and keep them from doing it.

**Ver. 13.** *Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life*, etc.] Or "soul"; he should not only have exposed his life to danger, but

acted falsely to the king, by going contrary to his orders; yea, would have done that which was contrary to his own conscience; and if he had buoyed himself up with the hope of impunity, or of a reward, he should have found himself mistaken; the textual reading is, “against his life”<sup>f309</sup>, or “soul”, the life of Absalom, by taking it away:

*for there is no matter hid from the king*; this, though done ever so secretly, would have come to his knowledge by some means or another, and then I should have incurred his displeasure, and suffered for it:

*and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against [me]*; to accuse and bring him to justice; he would have been so far from protecting him, that he would have been the first man that would have insisted on it that he should be punished for it; or why dost not thou thyself set thyself against him, and smite him? thou mayest if thou pleasest, yonder he hangs, go and smite him.

**Ver. 14.** *Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee*, etc.] It is not worth while to talk with thee any longer, nor must I lose time, and neglect my opportunity; I do not desire you to go and smite him, I will go and do it myself:

*and he took three darts in his hand*; or three rods, which were either all iron, or however the tops of them were iron spikes:

*and thrust them through the heart of Absalom*; or through the midst of his body; for if he had thrust through his heart, properly speaking, he must have died instantly, whereas he seems to have lived after this:

*while he [was] yet alive*; Joab found him alive when he came to him, and so he was when he thrust his darts through him; and so he was afterward; for the words may be rendered, “being yet alive”, even after the darts were fixed in him, and even so deeply as to pierce through his body:

*in the midst*, or “heart”,

*of the oak*; into which the darts penetrated.

**Ver. 15.** *And ten young men that bare Joab’s armour*, etc.] That waited upon him in the battle, to carry his armour, and supply him with it as he should have occasion; these, by his orders,

*compassed about, and smote Absalom, and slew him*; they enclosed him that none might rescue him, and smote him with their spears or swords, or whatsoever armour they had, until it was a clear case that he was really dead. Joab in this disobeyed the king's order, but provided for the good of the nation, and the safety of the king. The Jews observe <sup>f310</sup>, that measure for measure was given to Absalom; he was proud of his hair, (<sup><1042></sup>2 Samuel 14:25,26), and therefore was hanged by it, (<sup><1089></sup>2 Samuel 18:9); he lay with ten concubines of his father, (<sup><1062></sup>2 Samuel 16:21,22), and therefore was smitten with ten lances or spears by ten young men; and he stole three hearts, the heart of his father, the heart of the sanhedrim, and the heart of the men of Israel, and therefore three darts were fixed in him, (<sup><1084></sup>2 Samuel 18:14).

**Ver. 16.** *And Joab blew the trumpet*, etc.] As the sign of a retreat:

*and the people returned from pursuing after Israel*; upon the sound of the trumpet, the meaning of which they understood:

*for Joab held back the people*: from shedding any more blood; the head of the conspiracy being removed, the thing would be crushed at once; and Joab neither chose to slay any more, nor take any prisoners, to be tried as traitors, being unawares, without thought, drawn into this rebellion.

**Ver. 17.** *And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood*, etc.] In the wood of Ephraim, near to which the battle was fought, and into which Absalom fled, and where he was slain:

*and laid a very great heap of stones upon him*: his punishment was very exemplary; he was first hanged on an oak, and then thrust through with darts, and swords, and then covered with stones, (<sup><1089></sup>2 Samuel 18:9,14,15), pointing to the death that a rebellious son, according to the law, ought to die, (<sup><1021></sup>Deuteronomy 21:21); though this might be done in honour of him as a king's son; for such "tumuli", or heaps of stones or earth, were used by the ancients as sepulchral monuments, and the larger the more honourable <sup>f311</sup>; (see Gill on "<sup><1072></sup>Joshua 7:26") and (see Gill on "<sup><1089></sup>Joshua 8:29");

*and all Israel fled everyone to his tent*; or to his city, as the Targum; everyone returned to their own house, and to their own business, and so the rebellion ceased.

