The Book of II Samuel

Introduction

The two books of I and II Samuel cover a period of 125 years which dates the book at approximately 990 to 865 BC. These books are a continuation of the chronological events in the history of Israel. I and II Samuel fall under the time period known as, "Period of Judges" (the previous periods are commonly known as the Antediluvian, Postdiluvian, Patriarchal, Bondage, Wanderings, and Conquest periods of history). The author of I and II Samuel is unknown.

The book of 1 Samuel may be subtitled the tragedy of Saul. Saul began a godly man and ended a selfish hardened tool used by God to sculpt David into the next ruler of Israel. The acts of Saul are revealed in 1 Samuel. Five foolish acts of Saul’s life are recorded that make great examples for Bible students today (cf. Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11). The first foolish act of Saul was that he proved himself to be impatient in the face of trials (1 Samuel 13). The second foolish act of Saul was that he proved himself to be selfish (1 Samuel 14:24). The third foolish act of Saul was that he proved himself to be disobedient (1 Samuel 15). The fourth foolish act of Saul was his extreme jealousy (cf. 1 Samuel 18:11, 19:1, 21, 23:14, 24:16-18 etc.). The fifth foolish act of Saul is found in the final four chapters of the book. Saul proves himself to be unwilling to repent (1 Samuel 31:1-6).

Overview of 2 Samuel

The book of First Samuel deals largely with Saul. The second book of Samuel deals primarily with David with a hint of interest in the life of Joab. Though David is a man of greater character than Saul, he too has his rebellious moments. One of the beauties of God’s word is that it shows not only man in all his brilliance but man in moments of shame too. The life of David is a life we can all relate to. He loved God, yet he sinned.

David

It seems odd how that one man can bring a kingdom to its knees. David; however, did just that. David was thirty years old when he began to reign as king of Israel and his rule lasted forty years (see 2 Samuel 5:4). During his reign the Lord had promised David that he would establish his kingdom for ever (2 Samuel 7:12-16). The fulfillment of said promise would be realized in Jesus Christ and the everlasting kingdom of God (see Acts 2:29ff).

David was more than the anointed king or prince of Israel. David was a mighty man of war and valor (1 Samuel 16:18; 2 Samuel 17:5-10), a man of great courage and faith (1 Samuel 17), skillful harp player (1 Samuel 16:18), man after God’s heart (1 Samuel 13:14), sweet singer of Israel (2 Samuel 23:1) and a prophet of God (2 Samuel 23:2-4; Acts 2:29-30). David’s character of humility is also well documented. When the Lord told David of the great blessing of being the one through whom Jehovah would grant his promises; i.e., Jesus, David said, "Who am I Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far?" (2 Samuel 7:18; see also 1 Samuel 18:17-19). David was a man who dealt righteously and just with the people he governed (2 Samuel 8:15-18) and respected those in positions of authority (1 Samuel 24:8ff). David was also a man of his word (2 Samuel 9:7-13). Though all these wonderful character traits belonged to the king; he nonetheless, disappoints both God and us (see 2 Samuel 23:1-7).
David's Sins

David had many commendable qualities about himself but he was not without fault. We have already examined the sins of David in 1 Samuel. Second Samuel has more to say about the king's error. David failed to lawfully transfer the Ark of the Covenant correctly and thereby Uzzah lost his life (2 Samuel 6:6ff). David failed God miserably when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba's husband (2 Samuel 11-12). Due to this sin David's house experienced inner feuding and trouble as was prophesied by Nathan (see 2 Samuel 12:10ff). David's sin brought about a civil war in Israel that resulted in the deaths of twenty thousand men of Israel, one of which was Absalom his own son (see 2 Samuel 18:6-7). David again sins against Jehovah in that he numbered the fighting men of Israel thus showing a lack of faith in Jehovah God's protection (see 2 Samuel 24:10, 17). The results of this error was the death of seventy thousand men (2 Samuel 24:15). David single-handedly brings the nation of Israel to its knees on a few occasions.

David in the New Testament

David's name is mentioned many times in the New Testament. Jesus was often referred to as the, "Son of David" (see Matthew 12:23; Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8; Rev. 5:5; 22:16 etc.). Matthew gives the genealogy of Jesus bringing him through the seed of David as well (see Matthew 1:6). David clearly understood the grand significance of the blessing pronounced upon him by the Lord at 2 Samuel 7:12ff. Paul quotes David from Psalms 32:1-2 at Romans 4:6-8 regarding man's forgiveness of sins being contingent upon their obedient faith.

Lessons Learned from 2 Samuel

There are two overriding lessons detected in 2 Samuel. First, the reality of the Christ is seen in David's comprehension that the Messiah would come through his seed (2 Samuel 7:12ff). Secondly, we follow David's every day life only to see a man who performed both works of righteousness and evil deeds. David is no different than all of us. He was flesh and bone and that means he sinned like we all do (see Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8). The difference between David and many other sinners is that he always exercised a spirit of humility and confessed his wrong doings to the Lord (2 Samuel 12:13; 24:10, 17). When we confess our sins to the Lord, through a spirit of humble submission, the Lord promises to forgive us as well (see Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

Chapter 1

I. David hears about the death of Jonathan and Saul (1:1-16):
   A. "And it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag" (1:1).
      1. The book of I Samuel ends with the Philistines waging war against Israel. Saul and his three sons are killed in the battle.
      2. While the Philistines are routing Israel, David and his 600 men were retrieving their wives, children, and flocks that had been captured by the Amalekites. After David and his men retrieve their belongings they return to their home town of Ziklag in Philistia.
   B. "It came to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to
David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, The people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also" (1:2-4).

1. An unidentified man approaches David at Ziklag to tell him how the battle against the Philistines went.

2. The unidentified man tells David that many have died and the rest have fled from the battle. The man further tells David that both Jonathan and Saul were dead. News of Jonathan's death must have cut deep into David's heart as the two of them were very good friends (see I Sam. 18:1).

C. "And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead? And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul was leaning upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and the horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. And he said unto me, Stand, I pray thee, beside me, and slay me; for anguish hath taken hold of me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood beside him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord" (1:5-10).

1. The unidentified man is now revealed to be an Amalekite. This man had two strikes against him before he even told David the story. First, he was an Amalekite (one that Jehovah had commanded to exterminate) and secondly, he was a member of a people who just raided and stole David's wives and the wives and children of his men.

2. As in baseball, three strikes and your out. The Amalekite's third strike comes when he tells David that he finished Saul off (makes it sound like a mercy kill). The Amalekite had the crown of Saul and his bracelet to prove his case.

D. "Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: and they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of Jehovah, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite. And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to put forth thy hand to destroy Jehovah's anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him, so that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain Jehovah's anointed" (1:11-16).

1. "Jehovah's anointed" was Saul, the king of Israel that was hand picked by the Lord. When Samuel anointed Saul with oil it signified God's sovereign choice of him over all others (I Sam. 10:1). The Bible reveals that God's "anointing" took place to consecrate (set apart from others and declared holy) (see Lev. 16:32; Numb. 3:3) and to sanctify (Lev. 8:12). Saul was set apart and declared holy for the purpose of governing God's people by Jehovah (see I Sam. 2:10). Who in his right mind would set out to kill Jehovah's anointed king? David, time and time again, had the chance to kill Jehovah's anointed yet out of respect for the authority of Jehovah God's sovereign choices he would not do so (see I Sam. 24:8-10). Men may determine things would be better in service to God than what
He reveals; however, the true elect of God will respect and observe all the Lord's commands and will.

2. David asked the Amalekite a serious question, "How wast thou not afraid to put forth thy hand to destroy Jehovah's anointed?" Jehovah had asked a similar question to Miriam and Aaron after their foolish words against Jehovah's servant Moses. Numbers 12:1 states, "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Cushite woman. And they said, hath Jehovah indeed spoken only with Moses? Hath he not spoken also with us? And Jehovah heard it..." then the Lord said of Moses, "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly and not in dark speeches; and the form of Jehovah shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant against Moses?" (Numb. 12:1-2, 7-8). David cannot believe that a man would not be fearful to take the life of Jehovah's anointed king. Jehovah is beside himself in that Miriam and Aaron were not afraid to "speak against" God's sovereign choice of Moses as His servant. The lessons of Authority and respect for Jehovah's sovereign choices continues to mount. Those who refuse to honor Jehovah's sovereign laws and His choices illustrate a mindless lack of fear. Man ought to be terrified to speak words against our governing magistrates (Rom. 13:7; I Pet. 2:17), parents (Eph. 6:2), Employers (I Tim. 6:1), elders in the church (Heb. 13:17), and all others who hold positions of authority (see study # 11 # 15 and # 30).

II. David's Lamentation, "The Song of the Bow" (1:17-27): A. "And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son (and he bade them teach the children of Judah the song of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jashar)" (1:17-18).

1. David, due to a heavy heart of sorrow over the loss of not only his beloved friend Jonathan but also over the loss of Jehovah's anointed king, writes a lamentation titled, "The Song of the Bow." The ode is titled "the song of the bow" “because it is a martial ode, and the bow was one of the principal weapons used by the warriors of that age, and one of the use of which the Benjaminites, the tribemen of Saul, were particularly skilful: cf. I Chron. 8:40; 12:2; II Chron. 14:7; 17:17).”

2. The "book of Jashar" is mentioned in Josh. 10:13 too. "The book seems to have been a collection of poetry which probably included epics and religious songs... The term 'Jashar,' which is the Hebrew adjective 'upright,' has led some scholars to suppose that the collection either honored individual heroes or reflected the character of Israel as the upright nation in the ancient Near East...It seems to have had some affinity with the Books of the Wars of the Lord (Numb. 21:14), and both compositions may have commenced at approximately the same time" (ISBE, v. 2, pp. 969-970).

B. "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 Ashkelon; Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, neither fields of offerings: For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away, 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 the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided: They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep

1 Keil and Delitzsch. Commentary on the Old Testament Volume Two; pg. 560
over Saul, Who clothed you in scarlet delicately, Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan is slain upon thy high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: Thy love to me was wonderful, Passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, And the weapons of war perished!" (1:19-27)

1. The ode is divide into three strophes (a rhythmic system constituting a section of a poem, typically consisting of a series of asymmetric lines {A. H. Dictionary pg. 1208}).

2. The first strophe begins with “How are the mighty fallen!” (vs. 19) The "glory of Israel" (i.e., Saul) had been slain by the uncircumcised. This first strophe warns Israel not to publish the news lest the "uncircumcised rejoice" in their supposed triumph over Jehovah. It tells of the greatness of Saul and Jonathan. All of Israel is called upon to mourn the loss.

3. The second strophe begins with “How are the mighty fallen!” (vs. 25) It tells of the loving relationship between David and Jonathan.

4. The third strophe begins with “How are the mighty fallen!” (vs. 27) It tells of “the weapons of war” having fallen. This phrase is figurative with reference to Jonathan and Saul.

Chapter 2

I. David is Anointed the King of Judah (2:1-7):

A. "And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of Jehovah, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And Jehovah said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron. So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron" (2:1-3).

1. David communicates with Jehovah at Ziklag asking the Lord if he should return to Judah and the Lord says, "Yes." David is to go to Hebron (a town located about 22 miles due south of Jerusalem).

2. David takes his two wives and six hundred men with their families to dwell in Hebron.

B. "And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, The men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul. And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of Jehovah, that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now Jehovah show lovingkindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Now therefore let your hands be strong, and be ye valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them" (2:4-7).

1. It was common knowledge among God's people that David was to be the next king after Saul. The men of Judah take it upon themselves to thereby anoint David as king of Judah. Not all; however, were ready to receive him as king.

2. David sends messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead who had taken the dead bodies of Saul and his sons off a Philistine wall and buried them. David commends the men for their act of bravery as they honored the anointed of God. Lastly, David tells the men of Jabesh-gilead that he has been anointed as the next king. Jabesh-gilead is located east of the Jordan River in the land of Gilead.

II. Abner Anoints Ish-bosheth king over Gilead (2:8-31):
A. "Now Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, had taken Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezeel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ish-bosheth, 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" (2:8-10).

1. The division that would later divide Israel from Judah may have its beginnings here. Abner was determined to see to it that Saul's will be followed out rather than God's (see I Sam. 20:30-31).

2. Ish-bosheth must have survived the war against the Philistines as well as Abner. Abner anoints the son of Saul king over the Northern portion of Canaan recognized as Israel (as though it were separate from Judah). This was an unauthorized and defiant act on the part of Abner and Ish-bosheth due to the fact that Jehovah had already chose David as King.

B. "And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months. And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met them by 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 Joab, Let the young men, I pray thee, arise and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. Then they arose and went over by number: twelve for Benjamin, and for Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon" (2:11-16).

1. Abner was the military leader of Ish-bosheth's army and Joab the leader of David's army.

2. The two armies come together and decide to settle their perception of dominance by a battle with each side providing 12 choice men. The twenty four men all grabbed each other by the hair and thrust each other through with their swords.

C. "And the battle was very sore that day: and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David. And the three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe. And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him, and said, Is it thou, Asahel? And he answered, It is I. And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armor. But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother? Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him in the body, so that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still" (2:17-23).

1. After the twenty four men died the two armies went at each other. Abner and all the army of Israel came to be routed by Joab and David's men.

2. Abner flees the battle scene with Joab's brother Asahel pursuing him on foot. Abner warns the runner to turn away yet he would not. Abner turned and then killed the son of Joab and all stopped to view his dead body.

D. "But Joab and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon. And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and
became one band, and stood on the top of a hill. Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? How long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren? And Joab said, As God liveth, if thou hadst not spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone away, nor followed every one his brother. So Joab blew the trumpet; and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more" (2:24-28).

1. Joab then pursues Abner with his other brother Abishai. Abner is caught at the hill of Ammah with the Benjaminites taking their stand with Abner.
2. Before Joab strikes the remaining army of Israel Abner speaks. Abner convinces Joab not to kill any more of their brethren. Joab listens and turns his men away from Israel.

E. "And Abner and his men went all that night through the Arabah; and they passed over the Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and came to Mahanaim. And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died. And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and the day brake upon them at Hebron" (2:29-32).

1. Abner returned home and so did Joab and his men return home to Hebron.
2. Abner lost 360 men while Joab only lost 20.

Chapter 3

I. Israel is Reunited with their brethren of Judah under the Kingship of David (3:1-30):

A. "Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: and David waxed stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his first-born was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; and his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; and the sixth, Ithream, of Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron" (3:1-5).

1. Saul's spirit of rebellion and lack of fear directed toward Jehovah has obviously pored over to the other members of his family. Their worldly quest for power over Israel was actually a war against Jehovah's sovereignty.
2. Note once again the amount of wives David had. David had six wives and six sons through these wives. Truly the people's hearts were hardened against the Lord's initial design of marriage (see Matt. 19:3ff).

B. "And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong in the house of Saul. Now Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine? Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head that belongeth to Judah? This day do I show kindness unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David; and yet thou chargest me this day with a fault concerning this woman. God do so to Abner, and more also, if, as Jehovah hath sworn to David, I do not even so to him; to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over
Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba. And he could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him" (3:6-11).

1. Abner's rebellious and fearless spirit against Jehovah is also on display (in addition to the house of Saul). Abner had helped Ish-bosheth and protected him against the hand of David.

2. Though Ish-bosheth could see the faults of Abner he could not see his own faults. Ish-bosheth accuses Abner of sin in that he had taken one of Saul's concubines and made her his own. When Abner hears Ish-bosheth's accusations he is very angry. Abner's reasoning was that since he had protected Ish-bosheth he should not be questioned on his moral decisions. Seeing that Ish-bosheth did question him Abner decides to give over the whole kingdom to David whom the Lord had promised to anyway.

