# 2 Samuel

1 After Saul's death, David returned from
striking down the Amalekites and stayed in
Ziklag for two days.
2 On the third day, a man came from Saul's
camp with torn clothes and dirt on his head.
When he came to David, he fell to the ground
and paid homage.
3 David asked him, "Where have you come
from?" He answered, "I have escaped from the
camp of Israel."
4 David asked him, "What happened? Please
tell me." He answered, "The people fled from the
battle, and many of the people fell and died.
Saul and his son Jonathan are dead as well."
5 David asked the young man who brought
him the news, "How do you know that Saul and
his son Jonathan are dead?"
6 The young man who brought him the news
said, "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa. There
was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots
and horsemen closing in on him.
7 He turned around, saw me and called to me.
I said, 'Here I am.'
8 He asked me, 'Who are you?' I answered
him, 'I am an Amalekite.'
9 Then he said to me, 'Please stand beside me
and kill me, for anguish has seized me, but my
life is still in me.'

10 So I stood beside him and killed him, for I
knew he would not live after his fall. I took the
crown from his head and the armlet from his
arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."
11 David took hold of his clothes and tore
them, and all the men with him did the same.
12 They mourned, wept and fasted until
evening for Saul, for his son Jonathan, for the
LORD's people and for the house of Israel,
because they had fallen by the sword.

13 David asked the young man who had
brought him the news, "Where are you from?"
He answered, "I am the son of an Amalekite
resident foreigner."
14 David said to him, "How were you not afraid
to raise your hand to kill the LORD's anointed?"
15 Then David called one of the young men
and said, "Go, strike him down." He struck him,
and he died.
16 David said to him, "Your blood be on your
own head, for your own mouth has testified
against you, saying, 'I killed the LORD's
anointed.' "
17 David sang this lament over Saul and his
son Jonathan
18 and ordered that the people of Judah be
taught the Song of the Bow. It is written in the
Book of Jashar:

19 "Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights!
How the mighty have fallen!

20 Do not tell it in Gath;
do not announce it in the streets of
Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the

Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of
the uncircumcised exult.
21 O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or
rain upon you, nor fields yielding
offerings!
For there the shield of the mighty was
defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed
with oil.
22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the
mighty, Jonathan's bow did not turn back,
and Saul's sword did not return empty.
23 Saul and Jonathan, beloved and pleasant in
their lives, were not parted in their death.
They were swifter than eagles;
they were stronger than lions.
24 Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who
clothed you in scarlet and finery, who put
gold ornaments on your garments.
25 How the mighty have fallen in the midst of
battle!
Jonathan lies slain on your heights.
26 I am distressed for you, Jonathan my brother.
You were very dear to me.
Your love for me was wonderful, surpassing
the love of women.
27 How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons
of war have perished!”

# 2

1 After this, David inquired of the LORD, “Shall
I go up to one of the cities of Judah?” The LORD
said to him, “Go up.” David asked, “Where shall I
go?” He said, “To Hebron.”

2 So David went up there with his two wives,
Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, who had been
the wife of Nabal of Carmel.
3 David also brought up the men who were
with him, each with his household, and they
settled in the towns of Hebron.
4 The men of Judah came and anointed David
king over the house of Judah there. David was
told, “The men of Jabesh-gilead were the ones
who buried Saul.”
5 David sent messengers to the men of
Jabesh-gilead, saying, “May you be blessed by
the LORD for showing this kindness to your lord
Saul by burying him.
6 Now may the LORD show you kindness and
faithfulness. I too will do you good because you
have done this.
7 So let your hands be strong, and be valiant,
for your lord Saul is dead, and the house of
Judah has anointed me king over them.”
8 But Abner son of Ner, the commander of
Saul’s army, took Ish-bosheth son of Saul and
brought him over to Mahanaim.
9 He made him king over Gilead, the Ashurites,
Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin and all Israel.
10 Ish-bosheth son of Saul was forty years old
when he became king over Israel, and he
reigned for two years. But the house of Judah
followed David.
11 David was king in Hebron over the house of
Judah for seven years and six months.
12 Abner son of Ner and the servants of
Ish-bosheth son of Saul went out from
Mahanaim to Gibeon.

13 Joab son of Zeruiah and David's servants
went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon.
They sat down on opposite sides of the pool.
14 Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men get
up and compete before us." Joab said, "Let them
get up."
15 So they got up and crossed over in equal
numbers: twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth
son of Saul, and twelve of David's servants.
16 Each seized his opponent by the head and
thrust his sword into his opponent's side, and
they fell together. So that place in Gibeon was
called Helkath-hazzurim.
17 The battle was very fierce that day, and
Abner and the men of Israel were defeated
before David's servants.
18 Zeruiah's three sons were there: Joab,
Abishai and Asahel. Asahel was as swift of foot
as a gazelle in the open country.
19 Asahel pursued Abner without turning to
the right or the left as he followed him.
20 Abner looked behind him and asked, "Is that
you, Asahel?" He answered, "It is."
21 Abner said to him, "Turn to your right or
your left, seize one of the young men and take
his gear." But Asahel would not turn aside from
pursuing him.
22 Abner again said to Asahel, "Stop pursuing
me! Why should I strike you to the ground?
How could I then face your brother Joab?"
23 But he refused to turn aside. So Abner
struck him in the belly with the butt of his spear,
and the spear came out through his back. He fell

and died on the spot. Everyone who came to the
place where Asahel had fallen and died stood
still.
24 But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. The
sun was setting when they came to the hill of
Ammah, facing Giah, on the road to the
wilderness of Gibeon.
25 The Benjaminites gathered behind Abner,
formed one company and took their stand on
top of a hill.
26 Abner called to Joab, “Must the sword
devour forever? Do you not know it will end in
bitterness? How long before you tell the people
to stop pursuing their brothers?”
27 Joab said, “As God lives, if you had not
spoken, the people would have withdrawn in
the morning, each from pursuing his brother.”
28 Then Joab blew the ram’s horn, and all the
people stopped. They no longer pursued Israel
or continued fighting.
29 Abner and his men walked through the
Arabah all that night, crossed the Jordan, went
through all Bithron and came to Mahanaim.
30 Joab returned from pursuing Abner and
gathered all the people. Nineteen of David’s
servants were missing, besides Asahel.
31 But David’s servants had killed three
hundred and sixty men from Benjamin and
Abner’s forces.
32 They took up Asahel and buried him in his
father’s tomb in Bethlehem. Joab and his men
walked all night, and day broke for them at
Hebron.

# 3

1 The war between the house of Saul and the
house of David lasted a long time. David grew
stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul
grew weaker and weaker.

2 Sons were born to David in Hebron. His
firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam of Jezreel.
3 His second was Chileab, by Abigail, who had
been the wife of Nabal of Carmel. The third was
Absalom, son of Maacah, daughter of Talmai
king of Geshur.
4 The fourth was Adonijah son of Haggith, and
the fifth was Shephatiah son of Abital.
5 The sixth was Ithream, by Eglah, David's
wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

6 During the war between the house of Saul
and the house of David, Abner was
strengthening his position in the house of Saul.
7 Saul had a concubine named Rizpah
daughter of Aiah. Ish-bosheth said to Abner,
"Why have you slept with my father's
concubine?"
8 Abner was very angry at Ish-bosheth's words
and said, "Am I a dog's head belonging to Judah?
To this day I have shown kindness to the house
of your father Saul, to his brothers and to his
friends, and I have not delivered you into
David's hand. Yet today you charge me with
guilt over this woman!
9 May God do so to Abner, and more besides, if
I do not do for David what the LORD has sworn
to him:

10 to transfer the kingdom from the house of
Saul and establish David's throne over Israel
and Judah, from Dan to Beersheba."
11 Ish-bosheth could not answer Abner
another word, because he was afraid of him.
12 Abner sent messengers to David on his own
behalf, saying, "Whose is the land? Make a
covenant with me, and my hand will be with
you to bring all Israel over to you."
13 David answered, "Good. I will make a
covenant with you. But I require one thing of
you: you will not see my face unless you bring
Michal daughter of Saul when you come to see
me."
14 Then David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth
son of Saul, saying, "Give me my wife Michal,
whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred
Philistine foreskins."
15 So Ish-bosheth sent and took her from her
husband, Paltiel son of Laish.
16 Her husband went with her, weeping as he
followed her as far as Bahurim. Then Abner
said to him, "Go back!" And he went back.
17 Abner had spoken with the elders of Israel,
saying, "For some time you have wanted David
to be king over you.
18 Now act, for the LORD has said to David, 'By
the hand of my servant David I will save my
people Israel from the hand of the Philistines
and from the hand of all their enemies.' "
19 Abner also spoke with Benjamin. Then he
went to tell David in Hebron everything that
seemed good to Israel and the whole house of
Benjamin.

20 Abner came to David at Hebron with twenty
men, and David made a feast for Abner and the
men with him.
21 Abner said to David, “Let me go and gather
all Israel to my lord the king, so that they may
make a covenant with you and you may reign
over all you desire.” David sent Abner away, and
he went in peace.
22 Just then David’s servants and Joab were
returning from a raid, bringing much plunder
with them. Abner was no longer with David in
Hebron, for David had sent him away, and he
had gone in peace.
23 When Joab and all the army with him
arrived, Joab was told, “Abner son of Ner came
to the king, and the king sent him away, and he
went in peace.”
24 Joab came to the king and said, “What have
you done? Abner came to you! Why have you
sent him away and let him go?
25 You know Abner son of Ner. He came to
deceive you, to learn your going out and coming
in, and to find out everything you are doing.”
26 Joab left David and sent messengers after
Abner. They brought him back from the cistern
of Sirah, but David did not know.
27 When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took
him aside into the gateway to speak with him in
private. There he struck him in the belly, and he
died, for the blood of Joab’s brother Asahel.
28 When David heard of it afterward, he said,
“I and my kingdom are forever innocent before
the LORD of the blood of Abner son of Ner.