**Ver. 18.** *Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken*, etc.] Had taken it into his head, had of himself devised it, as Kimchi explains it; he contrived the following scheme to perpetuate his memory:

*and reared up for himself a pillar, which [is] in the king's dale*: or valley, the valley of Jehoshaphat; this pillar was of marble, as Josephus<sup>f312</sup> says, and stood about two furlongs or a quarter mile from Jerusalem. The author of Cippi Hebraici<sup>f313</sup> places it at the bottom of the mount of Olives: this is observed to show how vain are the devices and contrivances of men's hearts; Absalom intended to have been buried under or by this monumental pillar near Jerusalem, and, lo, he was buried in a pit, under an heap of stones, in a wood on the other side Jordan; whether his bones were ever removed hither it is not certain, though a notion has obtained that his grave was near this pillar. Rauwolff<sup>f314</sup> says, that as you go from the valley of Jehoshaphat<sup>f315</sup> to the Mount of Olives, you see below, towards your left hand, near unto the bridge of the river Kidron, an old square building like unto a steeple; this, although it is believed to this day, not only by Christians, but also by Turks and Moors, to be the grave of Absalom, as you shall see them fling stones into it as they go by, to revenge his unfaithfulness to his father, yet was he not buried there. Sandys<sup>f316</sup> says, at the east end of the bridge (over Kidron), and a little on the north, stands the pillar of Absalom, being yet entire, and of a good fabric, rising in a lofty square, below adorned with half columns, wrought out of the sides and corners, of the Doric form; and then changing into a round, a good height higher doth grow to a point in fashion of a bell, all framed of the growing stone; against this there lies a great heap of stones, which increaseth daily, by Jews and Mahometans throwing stones as they pass by; so that the frontispiece of it, which faces the road, as Leviticus Bruyn<sup>f317</sup> says, looks like a mountain of stones; but as to the fabric itself, he says, there is not a finer piece of workmanship to be met with in all those parts; it takes up a compass of ground of eighty two feet and an half square; the body, which is square, with its moulding, is one entire piece; and the coping, which is an ornament to it, and runs up into a point, taken with the rest of the work, is above thirty feet high; twenty columns, cut out of the same rock, add to the beauty of this pile; one sees through a broken window a great many pieces of antiquity that hang up in a chamber. Adrichomius also relates<sup>f318</sup>, from travellers, that in the king's valley is now a tower, and a large heap of stones, which is increased every day more and more; for Heathens and strangers passing by there have a custom to cast everyone a stone at it, as



it were revenging, according to the law, Absalom's rebellion against David his father, and curse him after this manner; let Absalom the parricide be cursed, and whoever unrighteously persecutes their parents are cursed for ever:

*for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance*; for though he had three sons, it seems they were all dead, (see <sup><10047></sup>2 Samuel 14:27);

*and he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called unto this day Absalom's place*; or his "hand"<sup>f319</sup>, the work of his hand; some wrongly think it was in the form of an hand; it was an obelisk, or monument, erected to preserve his name; but since it became so infamous, it would have been better to have had it buried in oblivion. Such sepulchral monuments were used in other nations; so Minerva advised Telemachus<sup>f320</sup> to go in quest of his father Ulysses, and if he could not find him, but was assured of his death, then to raise a signal or monument in memory of him, which he resolved to do.

**Ver. 19.** *Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok*, etc.] To Joab; for it seems he stayed with the army when he with Jonathan brought the message from Hushai to David:

*let me now run, and bear the king tidings how that the Lord hath avenged him on his enemies*; which he thought would be very acceptable to hear of as soon as possible; and to be a messenger with tidings of a victory, as it was honourable, so likewise profitable then as now; though perhaps Ahimaaz might have no respect to the reward, as indeed none could be expected, since the death of Absalom would be so disagreeable to the king; but was desirous of it, that the king might be acquainted with the event of the battle as soon as might be.

