

2 Samuel

The book of 2 Samuel is a continuation of the narrative begun in 1 Samuel, focusing on the reign of King David, one of the most significant figures in the Hebrew Bible. It begins with David mourning the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, demonstrating his respect for Saul as God's anointed and his deep friendship with Jonathan. Following these events, David is anointed king over Judah and eventually over all Israel after a period of civil war between his forces and those loyal to Saul's son, Ish-bosheth. David's reign is marked by significant military victories, including the conquest of Jerusalem, which he establishes as his capital. He brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, symbolizing the unification of religious and political power in Israel.

A central theme in 2 Samuel is the establishment of the Davidic Covenant, where God promises David that his dynasty will endure forever. This covenant is pivotal, as it sets the stage for messianic expectations within the Jewish tradition, pointing towards a future king from David's line who will fulfill God's promises to Israel. Despite these divine assurances, David's reign is not without personal and political turmoil. His adultery with Bathsheba and the arranged murder of her husband Uriah mark a turning point in his life, leading to familial strife and rebellion within his kingdom. The prophet Nathan confronts David about his sins, resulting in David's repentance but also in a series of tragic events within his family, including the rape of his daughter Tamar by her half-brother Amnon and the subsequent murder of Amnon by Absalom, who later rebels against David.

The latter part of 2 Samuel deals with the consequences of David's actions and the internal conflicts that arise within his kingdom. Absalom's rebellion forces David to flee Jerusalem temporarily, highlighting both his vulnerability and his enduring loyalty to God despite personal failings. The rebellion is ultimately quashed, but at great personal cost to David, who mourns deeply for Absalom despite his son's betrayal. The book concludes with various accounts that further illustrate both the successes and struggles during David's reign. These include military victories over surrounding nations and acts of diplomacy that help solidify his rule. Throughout 2 Samuel, themes of divine sovereignty, human frailty, repentance, and redemption are explored, underscoring the complex nature of leadership and covenantal faithfulness.

"After the death of Saul,... "What happened?" David asked....the young man said, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots and their drivers in hot pursuit...."



2 Samuel 1 marks a significant transition in Israel's history, as it recounts the aftermath of King Saul's death and the beginning of David's reign. The chapter opens with David receiving news of Saul and Jonathan's demise on Mount Gilboa. An Amalekite messenger arrives at David's camp, claiming to have assisted in Saul's death at the king's own request. He presents Saul's crown and armlet to David as proof of his account.

David's reaction to this news is one of profound grief and mourning. Instead of rejoicing at the death of his persecutor, David tears his clothes and weeps, along with all his men. He orders the execution of the Amalekite messenger for his alleged role in killing "the Lord's anointed," demonstrating David's deep respect for Saul's position as king, despite their troubled history. This act also serves to distance David from any suspicion of involvement in Saul's death.

The chapter concludes with David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, known as the "Song of the Bow." This poetic eulogy beautifully expresses David's sorrow and admiration for both men. He praises Saul and Jonathan's valor in battle and laments the loss to Israel. David's words for Jonathan are particularly poignant, reflecting their deep friendship: "I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women". This lament not only honors the fallen but also establishes David's character as a compassionate and righteous leader, setting the stage for his ascension to the throne of Israel.

"In the course of time, David inquired of the Lord. "Shall I go up to one of the towns of Judah?"... Meanwhile, Abner son of Ner...had taken Ish-Bosheth son of Saul and...made him king over Gilead, Ashuri and Jezreel, and also over Ephraim, Benjamin and all Israel....

2 Samuel 2 marks the beginning of David's reign as king over Judah, following the death of Saul. The chapter opens with David seeking God's guidance, which leads him to settle in Hebron. There, the men of Judah anoint David as their king, and he commends the people of Jabesh Gilead for their loyalty to Saul. This establishes David's political savvy and his respect for the former king, despite their tumultuous history.

The chapter then introduces a conflict between David's followers and those loyal to Saul's lineage. Abner, Saul's former military commander, installs Saul's son Ish-bosheth as king over the rest of Israel, creating a divided kingdom. This sets the stage for a power struggle between the house of David and the house of Saul. The tension culminates in a violent encounter at the pool of Gibeon, where Abner's men face off against Joab's men, who are loyal to David. The confrontation escalates from a contest of champions to a full-scale battle, resulting in significant casualties on both sides.

The chapter concludes with a pursuit, as Joab's brother Asahel chases Abner. Despite Abner's warnings, Asahel persists, leading to his death at Abner's hands. This event foreshadows future conflicts and blood feuds between the two factions. The day ends with a ceasefire, as Abner appeals to Joab to halt the bloodshed, recognizing the bitter consequences of civil war. The chapter sets the tone for the political and military challenges David will face as he works to unite the kingdom under his rule.