29 May it fall on Joab's head and on his father's
entire house! May Joab's house never lack one
with a discharge, one with leprosy, one who
holds a spindle, one who falls by the sword or
one who lacks bread."
30 Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner
because he had put their brother Asahel to
death in the battle at Gibeon.

31 David said to Joab and all the people with
him, "Tear your clothes, put on sackcloth and
mourn before Abner." King David walked
behind the bier.
32 They buried Abner in Hebron. The king
wept aloud at Abner's grave, and all the people
wept.

33 The king sang a lament for Abner, saying,

"Should Abner die as a fool dies?
34 Your hands were not bound, nor your feet put
in bronze shackles.
You fell as one falls before wicked men."
And all the people wept over him again.

35 All the people came to urge David to eat
bread while it was still day, but David swore,
"May God do so to me, and more besides, if I
taste bread or anything else before the sun goes
down."
36 All the people took notice and were pleased.
Everything the king did pleased all the people.
37 That day all the people and all Israel knew
that the killing of Abner son of Ner had not
come from the king.

38 The king said to his servants, “Do you not
know that a leader, a great man, has fallen in
Israel today?
39 Today I am weak, though anointed king, and
these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for
me. May the LORD repay the evildoer according
to his evil.”

# 4

1 When Saul’s son heard that Abner had died
in Hebron, his hands grew weak, and all Israel
was terrified.
2 Saul’s son had two men who were
commanders of raiding bands. One was named
Baanah and the other Rechab. They were sons
of Rimmon the Beerothite, from Benjamin, for
Beeroth was also counted as part of Benjamin.
3 The Beerothites had fled to Gittaim, where
they have lived as resident foreigners to this day.
4 Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was
lame in both feet. He was five years old when
the news about Saul and Jonathan came from
Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as
she hurried to flee, he fell and became lame. His
name was Mephibosheth.
5 Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the
Beerothite, set out and came to Ish-bosheth’s
house in the heat of the day, while he was lying
down for his midday rest.
6 They went into the interior of the house as
though to get wheat and struck him in the belly.
Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.
7 They had entered the house while he was
lying on his bed in his bedroom. They struck

him, killed him and cut off his head. They took
his head and walked along the Arabah road all
night.
8 They brought Ish-bosheth's head to David at
Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of
Ish-bosheth son of Saul, your enemy who sought
your life. Today the LORD has given my lord the
king vengeance on Saul and his descendants."
9 David answered Rechab and his brother
Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As
the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from
every distress,
10 when a man told me, 'Saul is dead,' thinking
he brought good news, I seized him and killed
him in Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him
for his news.
11 How much more when wicked men have
killed a righteous man in his own house, on his
bed! Shall I not now require his blood from your
hands and remove you from the earth?"
12 David commanded his young men, and they
killed them. They cut off their hands and feet
and hung them up by the pool in Hebron. But
they took Ish-bosheth's head and buried it in
Abner's tomb in Hebron.

# 5

1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at
Hebron and said, "Here we are, your own bone
and flesh.
2 In the past, when Saul was king over us, you
were the one who led Israel out and brought
them in. The LORD said to you, 'You will

shepherd my people Israel, and you will be ruler
over Israel.' "
3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at
Hebron. King David made a covenant with them
at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed
David king over Israel.

4 David was thirty years old when he became
king, and he reigned for forty years.
5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven
years and six months, and in Jerusalem he
reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three
years.
6 The king and his men went to Jerusalem
against the Jebusites who inhabited the land.
They said to David, "You will not enter here.
Even the blind and the lame will turn you back,"
meaning, "David will not enter here."
7 But David captured the stronghold of Zion,
which is the City of David.
8 That day David said, "Whoever attacks the
Jebusites must reach the water channel and
strike the lame and the blind, whom David
hates." That is why they say, "The blind and the
lame will not enter the house."
9 David settled in the stronghold and called it
the City of David. He built all around, from the
Millo inward.
10 David grew greater and greater, and the
LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

11 Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to
David, along with cedar timber, carpenters and
stonemasons for building walls. They built a
house for David.

12 David knew that the LORD had established
him as king over Israel and had exalted his
kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.
13 After coming from Hebron, David took more
concubines and wives from Jerusalem, and
more sons and daughters were born to him.
14 These are the names of those born to him in
Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan and
Solomon;
15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg and Japhia;
16 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.
17 When the Philistines heard that David had
been anointed king over Israel, all the
Philistines went up to seek David. David heard
about it and went down to the stronghold.
18 The Philistines came and spread out in the
Valley of Rephaim.
19 David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go up
against the Philistines? Will you give them into
my hand?” The LORD said to David, “Go up, for I
will surely give the Philistines into your hand.”
20 David came to Baal-perazim and struck
them down there. He said, “The LORD has
broken through my enemies before me as water
breaks through.” That is why he named that
place Baal-perazim.
21 The Philistines left their idols there, and
David and his men carried them away.
22 The Philistines came up again and spread
out in the Valley of Rephaim.
23 David inquired of the LORD, and he said,
“Do not go up. Circle around behind them and
come against them opposite the balsam trees.

24 When you hear the sound of marching in
the tops of the balsam trees, act decisively, for
then the LORD has gone out ahead of you to
strike the Philistine camp."
25 David did as the LORD commanded him and
struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as
Gezer.

# 6

1 David again gathered all the chosen men of
Israel, thirty thousand.
2 David and all the people with him set out
from Baale-judah to bring up from there the ark
of God, over which the Name is invoked, the
name of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned
above the cherubim.
3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart and
brought it from Abinadab's house on the hill.
Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were driving
the new cart.
4 They brought it from Abinadab's house on
the hill, with the ark of God, and Ahio walked in
front of the ark.
5 David and the whole house of Israel were
celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of
instruments made of cypress wood: lyres, harps,
tambourines, rattles and cymbals.
6 When they came to Nacon's threshing floor,
Uzzah reached toward the ark of God and took
hold of it, because the oxen stumbled.
7 The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah, and
God struck him there for his error. He died there
beside the ark of God.

8 David was angry because the LORD had
broken out against Uzzah. He called that place
Perez-uzzah, as it is called to this day.
9 David was afraid of the LORD that day and
said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me?”
10 David was unwilling to bring the ark of the
LORD to himself in the City of David, so he took
it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.
11 The ark of the LORD stayed in the house of
Obed-edom the Gittite for three months, and the
LORD blessed Obed-edom and his entire
household.
12 King David was told, “The LORD has blessed
Obed-edom's household and everything he has
because of the ark of God.” So David went and
brought the ark of God up from Obed-edom's
house to the City of David with joy.
13 When those carrying the ark of the LORD
had taken six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a
fattened animal.
14 David danced before the LORD with all his
might, wearing a linen ephod.
15 David and the whole house of Israel brought
up the ark of the LORD with shouting and the
sound of the ram's horn.
16 As the ark of the LORD entered the City of
David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out
through the window. She saw King David
leaping and dancing before the LORD and
despised him in her heart.
17 They brought in the ark of the LORD and set
it in its place inside the tent David had pitched
for it. David offered burnt offerings and peace
offerings before the LORD.

18 When David had finished offering the burnt
offering and the peace offerings, he blessed the
people in the name of the LORD of hosts.
19 He distributed to all the people, the whole
multitude of Israel, both men and women, a loaf
of bread, a portion of meat and a raisin cake for
each person. Then all the people went home,
each to his own house.
20 David returned to bless his household.
Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet David
and said, “How the king of Israel has honored
himself today, uncovering himself before his
servants' female slaves, as one of the worthless
men shamelessly uncovers himself!”
21 David said to Michal, “It was before the
LORD, who chose me over your father and his
whole house to appoint me ruler over the
LORD’s people Israel. I will celebrate before the
LORD.
22 I will make myself even more contemptible
than this and be lowly in my own eyes. But
among the female slaves you spoke of, among
them I will be honored.”
23 And Michal daughter of Saul had no child
until the day of her death.

# 7

1 When the king was settled in his house and
the LORD had given him rest from all his
surrounding enemies,
2 the king said to Nathan the prophet, “Look, I
live in a house of cedar, while the ark of God
remains within a tent curtain.”

3 Nathan said to the king, “Go and do all that is
in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

4 But that night the word of the LORD came to
Nathan:
5 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what
the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a
house to dwell in?
6 I have not lived in a house from the day I
brought the Israelites up from Egypt until today.
I have moved about in a tent and a tabernacle.
7 Wherever I have moved about among all the
Israelites, did I ever say to any of the tribes of
Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my
people Israel, “Why have you not built me a
house of cedar?” ’
8 Now say to my servant David, ‘This is what
the LORD of hosts says: I took you from the
pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler
over my people Israel.
9 I have been with you wherever you have
gone and have cut off all your enemies before
you. I will make your name great, like the
names of the great ones on the earth.
10 I will appoint a place for my people Israel
and plant them, so that they may dwell in their
own place and be disturbed no more. Wicked
men will no longer afflict them as they did in the
past,
11 from the day I appointed judges over my
people Israel. I will give you rest from all your
enemies. The LORD declares to you that the
LORD will make you a house.
12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie

down with your fathers, I will raise up your
offspring after you, who will come from your
own body, and I will establish his kingdom.
13 He will build a house for my name, and I
will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
14 I will be his father, and he will be my son.
When he does wrong, I will discipline him with
the rod of men and the blows of human beings.
15 But my kindness will not depart from him
as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed
from before you.
16 Your house and your kingdom will be
secure forever before you; your throne will be
established forever.' "
17 Nathan spoke to David according to all these
words and all this vision.
18 Then King David went in and sat before the
LORD and said, "Who am I, Lord GOD, and what
is my house, that you have brought me this far?
19 Yet even this was a small thing in your eyes,
Lord GOD, for you have also spoken of your
servant's house far into the future. This is
instruction for mankind, Lord GOD.
20 What more can David say to you? You know
your servant, Lord GOD.
21 For the sake of your word and according to
your own heart, you have done all this greatness
and made it known to your servant.
22 Therefore you are great, Lord GOD. There is
none like you, and there is no God besides you,
according to all we have heard with our ears.
23 Who is like your people Israel, the one
nation on earth whom God went to redeem as a

people for himself, to make a name for himself
and to do great and awesome things for you all,
for your land, before your people, whom you
redeemed for yourself from Egypt, from nations
and their gods?
24 You established your people Israel as your
own people forever, and you, LORD, became
their God.
25 Now, LORD God, establish forever the word
you have spoken concerning your servant and
his house, and do as you have said.
26 May your name be magnified forever, so
that people say, 'The LORD of hosts is God over
Israel.' And may the house of your servant
David be established before you.
27 For you, LORD of hosts, God of Israel, have
revealed to your servant, 'I will build you a
house.' Therefore your servant has found the
courage to pray this prayer to you.
28 Now, Lord GOD, you are God, and your
words are true. You have promised this good to
your servant.
29 Now be pleased to bless your servant's
house, so that it may continue forever before
you. For you, Lord GOD, have spoken, and with
your blessing your servant's house will be
blessed forever."

