

2 Samuel

After the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amal'ekites, David remained two days in Ziklag; and on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes rent and earth upon his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and did obeisance. David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." And David said to him, "How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, and many of the people also have fallen and are dead; and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead." Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilbo'a; and there was Saul leaning upon his spear; and lo, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amal'ekite.' And he said to me, 'Stand beside me and slay me; for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' So I stood beside him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen; and I took the crown which was on his head and the armlet which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord." Then David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and

so did all the men who were with him; and they mourned and wept and
fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of
the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.
And David said to the young man who told him, "Where do you come
5 from?" And he answered, "I am the son of a sojourner, an Amal'ekite."
David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to
destroy the LORD'S anointed?" Then David called one of the young men and
said, "Go, fall upon him." And he smote him so that he died. And David
said to him, "Your blood be upon your head; for your own mouth has
10 testified against you, saying, 'I have slain the LORD'S anointed.'" And David
lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son, and he said it
should be taught to the people of Judah; behold, it is written in the Book of
Jashar. He said: "Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places! How are
the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of
15 Ash'kelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of
the uncircumcised exult. "Ye mountains of Gilbo'a, let there be no dew or
rain upon you, nor upsurging of the deep! For there the shield of the mighty
was defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. "From the blood of the
slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and
20 the sword of Saul returned not empty. "Saul and Jonathan, beloved and

lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. "Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you daintily in scarlet, who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel. "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!

5 "Jonathan lies slain upon thy high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" After this David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" And the LORD said to him, "Go

10 up." David said, "To which shall I go up?" And he said, "To Hebron." So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahin'o-am of Jezreel, and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. And David brought up his men who were with him, every one with his household; and they dwelt in the towns of Hebron. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king

15 over the house of Judah. When they told David, "It was the men of Ja'bes-gilead who buried Saul," David sent messengers to the men of Ja'bes-gilead, and said to them, "May you be blessed by the LORD, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord, and buried him! Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you! And I will do good to you

20 because you have done this thing. Now therefore let your hands be strong,

and be valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has
anointed me king over them." Now Abner the son of Ner, commander of
Saul's army, had taken Ish-bo'sheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to
Mahana'im; and he made him king over Gilead and the Ash'urites and Jezreel
5 and E'phraim and Benjamin and all Israel. Ish-bo'sheth, Saul's son, was forty
years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But
the house of Judah followed David. And the time that David was king in
Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months. Abner the
son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bo'sheth the son of Saul, went out from
10 Mahana'im to Gibeon. And Jo'ab the son of Zeru'iah, and the servants of
David, went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon; and they sat down,
the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the
pool. And Abner said to Jo'ab, "Let the young men arise and play before
us." And Jo'ab said, "Let them arise." Then they arose and passed over by
15 number, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bo'sheth the son of Saul, and twelve of
the servants of David. And each caught his opponent by the head, and thrust
his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that
place was called Hel'kath-hazzu'rim, which is at Gibeon. And the battle was
very fierce that day; and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the
20 servants of David. And the three sons of Zeru'iah were there, Jo'ab, Abi'shai,

and As'ahel. Now As'ahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle; and As'ahel pursued Abner, and as he went he turned neither to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him and said, "Is it you, As'ahel?" And he answered, "It is I." Abner said to him, "Turn aside to
5 your right hand or to your left, and seize one of the young men, and take his spoil." But As'ahel would not turn aside from following him. And Abner said again to As'ahel, "Turn aside from following me; why should I smite you to the ground? How then could I lift up my face to your brother Jo'ab?" But he refused to turn aside; therefore Abner smote him in the belly with
10 the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back; and he fell there, and died where he was. And all who came to the place where As'ahel had fallen and died, stood still. But Jo'ab and Abi'shai pursued Abner; and as the sun was going down they came to the hill of Ammah, which lies before Gi'ah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon. And the Benjaminites gathered
15 themselves together behind Abner, and became one band, and took their stand on the top of a hill. Then Abner called to Jo'ab, "Shall the sword devour for ever? Do you not know that the end will be bitter? How long will it be before you bid your people turn from the pursuit of their brethren?" And Jo'ab said, "As God lives, if you had not spoken, surely the men would have
20 given up the pursuit of their brethren in the morning." So Jo'ab blew the

trumpet; and all the men stopped, and pursued Israel no more, nor did they fight any more. And Abner and his men went all that night through the Arabah; they crossed the Jordan, and marching the whole forenoon they came to Mahana'im. Jo'ab returned from the pursuit of Abner; and when he had

5 gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men besides As'ahel. But the servants of David had slain of Benjamin three hundred and sixty of Abner's men. And they took up As'ahel, and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was at Bethlehem. And Jo'ab and his men marched all night, and the day broke upon them at

10 Hebron. There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; and David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker. And sons were born to David at Hebron: his first-born was Amnon, of Ahin'o-am of Jezreel; and his second, Chil'e-ab, of Ab'igail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; and the third, Ab'salom the son of

15 Ma'acah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; and the fourth, Adoni'jah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephati'ah the son of Abi'tal; and the sixth, Ith're-am, of Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

While there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was making himself strong in the house of Saul. Now Saul had a

20 concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Ai'ah; and Ish-bo'sheth

said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?" Then
Abner was very angry over the words of Ish-bo'sheth, and said, "Am I a
dog's head of Judah? This day I keep showing loyalty to the house of Saul
your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not given you into
5 the hand of David; and yet you charge me today with a fault concerning a
woman. God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not accomplish for
David what the LORD has sworn to him, to transfer the kingdom from the
house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah,
from Dan to Beer-sheba." And Ish-bo'sheth could not answer Abner another
10 word, because he feared him. And Abner sent messengers to David at
Hebron, saying, "To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with
me, and behold, my hand shall be with you to bring over all Israel to you."
And he said, "Good; I will make a covenant with you; but one thing I
require of you; that is, you shall not see my face, unless you first bring
15 Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see my face." Then David sent
messengers to Ish-bo'sheth Saul's son, saying, "Give me my wife Michal,
whom I betrothed at the price of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines." And
Ish-bo'sheth sent, and took her from her husband Pal'ti-el the son of La'ish.
But her husband went with her, weeping after her all the way to Bahu'rim.
20 Then Abner said to him, "Go, return"; and he returned. And Abner conferred

with the elders of Israel, saying, "For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. Now then bring it about; for the LORD has promised David, saying, '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
5 enemies.'" Abner also spoke to Benjamin; and then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin thought good to do. When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. And Abner said to David, "I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they
10 may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires." So David sent Abner away; and he went in peace. Just then the servants of David arrived with Jo'ab from a raid, bringing much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. When Jo'ab and all the army that was with
15 him came, it was told Jo'ab, "Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he has let him go, and he has gone in peace." Then Jo'ab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Behold, Abner came to you; why is it that you have sent him away, so that he is gone? You know that Abner the son of Ner came to deceive you, and to know your going out and your coming
20 in, and to know all that you are doing." When Jo'ab came out from David's

presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. And when Abner returned to Hebron, Jo'ab took him aside into the midst of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he smote him in the belly, so that he died, for the blood of As'ahel his brother. Afterward, when David heard of it, he said, "I and my kingdom are for ever guiltless before the LORD for the blood of Abner the son of Ner. May it fall upon the head of Jo'ab, and upon all his father's house; and may the house of Jo'ab never be without one who has a discharge, or who is leprous, or who holds a spindle, or who is slain by the sword, or who lacks bread!" So Jo'ab and Abi'shai his brother slew Abner, because he had killed their brother As'ahel in the battle at Gibeon. Then David said to Jo'ab and to all the people who were with him, "Rend your clothes, and gird on sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." And King David followed the bier. They buried Abner at Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. And the king lamented for Abner, saying, "Should Abner die as a fool dies? Your hands were not bound, your feet were not fettered; as one falls before the wicked you have fallen." And all the people wept again over him. Then all the people came to persuade David to eat bread while it was yet day; but David swore, saying, "God do so to me and more also, if I taste bread or

anything else till the sun goes down!" And all the people took notice of it,
and it pleased them; as everything that the king did pleased all the people.
So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the
king's will to slay Abner the son of Ner. And the king said to his servants,
5 "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in
Israel? And I am this day weak, though anointed king; these men the sons
of Zeru'iah are too hard for me. The LORD requite the evildoer according to
his wickedness!" When Ish-bo'sheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner had died at
Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed. Now Saul's son had
10 two men who were captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was
Ba'anah, and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon a man of
Benjamin from Be-er'oth (for Be-er'oth also is reckoned to Benjamin; the Be-
er'othites fled to Gitta'im, and have been sojourners there to this day).
Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was
15 five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel;
and his nurse took him up, and fled; and, as she fled in her haste, he fell,
and became lame. And his name was Mephib'osheth. Now the sons of
Rimmon the Be-er'othite, Rechab and Ba'anah, set out, and about the heat of
the day they came to the house of Ish-bo'sheth, as he was taking his
20 noonday rest. And behold, the doorkeeper of the house had been cleaning

wheat, but she grew drowsy and slept; so Rechab and Ba'anah his brother slipped in. When they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him. They took his head, and went by the way of the Arabah all night, and brought the
5 head of Ish-bo'sheth to David at Hebron. And they said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-bo'sheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring." But David answered Rechab and Ba'anah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Be-er'othite, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life
10 out of every adversity, when one told me, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and slew him at Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his news. How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous man in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand, and destroy you from the earth?" And David
15 commanded his young men, and they killed them, and cut off their hands and feet, and hanged them beside the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bo'sheth, and buried it in the tomb of Abner at Hebron. Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you that
20 led out and brought in Israel; and the LORD said to you, 'You shall be

shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel." So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he

5 reigned forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years. And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jeb'usites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off" --thinking, "David cannot come in

10 here." Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. And David said on that day, "Whoever would smite the Jeb'usites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." And David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the

15 city of David. And David built the city round about from the Millo inward. And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him. And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, also carpenters and masons who built David a house. And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he

20 had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. And David took

more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David. And these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Sham'mu-a, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhar, Eli'shu-a, Nepheg, Japhi'a, Eli'shama, Eli'ada, and Eliph'elet.

5 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; but David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the valley of Reph'aim. And David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt thou give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to

10 David, "Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." And David came to Ba'al-pera'zim, and David defeated them there; and he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me, like a bursting flood." Therefore the name of that place is called Ba'al-pera'zim. And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

15 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread out in the valley of Reph'aim. And when David inquired of the LORD, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees. And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then bestir yourself; for then the LORD has gone out before you to

20 smite the army of the Philistines." And David did as the LORD commanded

him, and smote the Philistines from Geba to Gezer. David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Ba'ale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who sits
5 enthroned on the cherubim. And they carried the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abin'adab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahi'o, the sons of Abin'adab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahi'o went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel were making merry before the LORD with all their might, with
10 songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. And
15 David was angry because the LORD had broken forth upon Uzzah; and that place is called Pe'rez-uz'zah, to this day. And David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" So David was not willing to take the ark of the LORD into the city of David; but David took it aside to the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite. And the ark
20 of the LORD remained in the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite three months;

and the LORD blessed O'bed-e'dom and all his household. And it was told
King David, "The LORD has blessed the household of O'bed-e'dom and all
that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought
up the ark of God from the house of O'bed-e'dom to the city of David with
5 rejoicing; and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six
paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. And David danced before the LORD
with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and
all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and
with the sound of the horn. As the ark of the LORD came into the city of
10 David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King
David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her
heart. And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place,
inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt
offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And when David had
15 finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the
people in the name of the LORD of hosts, and distributed among all the
people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake
of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people
departed, each to his house. And David returned to bless his household. But
20 Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the

king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" And David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father, and above all his house, to appoint me as

5 prince over Israel, the people of the LORD--and I will make merry before the LORD. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death. Now when the king dwelt in his house, and

10 the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart; for the LORD is with you." But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says

15 the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people

20 Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' Now

therefore thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of
hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should
be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you
went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make
5 for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I
will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may
dwell in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and violent men shall
afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over
my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover
10 the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When
your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up
your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will
establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will
establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he
15 shall be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod
of men, with the stripes of the sons of men; but I will not take my steadfast
love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.
And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me;
your throne shall be established for ever.'" In accordance with all these
20 words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David. Then

King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O
Lord GOD, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And
yet this was a small thing in thy eyes, O Lord GOD; thou hast spoken also
of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast shown me future
5 generations, O Lord GOD! And what more can David say to thee? For thou
knowest thy servant, O Lord GOD! Because of thy promise, and according to
thy own heart, thou hast wrought all this greatness, to make thy servant
know it. Therefore thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like thee,
and there is no God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with
10 our ears. What other nation on earth is like thy people Israel, whom God
went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name, and doing for
them great and terrible things, by driving out before his people a nation and
its gods? And thou didst establish for thyself thy people Israel to be thy
people for ever; and thou, O LORD, didst become their God. And now, O
15 LORD God, confirm for ever the word which thou hast spoken concerning
thy servant and concerning his house, and do as thou hast spoken; and thy
name will be magnified for ever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over
Israel,' and the house of thy servant David will be established before thee.
For thou, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, hast made this revelation to
20 thy servant, saying, 'I will build you a house'; therefore thy servant has

found courage to pray this prayer to thee. And now, O Lord GOD, thou art
God, and thy words are true, and thou hast promised this good thing to thy
servant; now therefore may it please thee to bless the house of thy servant,
that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O Lord GOD, hast
5 spoken, and with thy blessing shall the house of thy servant be blessed for
ever." After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and David
took Meth'eg-am'mah out of the hand of the Philistines. And he defeated
Moab, and measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground;
two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared.
10 And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute. David also
defeated Hadade'zer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore
his power at the river Euphra'tes. And David took from him a thousand and
seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers; and David
hamstrung all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots. And
15 when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadade'zer king of Zobah,
David slew twenty-two thousand men of the Syrians. Then David put
garrisons in Aram of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David
and brought tribute. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.
And David took the shields of gold which were carried by the servants of
20 Hadade'zer, and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Betah and from