"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 Samuel 3 chronicles a crucial period in David's ascension to the throne of Israel, marked by political intrigue, shifting allegiances, and violent confrontations. The chapter opens with a description of the prolonged war between the houses of David and Saul, with David growing stronger while Saul's house weakens. During this time, David expands his family, fathering six sons with different wives in Hebron.

A significant turning point occurs when Abner, the powerful military commander loyal to Saul's house, has a falling out with Ish-bosheth, Saul's son and successor. This dispute leads Abner to switch his allegiance to David, recognizing God's promise to make David king over all Israel. Abner negotiates with David, who agrees to accept his support on the condition that his first wife Michal, Saul's daughter, is returned to him. Abner then works to convince the elders of Israel, including the influential tribe of Benjamin, to support David as king.

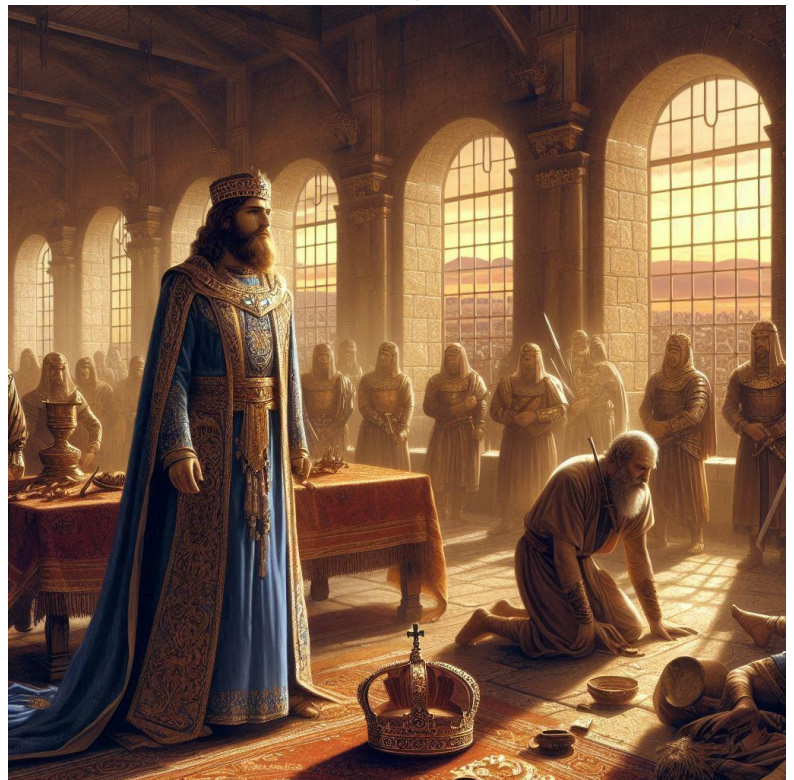
The chapter concludes with a tragic turn of events as Joab, David's military commander, assassinates Abner in Hebron, motivated by vengeance for his brother Asahel's death. David, upon learning of this treacherous act, publicly mourns Abner and curses Joab's house. This demonstration of grief and condemnation of the murder helps David maintain his integrity in the eyes of the people, showing he was not behind Abner's death. The chapter ends with David lamenting the loss of Abner, whom he calls "a prince and a great man," while also acknowledging the dangerous influence of Joab and his brother Abishai.

"When Ish-Bosheth son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage,... Now Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out for the house of Ish-Bosheth..."

2 Samuel 4 recounts the assassination of Ishbosheth, Saul's son and heir to the throne of Israel. The chapter begins with Ishbosheth losing courage upon hearing of Abner's death, which also alarms all of Israel. Two brothers, Rechab and Baanah, captains in Ishbosheth's army, see an opportunity to gain favor with David and plot to assassinate Ishbosheth. The narrative briefly mentions Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, who was crippled in both feet due to a childhood accident, highlighting the vulnerability of Saul's remaining lineage.

Rechab and Baanah carry out their plan, entering Ishbosheth's house at noon while he was resting. They stab him in the stomach, behead him, and escape with his head. The assassins then bring Ishbosheth's head to David at Hebron, expecting a reward for eliminating his rival. However, David's reaction is not what they anticipated. Instead of rewarding them, he is angered by their actions, viewing Ishbosheth as a righteous man who was murdered in his own house on his bed.

David orders the execution of Rechab and Baanah, recalling how he had previously executed the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul. The chapter concludes with David commanding his men to kill Rechab and Baanah, cut off their hands and feet, and hang their bodies by the pool in Hebron as a public display of justice. Ishbosheth's head is then buried respectfully in Abner's tomb. This chapter demonstrates David's commitment to justice and his refusal to gain power through treachery or murder, highlighting the theme of God's sovereignty in establishing David's kingship without David resorting to violence against Saul's house.



"All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron...and they anointed David king over Israel.... David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years...."