# 8

1 After this, David struck down the Philistines
and subdued them. He took Metheg-ammah
from the hand of the Philistines.
2 He also struck down Moab and measured
them with a cord after making them lie on the

ground. He measured two cord lengths for
putting to death and one full cord length for
keeping alive. The Moabites became David's
servants and brought tribute.
3 David also struck down Hadadezer son of
Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his
dominion at the Euphrates River.
4 David captured from him seventeen hundred
horsemen and twenty thousand foot soldiers.
He hamstrung all the chariot horses but kept
enough for a hundred chariots.
5 When the Arameans of Damascus came to
help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck
down twenty-two thousand of the Arameans.
6 David placed garrisons in Aram of
Damascus. The Arameans became David's
servants and brought tribute. The LORD gave
David victory wherever he went.
7 David took the gold shields carried by
Hadadezer's servants and brought them to
Jerusalem.
8 From Betah and Berothai, cities of
Hadadezer, King David took a very great amount
of bronze.
9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David
had defeated Hadadezer's entire army,
10 he sent his son Joram to King David to greet
him and congratulate him for fighting
Hadadezer and defeating him, for Hadadezer
had been at war with Toi. Joram brought objects
of silver, gold and bronze.
11 King David dedicated these to the LORD as
well, along with the silver and gold he had

dedicated from all the nations he had subdued:
12 from Aram, Moab, the Ammonites, the
Philistines, Amalek and the plunder of
Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah.
13 David made a name for himself when he
returned from striking down eighteen thousand
Arameans in the Valley of Salt.
14 He placed garrisons in Edom. Throughout
all Edom he placed garrisons, and all the
Edomites became David's servants. The LORD
gave David victory wherever he went.
15 David reigned over all Israel and
administered justice and righteousness for all
his people.
16 Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army, and
Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder.
17 Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of
Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was scribe.
18 Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the
Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons
were priests.

# 9

1 David asked, "Is there still anyone left of
Saul's house to whom I may show kindness for
Jonathan's sake?"
2 Now Saul's house had a servant named Ziba,
and they called him to David. The king asked
him, "Are you Ziba?" He answered, "Your
servant."
3 The king said, "Is there no one left of Saul's
house to whom I may show God's kindness?"
Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of
Jonathan who is lame in his feet."

4 The king asked him, “Where is he?” Ziba said
to the king, “He is in the house of Machir son of
Ammiel at Lo-debar.”
5 So King David sent for him and brought him
from the house of Machir son of Ammiel at
Lo-debar.
6 Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, son of Saul,
came to David, fell on his face and paid homage.
David said, “Mephibosheth!” He answered, “Here
is your servant.”
7 David said to him, “Do not be afraid. I will
surely show you kindness for the sake of your
father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land
of your grandfather Saul, and you will always
eat at my table.”
8 He bowed and said, “What is your servant,
that you should take notice of a dead dog like
me?”
9 The king called Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said
to him, “I have given your master’s grandson
everything that belonged to Saul and his whole
house.
10 You, your sons and your servants are to
work the land for him and bring in its produce,
so that your master’s grandson may have food to
eat. But Mephibosheth, your master’s grandson,
will always eat at my table.” Ziba had fifteen
sons and twenty servants.
11 Ziba said to the king, “Your servant will do
everything my lord the king commands his
servant.” The king added, “Mephibosheth will
eat at my table like one of the king’s sons.”
12 Mephibosheth had a young son named

Mica. All who lived in Ziba's house were
Mephibosheth's servants.
13 Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because
he always ate at the king's table. He was lame in
both feet.

# 10

1 After this, the king of the Ammonites died,
and his son Hanun became king in his place.
2 David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun
son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to
me." So David sent his servants to comfort him
over his father's death. David's servants came to
the land of the Ammonites.
3 But the Ammonite leaders said to Hanun
their lord, "Do you think David is honoring your
father by sending you comforters? Has David
not sent his servants to examine the city, spy it
out and overthrow it?"
4 So Hanun took David's servants, shaved off
half their beards, cut their garments in half at
the buttocks and sent them away.
5 When David was told, he sent to meet them,
for the men were deeply humiliated. The king
said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow
back, and then return."
6 When the Ammonites saw that they had
made themselves hated by David, they sent and
hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and Zobah,
twenty thousand foot soldiers, along with the
king of Maacah with a thousand men and twelve
thousand men of Tob.
7 When David heard of it, he sent Joab and the
whole army of mighty men.

8 The Ammonites came out and drew up for
battle at the entrance of the gate. The Arameans
of Zobah and Rehob, and the men of Tob and
Maacah, were by themselves in the field.
9 When Joab saw that the battle was arrayed
against him in front and behind, he chose some
of Israel's best men and drew them up against
the Arameans.
10 He put the rest of the people under the
command of his brother Abishai, who drew
them up against the Ammonites.
11 Joab said, "If the Arameans are too strong
for me, you must come to my help. But if the
Ammonites are too strong for you, I will come to
help you.
12 Be strong, and let us be courageous for our
people and for the cities of our God. May the
LORD do what is good in his eyes."
13 Joab and the people with him advanced to
battle against the Arameans, and they fled
before him.
14 When the Ammonites saw that the
Arameans had fled, they too fled before Abishai
and entered the city. Then Joab turned back
from the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.
15 When the Arameans saw that they had been
defeated before Israel, they gathered together.
16 Hadadezer sent and brought out the
Arameans from beyond the river. They came to
Helam, with Shobach, the commander of
Hadadezer's army, at their head.
17 When David was told, he gathered all Israel,
crossed the Jordan and came to Helam. The

Arameans drew up against David and fought
him.
18 The Arameans fled before Israel. David
killed the crews of seven hundred Aramean
chariots and forty thousand horsemen. He also
struck Shobach, the commander of their army,
who died there.
19 When all the kings who served Hadadezer
saw that they had been defeated before Israel,
they made peace with Israel and served them.
The Arameans were afraid to help the
Ammonites anymore.

# 11

1 At the turn of the year, when kings go out to
battle, David sent Joab, his servants with him
and all Israel. They devastated the Ammonites
and besieged Rabbah, but David stayed in
Jerusalem.
2 One evening David got up from his bed and
walked on the roof of the king's house. From the
roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman
was very beautiful.
3 David sent to inquire about the woman.
Someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba daughter of
Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"
4 David sent messengers and took her. She
came to him, and he lay with her. She was
purifying herself from her uncleanness. Then
she returned to her house.
5 The woman conceived and sent word to
David, saying, "I am pregnant."
6 David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the
Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked how
Joab was, how the people were and how the war
was going.
8 David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house
and wash your feet.” Uriah left the king’s house,
and a gift from the king followed him.
9 But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king’s
house with all his lord’s servants and did not go
down to his own house.
10 David was told, “Uriah did not go down to
his house.” David asked Uriah, “Have you not
just come from a journey? Why did you not go
down to your house?”
11 Uriah said to David, “The ark, Israel and
Judah are staying in shelters, and my lord Joab
and my lord’s servants are camped in the open
field. Shall I go to my house to eat, drink and lie
with my wife? By your life, by your very life, I
will not do such a thing!”
12 David said to Uriah, “Stay here today as well,
and tomorrow I will send you away.” So Uriah
stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next.
13 David invited him, and he ate and drank
before him, and David made him drunk. In the
evening Uriah went out to lie on his bed with his
lord’s servants, but he did not go down to his
house.
14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab
and sent it by Uriah’s hand.
15 In the letter he wrote, “Put Uriah at the
front, where the battle is fiercest. Then
withdraw from him, so that he may be struck
down and die.”

16 As Joab watched the city, he placed Uriah
where he knew there were valiant men.
17 The men of the city came out and fought
Joab. Some of the people, David's servants, fell,
and Uriah the Hittite also died.
18 Joab sent a report to David of everything
about the battle.
19 He instructed the messenger, "When you
have finished telling the king everything about
the battle,
20 if the king becomes angry and asks you,
'Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Did
you not know they would shoot from the wall?
21 Who struck down Abimelech son of
Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman throw a piece
of an upper millstone on him from the wall, so
that he died at Thebez? Why did you go close to
the wall?' then say, 'Your servant Uriah the
Hittite is dead as well.' "
22 The messenger went, came to David and
told him everything Joab had sent him to report.
23 The messenger said to David, "The men
were stronger than we were and came out
against us in the field, but we pressed them back
to the entrance of the gate.
24 Then the archers shot at your servants from
the wall, and some of the king's servants died.
Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well."

25 David said to the messenger, "Say this to
Joab, 'Do not let this matter trouble you, for the
sword devours one as well as another.
Strengthen your attack against the city and
overthrow it.' Encourage him."