Bero'thai, cities of Hadade'zer, King David took very much bronze. When To'i king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadade'zer, To'i sent his son Joram to King David, to greet him, and to congratulate him because he had fought against Hadade'zer and defeated him; 5 for Hadade'zer had often been at war with To'i. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and of bronze; these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold which he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Am'alek, and from the spoil of Hadade'zer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah. 10 And David won a name for himself. When he returned, he slew eighteen thousand E'domites in the Valley of Salt. And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the E'domites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and equity to all his 15 people. And Jo'ab the son of Zeru'iah was over the army; and Jehosh'aphat the son of Ahi'lud was recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahi'tub and Ahim'elech the son of Abi'athar were priests; and Serai'ah was secretary; and Benai'ah the son of Jehoi'ada was over the Cher'ethites and the Pel'ethites; and David's sons were priests. And David said, "Is there still any one left of 20 the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Now

there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "Your servant is he." And the king said, "Is there not still some one of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said
5 to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Am'miel, at Lo-debar." Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Am'miel, at Lo-debar. And Mephib'osheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David, and fell
10 on his face and did obeisance. And David said, "Mephib'osheth!" And he answered, "Behold, your servant." And David said to him, "Do not fear; for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father; and you shall eat at my table always." And he did obeisance, and said, "What is your servant, that you
15 should look upon a dead dog such as I?" Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's son. And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him, and shall bring in the produce, that your master's son may have bread to eat; but Mephib'osheth your master's son shall always
20 eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. Then Ziba

said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephib'osheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. And Mephib'osheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who dwelt in Ziba's house became Mephib'osheth's

5 servants. So Mephib'osheth dwelt in Jerusalem; for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet. After this the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. And David said, "I will deal loyally with Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father dealt loyally with me." So David sent by his servants to console him concerning his

10 father. And David's servants came into the land of the Ammonites. But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think, because David has sent comforters to you, that he is honoring your father? Has not David sent his servants to you to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?" So Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off half the beard

15 of each, and cut off their garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away. When it was told David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return." When the Ammonites saw that they had become odious to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-

20 re'hob, and the Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand foot soldiers, and the king

of Ma'acah with a thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men.

And when David heard of it, he sent Jo'ab and all the host of the mighty men. And the Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate; and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men

5 of Tob and Ma'acah, were by themselves in the open country. When Jo'ab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Syrians; the rest of his men he put in the charge of Abi'shai his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. And he said, "If the Syrians are too

10 strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our people, and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him." So Jo'ab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians; and they fled before him. And when

15 the Ammonites saw that the Syrians fled, they likewise fled before Abi'shai, and entered the city. Then Jo'ab returned from fighting against the Ammonites, and came to Jerusalem. But when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. And Hadade'zer sent, and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphra'tes; and they

20 came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadade'zer at

their head. And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians arrayed themselves against David, and fought with him. And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians the men of seven hundred chariots, and forty
5 thousand horsemen, and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. And when all the kings who were servants of Hadade'zer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel, and became subject to them. So the Syrians feared to help the Ammonites any more. In the spring of the year, the time when kings go forth to battle,
10 David sent Jo'ab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking upon the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and
15 inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathshe'ba, the daughter of Eli'am, the wife of Uri'ah the Hittite?" So David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am with
20 child." So David sent word to Jo'ab, "Send me Uri'ah the Hittite." And Jo'ab

sent Uri'ah to David. When Uri'ah came to him, David asked how Jo'ab was doing, and how the people fared, and how the war prospered. Then David said to Uri'ah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uri'ah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the

5 king. But Uri'ah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. When they told David, "Uri'ah did not go down to his house," David said to Uri'ah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" Uri'ah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths; and my lord Jo'ab

10 and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." Then David said to Uri'ah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart." So Uri'ah remained in Jerusalem that day, and the next. And David invited him, and he

15 ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. In the morning David wrote a letter to Jo'ab, and sent it by the hand of Uri'ah. In the letter he wrote, "Set Uri'ah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may

20 be struck down, and die." And as Jo'ab was besieging the city, he assigned

Uri'ah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. And the men of the city came out and fought with Jo'ab; and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uri'ah the Hittite was slain also. Then Jo'ab sent and told David all the news about the fighting; and he instructed the messenger,

5 "When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, 'Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? Who killed Abim'elech the son of Jerub'beseth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone upon him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why

10 did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uri'ah the Hittite is dead also.'" So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Jo'ab had sent him to tell. The messenger said to David, "The men gained an advantage over us, and came out against us in the field; but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. Then the archers shot at your

15 servants from the wall; some of the king's servants are dead; and your servant Uri'ah the Hittite is dead also." David said to the messenger, "Thus shall you say to Jo'ab, 'Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; strengthen your attack upon the city, and overthrow it.' And encourage him." When the wife of Uri'ah heard that Uri'ah

20 her husband was dead, she made lamentation for her husband. And when the

mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD. And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich
5 and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his morsel, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was
10 unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared it for the man who had come to him." Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because
15 he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Nathan said to David, "You are the man. Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; and I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if this were too little, I would add to
20 you as much more. Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do

what is evil in his sight? You have smitten Uri'ah the Hittite with the sword,
and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have slain him with the sword
of the Ammonites. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your
house, because you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uri'ah the
5 Hittite to be your wife.' Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil
against you out of your own house; and I will take your wives before your
eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in
the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before
all Israel, and before the sun.'" David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against
10 the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your
sin; you shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly
scorned the LORD, the child that is born to you shall die." Then Nathan
went to his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uri'ah's wife bore to
David, and it became sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and
15 David fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the ground. And the elders
of his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground; but he would
not, nor did he eat food with them. On the seventh day the child died. And
the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they
said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke to him, and he did
20 not listen to us; how then can we say to him the child is dead? He may do

himself some harm." But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; and David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They said, "He is dead." Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; 5 and he went into the house of the LORD, and worshiped; he then went to his own house; and when he asked, they set food before him, and he ate. Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted 10 and wept; for I said, 'Who knows whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." Then David comforted his wife, Bathshe'ba, and went in to her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD 15 loved him, and sent a message by Nathan the prophet; so he called his name Jedidi'ah, because of the LORD. Now Jo'ab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and took the royal city. And Jo'ab sent messengers to David, and said, "I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the city of waters. Now, then, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against 20 the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called by my name." So