2 Samuel 5 marks a significant turning point in David's reign as he becomes king over all Israel. The chapter begins with the elders of Israel coming to David at Hebron, acknowledging him as their rightful ruler and anointing him as king over the entire nation. This unification of the northern and southern tribes under David's leadership marks the fulfillment of God's promise and the beginning of a new era for Israel.

The chapter then focuses on David's military and political achievements. After becoming king, David captures Jerusalem from the Jebusites, establishing it as his capital city and renaming it the City of David. This strategic move not only provides a neutral location for the unified kingdom but also demonstrates David's military prowess. The chapter also mentions the construction of David's palace with the help of Hiram, king of Tyre, further solidifying his royal status and international relations.

The latter part of the chapter describes David's expanding family and his victories over the Philistines. David takes more wives and concubines in Jerusalem, and several of his children are born there. When the Philistines hear of David's anointing as king over Israel, they launch attacks against him. However, David, guided by God's instructions, defeats the Philistines in two significant battles, establishing his military dominance and securing Israel's borders.

"David again brought together all the able young men of Israel...to bring up from there the ark of God...David was dancing before the Lord with all his might,...

2 Samuel 6 recounts the transportation of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. This chapter highlights the importance of reverence for sacred objects and the consequences of disregarding divine instructions. David's first attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem ends in tragedy when Uzzah touches the Ark and is struck dead by God. This incident causes David to temporarily abandon the plan and leave the Ark at the house of Obed-Edom.

After three months, David learns that God has blessed Obed-Edom's household because of the Ark's presence. Encouraged by this news, David decides to make a second attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. This time, he ensures that the Levites carry the Ark according to God's instructions. The procession is marked by joyful celebration, with David himself dancing before the Lord with all his might. This public display of devotion and humility demonstrates David's deep faith and his desire to honor God.

The chapter concludes with the Ark's successful arrival in Jerusalem and its placement in the tent David had prepared for it. However, not everyone approves of David's exuberant celebration. His wife Michal, daughter of Saul, despises him for his undignified behavior. David defends his actions, stating that he was celebrating before the Lord who chose him over her father's house. This incident highlights the contrast between David's heartfelt worship and Michal's concern for royal dignity, ultimately resulting in her childlessness as a divine judgment.



"After the king was settled in his palace...the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying: "Go and tell my servant David,... This is what the Lord Almighty says:...

2 Samuel 7 is a pivotal chapter in the Old Testament, focusing on God's



covenant with King David. The chapter begins with David, now settled in his palace in Jerusalem, expressing his desire to build a permanent house (temple) for God to replace the portable tabernacle. David shares this intention with the prophet Nathan, who initially supports the idea. However, God intervenes and instructs Nathan to deliver a different message to David.

God's message to David, delivered through Nathan, is known as the Davidic Covenant. In this covenant, God promises to establish David's dynasty forever, declaring that one of David's descendants will always sit on the throne. God also promises to make David's name great and to provide a place for Israel where they will be secure and at peace. Importantly, God states that He will build a "house" (dynasty) for David, rather than David building a house (temple) for God. This covenant becomes a foundational promise in the Bible, ultimately pointing towards the coming of Jesus Christ as the eternal king from David's line.

The chapter concludes with David's prayer of gratitude and humility in response to God's promises. David acknowledges God's sovereignty and expresses his awe at the magnitude of the blessings bestowed upon him and his descendants. He praises God's uniqueness and faithfulness, recognizing that these promises are not based on his own merit but on God's grace. David's prayer reflects his deep faith and understanding of his role as God's servant, as well as his hope for the future of Israel under God's guidance and protection.

"In the course of time, David defeated the Philistines and subdued them... David also defeated the Moabites...king of Zobah,... the Arameans of Damascus... And David became famous after he returned from striking down eighteen thousand Edomites..."

2 Samuel 8 chronicles King David's military conquests and administrative developments during his reign over Israel. The chapter begins by detailing David's victories over several neighboring nations, including the Philistines, Moabites, Arameans, and Edomites. These conquests significantly expand Israel's territory and influence in the region. David's military prowess is evident as he subdues long-standing enemies and imposes tribute on defeated nations. The text repeatedly emphasizes that "the LORD preserved David wherever he went," attributing his successes to divine favor.

The chapter also highlights David's growing diplomatic influence. Tou, king of Hamath, sends his son Joram to congratulate David on his victory over Hadadezer and presents gifts of gold, silver, and bronze. This gesture signifies the recognition of David's power by neighboring rulers. Additionally, the chapter mentions David's practice of dedicating the spoils of war - including gold, silver, and bronze - to the LORD, acknowledging God's role in his victories.