**Ver. 20.** *And Joab said unto him, thou shall not bear tidings this day*, etc.] Because Joab knew the tidings of Absalom's death would not be acceptable to the king; and Ahimaaz being a good man, and the son of a priest, for whom Joab had a respect, he would not send the tidings by him, which he was sensible would not recommend him to the king:

*but thou shalt bear tidings another day*; when any salvation is wrought, or victory obtained, the tidings of which will be welcome:

*but this day thou shall bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead;* and thou must carry the news concerning his death, which it is not proper thou shouldst, being a priest, nor will it be to thine advantage.

**Ver. 21.** *Then said Joab to Cush*, etc.] The Ethiopian, or blackamoor; who either was an Ethiopian by birth and proselyted, or he was an Israelite of a black complexion, and therefore so called; and was judged a proper person by the general to carry such dismal news to the king, as he knew it would be. Some Jewish writers<sup>f321</sup> take him to be the same with Cush the Benjaminite, in the title of the seventh psalm, (~~<JOB>~~ Psalm 7:1); and that he is the same that told Joab he saw Absalom hanging in an oak, and declared that, if a thousand shekels of silver were offered him, he would not have put forth his hand against him, (~~<JOB>~~ 2 Samuel 18:10-12); though some think this was one of the ten young men that waited on Joab, and by his orders slew Absalom; but it would have been dangerous for one of these to have carried the tidings, had he been known by David to have done it:

*go tell the king what thou hast seen:* by which it should seem that he was present when Absalom was killed:

*and Cush bowed himself unto Joab;* in reverence to him as his general, and in thankfulness for sending him on this errand:

*and ran;* as fast as he could.

**Ver. 22.** *Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab*, etc.] He could not be easy, even though a messenger was dispatched, but pressed Joab still:

*but howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush;* only permit me to go after him, though not as a messenger:

*and Joab said, wherefore wilt thou run, my son?* having a great affection for him, and concerned that he should take trouble on him to no purpose:

*seeing thou hast no tidings ready;* no news to carry, but what Cush is gone with, and so can have no audience of the king, nor any reward from him.

**Ver. 23.** *But howsoever ([said he]) let me run*, etc.] Be it as it may, I beg I may have leave; and being so very importunate, it was granted:

*and he said unto him, run;* since he would take no denial:

*then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush*; who ran by the way of the mountains; which though the shorter way, that through the plain was easiest, and soonest run, though the longest.

**Ver. 24.** *And David sat between the two gates*, etc.] Of the city of Mahanaim; which being a fortified place had two walls, one within another, and in each wall a gate; and between these David sat, waiting for news of the battle:

*and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall*; the gate to the outward wall, over which was a tower, and on that a flat roof; to which the watchman went to observe if he could see an express coming; no doubt by David's orders:

*and lifted up his eyes and looked*; that is, very diligently and wistfully:

*and, behold, a man running alone*: which made him the more observable, and was the more likely to be a messenger.

**Ver. 25.** *And the watchman cried and told the king*, etc.] Called with a loud voice from the roof of the watchtower to the king, sitting between the gates, and informed him what he saw:

*and the king said, if he [be] alone [there is] tidings in his mouth*; for if the army was routed and fled, and were pursued, there would be more in company, or several running one after another; but being but one, it was highly improbable that he was sent express:

*and he came apace, and drew near*; which was another sign of his being a messenger, the haste he made towards the city.

**Ver. 26.** *And the watchman saw another man running*, etc.] At a further distance:

*and the watchman called unto the porter*; that kept the gate, under which the watchtower was:

*and said, behold, [another] man runneth alone*; as the other, and has the same appearance of a messenger:

*and the king said, he also bringeth tidings*; it being usual then, as now, to dispatch one messenger after another, as fresh accounts coming in made it necessary.