C. "And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee; but one thing I require of thee: that is, thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face. And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from Paltiel the son of Laish. And her husband went with her, weeping as he went, and followed her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return; and he returned" (3:12-16).

1. Abner sends message to David regarding a request to make a covenant with him so that he would bring all Israel under David's kingship.

2. David agrees; however, he has one request for Abner. David request that his wife, Saul's daughter Michal, be returned to him. Abner and Ish-bosheth agree and bring the woman to David.

D. "And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, In times past ye sought for David to be king over you; now then do it; for Jehovah hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and to the whole house of Benjamin. So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast. And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thy soul desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace" (3:17-21).

1. It appears that Ish-bosheth's weakly charge against Abner caused the military man to come to his senses. Abner was a man of war and so was David. Ish-bosheth was nothing more than a weak puppet king. Abner recalled the words of Jehovah in relationship to protecting Israel against the Philistines. David was the man named by Jehovah and Abner could no longer deny it.

2. Abner and David come together and Abner refers to David as "My lord the king." David makes a feast for Abner and the plans for Israel's covenant with David are formed.

E. "And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from a foray, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace. When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace. Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast
thou done? Behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou dost" (3:22-25).

1. Joab, David's military leader, was not as benevolent toward Abner as was David. Abner had openly defied Jehovah's will for David to be king and even went to war with David and Judah. Joab cannot believe that David would now make a league with the man that they were at war with who had defied Jehovah's will.

2. Joab, as we shall see, had much deeper reasons to hate Abner.

F. "And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the midst of the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there in the body, so that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. And afterward, when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before Jehovah for ever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner: let it fall upon the head of Joab, and upon all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth by the sword, or that lacketh bread. So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle" (3:26-30).

1. Joab's true feelings about Abner are now revealed. Joab had harbored hatred for Abner because he had killed his brother when in battle.

2. Joab secretly calls Abner back and kills him. When David hears the news he curses the house of Joab and says that his kingdom is not responsible for the blood of Abner but rather the blood guilt was to fall upon Joab and his house.

II. Israel and Judah mourn the death of Abner (3:31-)

A. "And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept" (3:31-32).

1. Abner's change of heart was obviously honest and sincere.

2. David was genuinely grieved at the death of Abner.

B. "And the king lamented for Abner, and said, Should Abner die as a fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: As a man falleth before the children of iniquity, so didst thou fall. And all the people wept again over him. And all the people came to cause 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 aught else, till the sun be down. And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them; as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people. So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner" (3:33-37).

1. David's heart was so grieved over the senseless death of Abner that he would not eat that day until the sun went down.

2. When all of Israel saw the king's reaction to Abner's death they truly believed that David had nothing to do with Abner's death.

C. "And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me: Jehovah reward the evil-doer according to his wickedness" (3:38-39).

1. While the public may have expected the king to act against Joab and his house David did nothing.
2. David proclaimed the greatness of Abner and then, as was his practice, left the vengeance for wicked deeds into the hands of Jehovah God. This was a lesson learned when dealing with both Nabal and Saul (see 1 Sam. 25:39; 26:10-11). This is also a lesson that the people of God ought to learn today. Though wicked men and our government officials may wrong us we are to leave vengeance in the hands of Jehovah where it belongs (see Matt. 5:38ff; Heb. 10:30; Rev. 14:9-20) (see study # 32).

Chapter 4

I. Ish-bosheth's Death (4 all):

A. "And when Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands became feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. And Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin (for Beeroth also is reckoned to Benjamin: and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and have been sojourners there until this day" (4:1-3).

1. Abner had protected Ish-bosheth from David yet now he was not around.
2. Ish-bosheth is afraid that someone would kill him now that he had no man to protect him.

B. "Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel; and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, as he took his rest at noon. And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him in the body: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. Now when they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and went by the way of the Arabah all night" (4:4-7).

1. The Holy Spirit now introduces us to an unknown son of Jonathan's named Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth's story is somewhat sad in that he had fallen at age five and likely broke a leg and it healed oddly to make him lame.
2. Ish-bosheth's fears were now realized. His two military leaders, brothers by the names of Rechab and Baanah, took it upon themselves to kill and behead the son of Saul while he slept. The two men then rode all night with Ish-bosheth's head and brought it to David to show to him their loyalty.

C. "And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold, the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, thine enemy, who sought thy life; and Jehovah hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed. And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his tidings. How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth? And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up
beside the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron” (4:8-12).

1. There were not many who seemed to understand the fear of Jehovah and respect for His sovereign choices. When the Amalekite killed Saul and brought the news to David he thought he was bringing "good tidings" to the king yet it was the last thing David wanted to hear. Now, these two men bring the head of Ish-bosheth to David thinking to bring him "good tidings" and once again it is the last thing he is wanting to hear. David commands that the men be killed.

2. There is much damage control taking place by David. Israel and Judah were to be united under a mutual respect and fear of Jehovah God. The kingdom of Israel was not about David or Saul's house. It was about understanding their place in the presence of Jehovah God. David had nothing against the house of Saul because they were indeed the anointed of Jehovah. David's problem, like all of our should be, was with men who refused to see that Jehovah's will must be honored (see study # 11).

3. To prove, once again, that the king did not sanction the murder of a righteous man (Ish-bosheth) David has the two men killed. The hands and feet of Rechab and Baanah were cut off and their bodies hung in a public setting at the pool in Hebron. All were to see the bodies and know that the king did not sanction such a wicked act.

4. One may ask why Joab was not immediately killed for taking the life of Abner. Was David showing partiality? It seems clear that the reason the Amalekite that killed Saul and the two military men who killed Ish-bosheth were put to death was their public disposition about the matter. Public perception has been a very important issue in the study of I Samuel. God's anointed was to be publicly acknowledged, respected, and honored (see I Sam. 24:8ff). These men thought that they were bringing David and all Israel great news in that they had killed Saul and Ish-bosheth. David, in order to make a public statement, took the lives of these men so that all would hear and fear when dealing with Jehovah's anointed king. Joab never bragged or try to justify the slaying of Abner. Is was a matter of revenge.

Chapter 5

I. David is Anointed king over Israel and Judah and Establishes his house in Zion (5:1-16):

A. "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that leddest out and broughthest in Israel: and Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Jehovah: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah” (5:1-5).

1. Recall the words of Abner to the elders of Israel at II Samuel 3:17-18. Every one knew that Jehovah had anointed David to be the next king of Israel; however, everyone was placed in odd circumstances in that while Saul was alive they owed their divinely decreed allegiance and honor to. Now that Saul had died they are called upon to honor Jehovah's sovereign choice of David to be the next king and
so they do. Fault surely lay upon the shoulders of Abner, Ish-bosheth, the house of Saul, and any one else who attempted to take the kingdom of Israel away from David.

2. David is officially anointed king of both Israel and Judah and so he reigned a total of 40 years (see study # 25).

B. "And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither; thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, let him get up to the watercourse, and smite the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul. Wherefore they say, There are the blind and the lame; he cannot come into the house. And David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward" (5:6-10).

1. The Jebusites had long occupied Jerusalem which was located on the border of Benjamin and Judah (another way of looking at its location is the border of Israel and Judah) (see Judges 1:20ff). It is likely David chose this place as a neutral city between Israel and Judah.

2. When the Jebusites hear of David's purpose to take the city they scoffed and said that their lame and blind could defend the city against him. Not only did David take the stronghold of Zion but he ordered that all the lame and blind of the Jebusites be slaughtered for the mocking that took place on their behalf.

3. David called Zion the "city of David" and fortified it. "Millo was some kind of fortification, probably a large tower or castle at one particular part of the surrounding wall."

4. This is the first time that we read of "Zion" in our Bibles. Zion is precisely identified as "the city of David" at I Kings 8:1 and II Chronicles 5:2. Some passages identify Zion with all of Jerusalem (Isa. 10:12; 24:23; Joel 2:32; Zec. 1:14) and others seem to indicate only the "stronghold" or fortress within Jerusalem where David made his home. Zion would be the place where the temple of God was built and the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant and thereby the sacred dwelling place of Jehovah God (see Ps. 9:11-12). It rested upon a hill within Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6) and God was said to reign from there (Micah 4:7). Eventually the word Zion came to be associated with the people of God and continues this use today (see Heb. 12:22).

C. "And David waxed greater and greater; for Jehovah, the God of hosts, was with him. And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar-trees, and carpenters, and masons; and they built David a house. And David perceived that Jehovah had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake" (5:11-12).

1. As God was once with Saul now Jehovah is with David (see I Sam. 10:7).

2. David's fame grew and the king of Tyre helped build a house for David in Jerusalem.

3. David looked about the greatness of Israel and he perceived that all was due to Jehovah's will.

D. "And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron; and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. And these are the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem: Shammua, and Shobab,
and Nathan, and Solomon, and Ibhar, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet' (5:13-16).

1. Before changing his residence to Jerusalem David had already obtained 7 wives (see II Sam. 3:1ff).

2. Divine revelation now informs us that the king took more wives and concubines and had many children of these wives and concubines one of which was Solomon.

II. Two Battles against the Philistines (5:17-25):

A. "And when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the stronghold. Now the Philistines had come and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And David inquired of Jehovah, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt thou deliver them into my hand? And Jehovah said unto David, Go up; for I will certainly deliver the Philistines into thy hand" (5:17-19).

1. When the Philistines heard of David ascending to the throne of Israel and Judah they attempt to destroy his leadership before it gets a chance to gain more strength and momentum.

2. David, being a man of great faith in Jehovah, prayed and asked the Lord what to do. The Lord replies to David that He would be with him in the battle and deliver the Philistines into the hand of Israel.

B. "And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there; and he said, Jehovah hath broken mine enemies before me, like the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim. And they left their images there; and David and his men took them away" (5:20-21).

1. David faithfully heeds the Lord's will and goes to battle against the Philistines and routs them.

2. After the bloody rout of the Philistines David faithfully remarks, "Jehovah hath broken mine enemies before me." David knew that it was Jehovah's strength that destroyed the enemies.

C. "And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And when David inquired of Jehovah, he said, Thou shalt not go up: make a circuit behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees. And it shall be, when thou hearest the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then is Jehovah gone out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines. And David did so, as Jehovah commanded him, and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gezer" (5:22-25).

1. The persistent Philistines make another attempt to defeat Israel. Once again they come to the same valley yet this time Jehovah instructs David to have a different strategy.

2. The Lord instructs David and his men to make a circuit behind the Philistines and He would fight for them. David obeys and the Lord routs the Philistines once again.

Chapter 6

I. David moves the Ark of the Covenant to Zion (6 all):

A. "And David again gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him, from Baale-judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, which is called by the Name, even the name of Jehovah of hosts that sitteth above the cherubim. And they set the ark of God upon
a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in the hill: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart" (6:1-3).

1. Recall that the Philistines had captured the ark of God and it caused great trouble in their cities so they returned it to the people of God. When the people of God received the ark they foolishly gazed upon it violating Jehovah's instructions not to do so and 50,000 died (see Numb. 4:20; I Sam. 6:19). The ark of God was then taken to Abinadab's house and there it has remained for approximately 70 years (see I Sam. 7:1ff).

2. David's confidence and faith in Jehovah was at an all time high (II Sam. 5:11). David decides that it is time to get the ark of God from Abinadab's house and bring it to Zion. The king takes 30,000 of his choice men and travels to Abinadab's house, loads the ark of God upon a new cart, and heads back for Zion.

B. "And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was in the hill, with the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel played before Jehovah with all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with castanets, and with cymbals. And when they came to the threshing-floor of Nacon, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God" (6:4-7).

1. Excitement was in the air. David and all the house of Israel played before Jehovah with joyful noises. All of Israel was excited because the very object which represented the dwelling place of Jehovah God was coming to Zion.

2. As the exciting procession came along they came to "the threshing-floor of Nacon;" however, the oxen stumble and the ark was apparently in danger of falling off the cart. Uzzah, in an attempt to steady the ark of God, put out his hand and supported it to keep it from falling off the cart. The next thing that happened was that "The anger of Jehovah was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God."

3. Israel's dealings with the ark of God had obviously come to be lax through the seventy years that it had been in Abinadab's house. Had they forgotten how many of their brethren had died by foolishly looking at it? A since of reverence and great fear should have moved them to deal very carefully with the ark of God yet it seems that God's laws were the last thing on their mind.

4. The Lord had appointed the Kohathites (sons of Levi) to carry the holy furniture such as the ark of God. Aaron and his sons alone were to go into the most holy place, cover the Ark of the Covenant first with the veil that separated the holy place from the most holy place. Secondly, the ark of God was to be covered with seal skins so that no man would place his or her eyes upon it when it was moved. Thirdly, when it was moved it was the Kohathites that were ordained to do so yet they were not permitted to touch it lest they die. Gold rings had been fabricated onto the ark of God so that staves could be used to carry it upon their shoulders (see Numb. 7:4-9). Through these instructions we find that it was God's will that the Ark of the Covenant not be touched nor looked at by anyone save Aaron, the high priest, and his sons the priests (see Numb. 4:1-6, 15). Though the law regarding the ark had been delivered approximately 500 years earlier these years did not extinguish their power and authority. God's laws remained in effect even when Israel did otherwise years latter.

5. Uzzah's "error" was that he was not a priest and thereby his touch was the touch of death. The ark was not being transported by the right people or in the right manner. The lesson is simple. Jehovah's laws are not to be forgotten or
disobeyed. Though much time had passed the laws remained in force (see study # 11).

6. When God gave law He intended for man to follow it. We may consider lessons learned to this point in Israel's history regarding the law (see study # 11):

   a. God flooded the whole earth and destroyed all that breathed because their thoughts continuously violated His sovereign will for man (Gen. 6:5ff).
   
   b. God’s sovereign choice was for man to go into the whole earth and repopulate it (Gen. 9:1). Man disobeyed God by building the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1) and thereby Jehovah confounded their language.
   
   c. God had commanded Lot and his family not to look back; however, Lot’s wife does so and is instantly turned to a pillar of salt for her disobedience (Gen. 19:23-26).
   
   d. God set a boundary around Sinai and those who broke that boundary would be put to death (Ex. 19:12-15).
   
   e. Nadab and Abihu offer "strange fire that Jehovah had not commanded" and they died for their error (Lev. 10:1ff).
   
   f. Korah rebels against Moses so he and his house died (Numb. 16:1ff).
   
   g. 50,000 people die as they erroneously gaze at the Ark of the Covenant (I Sam. 6:19ff).
   
   h. Moses, by divine inspiration, wrote, "Cursed is every one who continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them" (Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10).

C. "And David was displeased, because Jehovah had broken forth upon Uzzah; and he called that place Perez-uzzah, unto this day. And David was afraid of Jehovah that day; and he said, How shall the ark of Jehovah come unto me?" (6:8-9).

   1. David was not angry at Jehovah for destroying Uzzah but rather displeased at the manner that they had handled the ark of God and brought death to a man's life. The whole incident could have been averted if only they would have followed God's pattern for moving the ark as revealed in the Law of Moses.