David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, and fought against it and took it. And he took the crown of their king from his head; the weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city, a
5 very great amount. And he brought forth the people who were in it, and set them to labor with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them toil at the brickkilns; and thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem. Now Ab'salom, David's son, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar; and after a time Amnon,
10 David's son, loved her. And Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jon'adab, the son of Shim'e-ah, David's brother; and Jon'adab was a very crafty man. And he said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so
15 haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Ab'salom's sister." Jon'adab said to him, "Lie down on your bed, and pretend to be ill; and when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Let my sister Tamar come and give me bread to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it from her hand.'"
20 So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to

see him, Amnon said to the king, "Pray let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand." Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where

5 he was lying down. And she took dough, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. And she took the pan and emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Send out every one from me." So every one went out from him. Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from your hand." And

10 Tamar took the cakes she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this wanton folly. As for me, where could I carry my

15 shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the wanton fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray you, speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she, he forced her, and lay with her. Then Amnon hated her with very great hatred; so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with

20 which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Arise, be gone." But she

said to him, "No, my brother; for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other which you did to me." But he would not listen to her. He called the young man who served him and said, "Put this woman out of my presence, and bolt the door after her." Now she was wearing a long robe
5 with sleeves; for thus were the virgin daughters of the king clad of old. So his servant put her out, and bolted the door after her. And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent the long robe which she wore; and she laid her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went. And her brother Ab'salom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Now hold
10 your peace, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar dwelt, a desolate woman, in her brother Ab'salom's house. When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. But Ab'salom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad; for Ab'salom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. After two full years Ab'salom had sheepshearers at
15 Ba'al-ha'zor, which is near E'phraim, and Ab'salom invited all the king's sons. And Ab'salom came to the king, and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers; pray let the king and his servants go with your servant." But the king said to Ab'salom, "No, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome to you." He pressed him, but he would not go but gave him his
20 blessing. Then Ab'salom said, "If not, pray let my brother Amnon go with

us." And the king said to him, "Why should he go with you?" But Ab'salom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. Then Ab'salom commanded his servants, "Mark when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then kill him. Fear not; have I
5 not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant." So the servants of Ab'salom did to Amnon as Ab'salom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and each mounted his mule and fled. While they were on the way, tidings came to David, "Ab'salom has slain all the king's sons, and not one of them is left." Then the king arose, and rent his garments, and lay on
10 the earth; and all his servants who were standing by rent their garments. But Jon'adab the son of Shim'e-ah, David's brother, said, "Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men the king's sons, for Amnon alone is dead, for by the command of Ab'salom this has been determined from the day he forced his sister Tamar. Now therefore let not my lord the
15 king so take it to heart as to suppose that all the king's sons are dead; for Amnon alone is dead." But Ab'salom fled. And the young man who kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, many people were coming from the Horona'im road by the side of the mountain. And Jon'adab said to the king, "Behold, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has
20 come about." And as soon as he had finished speaking, behold, the king's

sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept; and the king also and all his servants wept very bitterly. But Ab'salom fled, and went to Talmai the son of Ammi'hud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. So Ab'salom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years. And the
5 spirit of the king longed to go forth to Ab'salom; for he was comforted about Amnon, seeing he was dead. Now Jo'ab the son of Zeru'iah perceived that the king's heart went out to Ab'salom. And Jo'ab sent to Teko'a, and fetched from there a wise woman, and said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner, and put on mourning garments; do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave
10 like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead; and go to the king, and speak thus to him." So Jo'ab put the words in her mouth. When the woman of Teko'a came to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, "Help, O king." And the king said to her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow; my
15 husband is dead. And your handmaid had two sons, and they quarreled with one another in the field; there was no one to part them, and one struck the other and killed him. And now the whole family has risen against your handmaid, and they say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he slew'; and so they would
20 destroy the heir also. Thus they would quench my coal which is left, and

leave to my husband neither name nor remnant upon the face of the earth."

Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." And the woman of Teko'a said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his

5 throne be guiltless." The king said, "If any one says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." Then she said, "Pray let the king invoke the LORD your God, that the avenger of blood slay no more, and my son be not destroyed." He said, "As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground." Then the woman said, "Pray let

10 your handmaid speak a word to my lord the king." He said, "Speak." And the woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again. We must all die, we are like water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up

15 again; but God will not take away the life of him who devises means not to keep his banished one an outcast. Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid; and your handmaid thought, 'I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. For the king will hear, and deliver his servant from

20 the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together from the

heritage of God.' And your handmaid thought, 'The word of my lord the king will set me at rest'; for my lord the king is like the angel of God to discern good and evil. The LORD your God be with you!" Then the king answered the woman, "Do not hide from me anything I ask you." And the woman

5 said, "Let my lord the king speak." The king said, "Is the hand of Jo'ab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has said. It was your servant Jo'ab who bade me; it was he who put all these words in the mouth of your handmaid. In

10 order to change the course of affairs your servant Jo'ab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth." Then the king said to Jo'ab, "Behold now, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Ab'salom." And Jo'ab fell on his face to the ground, and did obeisance, and blessed the king; and Jo'ab said, "Today your

15 servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant." So Jo'ab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Ab'salom to Jerusalem. And the king said, "Let him dwell apart in his own house; he is not to come into my presence." So Ab'salom dwelt apart in his own house, and did not come into the king's

20 presence. Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his

beauty as Ab'salom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight.