26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband
Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband.
27 When the mourning was over, David sent
for her and brought her to his house. She
became his wife and bore him a son. But what
David had done was evil in the LORD's eyes.

# 12

1 The LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to
him and said, "There were two men in one city,
one rich and the other poor.
2 The rich man had very many sheep and
cattle,
3 but the poor man had nothing except one
little ewe lamb he had bought and raised. She
grew up with him and his children. She ate from
his bread, drank from his cup and slept in his
arms. She was like a daughter to him.
4 A traveler came to the rich man, but he was
unwilling to take from his own sheep or cattle to
prepare food for the guest who had come to him.
Instead, he took the poor man's ewe lamb and
prepared her for the man who had come to him."
5 David's anger burned fiercely against the
man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives,
the man who did this deserves to die!
6 He must repay the ewe lamb fourfold,
because he did this and had no compassion."
7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This
is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I
anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered
you from Saul's hand.
8 I gave you your master's house and your
master's wives into your arms. I gave you the

house of Israel and Judah. If that had been too
little, I would have given you much more.
9 Why have you despised the word of the
LORD by doing evil in my eyes? You struck
down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took
his wife as your own wife. You killed him with
the sword of the Ammonites.
10 Now the sword will never depart from your
house, because you despised me and took the
wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'
11 This is what the LORD says: 'I am raising up
disaster against you from your own house. I will
take your wives before your eyes and give them
to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives
in the sight of this sun.
12 You did it in secret, but I will do this before
all Israel and before the sun.' "
13 David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against
the LORD." Nathan said to David, "The LORD has
also taken away your sin. You will not die.
14 Nevertheless, because by this deed you have
given the LORD's enemies great occasion to
blaspheme, the son born to you will surely die."
15 Then Nathan went home. The LORD struck
the child whom Uriah's wife had borne to David,
and he became gravely ill.
16 David pleaded with God for the child. He
fasted, went in and spent the night lying on the
ground.
17 The elders of his house stood beside him to
raise him from the ground, but he refused and
would not eat bread with them.
18 On the seventh day the child died. David's
servants were afraid to tell him that the child

had died, for they said, “While the child was alive, we spoke to him, but he would not listen to us. How can we tell him the child is dead? He may do harm.”

19 When David saw his servants whispering, he understood that the child had died. David asked his servants, “Is the child dead?” They answered, “He is dead.”

20 David got up from the ground, washed, anointed himself and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house and asked for food. They set bread before him, and he ate.

21 His servants asked him, “What is this you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but when the child died, you got up and ate bread.”

22 He said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for I thought, ‘Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.’

23 But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”

24 David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son and named him Solomon. The LORD loved him.

25 He sent word through Nathan the prophet, and he called him Jedidiah because of the LORD.

26 Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal city.

27 Joab sent messengers to David and said, “I have fought against Rabbah and captured the water city.

28 Now gather the rest of the people, camp
against the city and capture it, or I may capture
the city and it will be called by my name."
29 So David gathered all the people, went to
Rabbah, fought against it and captured it.
30 He took the crown from their king's head. It
weighed about seventy-five pounds of gold and
had a precious stone, and it was placed on
David's head. He brought a very great amount
of plunder out of the city.
31 He brought out the people who were in it
and put them under saws, iron threshing
implements and iron axes, and made them pass
through the brick kiln. He did this to all the
Ammonite cities. Then David and all the people
returned to Jerusalem.

# 13

1 After this, Absalom son of David had a
beautiful sister named Tamar, and Amnon son
of David loved her.
2 Amnon was so distressed over his sister
Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a
virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do
anything to her.
3 Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of
Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very
shrewd man.
4 He said to him, "Why are you, the king's son,
so thin morning after morning? Will you not tell
me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, the
sister of my brother Absalom."
5 Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed
and pretend to be ill. When your father comes

to see you, say to him, ‘Please let my sister
Tamar come and give me food. Let her prepare
the food in front of me, so that I may see it and
eat from her hand.’ ”
6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill.
When the king came to see him, Amnon said to
the king, “Please let my sister Tamar come and
make two cakes in front of me, so that I may eat
from her hand.”
7 David sent word to Tamar at her house,
“Please go to your brother Amnon’s house and
prepare food for him.”
8 Tamar went to the house of her brother
Amnon, who was lying down. She took dough,
kneaded it, made cakes in front of him and
cooked the cakes.
9 She took the pan and served them before
him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, “Send
everyone away from me.” So everyone left him.
10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food
into the bedroom, so that I may eat from your
hand.” Tamar took the cakes she had made and
brought them into the bedroom to her brother
Amnon.
11 When she brought them near for him to eat,
he seized her and said to her, “Come, lie with me,
my sister.”
12 She said to him, “No, my brother! Do not
violate me, for such a thing must not be done in
Israel. Do not do this outrage.
13 Where could I take my disgrace? And you
would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now
please speak to the king, for he will not withhold
me from you.”

14 But he would not listen to her. He
overpowered her, violated her and lay with her.
15 Then Amnon hated her with a very great
hatred. The hatred with which he hated her was
greater than the love with which he had loved
her. Amnon said to her, “Get up and go!”
16 She said to him, “No! Sending me away
would be a greater evil than the other you have
done to me.” But he would not listen to her.
17 He called the young man who served him
and said, “Put this one out of my presence. Bolt
the door behind her.”
18 She was wearing a long-sleeved robe, for
this was how the king’s virgin daughters
dressed. His servant brought her outside and
bolted the door behind her.
19 Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the
long-sleeved robe she was wearing. She put her
hand on her head and went away crying aloud.
20 Her brother Absalom said to her, “Has your
brother Aminon been with you? For now, my
sister, keep quiet. He is your brother. Do not
take this matter to heart.” So Tamar remained
desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.
21 When King David heard all these things, he
was very angry.
22 Absalom said nothing to Amnon, either bad
or good, for Absalom hated Amnon because he
had violated his sister Tamar.
23 After two full years, Absalom had sheep
shearers at Baal-hazor, near Ephraim, and he
invited all the king’s sons.
24 Absalom came to the king and said, “Your
servant has sheep shearers. Please let the king

and his servants go with your servant."
25 The king said to Absalom, "No, my son. We
must not all go, or we will be a burden to you."
Absalom urged him, but he refused to go,
though he blessed him.
26 Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my
brother Amnon go with us." The king said to
him, "Why should he go with you?"
27 But Absalom urged him, and he sent Amnon
and all the king's sons with him.
28 Absalom commanded his young men,
"Watch for when Amnon's heart is merry with
wine. When I tell you, 'Strike Amnon,' then kill
him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded
you? Be strong and valiant."
29 Absalom's young men did to Amnon as
Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's
sons got up, each mounted his mule, and they
fled.
30 While they were on the way, the report
came to David: "Absalom has struck down all
the king's sons, and not one of them is left."
31 The king got up, tore his clothes and lay on
the ground. All his servants stood by with their
clothes torn.
32 But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's
brother, said, "Let my lord not think they have
killed all the young men, the king's sons. Only
Amnon is dead, for this had been determined by
Absalom since the day Amnon violated his sister
Tamar.
33 So let my lord the king not take to heart the
report that all the king's sons are dead. Only

Amnon is dead."
34 Absalom had fled. The young watchman
looked up and saw a large crowd coming by the
road behind him, along the side of the mountain.
35 Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's
sons are coming. It has happened just as your
servant said."
36 As soon as he finished speaking, the king's
sons arrived and wept aloud. The king and all
his servants also wept very bitterly.
37 Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of
Ammihud, king of Geshur. David mourned for
his son every day.
38 Absalom had fled to Geshur and stayed
there for three years.
39 King David longed to go out to Absalom, for
he had been comforted over Amnon, since he
was dead.

# 14

1 Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's
heart was toward Absalom.
2 So Joab sent to Tekoa and brought a wise
woman from there. He said to her, "Please
pretend to be in mourning. Put on mourning
clothes and do not anoint yourself with oil. Be
like a woman who has been mourning the dead
for many days.
3 Go to the king and speak to him in this way."
Then Joab put the words in her mouth.
4 The woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, fell
with her face to the ground and paid homage.
She said, "Help me, O king!"

5 The king asked her, “What is the matter?” She
said, “I am indeed a widow; my husband is dead.
6 Your servant had two sons. They fought in
the field, and there was no one to separate them.
One struck the other and killed him.
7 Now the whole clan has risen against your
servant, saying, ‘Hand over the one who struck
down his brother, so that we may kill him for
the life of the brother he killed, and destroy the
heir as well.’ They will extinguish the coal I have
left, leaving my husband neither name nor
survivor on the face of the earth.”
8 The king said to the woman, “Go to your
house. I will give orders concerning you.”
9 The woman of Tekoa said to the king, “My
lord the king, let the guilt be on me and on my
father’s house, and let the king and his throne
be innocent.”
10 The king said, “Whoever threatens you,
bring him to me, and he will not touch you
again.”
11 She said, “Please let the king remember the
LORD your God, so that the blood avenger does
not increase the destruction and they do not
destroy my son.” He said, “As the LORD lives, not
one hair of your son will fall to the ground.”
12 The woman said, “Please let your servant
speak a word to my lord the king.” He said,
“Speak.”
13 The woman said, “Why have you planned
such a thing against God’s people? In speaking
this word, the king is like one who is guilty,

because the king has not brought back his
banished one.
14 We will surely die and be like water spilled
on the ground, which cannot be gathered up
again. Yet God does not take away life, but
devises ways so that the banished one will not
remain banished from him.
15 I have come to speak this matter to my lord
the king because the people have made me
afraid. Your servant thought, 'Let me speak to
the king. Perhaps the king will grant his
servant's request.
16 For the king will listen and deliver his
servant from the hand of the man who would
destroy both me and my son from God's
inheritance.'
17 Your servant also thought, 'May the word of
my lord the king bring rest, for my lord the king
is like an angel of God in discerning good and
evil.' May the LORD your God be with you."