   2. David's displeasure in his own self moved him to a fear of Jehovah. David's fear of God paralleled to Moses' (see Deut. 9:19), early Christians' (Acts 9:31), and the Apostle Paul's (II Cor. 5:11) fear of God. Those who fear God are those who reverentially fear Him because He is the Potentate King of kings (see I Tim. 6:15). Fear is evidenced in man through obedience to God’s commands (see Deut. 5:29; 6:1-3; Titus 3:8; I Pet. 1:17). To fear is to be aware of the fierce anger and wrath of God against law breakers (Deut. 19:19-21; I Tim. 5:20; Rev. 14). The Bible paints an obvious picture of the error of not possessing such fear (see Numb. 12:1, 7-8; II Sam. 1:14; Jer. 5:22-24). Fear caries with it the idea of reverential submission to those in positions that deem honor (see Rom. 13:7). One may have asked Uzzah, if still alive, "Wherefore did you not fear to touch the ark of God?" (see study # 15).

   3. At times God's people get caught up in a moment of joy and forget that Jehovah is a just and holy God that demands man's absolute obedience in all things. People, through time, come to be complacent in their service to God. Rather than asking if there is authority for doing things we just do it thinking that our past relationship with the Lord means we are clear to use the church treasury as we please or any other incidents. These lessons ought to illustrate the great power of God and the importance of making sure that we have authority for all our actions (see study # 11, # 15).

D. "So David would not remove the ark of Jehovah unto him into the city of David; but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And the ark of
Jehovah remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and Jehovah blessed Obed-edom, and all his house. And it was told king David, saying, Jehovah hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with joy" (6:10-12).

1. At the death of Uzzah the mood of the people moved from joy to great fear. No doubt now they began to remember the 50,000 who died as they gazed upon the ark. No doubt now they began to contemplate the laws of God. Rather than moving on with their purpose David moves the ark to the house of Obed-edom where it remained for three months.

2. During these three months Obed-edom's house was blessed. David considered this blessing a sign of Jehovah's approval and once again went out to get the ark of God. This time he was successful because he followed God's laws regarding moving the ark of God (see I Chronicles 15:1-3, 12-15).

E. "And it was so, that, when they that bare the ark of Jehovah had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. And David danced before Jehovah 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 Jehovah with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And it was so, as the ark of Jehovah came into the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out at the window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before Jehovah; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of Jehovah, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before Jehovah. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offering and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Jehovah of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, both to men and women, to every one a cake of bread, and a portion of flesh, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed every one to his house. Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, It was before Jehovah, who chose me above thy father, and above all his house, to appoint me prince over the people of Jehovah, over Israel: therefore will I play before Jehovah. And I will be yet more vile than this, and will be base in mine own sight: but of the handmaids of whom thou hast spoken, of them shall I be had in honor. And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death" (6:13-23).

1. As David arrives in Jerusalem with the ark, he and the other men with him dance, shout, sounded the trumpets, offered peace offerings, gave every single person in Israel a cake of bread and raisins and also some flesh to eat, and then he went to bless his own house. The celebration of the ark’s arrival in Zion was a great and joyous time for most of Israel.

2. Michal, Saul’s daughter and David’s wife, saw David dancing before the ark and considered him to be acting foolish. In David, she (Michal) only loved the brave hero and exalted king: she therefore took offence at the humility with which the king, in his pious enthusiasm, placed himself on equality with all the rest of the nation before the Lord.3 David exposed his wife's foolish bitterness by saying, "I will be yet more vile than this, and will be base in mine own sight: but of the handmaids of whom thou hast spoken, of them shall I be had in honor."

3 Ibid. pg. 593
The acts of joy over the arrival of the ark of God were depicted as vile and base in the eyes of the bitter Michal. If these acts of joy be considered vile and base then David says he shall increase such acts and be had in honor among the handmaids of his servants. Lesson: Careful not to condemn acts that the Lord approves. Michal went barren the rest of her life.

Chapter 7

I. Nathan tells David that God will establish his Throne Forever (7:1-17):

A. "And it came to pass, when the king dwelt in his house, and Jehovah had given him rest from all his enemies round about, that the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thy heart; for Jehovah is with thee. And it came to pass the same night, that the word of Jehovah came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith Jehovah, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to be shepherd of my people Israel, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedar?"

(7:1-7).

1. We are, for the first time, introduced to God's prophet Nathan who lived and worked with king David.

2. God had given David rest from all his enemies and the king began to ponder the condition of his house as compared to the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. David dwelled in a beautiful cedar house while the ark sat in the midst of curtains. David tells Nathan that he would like to build the Lord a house to dwell in and Nathan tells the king to do as he pleases. Stephen made mention of this event at Acts seven saying, "Which also our fathers, in their turn, brought in with Joshua when they entered on the possession of the nations, that God thrust out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; who found favor in the sight of God, and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built him a house. Howbeit the Most High dwells not in houses made with hands; as saith the prophet, 'The heaven is my throne, and the earth the footstool of my feet: What manner of house will ye build me? Saith the Lord: Or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?'" (Acts 7:45-50 see also Acts 17:24). The man of God quotes from Isaiah 66:1-2 to illustrate that God does not dwell in temples made by man's hands but rather in their hearts (Isa. 66:3) (see study # 40; God Dwells in the hearts of the Faithful).

3. That night; however, the Lord appeared to Nathan in a dream and gives the prophet a message to give to David regarding the building of a house for God. The Lord tells David that he has never dwelt in a house and that he has never commanded that a house of cedar be built for Him. Why is David trying to do something that God had not commanded? The Lord had ordained the construction of a portable tabernacle made of curtains and the skins of animals. This is a valuable lesson regarding God's silence. God commanded the tabernacle to be built out of curtains and skins. David was not at liberty to build something else (see study # 37; Bible Authority: God's Silence - see also Deut. 4:8, 11-19; Heb. 7:11-14).
B. "Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be prince over my people, over Israel; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee; and I will make thee a great name, like unto the name of the great ones that are in 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 moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first, and as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel; and I will cause thee to rest from all thine enemies. Moreover Jehovah telleth thee that Jehovah will make thee a house" (7:8-11).

1. David's idea was unauthorized and the Lord reveals this to him through Nathan. God had great plans for David and his house.

2. David was Jehovah's sovereign choice as the prince over Israel. The Lord would make David's name great and give Israel a planted dwelling place under his rule.

C. "When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, 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 shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David" (7:12-17).

1. The Lord promises David that he would establish his throne for ever. Jehovah had high regard for David. David was more than the anointed king or prince of Israel (I Kg. 2:11). David was a mighty man of valor and war (I Sam. 16:18), skillful harp player (I Sam. 16:18), man after God's heart (I Sam. 13:14), sweet singer of Israel (II Sam. 23:1) and a prophet of God (Acts 2:29-30) (see study # 25). The Lord would not give up on the house of David as He did with Saul (see Ps. 132:11).

2. While it is obvious that Solomon would rule immediately after David and fulfill the Lord's prophecy it is even more obvious that the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy would be realized in Jesus Christ (Ps. 132:11; Isa. 11:1, 10; Jer. 23:5-6 etc.) and his kingdom (the church) (see II Sam. 7:12-17; Isa. 9:6-7; Ps. 16:8ff; Matt. 1:1; 21:9; Lk. 1:30-33; Acts 2:29ff; 13:22-23) (see study # 38; The Church in Prophecy and study # 39; Jesus in Prophecy).

II. David's Response to God's Blessings (7:18-29):

A. "Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am I, O Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come; and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah! And what can David say more unto thee? For thou knowest thy servant, O Lord Jehovah. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou wrought all this greatness, to make thy servant know it. Wherefore thou art great, O Jehovah God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears" (7:18-22).

1. David's immediate response to such grand statements was that of humility (see study # 25). What could David had said other than, "Who am I and my house that thou hast brought me thus far?" God's plans to redeem mankind from sin through Jesus Christ and the establishment of his eternal kingdom, his church, would all come through this man David. The thought was overwhelming and the
only thing that David could further say was, "Thou knowest thy servant, O Lord Jehovah." God saw in David the man whom He would choose to accomplish the grandest of all accomplishments among humanity; i.e., their salvation.

2. The news and David's awe over such statements caused the king to break out in a doxology of praise to the one and only great Jehovah God. It is somewhat interesting to note the disposition of David after hearing of God's blessings to humanity being brought through his seed as compared to that of Esau who despised his birthright (see Gen. 25:34).

B. "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, and to make him a name, and to do great things for you, and terrible things for thy land, before thy people, whom thou redeemest to thee out of Egypt, from the nations and their gods? And thou didst establish to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, O Jehovah God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, confirm thou it for ever, and do as thou hast spoken. And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of hosts is God over Israel; and the house of thy servant David shall be established before thee. For thou, O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord Jehovah, thou art God, and thy words are truth, and thou hast promised this good thing unto thy servant: now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O Lord Jehovah, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever" (7:23-29).

1. David continues his prayer of humble praise to Jehovah mentioning the greatness of Israel due to God's help.

2. David prays that God's promises will surely be kept in that his house would be blessed forever.

Chapter 8

I. David's Military Conquests (8 all):
A. "And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took the bridle of the mother city out of the hand of the Philistines. And he smote Moab, and measured them with the line, making them to lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, and brought tribute. David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his dominion at the River. And David took from him a thousand and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David hocked all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for a hundred chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer king of Zobah, David smote of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. 6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought tribute. And Jehovah gave victory to David whithersoever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass. And when Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram brought
with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: These also did king David dedicate unto Jehovah, with the silver and gold that he dedicated of all the nations which he subdued: of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah. And David gat him a name when he returned from smiting the Syrians in the Valley of Salt, even eighteen thousand men. And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And Jehovah gave victory to David whithersoever he went” (8:1-14).

1. David subdued the Philistines and captured their capital city Gath. For a parallel of this event see I Chronicles 18:1. The Philistines submitted to David and gave him tributary.
2. David defeats Moab. David had earlier, I Sam. 22:3-4, taken his parents to Moab for safety. Something must have gone wrong in the relationship of Israel and Moab for David to attack and defeat them.
3. David defeats the men of Zobah; located “to a situation to the north-east of Damascus and south of Hamath, between the Orontes and Euphrates.”
5. David defeats Edom killing 18,000 men and making the rest slaves. David set military post in Edom.
6. Israel gained much treasures of gold, silver, and brass through the wars David fought. Later, Solomon would use these treasures to build the house of God (see I Chron. 18:8).

B. "And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed justice and righteousness unto all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were priests; and Seraiah was scribe; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers" (8:15-18).

1. More of David's character is revealed. We saw his humility at I Sam. 18:17-19 and II Sam. 7:18, his great conviction and courage as he faced Goliath and the many wars he fought as mentioned in this chapter (I Sam. 17), and showed great respect for Jehovah's anointed (I Sam. 24:8ff). Here it is recorded that "David executed justice and righteousness unto all his people." David was a fair and righteous man of God in all his dealings with Israel (see study # 25).
2. The Holy Spirit lists the chief civil ministers of David and Israel:
   a. The commander-in-chief of David’s military was Joab (apparently he had remained in good standing with David even though he had been cursed after killing Abner).
   b. Jehoshaphat was the chronicler: “the recorder of the most important incidents and affairs of the nation, but an officer resembling the magister memoriae of the later Romans, or the waka nuvis of the Persian court, who keeps a record of everything that takes place around the king, furnishes him with an account of all that occurs in the kingdom, places his vise upon all the king’s commands, and keeps a special protocol of all these things.”
   c. Zadok and Ahimelech were the two high priests.

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4 Ibid. pg. 606
5 Ibid. pg. 611
d. Seraiah was David’s scribe: “The scribe was a secretary of state; not a military officer, whose duty it was to raise and muster the troops.”

e. Benaiah was over the bodyguards of David.

f. David’s sons were chief ministers: “The first at the hand (or side) of the king.”

Chapter 9

I. David fulfills his oath that he made to Jonathan (9 all):

A. "And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba, and they called him unto David; and the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, who is lame of his feet. And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came unto David, and fell on his face, and did obeisance. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold, thy servant!"

(9:1-6).

1. David had swore an oath to Jonathan that he would not forget to be kind to all of Jonathan's house forever (see I Sam. 20:14-16). David, after having rest from his enemies, obviously remembers this oath that he made to Jonathan and wishes to fulfill it.

2. David finds that Jonathan has one son, Mephibosheth, who had been lame from birth (for more on this see II Sam. 4:4ff).

B. "And David said unto him, Fear not; for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. And he did obeisance, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, All that pertained to Saul and to all his house have I given unto thy master's son. And thou shalt till the land for him, thou, and thy sons, and thy servants; and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have bread to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king commandeth his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth. So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem; for he did eat continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet" (9:7-13).

1. David was a man of his word (a man of integrity) (see# 25). He had given his word to Jonathan and now he is fulfilling that oath.

2. Note the humility of Mephibosheth ("what is thy servant... such a dead dog as I am").

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6 Ibid. pg. 612
7 Ibid. pg. 614
3. David commanded that all of Saul's lands be restored to the ownership of Mephibosheth and that Ziba, a man with fifteen sons and twenty servants, work all the land for Mephibosheth as his servants.

4. Furthermore, Mephibosheth was to eat at the kings table continually as one of his own sons.

Chapter 10

I. David's acts of Kindness land Israel in a War with Syria and Ammon (10:1-11:1ff):

A. "And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. And David said, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me. So David sent by his servants to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon. But the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, in that he hath sent comforters unto thee? Hath not David sent his servants unto thee to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? So Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away" (10:1-4).

1. Nahash was the king of Ammon. What kind acts he did to David are not told. The only thing we know about Nahash is that he came up against the people of Israel demanding that they put out their right eyes or be killed (see I Sam. 11:1ff). Saul had saved Israel on this occasion from the seemingly despotic king of Ammon.

2. David, however, wanting to show honor, kindness, and comfort to Nahash's son after his father had died sent ambassadors to Ammon; however, the Ammonites rejected them. Hanun, the son of Nahash, took the advise of wicked counselors and shamefully shaved off half of the ambassadors beards and cut their clothing to the buttocks. "With the value universally set upon the beard by the Hebrews and other oriental nations, as being a man's greatest ornament, the cutting off of one-half of it was the greatest insult that could have been offered to the ambassadors, and through them to David their king." Cutting off a persons' beard is regarded by the Arabs as an indignity quite equal to flogging and branding among ourselves. Many would rather die than have their beard shaved off (Arvieux, Sitten der Beduinen-araber).

B. "When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them; for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return. And when the children of Ammon saw that they were become odious to David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand footmen, and the king of Maacah with a thousand men, and the men of Tob twelve thousand men" (10:5-6).

1. The men who had their beards shaved and clothing cut to the buttocks were "greatly ashamed." These men were embarrassed to be seen in public without their beards. Why do you suppose it is not embarrassing for men to walk about today with no beard at all? Propriety has always been a part of man's times and cultures. The apostle Paul speaks of this at I Corinthians 11 regarding the head covering (veils) worn by women in public. Women were to have their heads

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8 Ibid. pg. 618-619
9 Ibid. pg. 618
covered when praying (their hair was their covering and they were not permitted to shave their heads bald). The veil; however, was not a command. Paul said, "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (I Cor. 11:16). The word "custom" means "Habitual intercourse, acquaintance, society, intimacy… habit, custom, habituation, the customary use of a phrase" (LS 776). The decorum of the day was veils yet God did not command such. Women could thereby wear them or not wear them. Today, the beard is much the same way. Wearing a beard or not wearing a beard is not going to get you closer to God (see I Cor. 7:19).