5 There were born to Ab'salom three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a beautiful woman. So Ab'salom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king's presence. Then Ab'salom sent for Jo'ab, to send him to the king; but Jo'ab would not come to him. And he sent a second time, but Jo'ab would not come. Then he said to his servants,

10 "See, Jo'ab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire." So Ab'salom's servants set the field on fire. Then Jo'ab arose and went to Ab'salom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" Ab'salom answered Jo'ab, "Behold, I sent word to you, 'Come here, that I may send you to the king, to ask, 'Why have I come from

15 Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still.'" Now therefore let me go into the presence of the king; and if there is guilt in me, let him kill me.'" Then Jo'ab went to the king, and told him; and he summoned Ab'salom. So he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king; and the king kissed Ab'salom. After this Ab'salom

20 got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And

Ab'salom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate; and when any man had a suit to come before the king for judgment, Ab'salom would call to him, and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," Ab'salom would say to him,

5 "See, your claims are good and right; but there is no man deputed by the king to hear you." Ab'salom said moreover, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a suit or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice." And whenever a man came near to do obeisance to him, he would put out his hand, and take hold of him, and kiss him. Thus

10 Ab'salom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Ab'salom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. And at the end of four years Ab'salom said to the king, "Pray let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I dwelt at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the LORD will indeed bring me back to

15 Jerusalem, then I will offer worship to the LORD.'" The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose, and went to Hebron. But Ab'salom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Ab'salom is king at Hebron!'" With Ab'salom went two hundred men from Jerusalem who were invited guests,

20 and they went in their simplicity, and knew nothing. And while Ab'salom

was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahith'ophel the Gi'lonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Ab'salom kept increasing. And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Ab'salom." Then

5 David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee; or else there will be no escape for us from Ab'salom; go in haste, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword." And the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king

10 decides." So the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. And the king went forth, and all the people after him; and they halted at the last house. And all his servants passed by him; and all the Cher'ethites, and all the Pel'ethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the

15 king. Then the king said to It'tai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Go back, and stay with the king; for you are a foreigner, and also an exile from your home. You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, seeing I go I know not where? Go back, and take your brethren with you; and may the LORD show steadfast love and

20 faithfulness to you." But It'tai answered the king, "As the LORD lives, and

as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." And David said to It'tai, "Go then, pass on." So It'tai the Gittite passed on, with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. And all the country wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness. And Abi'athar came up, and lo, Zadok came also, with all the Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant of God; and they set down the ark of God, until the people had all passed out of the city. Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his habitation; but if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Look, go back to the city in peace, you and Abi'athar, with your two sons, Ahim'a-az your son, and Jonathan the son of Abi'athar. See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness, until word comes from you to inform me." So Zadok and Abi'athar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem; and they remained there. But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered; and all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went. And it was told David, "Ahith'ophel is

among the conspirators with Ab'salom." And David said, "O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahith'ophel into foolishness." When David came to the summit, where God was worshiped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent and earth upon his head. David said to him, "If
5 you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. But if you return to the city, and say to Ab'salom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahith'ophel. Are not Zadok and Abi'athar the priests with you there? So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell
10 it to Zadok and Abi'athar the priests. Behold, their two sons are with them there, Ahim'a-az, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abi'athar's son; and by them you shall send to me everything you hear." So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Ab'salom was entering Jerusalem. When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephib'osheth met him, with a
15 couple of asses saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. And the king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The asses are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to
20 drink." And the king said, "And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to

the king, "Behold, he remains in Jerusalem; for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back the kingdom of my father.'" Then the king said to Ziba, "Behold, all that belonged to Mephib'osheth is now yours." And Ziba said, "I do obeisance; let me ever find favor in your sight, my lord the

5 king." When King David came to Bahu'rim, there came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shim'e-i, the son of Gera; and as he came he cursed continually. And he threw stones at David, and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And Shim'e-i said as he cursed, "Begone,

10 begone, you man of blood, you worthless fellow! The LORD has avenged upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Ab'salom. See, your ruin is on you; for you are a man of blood." Then Abi'shai the son of Zeru'iah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog

15 curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head." But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeru'iah? If he is cursing because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'" And David said to Abi'shai and to all his servants, "Behold, my own son seeks my life; how much more now may this

20 Benjaminite! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden

him. It may be that the LORD will look upon my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for this cursing of me today." So David and his men went on the road, while Shim'e-i went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him and flung dust. And the king, and all the people who were with him, arrived weary at the Jordan; and there he refreshed himself. Now Ab'salom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahith'ophel with him. And when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Ab'salom, Hushai said to Ab'salom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" And Ab'salom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" And Hushai said to Ab'salom, "No; for whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. And again, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? As I have served your father, so I will serve you." Then Ab'salom said to Ahith'ophel, "Give your counsel; what shall we do?" Ahith'ophel said to Ab'salom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." So they pitched a tent for Ab'salom upon the roof; and Ab'salom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. Now in those days the counsel which Ahith'ophel

gave was as if one consulted the oracle of God; so was all the counsel of Ahith'ophel esteemed, both by David and by Ab'salom. Moreover Ahith'ophel said to Ab'salom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will set out and pursue David tonight. I will come upon him while he is weary and
5 discouraged, and throw him into a panic; and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down the king only, and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace." And the advice pleased Ab'salom and all the elders of Israel. Then Ab'salom said, "Call
10 Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he has to say." And when Hushai came to Ab'salom, Ab'salom said to him, "Thus has Ahith'ophel spoken; shall we do as he advises? If not, you speak." Then Hushai said to Ab'salom, "This time the counsel which Ahith'ophel has given is not good." Hushai said moreover, "You know that your father and his men are mighty
15 men, and that they are enraged, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the people. Behold, even now he has hidden himself in one of the pits, or in some other place. And when some of the people fall at the first attack, whoever hears it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the people who
20 follow Ab'salom.' Then even the valiant man, whose heart is like the heart of

a lion, will utterly melt with fear; for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man, and that those who are with him are valiant men. But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beer-sheba, as the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. So we

5 shall come upon him in some place where he is to be found, and we shall light upon him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and all the men with him not one will be left. If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall drag it into the valley, until not even a pebble is to be found there." And Ab'salom and all the men of Israel

10 said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahith'ophel." For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahith'ophel, so that the LORD might bring evil upon Ab'salom. Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abi'athar the priests, "Thus and so did Ahith'ophel counsel Ab'salom and the elders of Israel; and thus and so have I counseled. Now

15 therefore send quickly and tell David, 'Do not lodge tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over; lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.'" Now Jonathan and Ahim'a-az were waiting at En-ro'gel; a maidservant used to go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David; for they must not be seen entering the city. But a