The final verses provide insight into David's government structure. It states that David reigned over all Israel, executing justice and righteousness for his people. The chapter lists several key officials in David's administration, including Joab as army commander, Jehoshaphat as recorder, Zadok and Ahimelech as priests, and Benaiah in charge of special forces. This portrayal of David's reign shows him at the height of his power, with a strong, centralized government and Israel's borders extended to their greatest extent. The chapter serves as a testament to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises to Israel and to David personally.



"David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"... Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet."..."



2 Samuel 9 is a chapter that showcases King David's kindness and loyalty to his late friend Jonathan, the son of Saul. The chapter begins with David inquiring if there are any surviving members of Saul's family to whom he can show kindness for Jonathan's sake. He learns of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, who is crippled in both feet.

David summons Mephibosheth to his palace and reassures him, promising

to restore all the land that belonged to his grandfather Saul and inviting him to eat at the king's table regularly. This act of kindness demonstrates David's commitment to honoring his covenant with Jonathan and shows his compassion towards a potentially vulnerable member of the former royal family.

The chapter concludes with David instructing Ziba, a former servant of Saul's household, to manage the restored land on Mephibosheth's behalf. Mephibosheth is described as living in Jerusalem and eating at the king's table like one of the king's sons. This arrangement ensures Mephibosheth's well-being and elevates his status, reflecting David's generosity and his fulfillment of his promise to Jonathan.

"In the course of time, the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun succeeded him as king....So David sent a delegation to express his sympathy to Hanun concerning his father...."

2 Samuel 10 recounts the conflict between Israel and the Ammonites, sparked by a diplomatic misunderstanding. The chapter opens with King David sending envoys to express condolences to Hanun, the new king of the Ammonites, upon the death of his father Nahash. However, Hanun's advisors convince him that David's men are spies, leading to a shocking act of humiliation. Hanun seizes David's envoys, shaves off half of each man's beard, and cuts their garments at the buttocks before sending them away. This insult deeply offends David, who allows the men to stay in Jericho until their beards regrow before returning to Jerusalem.

Realizing the gravity of their actions, the Ammonites prepare for war, hiring 33,000 Aramean mercenaries from various regions. David responds by sending Joab with the entire Israelite army. The battle unfolds with Joab employing a clever strategy, dividing his forces to face both the Ammonites and Arameans simultaneously. Joab's rallying cry to his troops is noteworthy: "Be strong, and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. The Lord will do what is good in his sight.". This statement reflects both military resolve and trust in divine providence. The initial engagement results in a victory for Israel, with the Arameans fleeing and the Ammonites retreating into their city.

The conflict escalates when the Arameans regroup under the command of Hadadezer and his general Shobach. This time, David personally leads the Israelite forces across the Jordan to Helam. In a decisive battle, Israel emerges victorious, inflicting heavy casualties on the Aramean forces. The chapter concludes with the Arameans making peace with Israel and becoming subject to them, effectively ending their alliance with the Ammonites. This chapter illustrates several important themes: the consequences of misunderstanding and hasty judgment, the importance of honor in ancient Near Eastern diplomacy, and the role of divine favor in warfare. It also showcases David's military prowess and the strength of Israel under his leadership, as they overcome numerically superior forces through strategy and faith.



"In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war... David remained in Jerusalem....One evening David got up from his bed... From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful..."

2 Samuel 11 recounts one of the darkest chapters in King David's life, detailing his



moral failure and subsequent cover-up. The chapter begins with David remaining in Jerusalem while his army, led by Joab, goes to war against the Ammonites. One evening, David sees a beautiful woman named Bathsheba bathing on a rooftop and sends for her. Despite knowing she is married to Uriah the Hittite, one of his loyal soldiers, David commits adultery with her. When Bathsheba informs David that she is pregnant, he attempts to conceal his sin by recalling Uriah from battle, hoping he will sleep with his wife and believe the child is his own.

However, Uriah's unwavering loyalty to his fellow soldiers prevents him from enjoying the comforts of home while his comrades are at war. David's attempts to intoxicate Uriah and persuade him to go home to his wife also fail. Faced with the imminent exposure of his adultery, David resorts to a heinous plan. He sends Uriah back to the battlefield with a sealed letter for Joab, instructing him to place Uriah in the fiercest part of the battle and then withdraw, ensuring Uriah's death. Joab follows through with David's orders, and Uriah is killed in battle along with other Israelite soldiers.

The chapter concludes with Joab sending a messenger to inform David of Uriah's death. David's response to the news is seemingly callous, as he tells the messenger to encourage Joab not to be discouraged by the loss of life in battle. After a period of mourning, David takes Bathsheba as his wife, and she bears him a son. The final verse of the chapter serves as a stark indictment of David's actions, stating that "the thing David had done displeased the Lord". This chapter marks a turning point in David's reign, setting the stage for the consequences of his sin that will unfold in subsequent chapters.