2. Though the beard was not a command of God it was nonetheless considered as a man's only ornament (as the woman's hair on her head was no doubt hers). The custom and decorum of the day was to have a beard. It was embarrassing to the men not to have their beards. All other men had beards. It would be like someone wearing bell bottom jeans today (its out of style and embarrassing - no dishonor meant here but only a thought to consider). The point is that this was a serious matter; i.e., to embarrass someone who was only trying to comfort and honor you (see study # 41; The Importance of Customs in Society).

3. When David's ambassadors came back shamefully shaved all of Israel had an "odious" (hateful and detestable) disposition for the Ammonites. Word of this disposition gets back to Ammon and they hire thousands of Syrian soldiers to fight against Israel for them. Amazingly, that which started out as a good, kind, and honorable deed turned into war.

C. "And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entrance of the gate: and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the field. Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: And the rest of the people he committed into the hand of Abishai his brother; and he put them in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our people, and for the cities of our God: and Jehovah do that which seemeth him good" (10:7-12).

1. Joab, David's military captain, saw that his men were being attacked from the front and rear (near surrounded by the Syrians and Ammonites).

2. Joab's plan: Put his brother Abishai in charge of the battle against the men of Ammon and he would take his men and battle the Syrians.

3. The plan was that if he or his brother attained victory first they would return to the other to help with the battle.

D. "So Joab and the people that were with him drew nigh unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, and entered into the city. Then Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem. And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they gathered themselves together. And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the River: and they came to Helam, with Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer at their head" (10:13-16).

1. The Syrians were hired men fighting only for money. When they saw Joab come up against them with his men they decided to flee rather than fight. When the men of Ammon saw that their hired help had fled they too fled the battle.

2. All the retreating seemed to work on the pride of the Syrians and they regroup.
E. "And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel together, and passed over the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array 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 thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, so that he died there. And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more" (10:17-19).

1. David hears of the regrouping of the Syrians and thereby gathered Israel together to fight the Syrians (again, all because he tried to honor, show kindness, and comfort a man who lost his father).
2. David and Israel soundly defeat the Syrians as they destroyed 700 chariots and 40,000 horsemen and the captain of the host of Syrians.
3. The Syrians decided not to help the children of Ammon any more.

Lessons Learned to this point of our Study:

- **DAVID:**
  a. David was thirty years old when he began to reign over Judah and 37 years old when he reigned over all Israel and Judah (total of 40 years as king) (II Sam. 5:4-5).
  b. David was a man who honored those who held positions of authority (II Sam. 1:14-15; 4:9ff; 10:1-4).
  c. David had a great fear of Jehovah (II Sam. 6:9).
  d. David was a man of war. He defeated the Philistines, Moabites, the Syrians, Hadadezer, and Edom (II Sam. 8:1-14).
  e. David, a man of his word (integrity) (see II Sam. 9:1ff - He had swore an Oath to Jonathan that he would show kindness to his house forever and so he now does).

- **Bible Authority:**
  a. Uzzah's "error" - God's commands cannot be overlooked or forgotten (II Sam. 6:6-8).
  b. Authorized silence: God gave a command to build the tabernacle out of curtains and animal skins (Goat hair, seal skins, ram skins, acacia wood and gold) (see Ex. 26 all). When David told Nathan that he would build a house for God and the Ark of the Covenant the Lord told him no (see II Sam. 7:1-7). A valuable lesson on how the authority of God works is found here. If God gives commands in an area such as the Lord's Supper (i.e., it shall be the fruit of the vine and unleavened bread) He does not have to say, "Thou shalt not use orange juice and cookies..." God tells us what He wants of us and he does not have to say, "thou shalt not do this that and the other..." tells us one thing yet does not say "thou shalt not do otherthings" (for more information on God's authorized silence see Deut. 4:8, 11-19; Heb. 7:11-14).
  c. When an Old Testament principle is brought into the New Testament it becomes a binding part of God's new covenant (for example see Eph. 6:1-2). Other parts of the Mosaic Law are not brought over into the New Testament (like animal sacrifices). When the men of Ammon shaved David's ambassador's beards off the word of God tells us that they were ashamed (see II Sam. 10:5). The question naturally arises as to whether or not men today should shave their faces. Remember that Paul said that the old law was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:13-19). Though beards were a matter of law during Old Testament times (see Lev. 19:1, 27-28; 21:1-6) they are nonetheless a matter of personal judgment today (see I Cor. 7:19). The same could be said about "marking the flesh" (i.e., tattoos - see Lev. 19:28).
God's Promise to David:
   a. David's throne would be established for ever through the Christ and his church (II Sam. 7:12-16).

Chapter 11

I. David's Adulterous and Murderous Act against Uriah (11 all):
   A. "And it came to pass, at the return of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem" (11:1).
      1. Ammon's new king Hanaun had shamefully treated David's ambassadors who had come to their country to offer condolences, comfort, and kindness to the new king over the death of his father. Rather than being thankful, the new king gave heed to his counselors and considered David's men spies. The men of Ammon treat David's men shamefully by shaving off half their beards and cutting their cloths to the buttocks (see II Sam. 10:4-5).
      2. Apparently, through the span of a year of war with Ammon, David had completely "destroyed the children of Ammon."
   B. "And it came to pass at eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David send and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" (11:2-3).
      1. Though David was known as a man after God's own heart, the sweet singer of Israel, and a mighty man of valor who waged war against the Lord's enemies he was not without the ability to be tempted.
      2. As we follow the progression of events we find the following facts:
         a. David, while at his own home, walked out of his bedroom onto the roof of his house and looked out about the city.
         b. When David looked off of his roof he saw a woman bathing.
         c. David took note of her beauty.
         d. David became interested in the bathing beauty and sent a messenger to find out all he could about this beautiful woman.
         e. The servant does some research and finds that the beautiful woman was Bathsheba the wife of Uriah the Hittite.
   C. "And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her for she was purified from her uncleanness; and she returned unto her house" (11:4).
      1. David "took" Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and committed adultery with her.
      2. There are two possibilities regarding the text stating that Bathsheba "purified herself from her uncleanness."
         a. First, Bathsheba may have previously completed her feminine cycle and had purified herself (Lev. 15:19ff).
         b. Secondly, it may have been that after the sexual act Bathsheba followed the instructions of Leviticus 15:16-18 regarding cleaning oneself after sexual intercourse (she was to wash with water and remain unclean until evening).
   D. "And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to
David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David asked of him how Joab did, and how the people fared, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of food from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house" (11:5-9).

1. Bathsheba finds out that David had impregnated her with their act of adultery and tells the king. David, upon hearing the news, does all within his power to conceal his adulterous and sinful act with Bathsheba.

2. David sends for Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, and tries to get the man to go to his wife and have sexual relations with her so that Uriah would think the child was his.

3. It is obvious that David and Bathsheba have kept their adultery a secret from the woman's husband.

E. "And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Art thou not come from a journey? Wherefore didst thou not go down unto thy house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in booths; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field; shall I then go into my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing" (11:10-11).

1. David had grossly misjudged Uriah's character. Uriah was dedicated to Jehovah God and to the welfare of Israel.

2. Uriah said that he would not go to his house, experience comfort in the home, and have sexual intercourse with his wife while his fellow soldiers were camped in the open field in the elements. Uriah states, "As thou livest and thy soul lives, I will not do this thing." Uriah would not have been able to live with himself if he took pleasure and comfort while his fellow men fought and camped in the open field. Uriah is obviously a very good man who happen to be subject to the king's sinful lust against his own wife.

F. "And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house" (11:13-14).

1. David looked to the character of Uriah and knew that what the man said regarding being dedicated to God and his fellow soldiers would stand true.

2. David now tempts Uriah with wine. David caused Uriah to drink so much that he became drunk; however, even in this drunken state he would not go to Bathsheba.

3. While David failed his temptation miserably Uriah is standing his ground and successfully fighting off the urge to go to his house, be with his wife, and experience comfort while the other men are in the open field.

G. "And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. And it came to pass, when Joab kept watch upon the city, that he assigned Uriah unto the place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people, even of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also" (11:15-17).

1. David, seeing that he could not coerce Uriah to go to Bathsheba and have sexual intercourse with her, sends him to the hottest front line of battle.
2. Oddly, Uriah carried the very sealed letter that would be his demise. One wonders how much information Joab knew. Joab may have been doing anything he could to remain in good standing with David seeing that the king had earlier cursed him for killing Abner.

3. Joab opens the letter that Uriah brought him, read it, and acts immediately. Uriah is put in a hot battle and is killed. Problem solve so David thought. David was to learn that no man was above God's laws (see study # 42; No man is above God's Laws).

H. "Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; and he charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling all the things concerning the war unto the king, it shall be that, if the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore went ye so nigh unto the city to fight? Knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone upon him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why went ye so nigh the wall? Then shalt thou say, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also" (11:18-21).

1. A very disturbing bit of information is revealed here. David's decision to have Uriah killed in battle came at a cost of not only Uriah's life but the life of some of David's other "valiant men."

2. Notice also the information given to the messenger by Joab. Surely all knew that something was amiss with this suicide mission ordered by Joab and authorized by King David. When David's men found out the truth about such events they would surely conclude that the king cares nothing for their lives just as long as he can cover up his lustful sins.

I. "So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for. And the messenger said unto David, The men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entrance of the gate. And the shooters shot at thy servants from off the wall; and some of the king's servants are dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another; make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him" (11:22-25).

1. The messenger comes to the king and explains the terrible fait of the men of Israel and Uriah the Hittite. They had been killed by arrows because they were too close to the city walls. The men doing the battle with Uriah must have wandered why their orders were so yet they went to battle faithfully for the king and for Jehovah.

2. David speaks of the lives that he caused to be murdered saying, "The sword devours one as well as another." In other words, hey, this is war and this is expected. The problem; however, is that soldiers trust that their commander is not going to put them in foolish situations where they have no chance of escaping with their lives.

J. "And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she made lamentation for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased Jehovah" (11:26-27).

1. The minimum amount of time that the Israelites mourned over a loved one was seven days. Recall that the men of Jabesh Gilead mourned seven days for Saul (I Sam. 31:13). When Aaron and Moses died; however, they were mourned for thirty days.
2. David took Bathsheba as his wife immediately after this short time of morning was over. Was the mourning sincere by Bathsheba? Did she know that David was watching from his roof top and thereby tried to tempt him? Was she just as lustful as David? People seem to get caught up in trying to find the answers to these questions; however, there is a far bigger issue here.

3. The chapter ends with the ominous words, "But the thing that David had done displeased Jehovah." David had sinned against Jehovah and the people that were the king's subjects. The king tries to conceal his error by having Uriah have sexual intercourse with his wife Bathsheba so that he would think that the child was his. When this failed David tried to get Uriah drunk so that he would have sex with his wife. All David's wicked plans failed. The king finally takes matters to a new level. Seeing that Uriah would not lie with his wife while his fellow soldiers were in the field the king determines to have the faithful soldier of Israel killed. David sends Uriah to a hot battle, close to the city walls, and he is killed by archers. Not only Uriah but other valiant men died too. David then takes Bathsheba as his wife and seems to think everything is ok. The Lord; however, has witnessed the entire event and is "displeased." Jeremiah tells us that there is nothing that escapes the all seeing eyes of God (see Jer. 23:23ff).

Chapter 12

I. God sends Nathan to David to Expose his Wickedness (12:1-14):

A. "And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city: the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity" (12:1-6).

1. Jehovah had sent the prophet Nathan to David to awaken the king out of his sinful state. Nathan comes to the king and tells him a story that gets David really worked up.

2. Nathan tells David of a rich man and poor man. The poor man had a ewe lamb that he brought up in his house like one of his own kids. The poor family was attached to the one little lamb they had. The rich man; however, had many lambs yet was not willing to take from his own flocks to feed a stranger that had come into town. Nathan tells David that the rich man did the unthinkable. The rich man took that little ewe lamb from the poor family and killed it and served it to the stranger.

3. David was fit to be tied after hearing the story and proclaimed, "the man that hath done this is worthy to die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

B. "And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee
the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in his sight? Thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon" (12:7-9).

1. After David's zealous condemnation of the rich man Nathan looks to the king and said, "Thou art the man." No doubt a flood of emotion and shame came upon the king. His big secret had never been hid from God; however, David was going on acting as all was ok.

2. Nathan delivers a fourfold accusation against the King. David had acted ungrateful for Jehovah's blessings, despised the word of Jehovah in that he committed adultery with Uriah's wife, committed murder by smiting Uriah with the sword of the people of Ammon, and took Bathsheba, a woman that was not available for marriage, to be his wife.

3. David's sin marks four of the most heinous crimes against God. The king is equated to base idolaters (see Jer. 7:9):

   a. The ungrateful have never settled well with God. The characteristic of ungratefulness is due God's fierce wrath (see Hos. 2:8-9; 9:10, 13; 11:3-4; Amos 2:9; Zech. 11:10ff).

   b. David is guilty of "despising the word of Jehovah" which is an act of treating God's laws as though they were meaningless and worthless. Those who have done so have illustrated the greatest spirit of disrespect toward Jehovah God (see Numb. 15:31; Deut. 31:19ff; Mal. 1:6). Those who despise the word of Jehovah have the spirit of a false teacher (II Pet. 2:10).

   c. Murder is a gross error on the part of an individual that illustrates the basest of characters. To murder another man or woman shows not only disdain for life but also for God's laws (see Numb. 35:16; Rom. 1:29; I Jn. 3:15; Rev. 22:15)

   d. Lastly, David was an adulterer. A sin punishable by death (Lev. 20:10). Those who commit adultery with another man's wife illustrate a spirit void of understanding (Prov. 6:32). Jeremiah said that such an act was "horrible" (Jer. 23:14). Adultery, as the sin of murder, is always in a list of crimes against God and humanity that are the vilest of nature (see Hos. 4:2; Rom. 13:9).

C. "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun" (12:10-12).

1. David's gross error was compounded by the fact that he seemed to forget that Jehovah God is omniscient (all knowing). There is nothing that escapes His all seeing eyes (see Jer. 23:23-25).

2. The consequences of David's sin would be great. The Lord would bring the sword of battle always to David's house. David would find trouble from the least expected area; i.e., the home. Lastly, Jehovah tells David that seeing he had done this thing in secret He would take the king's wives from him and they shall be sexually abused by men in the broad daylight for all of Israel to see. Israel would know that the God of heaven does not tolerate such sinfulness even with the king (see study # 42). The curses of Jehovah upon the house of David would latter be fulfilled:
a. The death of Amnon by Absalom (II Sam. 13:29).

b. Absalom would be killed (II Sam. 18:14).

c. Adonijah was executed (I Kg. 2:24-25).

D. "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die" (12:13-14).

1. David's past life has been marked with a spirit of humility (see II Sam. 7:18ff). David, now being fully exposed by the prophet of God, confesses saying, "I have sinned against Jehovah." Such an humble admission of error has ever been Jehovah's requirement for his people (see Acts 8:22; II Cor. 7:8-9; I Jn. 1:9) (see study # 6). Nathan tells David, "Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." Though the sins of murder and adultery carried with it the punishment of death the Lord shows mercy to the king due to his admission of error.

2. Though Jehovah spared David because of his humble admission of error He could not spare the child born in adultery. David had done a terrible thing with his sin. The king caused the name of Jehovah God to be "blasphemed" by the enemies. The surrounding nations would find out about the king's adultery and murder and conclude that Jehovah God was a Lord of such filth. The child must die to make a public statement that Jehovah does not condone the king's sinful actions. Truly no man or nation is above the laws of God (see study # 9 and # 42).