20 lad saw them, and told Ab'salom; so both of them went away quickly, and

came to the house of a man at Bahu'rim, who had a well in his courtyard;
and they went down into it. And the woman took and spread a covering
over the well's mouth, and scattered grain upon it; and nothing was known
of it. When Ab'salom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said,
5 "Where are Ahim'a-az and Jonathan?" And the woman said to them, "They
have gone over the brook of water." And when they had sought and could
not find them, they returned to Jerusalem. After they had gone, the men
came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to
David, "Arise, and go quickly over the water; for thus and so has
10 Ahith'ophel counseled against you." Then David arose, and all the people
who were with him, and they crossed the Jordan; by daybreak not one was
left who had not crossed the Jordan. When Ahith'ophel saw that his counsel
was not followed, he saddled his ass, and went off home to his own city.
And he set his house in order, and hanged himself; and he died, and was
15 buried in the tomb of his father. Then David came to Mahana'im. And
Ab'salom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel. Now Ab'salom had
set Ama'sa over the army instead of Jo'ab. Ama'sa was the son of a man
named Ithra the Ish'maelite, who had married Ab'igal the daughter of Nahash,
sister of Zeru'iah, Jo'ab's mother. And Israel and Ab'salom encamped in the
20 land of Gilead. When David came to Mahana'im, Shobi the son of Nahash

from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir the son of Am'miel from Lo-
debar, and Barzil'lai the Gileadite from Ro'gelim, brought beds, basins, and
earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, parched grain, beans and lentils, honey
and curds and sheep and cheese from the herd, for David and the people
5 with him to eat; for they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty
in the wilderness." Then David mustered the men who were with him, and
set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. And
David sent forth the army, one third under the command of Jo'ab, one third
under the command of Abi'shai the son of Zeru'iah, Jo'ab's brother, and one
10 third under the command of It'tai the Gittite. And the king said to the men,
"I myself will also go out with you." But the men said, "You shall not go
out. For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will
not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us; therefore it is
better that you send us help from the city." The king said to them,
15 "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood at the side of the
gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands. And the
king ordered Jo'ab and Abi'shai and It'tai, "Deal gently for my sake with the
young man Ab'salom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders
to all the commanders about Ab'salom. So the army went out into the field
20 against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of E'phraim. And the

men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword. And Ab'salom chanced to meet the servants of David. Ab'salom was riding upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak, and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. And a certain man saw it, and told Jo'ab, "Behold, I saw Ab'salom hanging in an oak." Jo'ab said to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a girdle." But the man said to Jo'ab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abi'shai and It'tai, 'For my sake protect the young man Ab'salom.' On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." Jo'ab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Ab'salom, while he was still alive in the oak. And ten young men, Jo'ab's armor-bearers, surrounded Ab'salom and struck him, and killed him. Then Jo'ab blew the trumpet, and

the troops came back from pursuing Israel; for Jo'ab restrained them. And they took Ab'salom, and threw him into a great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones; and all Israel fled every one to his own home. Now Ab'salom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself the pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep
5 my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called Ab'salom's monument to this day. Then said Ahi'ma-az the son of Zadok, "Let me run, and carry tidings to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the power of his enemies." And Jo'ab said to him, "You
10 are not to carry tidings today; you may carry tidings another day, but today you shall carry no tidings, because the king's son is dead." Then Jo'ab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed before Jo'ab, and ran. Then Ahi'ma-az the son of Zadok said again to Jo'ab, "Come what may, let me also run after the Cushite." And Jo'ab said, "Why
15 will you run, my son, seeing that you will have no reward for the tidings?" "Come what may," he said, "I will run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahi'ma-az ran by the way of the plain, and outran the Cushite. Now David was sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a
20 man running alone. And the watchman called out and told the king. And the

king said, "If he is alone, there are tidings in his mouth." And he came
apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running; and the
watchman called to the gate and said, "See, another man running alone!" The
king said, "He also brings tidings." And the watchman said, "I think the
5 running of the foremost is like the running of Ahi'ma-az the son of Zadok."
And the king said, "He is a good man, and comes with good tidings." Then
Ahi'ma-az cried out to the king, "All is well." And he bowed before the
king with his face to the earth, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God,
who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the
10 king." And the king said, "Is it well with the young man Ab'salom?" Ahi'ma-
az answered, "When Jo'ab sent your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I do
not know what it was." And the king said, "Turn aside, and stand here." So
he turned aside, and stood still. And behold, the Cushite came; and the
Cushite said, "Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has
15 delivered you this day from the power of all who rose up against you." The
king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Ab'salom?" And the
Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise
up against you for evil, be like that young man." And the king was deeply
moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he
20 went, he said, "O my son Ab'salom, my son, my son Ab'salom! Would I

had died instead of you, O Ab'salom, my son, my son!" It was told Jo'ab,
"Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Ab'salom." So the victory
that day was turned into mourning for all the people; for the people heard
that day, "The king is grieving for his son." And the people stole into the
5 city that day as people steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle.
The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son
Ab'salom, O Ab'salom, my son, my son!" Then Jo'ab came into the house to
the king, and said, "You have today covered with shame the faces of all
your servants, who have this day saved your life, and the lives of your sons
10 and your daughters, and the lives of your wives and your concubines,
because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you. For you
have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you;
for today I perceive that if Ab'salom were alive and all of us were dead
today, then you would be pleased. Now therefore arise, go out and speak
15 kindly to your servants; for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go, not a
man will stay with you this night; and this will be worse for you than all
the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now." Then the king
arose, and took his seat in the gate. And the people were all told, "Behold,
the king is sitting in the gate"; and all the people came before the king.
20 Now Israel had fled every man to his own home. And all the people were at

strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies, and saved us from the hand of the Philistines; and now he has fled out of the land from Ab'salom. But Ab'salom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing
5 about bringing the king back?" And King David sent this message to Zadok and Abi'athar the priests, "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house, when the word of all Israel has come to the king? You are my kinsmen, you are my bone and my flesh; why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' And say to
10 Ama'sa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if you are not commander of my army henceforth in place of Jo'ab.'" And he swayed the heart of all the men of Judah as one man; so that they sent word to the king, "Return, both you and all your servants." So the king came back to the Jordan; and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and to
15 bring the king over the Jordan. And Shim'e-i the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahu'rim, made haste to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David; and with him were a thousand men from Benjamin. And Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan before the king, and they
20 crossed the ford to bring over the king's household, and to do his pleasure.

And Shim'e-i the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, and said to the king, "Let not my lord hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem; let not the king bear it in mind. For your servant knows that I
5 have sinned; therefore, behold, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king." Abi'shai the son of Zeru'iah answered, "Shall not Shim'e-i be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD'S anointed?" But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeru'iah, that you should this day be as an adversary to me?
10 Shall any one be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" And the king said to Shim'e-i, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath. And Mephib'osheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the
15 day he came back in safety. And when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephib'osheth?" He answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said to him, 'Saddle an ass for me, that I may ride upon it and go with the king.' For your servant is lame. He has slandered your servant to my lord
20 the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what

seems good to you. For all my father's house were but men doomed to death before my lord the king; but you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to cry to the king?" And the king said to him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land." And Mephib'osheth said to the king, "Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home." Now Barzil'lai the Gileadite had come down from Ro'gelim; and he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. Barzil'lai was a very aged man, eighty years old; and he had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahana'im; for he was a very wealthy man. And the king said to Barzil'lai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem." But Barzil'lai said to the king, "How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am this day eighty years old; can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king recompense me with such a reward? Pray let your servant return, that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham;