18 The king answered the woman, "Please hide
nothing from me that I ask you." The woman
said, "Let my lord the king speak."
19 The king asked, "Is Joab's hand with you in
all this?" The woman answered, "As you live, my
lord the king, no one can turn to the right or left
from anything my lord the king has said. Your
servant Joab commanded me and put all these
words in your servant's mouth.
20 Your servant Joab did this to change the
course of the matter. But my lord has wisdom
like the wisdom of an angel of God, to know
everything on the earth."

21 The king said to Joab, “I have granted this.
Go and bring back the young man Absalom.”
22 Joab fell with his face to the ground, paid
homage and blessed the king. He said, “Today
your servant knows that I have found favor in
your eyes, my lord the king, because the king
has granted your servant’s request.”
23 So Joab set out, went to Geshur and brought
Absalom to Jerusalem.
24 But the king said, “Let him turn aside to his
own house. He must not see my face.” So
Absalom turned aside to his own house and did
not see the king’s face.
25 No man in all Israel was as greatly praised
for his beauty as Absalom. From the sole of his
foot to the crown of his head, there was no
blemish in him.
26 At the end of each year he cut his hair
because it was heavy on him. When he cut it, he
weighed the hair from his head: about five
pounds by the royal weight standard.
27 Three sons and one daughter were born to
Absalom. His daughter’s name was Tamar, and
she was a beautiful woman.
28 Absalom stayed in Jerusalem for two full
years without seeing the king’s face.
29 Absalom sent for Joab so that he could send
him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him.
He sent a second time, but Joab still refused to
come.
30 Then he said to his servants, “Look, Joab’s
field is beside mine, and he has barley there. Go
and set it on fire.” So Absalom’s servants set the
field on fire.

31 Joab got up, came to Absalom at his house
and said to him, “Why have your servants set my
field on fire?”
32 Absalom said to Joab, “I sent word to you,
‘Come here, so that I may send you to the king to
ask, “Why have I come from Geshur? It would
have been better for me to stay there.” ’ Now let
me see the king’s face. If there is guilt in me, let
him put me to death.”
33 Joab went to the king and told him. The king
called Absalom, who came to him and bowed
with his face to the ground before the king.
Then the king kissed Absalom.

# 15

1 After this, Absalom provided himself with a
chariot, horses and fifty men to run before him.
2 Absalom would rise early and stand beside
the road to the gate. Whenever a man with a
dispute came to the king for judgment, Absalom
would call to him and ask, “What city are you
from?” He would answer, “Your servant is from
one of the tribes of Israel.”
3 Absalom would say to him, “Look, your
claims are good and right, but you have no one
from the king to hear you.”
4 Then Absalom would say, “If only I were
made judge in the land! Everyone with a dispute
or a case could come to me, and I would give
him justice.”
5 Whenever a man approached to bow before
him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take
hold of him and kiss him.

6 Absalom did this to all the Israelites who
came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole
the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 At the end of forty years, Absalom said to the
king, “Please let me go to Hebron and fulfill the
vow I made to the LORD.
8 For your servant made a vow while I was
living at Geshur in Aram, saying, ‘If the LORD
will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I
will serve the LORD.’ ”
9 The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he set
out and went to Hebron.

10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the
tribes of Israel, saying, “When you hear the
sound of the ram’s horn, say, ‘Absalom is king in
Hebron!’ ”
11 Two hundred men from Jerusalem went
with Absalom as invited guests. They went in
good faith, knowing nothing of the matter.
12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he
sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s
counselor, from his city Giloh. The conspiracy
grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept
increasing.
13 A messenger came to David, saying, “The
hearts of the men of Israel have gone after
Absalom.”
14 David said to all his servants who were with
him in Jerusalem, “Get up and let us flee, or we
will not escape from Absalom. Hurry and leave,
or he may hurry and overtake us, bring disaster
on us and strike the city with the edge of the
sword.”

15 The king's servants said to the king, “Here
are your servants, ready for whatever my lord
the king chooses.”
16 The king set out with his whole household
following him. But he left ten concubines to look
after the house.
17 The king set out with all the people
following him, and they stopped at the farthest
house.
18 All his servants passed beside him, and all
the Cherethites, all the Pelethites and all the
Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him
from Gath, passed before the king.
19 The king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why are
you also going with us? Go back and stay with
the king, for you are a foreigner and also an
exile from your own place.
20 You arrived only yesterday. Should I make
you wander with us today, when I myself am
going wherever I can? Go back and take your
brothers back with you. May kindness and
faithfulness be with you.”
21 But Ittai answered the king, “As the LORD
lives and as my lord the king lives, wherever my
lord the king may be, whether for death or for
life, there your servant will be.”
22 David said to Ittai, “Go on and cross over.” So
Ittai the Gittite crossed over with all his men and
all the little ones who were with him.
23 The whole land wept aloud as all the people
passed by. The king crossed the Kidron ravine,
and all the people crossed over toward the road
to the wilderness.
24 Zadok was also there with all the Levites,

carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They
set down the ark of God, and Abiathar went up
until all the people had finished passing out of
the city.
25 The king said to Zadok, “Take the ark of God
back to the city. If I find favor in the LORD’s
eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and
his dwelling.
26 But if he says, ‘I have no delight in you,’ here
I am. Let him do to me what is good in his eyes.”
27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, “Are
you a seer? Return to the city in peace, with
your two sons, Ahimaaz your son and Jonathan
son of Abiathar.
28 Look, I will wait in the plains of the
wilderness until word comes from you to inform
me.”
29 So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God
back to Jerusalem and stayed there.
30 David went up the ascent of the Mount of
Olives, weeping as he went, with his head
covered and his feet bare. All the people with
him covered their heads and went up weeping.
31 David was told, “Ahithophel is among the
conspirators with Absalom.” David said, “Please,
LORD, turn Ahithophel’s counsel into
foolishness.”
32 When David reached the summit, where
God was worshiped, Hushai the Archite came to
meet him with his tunic torn and dirt on his
head.
33 David said to him, “If you go on with me,
you will be a burden to me.

34 But if you return to the city and say to
Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king. I was
your father's servant before, but now I will be
your servant,' then you can frustrate
Ahithophel's counsel for me.
35 Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be
there with you? Tell Zadok and Abiathar the
priests everything you hear from the king's
house.
36 Their two sons are there with them,
Ahimaaz son of Zadok and Jonathan son of
Abiathar. Through them you are to send me
everything you hear."
37 So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city
as Absalom was coming into Jerusalem.

# 16

1 David had gone a little beyond the summit
when Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, came to
meet him with a pair of saddled donkeys. They
carried two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred
clusters of raisins, a hundred portions of
summer fruit and a wineskin of wine.
2 The king said to Ziba, "What are these for?"
Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's
household to ride on, the bread and summer
fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for
the weary to drink in the wilderness."
3 The king asked, "Where is your master's
grandson?" Ziba said to the king, "He is staying
in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of
Israel will restore my grandfather's kingdom to
me.' "

4 The king said to Ziba, “Everything that
belongs to Mephibosheth is yours.” Ziba said, “I
bow before you. May I find favor in your eyes,
my lord the king.”
5 When King David came to Bahurim, a man
from the clan of Saul’s house came out from
there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he
kept cursing as he came.
6 He threw stones at David and all King
David’s servants, while all the people and all the
mighty men were on his right and left.
7 As Shimei cursed, he said, “Get out! Get out,
you bloodthirsty, worthless man!
8 The LORD has brought back on you all the
blood of Saul’s house, in whose place you have
reigned. The LORD has given the kingdom into
the hand of your son Absalom. Now you are in
your own misery, because you are a bloodthirsty
man.”
9 Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why
should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let
me go over and cut off his head.”
10 But the king said, “What have I to do with
you, sons of Zeruiah? Let him curse as he does,
because the LORD has said to him, ‘Curse David.’
Who can say, ‘Why have you done this?’ ”
11 David said to Abishai and all his servants,
“My own son, who came from my own body,
seeks my life. How much more this Benjaminite!
Leave him alone and let him curse, for the LORD
has told him to.
12 Perhaps the LORD will look on my tears,
and the LORD will repay me with good for his

cursing today."
13 David and his men went on their way, while
Shimei walked along the hillside opposite him,
cursing as he went, throwing stones at him and
flinging dust.
14 The king and all the people with him
arrived weary, and he refreshed himself there.
15 Absalom and all the people, the men of
Israel, came to Jerusalem, with Ahithophel
beside him.
16 When Hushai the Archite, David's friend,
came to Absalom, he said to Absalom, "Long live
the king! Long live the king!"
17 Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your
kindness to your friend? Why did you not go
with your friend?"
18 Hushai said to Absalom, "No, I will belong to
the one the LORD, this people and all the men of
Israel have chosen, and I will stay with him.
19 Besides, whom should I serve? Should it not
be his son? As I served in your father's presence,
so I will be in your presence."
20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give
your counsel. What should we do?"
21 Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Lie with your
father's concubines, whom he left to look after
the house. All Israel will hear that you have
made yourself hated by your father, and the
hands of all who are with you will be
strengthened."
22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the
roof, and Absalom lay with his father's
concubines in the sight of all Israel.

23 In those days the counsel Ahithophel gave
was regarded as if a man had inquired of the
word of God. So it was with all Ahithophel's
counsel, both for David and for Absalom.