II. David and the child of adultery face the Lord's judgment of Death (12:15-)

A. "And Nathan departed unto his house. And Jehovah struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and stood beside him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that 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 spake unto him, and he hearkened not unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead! But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; and David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead" (12:15-19).

1. Jehovah smites the child born of David and Bathsheba in adultery with a sickness. Nathan had already told David that the child would die yet the king prays, fasts, and lays upon the earth in anguish over the child. God would not turn from His divine purpose of making an example to all Israel and the world regarding such sinful actions.

2. David's servants come to the king on the seventh day of the child's sickness and tell him that the child is dead.

B. "Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel; and he came into the house of Jehovah, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who knoweth whether Jehovah will not be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (12:20-23).
1. After the child of adultery dies David arose from the earth, washed himself, changed his clothes, and ate food. The king's servants were somewhat perplexed by the king's sudden change of behavior. They ask David about his doings.

2. David responds with a classic passage in the word of God by saying, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." The child now belonged to Jehovah in paradise. David knew that he did not have the power to bring one back from the dead. David's faith in an eternal afterlife is depicted in this statement (see study # 34).

C. "And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon. And Jehovah loved him; and he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, for Jehovah's sake" (12:24-25).

1. It is somewhat amazing to the human mind that God would not only forgive David for his gross error but that he would once again bless the king with a child and actually love the child (see study # 43; God's Mercy).

2. David has another son through Bathsheba whose name is Solomon. The Lord loved this new son of David's.

D. "Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah; yea, I have taken the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. And 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 off his head; and the weight thereof was a talent of gold, and in it were precious stones; and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city, exceeding much. And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem" (12:26-31).

1. Joab sends word to David that the capital city of Ammon is about to be defeated. He gives David the chance to take the honor for the victory. David gathers his men, travels to Ammon, and defeats the capital city.

2. Many men are captured and executed in cruel fashion by David and his men (vs. 31). It is most probable that David did this due to the cruel nature of the Ammonites (cf. Amos 1:13 and I Sam. 11:2). “The war with the Syrians and Ammonites, including as it did the Edomitish war as well, was the fiercest in which David was ever engaged, and was also the last great war of his life.”

Chapter 13

I. Amnon defiles Tamar / Absalom has Amnon killed {Nathan's Prophecy begins / see II Sam. 12:10-12} (13 all):

A. "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. And Amnon was so vexed that he fell sick because of his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything unto her. But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very subtle man. And he said unto him, Why, O son of the king, art thou thus lean from day to day?"
Wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and feign thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, Let my sister Tamar come, I pray thee, and give me bread to eat, and dress the food in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it from her hand" (13:1-5).

1. I Chronicles chapter 3 records the multitudes of sons that David fathered through many wives and concubines. A few of these sons and daughter are mentioned here. Namely, Absalom and Tamar the fair virgin daughter of David. Another son, Amnon, is mentioned due to his love for Tamar (his half sister). The ills of multitudes of wives and children are now depicted.

2. Amnon was fearful to take his half sister; however, his friend and cousin Jonadab had a plan to break the ice for Amnon. Jonadab suggested that Amnon fake a sickness so that his sister would come and minister to him.

B. "So Amnon lay down, and feigned himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, Let her sister Tamar come, I pray thee, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand. Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him food. So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took dough, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. And she took the pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from thy hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. And when she had brought them near unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come, lie with me, my sister. And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. And I, whither shall I carry my shame? and as for thee, thou wilt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee" (13:6-13).

1. Amnon is not interested in a wedding and love that would accompany the life of a man and woman. He burns in lust for his virgin sister as his father did for Bathsheba.

2. Tamar's wisdom far exceeds the foolishness of Amnon. Tamar refers to Amnon's desires of fornication as something that "ought not to be done in Israel... shameful... and foolish." Tamar pleads with her brother to speak to the king about her and surely David would give her to him; however, Amnon's lust got the better of him.

C. "Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but being stronger than she, he forced her, and lay with her. Then Amnon hated her with exceeding great hatred; for the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. And she said unto him, Not so, because this great wrong in putting me forth is worse than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her" (13:14-17).

1. Amnon forces himself upon his virgin sister and rapes her. After his lust was satisfied he then hated Tamar, the very object of his previous love. Tamar represented someone that was off limits to the king's son yet being the son of royalty may have caused him to believe he was above the laws of man and God. He wanted Tamar so he took her, much like David his father had done with
Bathsheba. It appears that David's influence with his sons was shot and his deeds of lust gave way to more deeds of lust.

2. Amnon, with a spirit of bitter hatred for Tamar, tells her to get lost. She pleads with him to now let her stay seeing that he had defiled her yet he forced her out and locked the doors to keep her out.

D. "And she had a garment of divers colors upon her; for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her. And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colors that was on her; and she laid her hand on her head, and went her way, crying aloud as she went. And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? But now hold thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; take not this thing to heart. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house" (13:18-20).

1. Tamar leaves Amnon's house crying aloud as she mourned the wicked event that just happened. Her whole life would now change. Instead of being a beautiful virgin bride for some loving man she was now defiled and not many men would want her.

2. Absalom sees his sister crying and seems to know immediately that Amnon is behind this. Absalom comforts his sister and permits her to stay at his home.

E. "But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. And Absalom spake unto Amnon neither good nor bad; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons. And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers; let the king, I pray thee, and his servants go with thy servant. And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee? But Absalom pressed him, and he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. And Absalom commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine; and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon, then kill him; fear not; have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant" (13:21-28).

1. Two years past and not a word is said about any punishment of Amnon for his wicked deed. The only thing that is said of David is that he was "wroth" at the event. David should have followed the law of Moses which enjoined death upon the soul that lays with a sister, mother, or close kin of such (see Lev. 20:17ff).

2. Two years would pass from the horrid event and Absalom had not forgotten it. Absalom decides to invite his family to a sheep shearing. David declines yet Amnon comes. When Absalom sees his brother Amnon he commands his servants to slay him. Amnon was dead.

F. "And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled. And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that the tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left. Then the king arose, and rent his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent. And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead, for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. Now therefore let not my lord the king
take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead; for Amnon only is dead" (13:29-33).

1. When David's sons saw that Absalom commanded that Amnon be killed they hastened upon their mules and fled. It may have been that they feared for their own lives as they witnessed their brother being slaughtered.

2. A messenger comes to David telling the king that all of his sons had been slaughtered by Absalom; however, the truth was that "Amnon only is dead."

G. "But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill-side behind him. And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons are come: as thy servant said, so it is. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice, and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore. But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai the son of Ammihur, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years. And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead" (13:34-39).

1. David's remaining sons come to their father and together they wail and mourn over the loss of their son and brother in the flesh.

2. Meanwhile, Absalom had fled to Talmai and remained there for three years. David was now experiencing the heartaches within his family that Nathan prophesied about due to the king's sin with Bathsheba (II Sam. 12:10ff).

Chapter 14

I. Joab arranges Absalom's return home to Jerusalem (14 all):

A. "Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom. And Joab sent to Tekoa, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on mourning apparel, I pray thee, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that hath a long time mourned for the dead: and go in to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab put the words in her mouth. And when the woman of Tekoa spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, Help, O king. And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, Of a truth I am a widow, and my husband is dead. And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and killed him. And, behold, the whole family is risen against thy handmaid, and they say, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he slew, and so destroy the heir also. Thus will they quench my coal which is left, and will leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the face of the earth. And the king said unto the woman, Go to thy house, and I will give charge concerning thee. And the woman of Tekoa said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house; and the king and his throne be guiltless. And the king said, Whosoever saith aught unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more. Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember Jehovah thy God, that the avenger of blood destroy not any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, As Jehovah liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth" (14:1-11).

1. Joab takes note of David longing to see his son Absalom even though Absalom had killed his brother Amnon.
2. Joab hires a woman of Tekoa (the home of the later prophet Amos) to come to the king with a fabricated problem. Joab tells the woman to come to David and tell him that she had two sons who fought and one killed the other. Her family is now demanding that she give up her only son so that they may put him to death for murdering his brother. The woman's problem is that this is her only son left and if she permit them to kill him she will have none for she is a widow.

3. David tells the woman not to worry because he would not permit anyone to take her only son's life.

B. "Then the woman said, Let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak a word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on. And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou devised such a thing against the people of God? For in speaking this word the king is as one that is guilty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished one. For we must needs die, and are as water split on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God take away life, but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from him. Now therefore seeing that I am come to speak this word unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. For the king will hear, to deliver his servant out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God. Then thy handmaid said, Let, I pray thee, the word of my lord the king be comfortable; for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad: and Jehovah thy God be with thee" (14:12-17).

1. The woman now applies the parable to the king and his beloved son Absalom. The king's son is banished while some demanded that his life be taken. Shall the king take his beloved son's life?

2. The woman claims to be putting this parable before the king out of a fear of the people of the land.

C. "Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, aught that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak. And the king said, Is the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from aught that my lord the king hath spoken; for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thy handmaid; to change the face of the matter hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth. And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom back. And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and did obeisance, and blessed the king; and Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found favor in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath performed the request of his servant" (14:18-22).

1. Joab continues to seem eager to completely please David. He knew that the king longed for Absalom so he did this trickery to get the king to bring his son back home.

2. David agrees to Joab's plan and Joab blesses the king.

D. "So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, but let him not see my face. So Absalom turned to his own house, and saw not the king's face. Now in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he cut the hair of his head (now it was at every year's end that he cut it; because it was heavy on him, therefore he cut it); he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels,
after the king's weight. And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one
daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance. And
Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem; and he saw not the king's face"
(14:23-28).

1. Absalom agrees to come back to Jerusalem with Joab; however, David would not
see his sons face.

2. The Holy Spirit reveals the physical beauty of Absalom who apparently had very
vibrant growing hair.

E. "Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king; but he would not come
to him: and he sent again a second time, but he would not come. Therefore he said unto his
servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on
fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, and came to
Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field
on fire? And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither,
that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? It were
better for me to be there still. Now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there
be iniquity in me, let him kill me. So Joab came to the king, and told him; and when
he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the
ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom" (14:29-33).

1. Absalom was determined to see the king (his father David). It had been a total of
five years since he had his brother Amnon murdered (see II Sam. 13:38
compared to II Sam. 14:28).

2. Absalom burns Joab's fields so as to get the attention of the commander of
David's army.

3. Absalom tells Joab that he is willing to die if he has done something worthy of
death. Joab arranges the meeting between David and Absalom and the two greet
each other with a kiss.

Chapter 15

I. Absalom Conspires to take the kingdom of Israel away from David (15 all):

A. "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him a chariot and horses, and
fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of
the gate: and it was so, that, when any man had a suit which should come to the king
for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said. Of what city art thou? And he
said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See,
thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.
Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man who
hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was
so, that, when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and
took hold of him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that
came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel"
(15:1-6).

1. The difficulties that existed between David and Absalom are unrecorded. David
refused to see Absalom's face for five years. David was obviously angered at his
son for killing his other son Amnon. Absalom may have very well been angry
with his father because no punishment was placed upon Amnon for raping his
own sister. More of Nathan's prophecy regarding David's house experiencing
heartaches would be fulfilled (see II Sam. 12:10-12).
2. Absalom, due to his dissatisfaction with his father David, began to "steal the hearts of the men of Israel." When people came to Jerusalem to gain council of the king Absalom would greet them and persuade them to listen to him rather than to the king. Verse four of the English Standard Version (ESV) reads, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you." People began to listen to Absalom because he intercepted them and told them things that gained their trust.

B. "And it came to pass at the end of forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto Jehovah, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If Jehovah shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Jehovah. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron. And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were invited, and went in their simplicity; and they knew not anything" (15:7-11).

1. Absalom was on an obvious quest to take the kingdom away from his father David. David had now reigned in Israel for forty years and was an older man. Absalom fabricates a story about having to go to Geshur and fulfill a vow to worship Jehovah yet his true objective was to overtake the kingdom from his father. David's respect for Jehovah's anointed when dealing with Saul was obviously not an inherited character trait.

2. Absalom sent spies throughout all of Israel to tell the people to pronounce him as the new king of Israel.

C. "And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom. And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for else none of us shall escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, 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 unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall choose" (15:12-15).

1. The Holy Spirit records, "the conspiracy was strong" against David. Absalom had gained the faith and favor of Israel. David was on the outs likely due to his terrible dealings with his soldiers in the case of Uriah, his infidelity, and his unwillingness to punish Amnon after he raped his sister. Many of Israel's citizens were obviously ready for a change though God had authorized no change.

2. Absalom's aggressive move made David nervous. The king orders that all of his close associates flee from the city to escape the sword of Absalom.

D. "And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, that were concubines, to keep the house. And the king went forth, and all the people after him; and they tarried in Beth-merhak. And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men that came after him from Gath, passed on before the king. Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? Return, and abide with the king: for thou art a foreigner, and also an exile; return to thine own place. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us, seeing I go whither I may? Return thou, and take back thy brethren; mercy and truth be with thee. And Ittai answered the king, and said, As Jehovah liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for
death or for life, even there also will thy servant be. And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him" (15:16-22).

1. David makes haste and clears his house.
2. David tries to get the Gittites to turn away from following them; however, they were dedicated to the king.

E. "And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness. And, lo, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God; and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favor in the eyes of Jehovah, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation: but if he say thus, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" (15:23-26).

1. While many had sided with Absalom and accepted him as the reigning king of Israel others "wept with a loud voice." There is nothing like turmoil in a country to cause people to mourn and weep. People's homes were left and their settled way of life put on hold.
2. The Ark of the Covenant of God was also brought with the priest; however, David told them to bring it back to the city. David's total dependency upon Jehovah's will is depicted in his statement that was made at this most difficult time for the nation. He said, "Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." David, for the first time, seems unsure as to his standing with Jehovah. He was humbled by God with these inner family disputes and knew that his sin was the cause of all the current problems (see study # 25).
3. David did not panic or grow bitter against Absalom. The king simply put his trust in Jehovah. If it was God's will that they come back to Jerusalem and regain the kingdom so be it. If not, David was not bothered by that either. God's will was all that mattered to the king.

F. "The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art thou not a seer? Return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry at the fords of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they abode there" (15:27-29).

1. David instructs Zadok and his sons to return with the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem so that they may send word to the king regarding the status of events.
2. Zadok agrees and returns to Jerusalem.

G. "And David went up by the ascent of the mount of Olives, and wept as he went up: and he had his head covered, and went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Jehovah, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness" (15:30-31).

1. Leaving Jerusalem by way of the mount of Olives the king, and all those with him, "wept, covered their heads, and the king was even barefoot." Covering the head was a sign of one experiencing great grief in life. The king went a step further by walking barefooted which was an obvious sign of humiliation and sorrow.
2. Ahithophel was David's close counselor (advisor) (see II Sam. 15:12). When David heard that his counselor had defected he prayed to God that his counsel provided to Absalom would be turned to foolishness.

H. "And it came to pass, that, when David was come to the top of the ascent, where God was worshipped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head. And David said unto him, If thou passest on with me, then thou wilt be a burden unto me: but if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant in time past, so will I now be thy servant; then wilt thou defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? Therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me everything that ye shall hear. So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city; and Absalom came into Jerusalem" (15:32-37).

1. Hushai was David's friend and would be a burden to the king likely due to his age. To meet treachery with treachery he sends Hushai back into the city of Jerusalem to be a close aid of Absalom's and David's spy.

2. Hushai's objective was to listen to all the plans of Absalom and tell them to Zadok's sons and they would in turn tell David all the on goings within Jerusalem.