let him go over with my lord the king; and do for him whatever seems good to you." And the king answered, "Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you; and all that you desire of me I will do for you." Then all the people went over the Jordan, and the king went over; and the king kissed Barzil'lai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home. The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him; all the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way. Then all the men of Israel came to the king, and said to the king, "Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David's men with him?" All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is near of kin to us. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's expense? Or has he given us any gift?" And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?" But the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel. Now there happened to be there a worthless fellow, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjaminite; and he blew the trumpet, and said, "We have no portion in David, and we have no inheritance in the son

of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel!" So all the men of Israel withdrew from David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri; but the men of Judah followed their king steadfastly from the Jordan to Jerusalem. And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to care for the house, and put them in a house under guard, and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood. Then the king said to Ama'sa, "Call the men of Judah together to me within three days, and be here yourself." So Ama'sa went to summon Judah; but he delayed beyond the set time which had been appointed him. And David said to Abi'shai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Ab'salom; take your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he get himself fortified cities, and cause us trouble." And there went out after Abi'shai, Jo'ab and the Cher'ethites and the Pel'ethites, and all the mighty men; they went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Ama'sa came to meet them. Now Jo'ab was wearing a soldier's garment, and over it was a girdle with a sword in its sheath fastened upon his loins, and as he went forward it fell out. And Jo'ab said to Ama'sa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Jo'ab took Ama'sa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. But Ama'sa did not observe the

sword which was in Jo'ab's hand; so Jo'ab struck him with it in the body,
and shed his bowels to the ground, without striking a second blow; and he
died. Then Jo'ab and Abi'shai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri.
And one of Jo'ab's men took his stand by Ama'sa, and said, "Whoever favors
5 Jo'ab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Jo'ab." And Ama'sa lay
wallowing in his blood in the highway. And any one who came by, seeing
him, stopped; and when the man saw that all the people stopped, he carried
Ama'sa out of the highway into the field, and threw a garment over him.
When he was taken out of the highway, all the people went on after Jo'ab to
10 pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. And Sheba passed through all the tribes of
Israel to Abel of Beth-ma'acah; and all the Bichrites assembled, and followed
him in. And all the men who were with Jo'ab came and besieged him in
Abel of Beth-ma'acah; they cast up a mound against the city, and it stood
against the rampart; and they were battering the wall, to throw it down. Then
15 a wise woman called from the city, "Hear! Hear! Tell Jo'ab, 'Come here, that
I may speak to you.'" And he came near her; and the woman said, "Are you
Jo'ab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of
your maidservant." And he answered, "I am listening." Then she said, "They
were wont to say in old time, 'Let them but ask counsel at Abel'; and so
20 they settled a matter. I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in

Israel; you seek to destroy a city which is a mother in Israel; why will you swallow up the heritage of the LORD?" Jo'ab answered, "Far be it from me, far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy! That is not true. But a man of the hill country of E'phraim, called Sheba the son of Bichri, has lifted up
5 his hand against King David; give up him alone, and I will withdraw from the city." And the woman said to Jo'ab, "Behold, his head shall be thrown to you over the wall." Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and threw it out to Jo'ab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, every man
10 to his home. And Jo'ab returned to Jerusalem to the king. Now Jo'ab was in command of all the army of Israel; and Benai'ah the son of Jehoi'ada was in command of the Cher'ethites and the Pel'ethites; and Ador'am was in charge of the forced labor; and Jehosh'aphat the son of Ahi'lud was the recorder; and Sheva was secretary; and Zadok and Abi'athar were priests; and Ira the
15 Ja'irite was also David's priest. Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the face of the LORD. And the LORD said, "There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gib'eonites to death." So the king called the Gib'eonites. Now the Gib'eonites were not of the people of Israel, but of the remnant of
20 the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul

had sought to slay them in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah. And David said to the Gib'eonites, "What shall I do for you? And how shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of the LORD?" The Gib'eonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and
5 Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put any man to death in Israel." And he said, "What do you say that I shall do for you?" They said to the king, "The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel, let seven of his sons be given to us, so that we may hang them up before the LORD at Gibeon on
10 the mountain of the LORD." And the king said, "I will give them." But the king spared Mephib'osheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the oath of the LORD which was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. The king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Ai'ah, whom she bore to Saul, Armo'ni and Mephib'osheth; and the five sons
15 of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom she bore to A'dri-el the son of Barzil'lai the Meho'lathite; and he gave them into the hands of the Gib'eonites, and they hanged them on the mountain before the LORD, and the seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest. Then Rizpah the daughter of
20 Ai'ah took sackcloth, and spread it for herself on the rock, from the

beginning of harvest until rain fell upon them from the heavens; and she did not allow the birds of the air to come upon them by day, or the beasts of the field by night. When David was told what Rizpah the daughter of Ai'ah, the concubine of Saul, had done, David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the men of Ja'besht-gil'ead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilbo'a; and he brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who were hanged. And they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of Kish his father; and they did all that the king commanded. And after that God heeded supplications for the land. The Philistines had war again with Israel, and David went down together with his servants, and they fought against the Philistines; and David grew weary. And Ish'bi-be'nob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze, and who was girded with a new sword, thought to kill David. But Abi'shai the son of Zeru'iah came to his aid, and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men adjured him, "You shall no more go out with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel." After this there was again war with the Philistines at Gob; then Sib'becai the Hu'shathite slew Saph,

who was one of the descendants of the giants. And there was again war with the Philistines at Gob; and Elha'nan the son of Ja'areor'egim, the Bethlehemite, slew Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. And there was again war at Gath, where there was a man of

5 great stature, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also was descended from the giants. And when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shim'e-i, David's brother, slew him. These four were descended from the giants in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants. And David spoke to the

10 LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said, "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence. I call upon the

15 LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. "For the waves of death encompassed me, the torrents of perdition assailed me; the cords of Sheol entangled me, the snares of death confronted me. "In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I called. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears. "Then the earth reeled and