"The Lord sent Nathan to David.... "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor....the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb...a...traveler...took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man..."

2 Samuel 12 focuses on the aftermath of King David's sins of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Uriah. The chapter opens with the prophet Nathan confronting David using a parable about a rich man who steals a poor man's only lamb. David, unaware that the story is about him, becomes outraged and declares that the rich man deserves to die. Nathan then delivers the shocking revelation: "You are the man," exposing David's own guilt. Nathan recounts God's blessings upon David and His disappointment in David's actions. He pronounces God's judgment: conflict will arise within David's own household, and his wives will be taken by another in public view, mirroring David's secret sins.

Upon hearing Nathan's words, David immediately confesses, "I have sinned against the Lord." This brief but sincere confession demonstrates David's genuine repentance. Nathan assures David that God has forgiven him and he will not die for his sin. However, the child born from his affair with Bathsheba will die as a consequence of David's actions. The chapter then describes the illness and death of David's newborn son. Despite David's fervent prayers and fasting, the child dies after seven days. David's response to this tragedy shows his faith and understanding of God's ways.

Following this loss, David comforts Bathsheba, and they conceive another son, Solomon, whom God loves and names Jedidiah (meaning "beloved of the Lord"). 2 Samuel 12 powerfully illustrates the themes of sin, repentance, forgiveness, and consequences. It reveals the complexity of David's character - a man after God's own heart who was still capable of grievous sin. The chapter emphasizes that while God forgives, actions still have consequences. Yet, it also demonstrates God's grace in the midst of human failure, as seen in the birth of Solomon.



"In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David....Then Amnon...grabbed her..."No, my brother!" she said to him...."

2 Samuel 13 recounts a tragic and disturbing series of events within King David's family. The chapter begins with Amnon, one of David's sons, becoming



obsessed with his half-sister Tamar, who is Absalom's full sister.

Amnon's cousin Jonadab devises a scheme for Amnon to lure Tamar to his quarters under the pretense of being ill. When Tamar comes to care for him, Amnon rapes her despite her pleas. After the assault, Amnon's lust turns to hatred, and he sends Tamar away in disgrace. She tears her robes and cries out in anguish, going to live as a desolate woman in her brother Absalom's house.

When King David hears of this, he is furious but takes no action against Amnon. Absalom, however, harbors intense hatred for Amnon over the violation of his sister. Two years later, Absalom invites all the king's sons to a sheep-shearing feast, where he orders his servants to kill Amnon once he is drunk. After Amnon's murder, Absalom flees to his grandfather in Geshur, where he remains in exile for three years.

The chapter ends with David mourning for Amnon while also longing to be reunited with his exiled son Absalom. This chapter illustrates the tragic consequences of unchecked lust, violence, and a failure of justice within David's own household. It sets the stage for further turmoil and rebellion in David's kingdom in subsequent chapters, highlighting the complex dynamics of family, power, and revenge in the royal court of ancient Israel.

"Joab...knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. So Joab sent someone...go to the king...When the woman from Tekoa went to the king, she fell with her face to the ground to pay him honor..."

In **2 Samuel 14**, the narrative continues with the aftermath of Absalom's exile following the murder of his brother Amnon. Joab, King David's military commander, perceives the king's longing for his estranged son, Absalom. To facilitate Absalom's return to Jerusalem, Joab devises a plan involving a wise woman from Tekoa. He instructs her to present a fabricated story to David, mirroring his situation with Absalom. The woman tells a tale of two sons, one of whom killed the other, and seeks the king's judgment to protect the surviving son. Through this parable, David is led to recognize his own unresolved family conflict and is persuaded by Joab to allow Absalom to return.

Upon Absalom's return to Jerusalem, he is not immediately reinstated into David's presence. Instead, he is required to remain in his own house for two years without seeing the king. During this time, Absalom begins to reestablish his influence and presence in the city. His physical appearance is noted for its striking handsomeness and his long hair, which he cuts annually. This period highlights Absalom's growing ambition and sets the stage for future events in his life.

The chapter concludes with Absalom finally gaining an audience with King David. After setting Joab's field on fire to compel him to arrange a meeting with the king, Absalom is finally brought before David. The reunion is marked by a gesture of reconciliation as David kisses Absalom, symbolizing forgiveness and acceptance back into the royal family. However, this reconciliation is superficial and foreshadows further conflict between father and son.



"In the course of time,... David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom...."



2 Samuel 15 marks a significant turning point in King David's reign, focusing on the rebellion of his son Absalom. The chapter begins by describing Absalom's cunning strategy to win the hearts of the people of Israel. Over four years, he positions himself at the city gate, intercepting those coming to seek the king's justice. With charisma and false promises, Absalom gradually steals the loyalty of the people, undermining his father's authority. This section highlights the power of populism and the dangers of manipulative leadership.