Chapter 16

I. Mephibosheth's Defection / David is cursed and Stoned (16 all):

A. "And when David was a little past the top of the ascent, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and a hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses are for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as are faint in the wilderness may drink. And the king said, And where is thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem; for he said, To-day will the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine is all that pertaineth unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I do obeisance; let me find favor in thy sight, my lord, O king" (16:1-4).

1. Israel is in a state of great distress due to Absalom's attempt to take over the kingdom of Israel from David his father and Jehovah God. Loyalty to the king is being exposed.

2. Mephibosheth, Jonathan's remaining son that was lame in the feet, had been greatly cared for by David. The king had restored all the lands that were owned by Saul unto Mephibosheth. Obviously he was a very wealthy man with servants; i.e., Ziba whom David had earlier appointed to serve him.

3. Ziba has a different disposition regarding David's place as king of Israel than that of his master Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth looks at David's exit from Jerusalem as an opportunity to take the kingdom back for Saul. Obviously Saul's sons and their sons continued to have an erroneous approach to the throne of Israel (see I Samuel 20:30-31). Ziba, on the other hand, proclaims his allegiance to David and proves his loyalty by bringing him donkeys, food, and wine. David rewards Ziba by telling him that all Mephibosheth's lands would now belong to him.
B. "And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out thence a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out, and cursed still as he came. And he cast 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 thus said Shimei when he cursed, Begone, begone, thou man of blood, and base fellow: Jehovah hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and Jehovah hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son; and, behold, thou art taken in thine own mischief, because thou art a man of blood. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Because he curseth, and because Jehovah hath said unto him, Curse David; who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, who came forth from my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more may this Benjamite now do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for Jehovah hath bidden him. It may be that Jehovah will look on the wrong done unto me, and that Jehovah will requite me good for his cursing of me this day. So David and his men went by the way; and Shimei went along on the hill-side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust" (16:5-13).

1. David, for the first time, seems unsure if God is with him during this ordeal against Absalom (see II Sam. 15:25-26) (see study # 25).

2. Once again, David indicates that he is not in the know regarding Jehovah's favor. Shimei, a Benjaminite of the house of Saul, came out to meet the king and he cursed at the king and threw stones at him. Shimei tells David that he is getting what he deserves for being a base man who is responsible for all the blood shed from the house of Saul. We know that Saul brought all his sorrows upon himself and clearly David is where he is at due to his errors. Sins, though forgiven, have consequences (See study # 44; The Consequences of Sin).

3. David was obviously very down on himself at this point of his life. He could easily look back at his sins with Bathsheba and Nathan's prophecy of his future demise and conclude that he was getting his just reward. David was pursued by this Benjaminite all the way to the Jordan and it is there that David had had enough and gives a death sentence upon Shimei (see I Kings 2:8-9).

C. "And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary; and he refreshed himself there. And Absalom, and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, Long live the king, Long live the king. And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Why wentest thou not with thy friend? And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom Jehovah, and this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his will I be, and with him will I abide. And again, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence. Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give your counsel what we shall do. And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, that he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then will the hands of all that are with thee be strong. So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if a man inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom" (16:14-23).
1. David’s good friend Hushai succeeds in deceiving Absalom. Absalom asks Hushai for reasons of staying in Jerusalem instead of escaping with his good friend David. Hushai replies that he will serve whom ever God’s people and God accept as King. Absalom accepts this answer.

2. Absalom then turns to Ahithophel, a man who was previously David’s counselor, and says, “what shall I now do.” Ahithophel tells Absalom to take David’s ten concubines and have sex with them in the site of all Israel. “This advice was sagacious enough. Lying with the king’s concubines was an appropriation of the royal harem, and, as such, a complete usurpation of the throne, which would render any reconciliation between Absalom and his father utterly impossible, and therefore would of necessity instigate the followers of Absalom to maintain his cause with all the greater firmness.”

3. Nathan had predicted that though David had sinned secretly, by committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing Uriah, Jehovah would expose David’s shame in the eyes of all openly. One of David’s neighbors would lay with his wives in the wide open sun and so it has come to pass at the hands of his own son (see II Sam. 12:11-12).

There are Four Great Lessons:

First, there are always consequences to one's sins. God has ordained that "the way of the transgressor is hard" (Prov. 13:15) and "Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward" (Prov. 22:5). David, nor any other man, can possibly expect that all will be smooth and well in life after committing gross sins against Jehovah and one's fellow man. While we may receive forgiveness we cannot erase what we did (see II Sam. 12:13). Manuel Ruiz cannot erase his grave error that landed him in jail no matter how many tears he sheds for his wrong doing. David's adultery amounted to being ungrateful for God's blessings, despising the word of Jehovah, murder, and then taking Bathsheba to be his wife (see II Sam. 12:7-10). The king would not get away with such gross error.

Secondly, the Lord God Almighty was showing the world that He will not tolerate sin in the lives of any man. Recall that Nathan revealed to David the widespread consequences of his error at II Samuel 12:14. Jehovah responds to David by "raising up evil against him out of his own house" (II Sam. 12:11) and killing the child born of adultery (II Sam. 12:14). David was to feel the sting and shame of his sin.

Thirdly, Shimei is permitted to curse and throw rocks at David for the supposed sin of being guilty of the blood of Saul. The real issue; however, was David's sin against Jehovah and Uriah the Hittite by taking Bathsheba in adultery. Sometimes people get confused as to why someone is suffering in this life. Sometimes people think that some contract various diseases or financial woe because God is cursing them for some wrong they have done. Sometimes people do suffer because of wrongs done; i.e., a homosexual will likely contract aids due to his error (there are consequences to sinful decisions). Other times; however, people suffer even though they did no wrong. Solomon wrote, “The wise man’s eyes are in his head, and the fool walks in darkness: and yet I perceived that one event happens to them all” (Eccl. 2:14; see also Eccl. 8:12-13; 9:1ff see also Job 21:7-14). Job stated that man is being tested and refined by God during these days of affliction that they may come forth as gold (see Job 23:10). The New Testament confirms Job’s observations as truth for today. Those who choose to permit suffering to refine (I Pet. 1:6-8) and strengthen (James 1:1ff) them will never be disappointed. Rather than asking, “Why do I suffer,”

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11 Ibid. pg. 654
we ought to look forward to a time when the anguish of this life will end. Heaven ought to be cherished and longed for by every right thinking man and woman because the groaning of this life that comes to all (see Rom. 8:22-23) shall end for the faithful (see Rev. 21:1-7).

Fourthly, we learn that we cannot give up because we have committed a gross error against the Lord. David was a man who at one time fought the Lord's battles and had a great relationship with God. David was on top of the word one moment and down in the dregs of life the next (fleeing for his life, crying along the way, and being cursed and having rocks thrown at him). David was sowing what he had reaped. The only thing David could do is keep pushing forward and accepting what ever the Lord threw his way.

Chapter 17

I. Absalom chooses Hushai’s council over Ahithophel's and David Flees eastward of the Jordan River (17:1-10):  
   A. "Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid; and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only; and I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace. And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel" (17:1-4).
   1. Recall that Ahithophel was David's personal counselor (II Sam. 15:12). Once David found out that Ahithophel had defected to Absalom he prayed that his counsel would be turned to foolishness (II Sam. 15:31).
   2. Ahithophel makes a suggestion to Absalom. The counselor suggest that he be permitted to take 12,000 men after David so that they might kill the king of Israel. One would think that your son would never be a part of such a dastardly plan; however, divine revelation states that as Absalom heard these words it "pleased him well, and all the elders of Israel." Truly the hearts of the people of God had been turned against David.

   B. "Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith. And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his saying? If not, speak thou. And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given this time is not good. Hushai said moreover, Thou knowest thy father and his men, that they are mighty men, and they are chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field; and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people. Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place: and it will come to pass, when some of them are fallen at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom. And even he that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, will utterly melt; for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they that are with him are valiant men" (17:5-10).
   1. Absalom, desiring to get a second opinion about Ahithophel's council, calls upon Hushai (David's spy).
   2. Hushai disagrees with Ahithophel's plan. Hushai reminds Absalom of David's person. Hushai states, "Thy father is a man of war... all Israel knows that thy father is a might man..." David was no man to be toyed with or taken lightly.
David had been a warrior who lacked no fear and so made his valor first manifest at the slaying of Goliath (see study # 25).

3. Hushai suggest that Absalom take men against David as the sand upon the sea shore for number rather than only 12,000.

C. "But I counsel that all Israel be gathered together unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person. So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground; and of him and of all the men that are with him we will not leave so much as one. Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there. And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For Jehovah had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Jehovah might bring evil upon Absalom" (17:11-14).

1. Hushai's council sounded better to Absalom and so he purposed to bring all of Israel against David as the sand of the sea for number.

2. Interestingly, the council of Ahithophel was obviously better; however, by the providence of God Absalom chose Hushai's. All of Israel was to learn that David was Jehovah's anointed king and that the rebellion of Absalom and all Israel was sinful.

D. "Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled. Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him. Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying by En-rogel; and a maid-servant used to go and tell them; and they went and told king David: for they might not be seen to come into the city. But a lad saw them, and told Absalom: and they went both of them away quickly, and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down thither. And the woman took and spread the covering over the well's mouth, and strewed bruised grain thereon; and nothing was known. And Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house; and they said, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, They are gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David; and they said unto David, Arise ye, and pass quickly over the water; for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you. Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over the Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over the Jordan" (17:15-23).

1. Hushai sends word to David that Absalom would be coming with all Israel up against him. He advises the king to travel further east across the Jordan for safety.

2. Hushai's messengers, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, were spotted by Absalom's men yet they were hid and were safe.

E. "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and got him home, unto his city, and set his house in order, and hanged himself; and he died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father. Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. And Absalom set Amasa over the host instead of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man, whose name was Ithra the Israelite, that went in to Abigail the
daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother. And Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead" (17:24-26).

1. David's ex-counselor decided to kill himself once he found out that his counsel was not to be followed by Absalom. It may be that he knew that any other plan would not work and that David would surely be victorious and have him killed. Hushai's plan was the death penalty for Ahithophel.

2. Meanwhile, Absalom passes over the Jordan with all Israel as they pursue his father. David was no stranger to fleeing from an enemy. Saul sought to kill him earlier in his life.

F. "And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and meal, and parched grain, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of the herd, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people are hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness" (17:27-29).

1. Mahanaim, one of the Levitical cities, is located about 15 miles east of the Jordan river right on the Jabbok River.

2. David and all those with him are strengthened with the food so graciously brought by people of various areas that sided with him.

Chapter 18

I. War against Absalom and Israel (18 all):

A. "And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth the people, a third part under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also. But the people said, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us: neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but thou art worth ten thousand of us; therefore now it is better that thou be ready to succor us out of the city. And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate-side, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands" (18:1-4).

1. David prepares his people for war by setting captains of thousands and hundreds.

2. The king is determined to go to war with his men; however, they would not permit it. The people said, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us..." These words illustrate their loyalty, love, and understanding that David was Jehovah's anointed (see study # 25).

B. "And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim. And the people of Israel were smitten there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men. For the battle was there spread over the face of all the country; and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured" (18:5-8).

1. David sends his three captains out to war against Israel and commands them to deal gently with Absalom in the hearing of all men.

2. David's men go to war and soundly defeat Israel killing 20,000 men (the forest actually consumed more men than the sword).
C. "And Absalom chanced to meet the servants of David. And Absalom was riding upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between heaven and earth: and the mule that was under him went on. And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak. And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou savest it, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? And I would have given thee ten pieces of silver, and a girdle. And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise if I had dealt falsely against his life (and there is no matter hid from the king), then thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me" (18:9-13).

1. We now see how the forest devoured many men of Israel. As Absalom is trying to escape from David's men he is caught in an oak tree by the hair and is left hanging.
2. A man sees Absalom and tells Joab. Joab wanders out loud why the man did not kill Absalom. The man replies that it was David's command not to harm Absalom.

D. "Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten young men that bare Joab's armor compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel; for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom, and cast him into the great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones: and all Israel fled every one to his tent" (18:14-17).

1. Joab did not show the discretion of the man who recalled David's charge. David's captain blatantly disobeys the kings orders and thrust the king's son through with three darts (see study # 45; Joab). Joab's men then finish Absalom off and throw his body into a pit and covered him with a great heap of stones.
2. Joab, after Absalom's death, blows the trumpet and all Israel fled to their tents in fear because David's men had routed them.

E. "Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself the pillar, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called Absalom's monument, unto this day. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that Jehovah hath avenged him of his enemies. And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not be the bearer of tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead. Then said Joab to the Cushite, Go, tell the king what thou hast seen. And the Cushite bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But come what may, let me, I pray thee, also run after the Cushite. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou wilt have no reward for the tidings? But come what may, said he, I will run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and outran the Cushite" (18:18-23).

1. Due to Absalom's death the writer of II Samuel informs the readers that the king's son had no children of his own to have his name remembered. Absalom thereby had a pillar erected in the king's dale so that he would be remembered.
2. Joab would not permit Ahimaaz, Zadok the priest's son, to bring news of the battle to David. Joab, instead, chose a Cushite to run the news to the king. Ahimaaz; however, pleaded with Joab and so he was permitted to go. Ahimaaz's
running skills exceeded the skill of the Cushite and he beat the messenger to David.

F. "Now David was sitting between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. And the watchman said, I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings" (18:24-27).

1. As the battle raged David appointed watchmen to sit upon the wall and watch for messengers.
2. The watchman sees, in the distant, a runner coming (a messenger). He tells the king of a lone runner. Then the watchman sees another runner coming in the distant. The front runner had the gate of Ahimaaz (apparently the watchman had seen Ahimaaz run before). David knows the goodness of Ahimaaz and supposes that the priest's son has good news regarding the war.

G. "And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth, and said, Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, even me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. And the king said, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still. And, behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, Tidings for my lord the king; for Jehovah hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. And the king said unto the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (18:28-33).

1. Ahimaaz gives the king the good news; i.e., Israel had been defeated. Ahimaaz; for an unrecorded reason, did not tell David about the fate of Absalom. Ahimaaz was very aware of the fate of Absalom; however, he did not reveal it to the king. Ahimaaz allows the Chushite to give the bad news to the king.
2. David is devastated at the news of Absalom's death. David wept and said that he would had died for his son if he could have.
3. The awful sting of David's sin against Jehovah by committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering Uriah the Hittite continues to haunt him (see II Sam. 12:10-12) (see study # 25).

Lessons Learned from Chapters 17-18

- Jehovah providentially saw to it that all Israel would know that David was His anointed King and that their rebellion was sinful (see II Sam. 17:11, 14). The best way for this to happen was that Ahithophel's council was rejected by Absalom and Hushai's accepted. Hushai had counseled Absalom by saying take all Israel against David as the sand upon the sea shore for number. When such a great multitude was defeated they would know that God's divine will was being met. They were wrong to try to take the kingdom by force away from David and Jehovah God. Defeat and failure is due the man who would do things according to his own
will rather than by the will of Jehovah God. Solomon wrote, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12).

- Secondly, David continues to experience the awful sting that comes with sin (see II Sam. 12:10-12). All those who make sinful choices in this life shall suffer the consequences. It is God's will so that man would be fearful and ashamed to do such things again. The more we study God's word the greater wisdom we obtain. God's people should remain free of sin not only because it will cause you to lose your soul but also because it is a life of trouble.