20 rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was

angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him. He bowed the heavens, and came
down; thick darkness was under his feet. He rode on a cherub, and flew; he
was seen upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness around him his
5 canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water. Out of the brightness before him
coals of fire flamed forth. The LORD thundered from heaven, and the Most
High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning,
and routed them. Then the channels of the sea were seen, the foundations of
the world were laid bare, at the rebuke of the LORD, at the blast of the
10 breath of his nostrils. "He reached from on high, he took me, he drew me
out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those
who hated me; for they were too mighty for me. They came upon me in the
day of my calamity; but the LORD was my stay. He brought me forth into
a broad place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. "The LORD
15 rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of
my hands he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and
have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his ordinances were before
me, and from his statutes I did not turn aside. I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from guilt. Therefore the LORD has recompensed me
20 according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight. "With

the loyal thou dost show thyself loyal; with the blameless man thou dost
show thyself blameless; with the pure thou dost show thyself pure, and with
the crooked thou dost show thyself perverse. Thou dost deliver a humble
people, but thy eyes are upon the haughty to bring them down. Yea, thou art
5 my lamp, O LORD, and my God lightens my darkness. Yea, by thee I can
crush a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God--his way is
perfect; the promise of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those
who take refuge in him. "For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a
rock, except our God? This God is my strong refuge, and has made my way
10 safe. He made my feet like hinds' feet, and set me secure on the heights. He
trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. Thou
hast given me the shield of thy salvation, and thy help made me great. Thou
didst give a wide place for my steps under me, and my feet did not slip; I
pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and did not turn back until they
15 were consumed. I consumed them; I thrust them through, so that they did
not rise; they fell under my feet. For thou didst gird me with strength for
the battle; thou didst make my assailants sink under me. Thou didst make
my enemies turn their backs to me, those who hated me, and I destroyed
them. They looked, but there was none to save; they cried to the LORD, but
20 he did not answer them. I beat them fine as the dust of the earth, I crushed

them and stamped them down like the mire of the streets. "Thou didst deliver me from strife with the peoples; thou didst keep me as the head of the nations; people whom I had not known served me. Foreigners came cringing to me; as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me. Foreigners

5 lost heart, and came trembling out of their fastnesses. "The LORD lives; and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation, the God who gave me vengeance and brought down peoples under me, who brought me out from my enemies; thou didst exalt me above my adversaries, thou didst deliver me from men of violence. "For this I will extol thee, O

10 LORD, among the nations, and sing praises to thy name. Great triumphs he gives to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David, and his descendants for ever." Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel: "The Spirit of the

15 LORD speaks by me, his word is upon my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken, the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth upon a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth. Yea, does not my house stand so with God? For he

20 has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure.

For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire? But godless men are all like thorns that are thrown away; for they cannot be taken with the hand; but the man who touches them arms himself with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they are utterly consumed with fire." These are the

5 names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-basshe'beth a Tah-che'monite; he was chief of the three; he wielded his spear against eight hundred whom he slew at one time. And next to him among the three mighty men was Elea'zar the son of Dodo, son of Aho'hi. He was with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle,

10 and the men of Israel withdrew. He rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand cleaved to the sword; and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the men returned after him only to strip the slain. And next to him was Shammah, the son of Agee the Har'arite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of

15 ground full of lentils; and the men fled from the Philistines. But he took his stand in the midst of the plot, and defended it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD wrought a great victory. And three of the thirty chief men went down, and came about harvest time to David at the cave of Adullam, when a band of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Reph'aim. David was

20 then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at

Bethlehem. And David said longingly, "O that some one would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!" Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem which was by the gate, and took and brought it to David. But he would not drink of it; he poured it out to the LORD, and said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things did the three mighty men. Now Abi'shai, the brother of Jo'ab, the son of Zeru'iah, was chief of the thirty. And he wielded his spear against three hundred men and slew them, and won a name beside the three. He was the most renowned of the thirty, and became their commander; but he did not attain to the three. And Benai'ah the son of Jehoi'ada was a valiant man of Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he smote two ariels of Moab. He also went down and slew a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. And he slew an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but Benai'ah went down to him with a staff, and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benai'ah the son of Jehoi'ada, and won a name beside the three mighty men. He was renowned among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. And David set him over his bodyguard. As'ahel the

brother of Jo'ab was one of the thirty; Elha'nan the son of Dodo of
 Bethlehem, Shammah of Harod, Eli'ka of Harod, Helez the Paltite, Ira the
 son of Ikkes of Teko'a, Abi-e'zer, of An'athoth, Mebun'nai the Hu'shathite,
 Zalmon the Aho'hite, Ma'harai of Netoph'ah, Heleb the son of Ba'anah of
 5 Netoph'ah, It'tai the son of Ri'bai of Gib'e-ah of the Benjaminites, Benai'ah of
 Pira'thon, Hid'dai of the brooks of Ga'ash, Abi-al'bon the Ar'bathite,
 Az'maveth of Bahu'rim, Eli'ahba of Sha-al'bon, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan,
 Shammah the Har'arite, Ahi'am the son of Sharar the Har'arite, Eliph'elet the
 son of Ahas'bai of Ma'acah, Eli'am the son of Ahith'ophel of Gilo, Hezro of
 10 Carmel, Pa'arai the Arbite, Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,
 Zelek the Ammonite, Na'harai of Be-er'oth, the armor-bearer of Jo'ab the son
 of Zeru'iah, Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, Uri'ah the Hittite: thirty-seven in
 all. Again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he incited
 David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah." So the king said
 15 to Jo'ab and the commanders of the army, who were with him, "Go through
 all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and number the people, that
 I may know the number of the people." But Jo'ab said to the king, "May the
 LORD your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are,
 while the eyes of my lord the king still see it; but why does my lord the
 20 king delight in this thing?" But the king's word prevailed against Jo'ab and

the commanders of the army. So Jo'ab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel. They crossed the Jordan, and began from Aro'er, and from the city that is in the middle of the valley, toward Gad and on to Jazer. Then they came to

5 Gilead, and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites; and they came to Dan, and from Dan they went around to Sidon, and came to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites; and they went out to the Negeb of Judah at Beer-sheba. So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. And

10 Jo'ab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand. But David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, I pray thee, take away the

15 iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly." And when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, "Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD, Three things I offer you; choose one of them, that I may do it to you.'" So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him, "Shall three years of famine

20 come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes

while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land?

Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to him who sent me."

Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man."

5 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time; and there died of the people from Dan to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched forth his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented of the evil, and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand."

10 And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Arau'nah the Jeb'usite. Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was smiting the people, and said, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me and against my father's house." And Gad came that day to David, and

15 said to him, "Go up, rear an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Arau'nah the Jeb'usite." So David went up at Gad's word, as the LORD commanded. And when Arau'nah looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming on toward him; and Arau'nah went forth, and did obeisance to the king with his face to the ground. And Arau'nah said, "Why has my

20 lord the king come to his servant?" David said, "To buy the threshing floor

of you, in order to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be
averted from the people." Then Arau'nah said to David, "Let my lord the
king take and offer up what seems good to him; here are the oxen for the
burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the
5 wood. All this, O king, Arau'nah gives to the king." And Arau'nah said to
the king, "The LORD your God accept you." But the king said to Arau'nah,
"No, but I will buy it of you for a price; I will not offer burnt offerings to
the LORD my God which cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing
floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar
10 to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD
heeded supplications for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.*

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946, 1952, and 1971 by the
Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the
USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.