# 17

1 Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose
twelve thousand men, and I will set out and
pursue David tonight.
2 I will come upon him while he is weary and
weak, and throw him into a panic. All the
people with him will flee, and I will strike down
the king alone.
3 Then I will bring all the people back to you.
The man you seek is as good as the return of
everyone. All the people will be at peace."
4 The proposal seemed right to Absalom and
all the elders of Israel.
5 Then Absalom said, "Call Hushai the Archite
as well, and let us hear what he has to say."
6 Hushai came to Absalom, and Absalom said
to him, "This is what Ahithophel has said.
Should we follow his advice? If not, speak."
7 Hushai said to Absalom, "The counsel
Ahithophel has given is not good this time."
8 Hushai continued, "You know your father
and his men. They are mighty warriors, and
they are bitter in spirit, like a bear robbed of her
cubs in the field. Your father is a man of war,
and he will not spend the night with the people.
9 Even now he is hidden in one of the pits or
some other place. When some of your men fall
at the beginning, whoever hears of it will say,

‘There has been a slaughter among the people
who follow Absalom.’
10 Then even a valiant man with the heart of a
lion will utterly melt, for all Israel knows that
your father is a mighty warrior and that the
men with him are valiant.
11 So my counsel is that all Israel be gathered
to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as numerous as
the sand by the sea, and that you yourself go
into battle.
12 We will come upon him wherever he is
found, and settle on him as the dew falls on the
ground. Neither he nor a single one of the men
with him will be left.
13 If he withdraws into a city, all Israel will
bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into
the ravine until not even a pebble is found
there.”
14 Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The
counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than
Ahithophel’s counsel.” For the LORD had
ordained that Ahithophel’s good counsel be
frustrated, so that the LORD might bring disaster
on Absalom.
15 Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the
priests, “This is what Ahithophel advised
Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is
what I advised.
16 Now send word quickly to David: ‘Do not
spend tonight in the plains of the wilderness. Be
sure to cross over, or the king and all the people
with him may be swallowed up.’ ”
17 Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at
En-rogel. A servant girl would go and tell them,

and they would go and tell King David, for they could not be seen entering the city.

18 But a young man saw them and told Absalom. The two hurried away and came to the house of a man in Bahurim who had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it.

19 The woman took a covering and spread it over the mouth of the well, then scattered crushed grain on it. Nothing was discovered.

20 Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house and asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman said to them, "They have crossed the stream." They searched but did not find them, so they returned to Jerusalem.

21 After they had gone, the two came up out of the well and went to tell King David. They said to David, "Get up and cross the water quickly, for this is what Ahithophel has advised against you."

22 So David and all the people with him got up and crossed the Jordan. By morning light, every one of them had crossed the Jordan; not one was missing.

23 When Ahithophel saw that his counsel had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and went home to his own city. He put his household in order, hanged himself and died, and was buried in his father's tomb.

24 David came to Mahanaim, while Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel.

25 Absalom had appointed Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Israelite, who had gone in

to Abigail daughter of Nahash, the sister of
Zeruiah, Joab's mother.
26 Israel and Absalom camped in the land of
Gilead.
27 When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son
of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites,
Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and
Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim
28 brought beds, bowls, earthenware vessels,
wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils
and roasted grain,
29 along with honey, butter, sheep and cheese
from cows' milk. They brought these to David
and the people with him to eat, for they said,
"The people are hungry, weary and thirsty in the
wilderness."

# 18

1 David mustered the people with him and
appointed commanders of thousands and
commanders of hundreds over them.
2 David sent out the people, a third under
Joab, a third under Abishai son of Zeruiah,
Joab's brother, and a third under Ittai the Gittite.
The king said to the people, "I myself will
certainly go out with you."
3 But the people said, "You must not go out. If
we flee, they will pay no attention to us, and if
half of us die, they will pay no attention to us.
For now there are ten thousand like us. It is
better for you to help us from the city."
4 The king said to them, "I will do what seems
best to you." So the king stood beside the gate

while all the people went out by hundreds and thousands.
5 The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai,
“For my sake, deal gently with the young man
Absalom.” All the people heard the king give all
the commanders this order about Absalom.
6 The people went out into the field to meet
Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of
Ephraim.
7 There the people of Israel were defeated by
David’s servants, and the slaughter that day was
great: twenty thousand men.
8 The battle spread over the whole
countryside, and the forest devoured more
people that day than the sword devoured.
9 Absalom happened to meet David’s servants.
He was riding a mule, and the mule went under
the thick branches of a great oak. His head
caught in the oak, leaving him suspended
between heaven and earth, while the mule
beneath him went on.
10 A man saw him and told Joab, “I saw
Absalom hanging in an oak.”
11 Joab said to the man who told him, “You saw
him! Why did you not strike him to the ground
there? I would have given you about four
ounces of silver and a belt.”
12 The man said to Joab, “Even if about
twenty-five pounds of silver were weighed into
my hands, I would not lay a hand on the king’s
son. In our hearing the king commanded you,
Abishai and Ittai, ‘Take care of the young man
Absalom.’

13 If I had dealt falsely at the cost of my own
life, nothing would have been hidden from the
king, and you yourself would have stood aloof."
14 Joab said, "I will not wait here with you like
this." He took three spears in his hand and
thrust them into Absalom's heart while he was
still alive in the heart of the oak.
15 Then ten young men who carried Joab's
armor surrounded Absalom, struck him and
killed him.
16 Joab blew the ram's horn, and the people
turned back from pursuing Israel, for Joab held
the people back.
17 They took Absalom and threw him into the
great pit in the forest, and raised a very large
heap of stones over him. All Israel fled, each to
his tents.
18 During his lifetime Absalom had set up for
himself the pillar in the King's Valley, for he
said, "I have no son to keep my name in
remembrance." He named the pillar after
himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument to
this day.
19 Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me
run and bring the king news that the LORD has
vindicated him against his enemies."
20 Joab said to him, "You are not to be the
bearer of news today. You may bring news
another day, but you must not bring news today,
because the king's son is dead."
21 Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go and tell
the king what you have seen." The Cushite
bowed before Joab and ran.

22 Ahimaaz son of Zadok said to Joab again,
“Whatever happens, let me also run after the
Cushite.” Joab said, “Why do you want to run,
my son, when you have no news that will bring
you a reward?”
23 “Whatever happens, I will run,” he said.
Joab told him, “Run.” So Ahimaaz ran by the way
of the plain and passed the Cushite.
24 David was sitting between the two gates.
The watchman went up to the roof of the
gateway by the wall, looked up and saw a man
running alone.
25 The watchman called out and told the king.
The king said, “If he is alone, he has news to tell.”
The man kept coming closer.
26 The watchman saw another man running
and called to the gatekeeper, “There is another
man running alone!” The king said, “He too is
bringing news.”
27 The watchman said, “I see that the first man
runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok.” The king said,
“He is a good man and comes with good news.”
28 Ahimaaz called to the king, “Peace!” He
bowed before the king with his face to the
ground and said, “Blessed be the LORD your
God, who has delivered up the men who raised
their hands against my lord the king.”
29 The king asked, “Is the young man Absalom
well?” Ahimaaz said, “I saw a great commotion
when Joab sent the king’s servant and me, your
servant, but I do not know what it was.”
30 The king said, “Step aside and stand here.”
So he stepped aside and stood there.

31 Then the Cushite arrived and said, “Let my
lord the king receive good news! Today the
LORD has vindicated you against all who rose
up against you.”
32 The king said to the Cushite, “Is the young
man Absalom well?” The Cushite said, “May the
enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up
to harm you be like that young man.”
33 The king trembled, went up to the room
over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said,
“My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If
only I had died in your place! Absalom, my son,
my son!”

# 19

1 Joab was told, “The king is weeping and
mourning for Absalom.”
2 The victory that day turned to mourning for
all the people, because the people heard that day
that the king was grieving for his son.
3 The people stole into the city that day as
people steal away in shame when they flee from
battle.
4 The king covered his face and cried out with
a loud voice, “My son Absalom! Absalom, my
son, my son!”
5 Joab came to the king in the house and said,
“Today you have put to shame all your servants
who have saved your life today, and the lives of
your sons, daughters, wives and concubines.
6 You love those who hate you and hate those
who love you. Today you have made it clear that
commanders and servants mean nothing to you.

I know today that if Absalom were alive and all
of us were dead, that would please you.
7 Now get up, go out and speak to the hearts of
your servants. I swear by the LORD that if you
do not go out, not a man will stay with you
tonight. This will be worse for you than all the
trouble that has come upon you from your
youth until now."

8 So the king got up and sat in the gateway. All
the people were told, "The king is sitting in the
gateway," and all the people came before the
king. Now Israel had fled, each to his tents.

9 Throughout all the tribes of Israel, all the
people were arguing, saying, "The king rescued
us from the hand of our enemies and delivered
us from the hand of the Philistines. But now he
has fled the land because of Absalom.
10 Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has
died in battle. So why are you silent about
bringing the king back?"

11 King David sent word to Zadok and Abiathar
the priests: "Speak to the elders of Judah and
say, 'Why should you be the last to bring the
king back to his house, when the words of all
Israel have reached the king at his house?
12 You are my brothers, my bone and my flesh.
Why should you be the last to bring the king
back?'
13 And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone
and my flesh? May God do so to me, and more
also, if you are not commander of the army
before me always in place of Joab.' "

14 He turned the hearts of all the men of Judah
as one man, and they sent word to the king,
“Return, you and all your servants.”
15 So the king set out to return and came to the
Jordan. Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king
and bring him across the Jordan.
16 Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from
Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah
to meet King David.
17 With him were a thousand men from
Benjamin. Ziba, the servant of Saul’s house, also
came with his fifteen sons and twenty servants.
They crossed the Jordan ahead of the king.
18 The ferry crossed over to bring the king’s
household across and to do whatever seemed
good to him. Shimei son of Gera fell down
before the king as he was crossing the Jordan.
19 He said to the king, “Let my lord not count
me guilty or remember the wrong your servant
did on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem.
Let the king not take it to heart.
20 For your servant knows that I have sinned.
So today I have come, the first of all the house of
Joseph, to come down and meet my lord the
king.”
21 Abishai son of Zeruiah replied, “Should
Shimei not be put to death for this, since he
cursed the LORD’s anointed?”
22 But David said, “What have I to do with you,
sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries
to me today? Should anyone be put to death in
Israel today? Do I not know that today I am king
over Israel?”