Chapter 19

I. Joab Chides David for Mourning the death of Absalom (19:1-7):

A. "And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people; for the people heard say that day, The king grieveth for his son. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people that are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle" (19:1-3).

1. The sorrow of heart experienced by Israel was caused by David's mourning the death of his son Absalom. A victory over enemies ought to have been cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving to Jehovah; however, due to the circumstances they mourned.

2. As confusion and mourning ruled the minds of Israel the defectors secretly crept back into their cities. These men suppose to pick up life as it had been. They had been defeated in battle yet remained Israelites. Once again, they would be subject to David.

B. "And the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son! And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, who this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; in that thou lovest them that hate thee, and hatest them that love thee. For thou hast declared this day, that princes and servants are nought unto thee: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants; for I swear by Jehovah, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry a man with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that hath befallen thee from thy youth until now" (19:4-7).

1. This is not the first time Joab chided David over a sensitive subject (see II Sam. 3:24). One cannot help but notice the bold manner in which Joab speaks to David. Joab always has David's best interest in mind as he goes about his business (see study # 45).

2. David was wailing "with a loud voice." Surely all knew of David's sorrow over the loss of his son. Though David had lost a son he was nonetheless showing a lack of love and concern for all others by crying so loudly over the death of Absalom. Such an act illustrated a lack of concern for those who protected the king from Absalom. Would David had rather the men who fought for him had died? Joab warns David that with his actions he will find greater trouble than he has ever experienced if he doesn't stop all this crying.

3. We are reminded of another father that was commanded not to mourn at the death of his sons. When Nadab and Abihu brought strange fire before Jehovah the Lord killed them both. Aaron was commanded not to mourn over their deaths because they had done what was wrong. Likewise, David's mourning the
death of Absalom showed that he sided with those in error rather than the righteous. Absalom's rebellion was an act against the sovereign will of Jehovah God. We cannot mourn over a loss of such a one (see study #46; Never Mourn the Wicked).

II. **David back upon the Throne of Israel (7:8-43):**

A. "Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king is sitting in the gate: and all the people came before the king. Now Israel had fled every man to his tent. And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king delivered us out of the hand of our enemies, and he saved us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land from Absalom. And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back? And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, to bring him to his house. Ye are my brethren, ye are my bone and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?" (7:8-12).

1. There was mass confusion in all Israel. David was a warrior for Jehovah in times past; however, at the movement of Absalom he fled. David left the people in a precarious situation. Should they flee with the king or remain with the challenger?

2. Apparently all of Israel was prepared to accept David back as the King; however, the elders were not so sure it was the right thing to do seeing that he fled from the dangers of a rebellion. David sends word to these elders asking why it is that they are slow to receive him back while everyone else has accepted him.

B. "And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent unto the king, saying, Return thou, and all thy servants. So the king returned, and came to the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to bring the king over the Jordan" (19:13-15).

1. David appeals to the people's physical relationship to him. David also appeals to Amasa as one who would take the place of Joab as the captain of the host of Israel. David's anger against his old friend Joab is expressed by stripping him of his duties as the captain of the host of Israel (see study #45).

2. All of Israel accepts the letter that David wrote and receives the king back to Jerusalem.

C. "And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, who was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went through the Jordan in the presence of the king. And there went over a ferry-boat to bring over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, when he was come over the Jordan. And he said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come this day the first of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king" (19:16-20).

1. Shimei had cursed David and threw rocks at him (see II Sam. 16:5ff). One would surely think that such vile acts against Jehovah's anointed would be worthy of death.

48
2. Shimei now shows a complete change in character. Earlier he had cursed the king and threw rocks at him yet now he bows down in humble submission admitting his error saying, "I have sinned" as he begs the king's forgiveness (see study # 13 and 47; Humble Repentance).

D. "But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed Jehovah's anointed? And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? For do not I know that I am this day king over Israel? And the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him" (19:21-23).

1. Abishai demanded the death of Shimei because the Benjaminithe had cursed and threw rocks at Jehovah's anointed.

2. David; however, looked upon the humble admission of error and forgave the man.

E. "And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came home in peace. And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go with the king; because thy servant is lame. And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet that I should cry any more unto the king? And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I say, Thou and Ziba divide the land. And Mephibosheth said unto the king, yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come in peace unto his own house" (19:24-30).

1. We now find that Ziba's original words to David were not all true. Mephibosheth actually ordered Ziba to load the animals with food and they would all go to David; however, once the animals were loaded Ziba took off before Mephibosheth had the chance to go with him. Mephibosheth was so upset that the king left that he neither shaved or bathed while the king was gone. Such sympathy for David caused him ill treatment from Absalom's followers.

2. David was thereby in somewhat of a difficult situation. Ziba had indeed helped; however, Mephibosheth's loyalty to David had never wavered. Though David had promised Ziba all of Mephibosheth's land he now decides to half it between the two.

F. "And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim; and he went over the Jordan with the king, to conduct him over the Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king with sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man. And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou with me, and I will sustain thee with me in Jerusalem. And Barzillai said unto the king, How many are the days of the years of my life, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old: can I discern between good and bad? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant would but just go over the Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, by the grave of my father and my mother. But behold, thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee."
And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee” (19:31-38).

1. The eighty year old Barzillai had also gone over the Jordan to welcome David back to Israel. Barzillai had earlier provided much food for David and his followers. David desires to honor Barzillai in Jerusalem by taking care of him; however, the aged man declines and request that he be able to go back to his city and be buried next to his father and mother.

2. David agrees and honors Chimham, Barzillai's son, in his place.

G. "And all the people went over the Jordan, and the king went over: and the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place. So the king went over to Gilgal, and Chimham went over with him: and all the people of Judah brought the king over, and also half the people of Israel. And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and brought the king, and his household, over the Jordan, and all David's men with him? And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is near of kin to us: wherefore then are ye angry for this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's cost? Or hath he given us any gift? And the words of the men of Israel were fiercer than the words of the men of Judah; and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel" (19:39-43).

1. The ten tribes of Israel accuse Judah of acting in secret to bring the king back to Jerusalem. By the time Israel heard of Judah's purpose they were late in sending their representatives to bring back the king.

2. Judah argued that David was a part of their flesh and blood while Israel said that they actually had more part in David due to their being ten tribes. Israel's argument was from a national since while Judah's was from a family argument. Once again we find that before the kingdom was divided between Israel and Judah there was feuding (see II Sam. 2:8-10; 19:39-43; 20:1-2) (see study # 48; Israel and Judah Divided).

Chapter 20

I. Sheba's Rebellion is Squashed (20 all):

A. "And there happened to be there a base fellow, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew the trumpet, and said, We have no portion in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. So all the men of Israel went up from following David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from the Jordan even to Jerusalem" (20:1-2).

1. Once again David is feeling the sting of his sin and the reproach that God pronounced upon him through Nathan the prophet (see II Sam. 12:10).

2. Sheba will not accept David back as the king of Israel. All of Israel appears to side with him and so they began to follow Sheba rather than David. Those of Judah remained with David. Long before Solomon and the divided kingdom occurs there was friction between the two.

B. "And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and provided
them with sustenance, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood" (20:3).

1. It seems that both of these incidents are recorded together to illustrate the fulfillment of Nathan's divine prophecy against David seeing that he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, killed Uriah, and then married Bathsheba.

2. Israel had left off following David and the ten wives that the king had left behind had been sexually abused by Absalom (a reminder of God's judgment against the king).

C. "Then said the king to Amasa, Call me the men of Judah together within three days, and be thou here present. So Amasa went to call the men of Judah together; but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him. And David said to Abishai, Now will Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fortified cities, and escape out of our sight. And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men; and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri" (20:4-7).

1. The rebellion of Sheba caused David great concern. David calls for Amasa (his new commander over the military). Amasa is to gather all the men of Judah together for war.

2. Amasa does so; however, he does not return to David at the set time. David, in order to avert a great loss, sets Abishai over Joab's men and tells him to pursue Sheba.

3. David had lost all confidence and trust in Joab due to the commander's blatant disobedience in relation to killing the king's son.

D. "When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. And Joab was girded with his apparel of war that he had put on, and thereon was a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out. And Joab said to Amasa, Is it well with thee, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the body, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. And Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri" (20:8-10).

1. Joab is a strange fellow. He obviously hooked up with his brother Abishai and Joab's men somewhere between David commanding the men to pursue Sheba and Gibeon.

2. Joab is not ready to relinquish his post as military leader even though David had given it to Amasa. Joab thereby kills Amasa in the sight of all his men (see study # 45).

E. "And there stood by him one of Joab's young men, and said, He that favoreth Joab, and he that is for David, let him follow Joab. And Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he carried Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a garment over him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still. When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri" (20:11-13).

1. The call to follow Joab and David was made while Amasa laid in the road wallowing in his own blood (not dead yet). The men obviously felt uneasy making such a decision while their former appointed captain lay in the road still alive.
2. The man who posed the question to Joab and David's men noticed that they all stared at the dying Amasa so he drug him off the road and threw a coat over him. After Amasa's body was removed they all followed Joab to pursue after Sheba.

F. "And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Beth-maacah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah, and they cast up a mound against the city, and it stood against the rampart; and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down. Then cried a wise woman out of the city. Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee. And he came near unto her; and the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thy handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying. They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter. I am of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of Jehovah? And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. The matter is not so: but a man of the hill-country of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David; deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall. Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and threw it out to Joab. And he blew the trumpet, and they were dispersed from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king" (20:14-22).

1. (see study # 45) - Joab's loyalty to David was remarkable. Joab's relationship to David seem to be overly close. Joab had no problem calling out the king after he had wailed over the death of his son Absalom. Likewise, Joab has no problem killing Amasa, David's newly appointed commander of the military. Joab believed that the office of military commander belonged to him alone. He had been faithful to David and Jehovah's will. Joab thereby takes up the battle against Sheba saying that this man has "lifted up his hand against the king."

2. As Joab and his men faithful lay siege upon the city that held Sheba a wise woman comes out to meet Joab. Joab tells her that he is only interested in Sheba. The woman replies by speaking to the men of the city so that they would capture Sheba, cut off his head, and throw it to Joab. Once this was done Joab and his men leave the city and return to Jerusalem. Joab will have some explaining to do to David.

G. "Now Joab was over all the host of Israel; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites; and Adoram was over the men subject to taskwork; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder; and Sheva was scribe; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests; and also Ira the Jairite was chief minister unto David" (20:23-26).

1. The chapter ends with Joab remaining the commander over all the host of Israel. It was his position and not even David seemed to be able to take it away from him. Joab's loyalty to David, Jehovah's anointed King, may have proved to strong for even David to take away. David may very well had recognized this and simply embraced Joab with all his flaws. Joab and David were two of a kind; i.e., men of war (see study # 45).

2. The various offices within David's kingdom are enumerated.

Chapter 21
I. The Gibeonites are Vindicated for Saul's Despotic Treatment (21:1-14):

A. "And there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year: and David sought the face of Jehovah. And Jehovah said, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites. And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah): and David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? And wherewith shall I make atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of Jehovah?" (21:1-3).

1. At some point during Saul's reign he zealously killed many peoples out of a zealous attempt to serve the Lord. Saul had thoroughly wiped out all the wizards and those who practiced magic (I Sam. 28:9) in accordance to the Law of God found at Exodus 22:18 and Leviticus 20:6. Saul had also attempted to exterminate all native people in Israel and Judah in accordance with Deuteronomy 7:2 and 20:16-18. Saul's zealous spirit went overboard when he, at some unrecorded time, murdered many Gibeonites whom Joshua and all Israel had made a covenant with (see Josh. 9:3-27). One is left to wander if Saul did these things to try to make up for his unlawful sacrifice recorded at 1 Samuel 13 and his disobedience in that he saved the animals and the king of the Amalekites at 1 Samuel 15.

2. Jehovah brings upon Israel a famine due to Saul breaking this covenant. The providential famine was intended to cause Israel to act on their wrong. David, as king of Israel, goes to the Gibeonites and asks what he can do for them seeing that Saul had illegally slaughtered many of them.

B. "And the Gibeonites said unto him, It is no matter of silver or gold between us and Saul, or his house; neither is it for us to put any man to death in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you. And they said unto the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the borders of Israel, let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto Jehovah in Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of Jehovah. And the king said, I will give them. But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of Jehovah's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she bare to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite: And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the mountain before Jehovah, and they fell all seven together. And they were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, at the beginning of barley harvest" (21:4-9).

1. The Gibeonites respond to David's offer by asking for the lives of seven of Saul's sons.

2. David complies with their request and delivered seven of Saul's sons to be hanged upon a tree until dead.

C. "And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water was poured upon them from heaven; and she suffered neither the birds of the heavens to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, in the day that the
Philistines slew Saul in Gilboa; and he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son: and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. And they buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was entreated for the land" (21:10-14).

1. Rizpah, one of the mothers of two sons of Saul that were hanged, mourned greatly over the loss of her sons. David heard about it and decided to take the bones of Saul, Jonathan, and the seven men that were hanged and bury them in the country of Benjamin in the sepulcher of Kish Saul's father.

2. After David had done these deeds "God was entreated for the land" i.e., the Lord heard prayers regarding the land (the inference was that before the above punishment He would not be entreated regarding the land) (see study # 33). There are two lessons here:
   a. First, such an event tells us that when things are not right God will providentially see to it that they are made right (i.e., a famine). Fellowship with Jehovah and His people was dependant upon their stand in His laws.
   b. Secondly, the world was to know that Jehovah God did not approve of Saul's actions. Saul, as king of Israel, was a representative of what Jehovah was all about. The king's actions were sinful. The Lord thereby providentially set events in motion to clear His holy name from Saul's wickedness (see study # 9; The Lord's Reputation Among the Nations).

II. War with the Philistines (21:15-22):
A. "And the Philistines had war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines. And David waxed faint; and Ishbibenob, who was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succored him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the lamp of Israel" (21:15-17).
   1. It is difficult to say at what point this battle took place. I Chronicles 20:4-8 places this event immediately after the capture of Rabbah and before the king illegally numbers Israel (I Chron. 21:1ff).
   2. This Philistine war nearly claimed David's life. One of Goliath's sons, Ishbibenob, found David and thought to slay him. One of David's nephew's takes the battle upon himself and slays the giant Ishbibenob. David's men tell him that he is to no longer go to war with them lest the light of Israel be put out.

B. "And it came to pass after this, that there was again war with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbecai the Hushathite slew Saph, who was of the sons of the giant. And there was again war with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim the Beth-lehemite slew Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. And there was again war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant. And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, slew him. These four were born to the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants" (21:18-22).
   1. The four sons of the giant of Gath were Ishbibenob, Saph, Goliath, and an unnamed man of great stature who had 12 fingers and 12 toes. This giant also defied the armies of Israel and Jonathan, David's nephew, killed him.
2. All four of these giants "fell by the hand of David and his servants" in that David received the glory for such warfare due to being king but it was actually his men who did the slaying.

Chapter 22

I. David's Song of Praise and Thanksgiving to Jehovah (22:1 all):
A. "And David spake unto Jehovah the words of this song in the day that Jehovah delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul." (22:1).

1. The following song was written by David most likely right before his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. David refers to the subjection of kings at II Samuel 22:45-46 which is an event that transpired at II Samuel 8:9ff. The song is identical to Psalms 18. David came to be known as the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (see 2 Samuel 23:1).