The narrative then shifts to Absalom's open rebellion against David. He travels to Hebron under the pretense of fulfilling a vow but uses this opportunity to declare himself king. Absalom's conspiracy grows stronger as he gains more supporters, including some of David's trusted advisors. The most notable of these is Ahithophel, whose defection deeply troubles David. This part of the chapter illustrates the fragility of political power and the pain of betrayal, especially from those closest to the king.

The final section of the chapter describes David's hasty flight from Jerusalem. Realizing the gravity of the situation, David decides to leave the city to avoid bloodshed and destruction. This exodus is portrayed with poignant detail, showing David's humility and the loyalty of those who choose to follow him into exile. The chapter ends with David sending his friend Hushai back to Jerusalem as a spy, demonstrating the king's strategic thinking even in the midst of crisis. This chapter serves as a powerful narrative on the themes of loyalty, betrayal, and the consequences of earlier sins coming to fruition in David's life.

"When David had gone a short distance...the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours."... So David and his men continued...while Shimei was...cursing as he went and throwing stones at him..."

2 Samuel 16 continues the narrative of David's flight from Jerusalem due to Absalom's rebellion. As David and his loyal followers leave the city, they encounter various individuals who react differently to the king's plight. Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, meets David with provisions and claims that his master has turned against the king. David, without verifying this information, grants Ziba all of Mephibosheth's property. This hasty decision highlights the vulnerable state of David's judgment during this crisis.

As David's group reaches Bahurim, they face a more hostile encounter with Shimei, a man from Saul's clan. Shimei curses and throws stones at David, accusing him of being responsible for the bloodshed in Saul's family. This scene powerfully illustrates the lingering resentment some held against David for replacing Saul's dynasty. David's response to Shimei's curses is remarkably restrained, as he sees this humiliation as potentially part of God's chastisement, demonstrating his humility and acceptance of divine judgment.

Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, Absalom enters the city and consults with Ahithophel, David's former advisor who has now sided with the rebellion. Ahithophel advises Absalom to publicly sleep with David's concubines, an act that would solidify Absalom's claim to the throne and make reconciliation with David impossible. This fulfills Nathan's prophecy of judgment on David's house for his sin with Bathsheba. The chapter ends with Absalom following this advice, illustrating the depths of his rebellion and the fulfillment of divine judgment on David's household.



"Ahithophel said to Absalom,... choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight...Hushai came to...Absalom..."The advice Ahithophel has given is not good this time...."



2 Samuel 17 revolves around the ongoing rebellion of Absalom against his father, King David. It primarily focuses on the conflicting advice given to Absalom by two counselors, Ahithophel and Hushai, and how their counsel impacts the course of the rebellion. Ahithophel, known for his wisdom, advises an immediate pursuit of David with a small force. In contrast, Hushai, secretly loyal to David, suggests a more cautious approach with a larger army.

God's intervention plays a crucial role in this chapter. Despite Ahithophel's advice being strategically sound, God influences Absalom to follow Hushai's counsel instead. This divine intervention is explicitly stated as a means to bring disaster upon Absalom, highlighting God's protection of David. The chapter also details the efforts to warn David of the impending danger, showcasing the loyalty of his supporters and the risks they take to ensure his safety.

The chapter concludes with significant consequences for the main characters. Ahithophel, realizing his advice has been rejected, returns home and takes his own life. Meanwhile, David and his followers successfully escape across the Jordan River, finding refuge and support in Mahanaim. This chapter serves as a powerful illustration of God's providential care for David, even as he faces the repercussions of his past actions, and demonstrates how God can work through human decisions and events to fulfill His purposes.

"David mustered the men who were with him...David's army marched out of the city to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim...."

2 Samuel 18 recounts King David's climactic battle between David's forces and those of his rebellious son, Absalom. As the chapter opens, David organizes his army into three divisions, led by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. Despite the soldiers' insistence that he remain in the city for his safety, David demonstrates his concern for Absalom by instructing his commanders to "deal gently" with the young man. The battle takes place in the forest of Ephraim, where David's experienced troops gain the upper hand against Absalom's forces.

The narrative then shifts to Absalom's fate. While riding his mule through the forest, Absalom's long hair becomes entangled in the branches of a large oak tree, leaving him suspended between heaven and earth. Upon discovering Absalom in this vulnerable position, Joab, disregarding David's orders, takes matters into his own hands. He and his armor-bearers strike Absalom and kill him. Joab then sounds the trumpet to halt the pursuit of Absalom's remaining forces, effectively ending the battle. Absalom's body is unceremoniously thrown into a large pit in the forest and covered with a heap of stones.