23 The king said to Shimei, “You will not die.”
And the king swore it to him.
24 Mephibosheth, Saul’s grandson, also came
down to meet the king. He had not cared for his
feet, trimmed his mustache or washed his
clothes from the day the king left until the day
he returned in peace.
25 When he came to Jerusalem to meet the
king, the king said to him, “Why did you not go
with me, Mephibosheth?”
26 He said, “My lord the king, my servant
deceived me. Your servant had said, ‘I will
saddle the donkey for myself, ride on it and go
with the king,’ for your servant is lame.
27 But he slandered your servant to my lord
the king. Yet my lord the king is like an angel of
God, so do what seems good to you.
28 For all my father’s house were nothing but
men doomed to death before my lord the king,
yet you placed your servant among those who
eat at your table. What right do I still have to
appeal to the king?”
29 The king said to him, “Why speak any more
about your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba
shall divide the land.”
30 Mephibosheth said to the king, “Let him take
it all, since my lord the king has come home in
peace.”
31 Barzillai the Gileadite came down from
Rogelim and crossed the Jordan with the king to
see him across the Jordan.
32 Barzillai was very old, eighty years of age.
He had provided for the king during his stay in

Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.
33 The king said to Barzillai, “Cross over with
me, and I will provide for you at my side in
Jerusalem.”
34 Barzillai said to the king, “How many days
of life have I left, that I should go up with the
king to Jerusalem?
35 I am eighty years old today. Can I
distinguish between good and bad? Can your
servant taste what I eat and drink? Can I still
hear the voices of men and women singing?
Why should your servant be a further burden to
my lord the king?
36 Your servant will cross the Jordan with the
king for a little way. Why should the king repay
me with such a reward?
37 Please let your servant return, so that I may
die in my own city near the tomb of my father
and mother. Here is your servant Chimham. Let
him cross over with my lord the king, and do for
him what seems good to you.”
38 The king said, “Chimham will cross over
with me, and I will do for him what seems good
to you. Whatever you ask of me, I will do for
you.”
39 All the people crossed the Jordan, and the
king crossed over. The king kissed Barzillai and
blessed him, and Barzillai returned to his own
place.
40 The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimhan
went with him. All the people of Judah brought
the king across, along with half the people of
Israel.

41 Then all the men of Israel came to the king
and said to him, “Why have our brothers, the
men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the
king and his household across the Jordan, with
all David’s men?”
42 All the men of Judah answered the men of
Israel, “Because the king is our close relative.
Why are you angry about this? Have we eaten at
the king’s expense, or has any gift been given to
us?”
43 The men of Israel answered the men of
Judah, “We have ten shares in the king, and
more claim to David than you. Why have you
treated us with contempt? Were we not the first
to speak of bringing back our king?” But the
words of the men of Judah were harsher than
those of the men of Israel.

# 20

1 Now a worthless man happened to be there,
named Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjaminite. He
blew the ram’s horn and said, “We have no share
in David, no inheritance in the son of Jesse.
Every man to his tents, Israel!”
2 So all the men of Israel left David and
followed Sheba son of Bichri. But the men of
Judah clung to their king from the Jordan to
Jerusalem.
3 When David came home to Jerusalem, the
king took the ten concubines he had left to look
after the house and placed them under guard.
He provided for them but did not lie with them.
They remained confined until the day of their
death, living as widows.

4 The king said to Amasa, “Summon the men of
Judah for me within three days, and be here
yourself.”
5 Amasa went to summon Judah, but he took
longer than the time appointed for him.
6 David said to Abishai, “Now Sheba son of
Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take
your lord’s servants and pursue him, or he may
find fortified cities and escape our sight.”
7 So Joab’s men, the Cherethites, the Pelethites
and all the mighty men went out after him. They
left Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.
8 They were by the great stone in Gibeon when
Amasa came to meet them. Joab was wearing
his belted garment, and over it a belt with a
sword fastened at his waist in its sheath. As he
stepped forward, it fell out.
9 Joab said to Amasa, “Are you well, my
brother?” Joab took Amasa by the beard with his
right hand to kiss him.
10 Amasa did not guard against the sword in
Joab’s hand. Joab struck him with it in the belly,
spilling his entrails to the ground. He did not
strike him a second time, and Amasa died. Then
Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba son
of Bichri.
11 One of Joab’s young men stood beside
Amasa and said, “Whoever favors Joab and
whoever is for David, follow Joab!”
12 Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the
middle of the highway. When the man saw that
all the people were stopping, he moved Amasa
from the highway into the field and threw a

garment over him, for he saw that everyone
who came upon him stopped.
13 Once he had been removed from the
highway, everyone went on after Joab to pursue
Sheba son of Bichri.
14 He passed through all the tribes of Israel to
Abel and Beth-maacah, and all the Berites
gathered and also followed him.
15 They came and besieged him in
Abel-beth-maacah. They piled up a siege ramp
against the city, and it stood against the outer
fortification. All the people with Joab were
battering the wall to bring it down.
16 Then a wise woman called from the city,
“Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, ‘Come here so I may
speak to you.’ ”
17 He came near her, and the woman asked,
“Are you Joab?” He said, “I am.” She said to him,
“Listen to the words of your servant.” He said, “I
am listening.”
18 She said, “In former times they used to say,
‘Let them seek counsel at Abel,’ and so they
settled the matter.
19 I am one of the peaceful and faithful in
Israel. You seek to destroy a city that is a mother
in Israel. Why would you swallow up the LORD’s
inheritance?”
20 Joab replied, “Far be it, far be it from me to
swallow up or destroy!
21 That is not the matter. A man from the hill
country of Ephraim named Sheba son of Bichri
has raised his hand against King David. Hand
him over alone, and I will withdraw from the

city." The woman said to Joab, "His head will be
thrown to you over the wall."
22 Then the woman went to all the people in
her wisdom. They cut off the head of Sheba son
of Bichri and threw it to Joab. He blew the ram's
horn, and they dispersed from the city, each to
his tents. Joab returned to the king in Jerusalem.
23 Joab was over all the army of Israel.
Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the
Cherethites and the Pelethites.
24 Adoram was over the forced labor, and
Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder.
25 Sheva was the scribe, and Zadok and
Abiathar were priests.
26 Ira the Jairite was also a priest to David.

# 21

1 There was a famine in the days of David for
three years, year after year. David sought the
face of the LORD, and the LORD said, "It is
because of Saul and his bloodstained house,
because he put the Gibeonites to death."
2 The king summoned the Gibeonites and
spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not
Israelites, but a remnant of the Amorites. The
Israelites had sworn an oath to them, but Saul
had sought to strike them down in his zeal for
Israel and Judah.
3 David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do
for you? How shall I make atonement, so that
you may bless the LORD's inheritance?"
4 The Gibeonites said to him, "Our dispute with
Saul and his house is not a matter of silver or

gold, nor is it for us to put anyone in Israel to
death." He said, "Whatever you say, I will do for
you."
5 They said to the king, "As for the man who
consumed us and plotted against us so that we
would be destroyed, with no place remaining for
us in all the territory of Israel,
6 let seven men from among his descendants
be handed over to us. We will hang them up
before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, the LORD's
chosen one." The king said, "I will hand them
over."
7 But the king spared Mephibosheth son of
Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the oath
before the LORD between David and Jonathan
son of Saul.
8 The king took the two sons of Rizpah
daughter of Aiah, whom she had borne to Saul,
Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five sons of
Michal daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to
Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite.
9 He handed them over to the Gibeonites, who
hung them up on the hill before the LORD. All
seven fell together. They were put to death in
the first days of harvest, at the beginning of the
barley harvest.
10 Rizpah daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and
spread it for herself on the rock, from the
beginning of harvest until water poured on
them from heaven. She did not allow the birds
of the heavens to settle on them by day, or the
beasts of the field by night.
11 David was told what Rizpah daughter of

Aiah, Saul's concubine, had done.
12 David went and took the bones of Saul and
his son Jonathan from the men of Jabesh-gilead.
They had stolen them from the public square of
Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them
on the day the Philistines struck down Saul at
Gilboa.
13 He brought up the bones of Saul and his son
Jonathan from there, and they gathered the
bones of those who had been hung up.
14 They buried the bones of Saul and his son
Jonathan in the land of Benjamin, at Zela, in the
tomb of Saul's father Kish. They did all that the
king commanded, and after that God answered
the plea for the land.

15 War broke out again between the Philistines
and Israel. David went down with his servants
and fought the Philistines, and David grew
weary.
16 Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of
Rapha, whose bronze spearhead weighed over
seven pounds, was armed with a new sword. He
intended to strike David down.
17 But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid,
struck down the Philistine and killed him. Then
David's men swore to him, "You must never
again go out to battle with us, so that you do not
extinguish the lamp of Israel."

18 After this there was another battle with the
Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite
struck down Saph, one of the descendants of
Rapha.

19 There was another battle with the
Philistines at Gob, and Elhanan son of

Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite struck down
Goliath the Gittite, whose spear shaft was like a
weaver's beam.
20 There was another battle at Gath, where
there was a man of great stature with six fingers
on each hand and six toes on each foot,
twenty-four in all. He too was descended from
Rapha.
21 He defied Israel, and Jonathan son of
Shimeah, David's brother, struck him down.
22 These four were descended from Rapha in
Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by
the hand of his servants.

# 22

1 David spoke the words of this song to the
LORD on the day the LORD delivered him from
the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of
Saul.
2 He said, "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and
my deliverer,
3 my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my
shield and the horn of my salvation, my
stronghold and my refuge.
My Savior, you save me from violence.
4 I call on the LORD, who is worthy of praise,
and I am saved from my enemies.
5 For the waves of death surrounded me;
torrents of destruction terrified me.
6 The cords of Sheol encircled me;
the snares of death confronted me.
7 In my distress I called on the LORD;
I called to my God.