**Ver. 27.** *And the watchman said, me thinketh,* etc.] Or, “I see”<sup>f322</sup>; I perceive, so it appears to me:

*that the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok*; who it seems was well known, and famous for his manner of running and swiftness in it, having been employed in carrying expresses before from Jerusalem to David, and his army, wheresoever they were; and some of these persons thus employed were very swift; we read<sup>f323</sup> of one that was a king’s messenger, that went from Jerusalem to Tyre, on the first of Elul, or August, in a night and a day; which, according to Bunting<sup>f324</sup> was an hundred miles: this watchman must be one of David’s sentinels, who was well acquainted with the people about him:

*and the king said, he [is] a good man, and cometh with good tidings*; he knew he was a man of courage, and therefore was not one that fled, but must be a messenger; and that he was well affected to him, and would never be the messenger of evil tidings to him.

**Ver. 28.** *And Ahimaaz called and said unto the king,* etc.] As soon as he came so near as to be heard by him, before he came up to him, he said with a loud voice:

*all is well*; the king’s army has had success, beat the rebels, and obtained a complete victory: or “peace”<sup>f325</sup>; for it is but one word in the original, which signifies all happiness and prosperity, and this he wished the king; and so it is the same as if he had said, God save the king, may all happiness attend him:

*and he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king*; when he came nearer to him, not only in reverence of him, but in thankfulness to God:

*and said, blessed [be] the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king*; in which he ascribes the victory, not to Joab and his army, but to the Lord, to whom he gives thanks; and this agreeably to his character as a good man, and a priest of the Lord.

**Ver. 29.** *And the king said, is the young man Absalom safe?* etc.] Or, is there “peace”<sup>f326</sup> to him? you say there is peace, and that prosperity and success have attended my army; but what peace has Absalom? is he well, and in safety? David seemed more concerned for him than for his army and

the success of it; and even suggests as if it was nothing if Absalom was not safe, so great were his affections towards him:

*and Ahimaaz answered, when Joab sent the king's servant;* which was Cush, the first messenger, whose office perhaps it was to be one of the king's messengers, and therefore called his servant:

*and [me] thy servant:* Ahimaaz himself who was sent after the other:

*I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what [it was];* he perceived that the tidings of the death of Absalom would be disagreeable to the king, and therefore concealed it from him; and though a good man, he cannot be excused from lying, for certainly he knew that Absalom was dead, as appears from (<sup>1089</sup>2 Samuel 18:19,20); though indeed what he said might be true, that after Joab had sent him and Cush, as the Targum paraphrases it, he saw a company of people gathered together in a tumultuous manner, the meaning of which he knew not; but then this was no other than an evasion.

**Ver. 30.** *And the king said [unto him], turn aside, [and] stand here,* etc.] On the side of him, not far from him, until the other messenger came, that he might learn from them both the true state of the case:

*and he turned aside, and stood still;* saying nothing more to the king, nor he to him.

**Ver. 31.** *And, behold, Cush came,* etc.] A little after:

*and Cush said, tidings, my lord the king;* news is sent and brought by me, and good news it is:

*for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee;* they are either killed or dispersed; there is an entire victory over them, and deliverance from them.

**Ver. 32.** *And the king said unto Cush, is the young man Absalom safe?* etc.] The same question that was put to Ahimaaz, (<sup>1089</sup>2 Samuel 18:29); which shows what lay nearest his heart, and was uppermost in his mind,

*and Cush answered, the enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do [thee] hurt, be as [that] young man [is],* which was tacitly saying he was dead, and so David understood it; and he expressed it

in such a manner, that David could not be displeased with the messenger; though the message was grievous to him.

**Ver. 33.** *And the king was much moved*, etc.] His affections were moved, his passions were stirred up; he was greatly troubled, distressed, and grieved:

*and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept*; got out of sight and company as soon as he could; as his own dwelling was at some distance, he made haste to the chamber in the watchtower, over the gate of the city, where the watchman was, to vent his grief; and could not suppress it till he got thither:

*and as he went*; up the stairs to the chamber:

*thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom!* which repetition expresses the vehemence of his affections, and how inconsolable he was on account of his son's death:

*would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!* some think he said this on account of his eternal state, being satisfied of his own; but it may be it was only the effect of natural affection, indulged to too great a degree, and unbecoming so good a man in such a case; the Targum is,

“I wish I had died for thee, and thou hadst remained this day.”