The chapter concludes with the news of the battle's outcome being delivered to David. Two messengers are sent: Ahimaaz son of Zadok and a Cushite. Ahimaaz arrives first but hesitates to deliver the full news of Absalom's death. The Cushite, however, informs David of his son's demise. Upon hearing this, David is overcome with grief, retreating to the room above the gateway to mourn. His anguished cry, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son, my son!" poignantly illustrates the deep personal tragedy amidst the political victory.



"Joab was told, 'The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.'... Then Joab...said, 'Today you have humiliated all your men, who have just saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and the lives of your wives and concubines. You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that the commanders and their men mean nothing to you....'"



2 Samuel 19 continues the narrative of King David's reign, focusing on the aftermath of Absalom's rebellion and David's return to power. The chapter opens with David mourning the death of his son Absalom, which causes distress among his loyal soldiers who had fought to defend his throne. Joab, David's military commander, confronts the king and urges him to address his troops, warning that his excessive grief might lead to further political instability.

As David prepares to return to Jerusalem, the chapter describes the complex process of reconciliation and political maneuvering. Various groups and individuals approach David, seeking forgiveness or reaffirming their loyalty. Among these are Shimei, who had previously cursed David, and Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, who explains his absence during the rebellion. David shows mercy to Shimei and partially restores Mephibosheth's property. The chapter also highlights the tension between the tribes of Israel and Judah, as they argue over who has the right to escort the king back to Jerusalem.

The chapter concludes with David's return to Jerusalem, marking the end of the rebellion and the restoration of his reign. However, the events described in this chapter set the stage for future conflicts and tensions within the kingdom. David's actions, including his pardoning of former enemies and his attempts to balance the interests of different factions, demonstrate the challenges of leadership and the complexities of maintaining political stability in the aftermath of a civil war.

"Now a troublemaker named Sheba...sounded the trumpet and shouted,... So all the men of Israel deserted David to follow Sheba...While they were battering the wall ...down,... a wise woman called from the city..."

2 Samuel 20 recounts a tumultuous period in King David's reign, marked by rebellion and political instability. The chapter opens with a man named Sheba son of Bikeri, a Benjamite, inciting a revolt against David. Taking advantage of the lingering tensions from Absalom's recent rebellion, Sheba rallies the northern tribes of Israel to abandon their loyalty to David, while Judah remains faithful to the king. This new threat prompts David to take swift action to quell the uprising and restore unity to his kingdom.

David orders Amasa, his newly appointed military commander, to mobilize the army of Judah within three days to pursue Sheba. However, when Amasa fails to return in time, David sends Abishai and Joab with the elite troops to track down the rebel leader. During the pursuit, Joab encounters Amasa and, in a treacherous act, murders him. This brutal killing demonstrates the ongoing power struggles and personal vendettas within David's inner circle. Joab then assumes command of the army and continues the chase after Sheba.

The pursuit leads to the city of Abel Beth Maakah, where Sheba has taken refuge. Joab's forces besiege the city, threatening to destroy it to capture the rebel. However, a wise woman from the city intervenes, negotiating with Joab to spare the city in exchange for Sheba's head. The citizens of Abel Beth Maakah, valuing their safety over loyalty to Sheba, comply with the request and throw Sheba's severed head over the wall to Joab. With the rebellion quashed, Joab withdraws his forces, and the chapter concludes by listing the key officials in David's administration, signaling a return to order and stability in the kingdom.



"During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years,... Once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel....In still another battle, which took place at Gath, there was a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot..."

2 Samuel 21 is a chapter that deals with two significant events in the reign of King David:



a three-year famine and battles against the Philistines. The chapter begins with a severe famine afflicting Israel for three consecutive years. When David seeks God's guidance, he learns that the famine is a consequence of Saul's earlier actions against the Gibeonites, whom he had tried to annihilate despite an ancient covenant of protection. To atone for this breach and end the famine, David allows the Gibeonites to execute seven of Saul's descendants. This grim episode concludes with David gathering the bones of Saul and Jonathan, along with those of the executed men, and giving them a proper burial in the tomb of Saul's father, Kish.

The second part of the chapter shifts focus to a series of battles between Israel and the Philistines. These conflicts feature encounters with giant warriors, reminiscent of Goliath whom David had famously defeated in his youth. David's mighty men play crucial roles in these battles, demonstrating their prowess by slaying these formidable foes. Notable among these encounters is a battle where David himself faces a giant named Ishbi-Benob and is rescued by Abishai, one of his loyal warriors. This incident leads David's men to insist that he no longer personally participate in battle, to preserve his life and the stability of the kingdom.

Throughout this chapter, we see a complex interplay of themes including divine justice, the consequences of past actions, and the importance of honoring covenants. The famine and its resolution highlight the serious nature of oath-breaking in ancient Near Eastern culture and the belief in collective responsibility for a ruler's actions. The battles against the Philistines and their giants serve to showcase the strength and loyalty of David's warriors while also marking a transition in David's role as king, moving from active warrior to a more protected figurehead. This chapter thus provides insight into the challenges of David's reign and the evolving nature of his kingship as he ages.