From his temple he heard my voice, and my
cry was in his ears.
8 Then the earth shook and trembled;
the foundations of the heavens quaked and
shook because he was angry.
9 Smoke rose from his nostrils, and devouring
fire came from his mouth;
coals were kindled by it.
10 He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
11 He rode on a cherub and flew;
he appeared on the wings of the wind.
12 He made darkness shelters around him,
masses of water, thick clouds of the skies.
13 From the brightness before him, coals of fire
were kindled.
14 The LORD thundered from heaven;
the Most High made his voice heard.
15 He sent arrows and scattered them;
with lightning he threw them into
confusion.
16 The channels of the sea appeared, and the
foundations of the world were laid bare at
the rebuke of the LORD, at the blast of the
breath of his nostrils.
17 He reached down from on high and took me;
he drew me out of many waters.
18 He rescued me from my strong enemy, from
those who hated me, for they were
stronger than I.
19 They confronted me on the day of my
calamity, but the LORD was my support.
20 He brought me out into a broad place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.

21 The LORD rewarded me according to my
righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he
repaid me.
22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD and
have not wickedly departed from my God.
23 For all his judgments are before me, and I do
not turn away from his statutes.
24 I have been blameless before him and have
kept myself from my iniquity.
25 The LORD repaid me according to my
righteousness, according to my cleanness
in his sight.
26 With the faithful you show yourself faithful;
with the blameless warrior you show
yourself blameless.
27 With the pure you show yourself pure, and
with the crooked you show yourself
shrewd.
28 You save an afflicted people, but your eyes are
on the haughty to bring them low.
29 For you are my lamp, LORD;
the LORD lights my darkness.
30 With you I can charge a troop;
with my God I can leap over a wall.
31 As for God, his way is perfect;
the word of the LORD is refined.
He is a shield to all who take refuge in him.
32 For who is God besides the LORD?
Who is a rock besides our God?
33 God is my strong refuge;
he clears my way completely.

34 He makes my feet like a doe's and sets me on
my high places.
35 He trains my hands for war, so that my arms
bend a bow of bronze.
36 You have given me the shield of your
salvation, and your response makes me
great.
37 You made room for my steps beneath me, and
my ankles did not slip.
38 I pursued my enemies and destroyed them;
I did not turn back until I had consumed
them.
39 I consumed them and crushed them so that
they could not rise;
they fell beneath my feet.
40 You girded me with strength for battle;
you made those who rose against me bow
beneath me.
41 You made my enemies turn their backs to me,
and I destroyed those who hated me.
42 They looked for help, but there was no one to
save;
they looked to the LORD, but he did not
answer them.
43 I ground them like the dust of the earth;
I crushed them and trampled them like mud
in the streets.
44 You delivered me from the disputes of my
people;
you kept me as head of nations.
A people I did not know serves me.
45 Foreigners feign submission to me;
as soon as they hear, they obey me.

46 Foreigners fade away and gird themselves as
they come from their strongholds.
47 The LORD lives!
Blessed be my rock!
Exalted be God, the rock of my salvation,
48 the God who gives me vengeance and brings
peoples down beneath me,
49 who brings me out from my enemies.
You lift me above those who rise against me;
you rescue me from the violent man.
50 Therefore I will give you thanks among the
nations, LORD, and sing praises to your
name.
51 He is a tower of salvation for his king and
shows faithful love to his anointed, to
David and his offspring forever."

# 23

1 These are the last words of David:
"The declaration of David son of Jesse, the
declaration of the man raised on high, the
anointed of the God of Jacob, the pleasant
singer of Israel's songs:
2 The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.
3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke
to me: 'One who rules over people justly,
who rules in the fear of God,
4 is like the light of morning when the sun rises,
a morning without clouds, like the
brightness after rain that brings grass
from the earth.'
5 Is not my house so with God?

For he has made an everlasting covenant
with me, ordered in every respect and
secure.
Will he not cause all my salvation and all
my desire to spring up?

6 But the worthless are all like thorns cast aside,
for they cannot be taken by hand.

7 Anyone who touches them must arm himself
with iron and the shaft of a spear, and
they will be utterly burned with fire
where they lie."

8 These are the names of David's mighty warriors: Josheb-basshebeth the Tahchemonite, chief of the Three. He was Adino the Eznite, who struck down eight hundred at one time.

9 After him was Eleazar son of Dodo, son of an Ahohite. He was one of the three mighty warriors with David when they defied the Philistines who had gathered there for battle, while the men of Israel withdrew.
10 He stood and struck the Philistines until his hand grew weary and clung to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day, and the people returned after him only to plunder.

11 After him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered in a troop where there was a plot of ground full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines.
12 But he took his stand in the middle of the plot, defended it and struck down the Philistines. The LORD brought about a great victory.

13 Three of the thirty chiefs went down at
harvest time and came to David at the cave of
Adullam, while a troop of Philistines was
camped in the Valley of Rephaim.
14 David was then in the stronghold, and the
Philistine garrison was at Bethlehem.
15 David longed for water and said, “If only
someone would give me water to drink from the
well by the gate of Bethlehem!”
16 The three mighty warriors broke through
the Philistine camp, drew water from the well
by the gate of Bethlehem and brought it to
David. But he would not drink it; he poured it
out to the LORD.
17 He said, “Far be it from me, LORD, to do this!
Is this not the blood of the men who went at the
risk of their lives?” So he would not drink it.
These things the three mighty warriors did.

18 Abishai, the brother of Joab, son of Zeruiah,
was chief of the three. He raised his spear
against three hundred and struck them down,
and he had a name among the three.
19 He was the most honored of the three and
became their commander, but he did not attain
to the Three.

20 Benaiah son of Jehoiada, son of a valiant
man, was from Kabzeel and did great deeds. He
struck down two champions of Moab. He also
went down and struck down a lion in the middle
of a pit on a snowy day.
21 He struck down an Egyptian, a man of
imposing appearance. The Egyptian had a spear
in his hand, but Benaiah went down against him

with a staff, seized the spear from the Egyptian's
hand and killed him with his own spear.
22 These things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did,
and he had a name among the three mighty
warriors.
23 He was more honored than the Thirty, but
he did not attain to the Three. David put him
over his bodyguard.
24 Asahel the brother of Joab was among the
Thirty; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem;
25 Shammah the Harodite; Elika the Harodite;
26 Helez the Paltite; Ira son of Ikkesh the
Tekoite;
27 Abiezer the Anathothite; Mebunnai the
Hushathite;
28 Zalmon the Ahohite; Maharai the
Netophathite;
29 Heleb son of Baanah the Netophathite; Ittai
son of Ribai from Gibeah of the Benjaminites;
30 Benaiah the Pirathonite; Hiddai from the
ravines of Gaash;
31 Abi-albon the Arbathite; Azmaveth the
Barhumite;
32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite; the sons of Jashen;
Jonathan;
33 Shammah the Hararite; Ahiam son of
Sharar the Hararite;
34 Eliphelet son of Ahasbai, son of a
Maacathite; Eliam son of Ahithophel the
Gilonite;
35 Hezrai the Carmelite; Paarai the Arbite;
36 Igal son of Nathan from Zobah; Bani the
Gadite;

37 Zelek the Ammonite; Naharai the
Beerothite, armor-bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah;
38 Ira the Ithrite; Gareb the Ithrite;
39 Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.

# 24

1 Again the anger of the LORD burned against
Israel, and he incited David against them,
saying, “Go, count Israel and Judah.”
2 The king said to Joab, the commander of the
army who was with him, “Go through all the
tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and
count the people, so that I may know the
number of the people.”
3 Joab said to the king, “May the LORD your
God multiply the people a hundredfold, and may
the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does
my lord the king desire this?”
4 The king’s command prevailed over Joab and
the commanders of the army. So Joab and the
army commanders went out from the king’s
presence to count the people of Israel.
5 They crossed the Jordan and camped at
Aroer, south of the city in the middle of the
ravine of Gad, toward Jazer.
6 They came to Gilead and the land of
Tahtim-hodshi, then to Dan-jaan and around to
Sidon.
7 They came to the fortress of Tyre and all the
cities of the Hivites and Canaanites. Then they
went out to the Negev of Judah, to Beersheba.

8 They traveled through the whole land and
came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months
and twenty days.
9 Joab gave the king the result of the count of
the people. In Israel there were eight hundred
thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and
in Judah five hundred thousand men.
10 David's heart troubled him after he had
counted the people. David said to the LORD, "I
have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now,
LORD, please take away the guilt of your
servant, for I have acted very foolishly."
11 When David rose in the morning, the word
of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's
seer:
12 "Go and say to David, 'This is what the LORD
says: I offer you three things. Choose one of
them, and I will do it to you.' "
13 Gad came to David, told him the message
and said, "Shall seven years of famine come
upon you in your land, or three months of
fleeing before your enemies as they pursue you,
or three days of plague in your land? Now
consider and decide what answer I should take
back to the one who sent me."
14 David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let
us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercies
are great, but let me not fall into human hands."
15 So the LORD sent a plague on Israel from
morning until the appointed time. From Dan to
Beersheba, seventy thousand men of the people
died.
16 When the angel stretched out his hand
toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD

relented concerning the disaster. He said to the angel who was destroying the people, “Enough! Now withdraw your hand.” The angel of the LORD was beside the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 When David saw the angel striking the people, he said to the LORD, “I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be against me and my father’s house.”

18 That day Gad came to David and said, “Go up and set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.”
19 David went up according to Gad’s word, as the LORD had commanded.
20 Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground.
21 Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” David said, “To buy the threshing floor from you and build an altar to the LORD, so that the plague may be stopped among the people.”
22 Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer what seems good to him. Here are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and oxen’s equipment for wood.
23 All this, O king, Araunah gives to the king.” Then Araunah said to the king, “May the LORD your God accept you.”

24 But the king said to Araunah, “No, I will
certainly buy it from you for a price. I will not
offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that
cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing
floor and the oxen for about twenty ounces of
silver.
25 David built an altar to the LORD there and
offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. The
LORD answered the plea for the land, and the
plague was stopped in Israel.

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