"David sang to the Lord the words of this song... "The Lord is my rock,... "I called to the Lord..."In my distress I called..."He reached down from on high and took hold of me;..."

2 Samuel 22 is a chapter that contains David's song of praise to God, which he composed after being delivered from his enemies and from Saul. This poetic masterpiece is nearly identical to Psalm 18 and serves as a powerful testament to David's faith and gratitude towards God. The chapter begins with David acknowledging God as his rock, fortress, and deliverer, emphasizing the Lord's role as his protector and savior in times of distress.

Throughout the song, David vividly describes his experiences of danger and divine intervention. He uses metaphorical language to portray God's mighty acts, such as the earth trembling, smoke rising from God's nostrils, and the Lord thundering from heaven. These dramatic images underscore the awesome power of God and His willingness to come to David's aid. The king recounts how God rescued him from his enemies, drawing him out of deep waters and bringing him to a place of safety and victory.

The latter part of the chapter focuses on David's righteousness and God's faithfulness. David asserts that the Lord rewarded him according to his righteousness and the cleanness of his hands. He emphasizes the importance of walking in God's ways and keeping His decrees. The song concludes with David praising God for His perfect way, His flawless word, and His unfailing love. He exalts the Lord as the one who gives him strength, makes his way perfect, and grants him victory over his enemies. The chapter ends with David declaring his intention to praise God among the nations, acknowledging Him as the source of his deliverance and the one who shows unfailing kindness to His anointed.



"These are the last words of David: "The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse, the utterance of the man exalted by the Most High,..."

2 Samuel 23 serves as a significant conclusion to the narrative of King David's



reign. This chapter is divided into two main sections: David's last words and a record of his mighty warriors. In the opening verses, we encounter David's final oracle, where he reflects on his life, reign, and relationship with God. He acknowledges God as the source of his strength and success, emphasizing the importance of ruling justly and in the fear of the Lord. David's words are poetic and prophetic, pointing to the eternal covenant God made with him and his house, which finds its ultimate fulfillment in the Messiah.

The second part of the chapter shifts focus to David's mighty warriors, also known as the "Three" and the "Thirty." These were exceptional soldiers who demonstrated remarkable courage and loyalty to David throughout his reign. The text recounts their heroic deeds, such as Jashobeam who killed 800 men in a single encounter, and Eleazar who stood his ground against the Philistines until his hand grew weary and froze to his sword. Perhaps the most touching story is that of the three warriors who risked their lives to bring David water from the well of Bethlehem when it was under Philistine control. David, moved by their devotion, poured out the water as an offering to the Lord, unwilling to drink what had been obtained at such great risk.

This chapter serves multiple purposes within the larger narrative of 2 Samuel. It provides a fitting conclusion to David's story, highlighting both his spiritual legacy and the loyal followers who supported him. The emphasis on David's mighty men also underscores the importance of strong leadership and faithful service in God's kingdom. Moreover, the chapter sets the stage for the transition of power to Solomon, David's son, who would build the temple and continue the Davidic dynasty. Through these accounts, we see a blend of human courage and divine providence, illustrating how God works through faithful individuals to accomplish His purposes in history.

"Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."

2 Samuel 24 illustrates the consequences of pride and the importance of trusting in God's providence. The chapter begins with God's anger being kindled against Israel, leading Him to incite David to conduct a census of the people. This act, while seemingly innocuous, was considered a sin as it demonstrated a lack of faith in God's provision and an overreliance on human strength. Despite objections from his military commander Joab, David proceeds with the census, which takes nine months and twenty days to complete, revealing a substantial fighting force in Israel and Judah.

Upon completion of the census, David is struck with guilt, realizing the gravity of his transgression. God sends the prophet Gad to David, offering him a choice of three punishments: seven years of famine, three months of fleeing from enemies, or three days of pestilence in the land. David, in his wisdom, chooses to fall into the hands of God rather than those of men, opting for the three days of pestilence. The resulting plague claims the lives of 70,000 Israelites. As the destroying angel approaches Jerusalem, God relents and halts the destruction. David, seeing the angel, pleads with God to punish him and his house instead of the innocent people.

The chapter concludes with God instructing David, through the prophet Gad, to build an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. David purchases the threshing floor and the oxen for sacrifice, insisting on paying full price despite Araunah's offer to give it freely. David's statement, "I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing," underscores the importance of personal sacrifice in worship. The altar is built, sacrifices are offered, and God answers David's prayer, bringing an end to the plague in Israel. This narrative serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of sin, the mercy of God, and the significance of genuine repentance and sacrifice. It also foreshadows the future site of Solomon's temple, as the threshing floor of Araunah would later become the location where the house of the Lord would be built.