2. The words of this song are not from a man who just committed adultery and murder but from a man who had very recently received the grand promise of an eternal throne (2 Sam. 7:12ff) and the fulfillment of delivering him out of the hands of all his enemies. This song depicts a heart of gratitude and thanksgiving as well as professed perfection (see 2 Sam. 22:23-25).

B. "and he said, Jehovah is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, even mine; God, my rock, in him will I take refuge: My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge; My saviour, thou savest me from violence" (22:2-3).

1. David reveals all that Jehovah God represents in his life.

2. Jehovah is a "rock" in that He represents a solid foundation for man to stand upon. His promises are true and He will never fail the faithful.
   a. Moses referred to God as “The Rock” (Deut. 32:4). Jacob had ascribed the rock like identity to God at Genesis 49:24 by referring to him as a “stone.” David often refers to God as a Rock (II Sam. 22:1-3, 32; Psalms 18:1-2, 46; 19:14; 31:2-4; 62:1-7; 71:3; 95:1).
   b. There are multitudes of “Rock” statements in Psalms and other parts of the Bible. Seven themes seem to consistently surface when identifying the illustration of a Rock:
      1. God is a Rock in the sense that man can depend upon him for protection against enemies (i.e., a "fortress").
      2. God provides inner strength and stability as our Rock through His laws (horn of my salvation).
      3. God cannot be penetrated by any enemies (my shield).
      4. God does not change and thereby represents a constant in man’s life (our high tower).
      5. God is our helper in times of need (my deliverer).
      6. God is a refuge or shelter in the stormy times of life (refuge).
      7. God’s love will never fail us... His promises are sure and thereby our hope is real (our savior).

C. "I will call upon Jehovah, who is worthy to be praised: So shall I be saved from mine enemies. For the waves of death compassed me; The floods of ungodliness made me afraid: The cords of Sheol were round about me; The snares of death came upon me. In my distress I called upon Jehovah: Yea, I called unto my God: And he heard my voice out of his temple, And my cry came into his ears" (22:4-7).

1. David professes his desire to call upon the name of Jehovah that he may be rescued from enemies. At times when the "waves of death compassed me... floods of ungodliness caused fear... and so forth." David found times in life
when he was in great need of God and so he called out to Him for help and the Lord heard his cries.

2. When Jehovah is our rock (protection and object of our affection and salvation) then we shall also call out to him in our hour of need. Those who call out to God for help are identified as the saints of God (I Cor. 1:2). Those willing to be saved will call out to God for help (Acts 2:21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12ff) (see study # 50; Calling on the Name of the Lord).

D. "Then the earth shook and trembled. The foundations of heaven quaked And were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils. And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; And thick darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; Yea, he was seen upon the wings of the wind. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, Gathering of waters, thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness before him Coals of fire were kindled. Jehovah thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; Lightning, and discomfited them. Then the channels of the sea appeared, The foundations of the world were laid bare, By the rebuke of Jehovah, At the blast of the breath of his nostrils. He sent from on high, he took me; He drew me out of many waters; He delivered me from my strong enemy, From them that hated me; for they were too mighty for me. They came upon me in the day of my calamity; But Jehovah was my stay" (22:8-19).

1. David, a man after God's own heart, called upon Jehovah for help in his time of distress and the Lord responds mightily. The thundering voice of Jehovah and the blast of his breath of his nostrils derailed the enemies of David. God is truly great and to be feared by all.

2. David's point reminds us of a time when Israel had sinned against the Lord and admitted it (I Sam. 7:6). Samuel cried out to Jehovah for help against the Philistines and with a great thunder He wiped out the enemies of God's people.

3. We too have the mighty Jehovah God to call unto during times of our distress as mentioned above. He will act mightily for us against Satan's wickedness if only we would call unto Him for help.

E. "He brought me forth also into a large place; He delivered me, because he delighted in me. Jehovah rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of Jehovah, And have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his ordinances were before me; And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also perfect toward him; And I kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore hath Jehovah recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to my cleanness in his eyesight. With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; With the perfect man thou wilt show thyself perfect; With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; And with the perverse thou wilt show thyself froward. And the afflicted people thou wilt save; But thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down" (22:20-28).

1. David's word illustrate the condition by which Jehovah hears and answers the call of his people. Those of a humble disposition of righteousness, cleanness, obedience, and perfection in relationship to iniquity will be recipients of the Lord's help.

2. Those who are merciful, perfect, and pure will have God's help. Those; however, that are perverse God will show himself to be "froward" ("unsavory" - ASV footnote) (Young's Literal Translation reads, "And with the perverse Thou shewest Thyself a wrestler" while the NKJ and others use the words astute or shrewd). Rather than answering the prayers of the wicked God shows himself
wise and judicious toward them and will fight against them rather than fighting for them. Herein is a verse in the Bible that helps us understand God's conditions. The Lord has always reciprocated man's ways. Solomon wrote, "I love them that love me..." (Prov. 8:17) (see study # 49; Conditional Salvation).

F. "For thou art my lamp, O Jehovah; And Jehovah will lighten my darkness. For by thee I run upon a troop; By my God do I leap over a wall. As for God, his way is perfect: The word of Jehovah is tried; He is a shield unto all them that take refuge in him. For who is God, save Jehovah? And who is a rock, save our God? God is my strong fortress; And he guideth the perfect in his way" (22:29-33).

1. David saw the things that would appear impossible to achieve by human mind as achievable through Jehovah's help. When days were dark the Lord would be a lamp to the king. When a troop assembled against the king he ran upon them and with great power of God he could leap over a wall. David could do anything with God by his side. The apostle Paul said, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). Again, the apostle Paul said, "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8:31) (see study # 51; Confident Faith).

2. David is confident in God's ability to help and guide man through this life as should all today.

G. "He maketh his feet like hinds' feet, And setteth me upon my high places. He teacheth my hands to war, So that mine arms do bend a bow of brass. Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; And thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; And my feet have not slipped. I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; Neither did I turn again till they were consumed. And I have consumed them, and smitten them through, so that they cannot arise: Yea, they are fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle; Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. Thou hast also made mine enemies turn their backs unto me, That I might cut off them that hate me" (22:34-41).

1. The enemy of God was the enemy of David. David was thereby made swift as a hind and brought to a high place that belongs to conquerors.

2. Victory was obtained by David over God's enemies as he destroyed, consumed, and smote them through so that they cannot arise. So great was David by God's help that the enemies fled for fear.

3. The apostle John spoke of the saints victory over false teachers saying, "Ye are of God, my little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). The word "overcome" (Greek - nike) means to conquer or overpower. The saints weapons are not of this world yet do we fight battles against "he that is in the world" (i.e., Satan and all his followers) (see II Cor. 10:4) (see study # 52; The Victorious Christian).

H. "They looked, but there was none to save; Even unto Jehovah, but he answered them not. Then did I beat them small as the dust of the earth, I did crush them as the mire of the streets, and did spread them abroad" (22:42-43).

1. The enemies of Jehovah looked for a savior from David's wrath yet found no one. They also looked even to Jehovah yet the Lord "answered them not."

2. As the enemies of God were defeated David did not quit beating upon them until they were as "the dust of the earth, I did crush them..." Moses (Ex. 32:20) and Josiah (II Chron. 34:7) had beaten and grinded idols into dust through a spirit of righteous indignation. Likewise Jehovah will beat and crush the wicked of all time (see Rev. 14:9-12, 20). Those who show no mercy shall receive no mercy.

I. "Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people; Thou hast kept me to be the head of the nations: A people whom I have not known shall serve me. The
foreigners shall submit themselves unto me: As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me. The foreigners shall fade away, And shall come trembling out of their close places. Jehovah liveth; And blessed be my rock; And exalted be God, the rock of my salvation, Even the God that executeth vengeance for me, And that bringeth down peoples under me, And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: Yea, thou liftest me up above them that rise up against me; Thou deliverest me from the violent man. Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah, among the nations, And will sing praises unto thy name. Great deliverance giveth he to his king, And showeth lovingkindness to his anointed, To David and to his seed, for evermore" (22:44-51).

1. Toi, king of Hamath, heard all that David had done as a conqueror of nations like Hadadezer and thereby submitted to him by sending gifts (see II Sam. 8:9ff).

2. David attributed all his success to Jehovah. Due to Jehovah subduing all for David's sake the king said, "Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah, and will sing praises unto thy name."

Chapter 23

I. David reveals the facts regarding his error in relationship to God's desire of a King (23:1):

A. "Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse saith, And the man who was raised on high saith, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel:"

1. The author tells us that the final words of David are now recorded.

2. David came to be known as the "sweet psalmist of Israel." To David is ascribed more divine revelation than any other writer in the Bible. The divinely inspired psalms of David bring enlightenment to people of subsequent ages (see study #25).

B. "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me: One that ruleth over men righteously, That ruleth in the fear of God, He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, A morning without clouds, When the tender grass springeth out of the earth, Through clear shining after rain" (23:2-4).

1. David attributes the words he speaks to Jehovah God. It was God's words that were "upon my tongue." The book of Acts identifies David as a prophet who spoke divine revelation (see Acts 2:29-30) (see study #25).

2. David, by divine inspiration, announces the quality of character attributed to the one who rules as a king over God's people. Such a man must rule righteously, in the fear of God, acting as a light of morning sun that scatters the darkness of sinners.

C. "Verily my house is not so with God: Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things, and sure: For it is all my salvation, and all my desire, Although he maketh it not to grow. But the ungodly shall be all of them as thorns to be thrust away. Because they cannot be taken with the hand; But the man that toucheth them Must be armed with iron and the staff of a spear: And they shall be utterly burned with fire in their place" (23:5-7).

1. While God's divinely inspired model king is revealed and praised the same cannot be said of David and his household. David knew that he had not always met the expectation of God's king. Knowing God's expectation of His saints today we too are left pondering our inadequacies in relationship to His will.
David's house was not pure and bright or worthy to be praised due to the awful sin he had involved himself in. Nonetheless the firm promises of God remain with David. The king praises Jehovah for the "everlasting covenant" made with him at 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (i.e., that the Christ would come of the seed of David and bless all of humanity with the opportunity to be forgiven of sins) (see study #25; David's Humility) (see 1 Chronicles for the parallel passages).

2. The "ungodly" who are not governed by righteousness and justice are likened unto undesirable thorns that are prickly to take hold of. These thorny wicked men must be violently rooted out with iron and spear.

D. "These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite, chief of the captains; the same was Adino the Ezrite, against eight hundred slain at one time. And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodai the son of an Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away. He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword; and Jehovah wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to take spoil. And after him was Shammah the son of Agee a Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a plot of ground full of lentils; and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the plot, and defended it, and slew the Philistines; and Jehovah wrought a great victory. And three of the thirty chief men went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam; and the troop of the Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. And David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me water to drink of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate! And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah. And he said, Be it far from me, O Jehovah, that I should do this: shall I drink the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Therefore he would not drink it. These things did the three mighty men. And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruia, was chief of the three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred and slew them, and had a name among the three. Was he not most honorable of the three? Therefore he was made their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done mighty deeds, he slew the two sons of Ariel of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow. And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had a name among the three mighty men. 23 He was more honorable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his guard. Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty: Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem, Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, Zalmon the Ahoite, Maharai the Netophathite, Heleb the son of Baanah the Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash. Abialbon the Arbahite, Ezmaveth the Barhumite, Eliahu the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Ararite, Elipelet the son of Ahashai, the son of the Maacathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, Zelek the
Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armorbearers to Joab the son of Zeruiah, Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all" (23:8-39).

1. A list of David's mighty men and their accomplishments is recorded. There is a similar list given at 1 Chronicles 11:10-47 with variations in the names and sixteen additional ones. It is thought that the reason for these variations and new names was that some of the first ones listed in 2 Samuel had died and had been replaced.

2. This list was first given shortly after David was pronounced king of all Israel (i.e., before the battle with the Jebusites in Jerusalem and before Uzzah is killed for touching the Ark of the Covenant) (see 1 Chron. 11:1-9).

Chapter 24

I. David errs against God by Numbering the men of War (24 all):

A. "And again the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah. And the king said to Joab the captain of the host, who was with him, Go now to and fro through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the sum of the people. And Joab said unto the king, Now Jehovah thy God add unto the people, how many soever they may be, a hundredfold; and may the eyes of my lord the king see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing? Notwithstanding, the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel" (24:1-4).

1. The same event is recorded in 1 Chronicles 21:1 where the temptation is ascribed to Satan. James tells us that God tempts no man to sin (James 1:13). The author of 2 Samuel 24:1 states that God "moved" David to do this thing. Though God does not tempt man He does try men (puts their faith to the test). While it was Satan causing all the pain in Job's life it was God behind the scenes permitting these things to happen to Job that He may see where man's faith is. Job writes, "But he knows the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). If David was to come away from this test of God and temptation of Satan as purified gold he would need to know that such a numbering was an error of judgment on his part.

2. Why would numbering the men of Israel be a sin? A census was actually lawful to do (see Ex. 30:12). Moses actually numbered Israel on a regular basis (see Ex. 38:26; Numb. 1:2; 36:2). What was different about this numbering and the lawful census? The obvious answer is that David was not getting a population count he was getting a men available for war count. It seems that David's desire to number the men of war was an act of seeking out a war to fight when there was none to fight. He had been tempted with the thirst of conquest like the surrounding nations and others in history (see study # 25).

3. Joab seems to recognize what David does not (see study # 45). Whatever the number of men that would be counted mattered not. When God is on your side it is as though there were added one hundred times the amount of soldiers there actually are.

4. Joab does not understand why David would want to do this. David would not be talked out of numbering Israel and thereby he prevailed against Joab's judgment. Today, it seems that men delight in error as well (see 1 Chron. 21:3-6).
B. "And they passed over the Jordan, and encamped in Aroer, on the right side of
the city that is in the middle of the valley of Gad, and unto Jazer: Then they came to
Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi; and they came to Dan-jaan, and round
about to Sidon, and came to the stronghold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites,
and of the Canaanites; and they went out to the south of Judah, at Beer-sheba. So
when they had gone to and from through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the
end of nine months and twenty days. And Joab gave up the sum of the numbering of
the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant
men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men"
(24:5-9).

1. Joab obviously acts against his better judgment and faithfully follows David's
wishes. Joab travels throughout the tribes of Israel over a space of nine months
and twenty days as he went about numbering all those who "drew the sword."

2. Joab's final tally that he brings to David is Israel eight hundred thousand and
Judah five hundred thousand men who valiantly drew the sword. Note that
women and children were not numbered. David was not interested in a
population count he was interested in seeing how large his army was. Such an
act would certainly illustrate a faith not in the power of Jehovah God to deliver
but rather in the arm of flesh.

C. "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David
said unto Jehovah, I have sinned greatly in that which I have done: but now, O
Jehovah, put away, I beseech thee, the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very
foolishly" (24:10).

1. As soon as Joab had told David the number of Israel's army (i.e., one million
three hundred thousand men) the king felt the sting of guilt for his error. David's
error was a lack of trust that Jehovah would deliver him from all his enemies if
he would put his trust in Him.

2. David then cries out unto Jehovah for forgiveness. David said, "I have sinned
greatly in that which I have done... for I have done very foolishly..." This is not
the first time the king has had to admit his gross error (see study #25):
   a. After David came to his senses about his sin of adultery and murder he
      exclaimed, "I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David,
      Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Sam. 12:13).
   b. David has proved himself to be humble rather than a man who thinks too
      highly of himself (see 1 Samuel 18:17-19; 2 Samuel 7:18-22).

D. "And when David rose up in the morning, the word of Jehovah came unto the
prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and speak unto David, Thus saith Jehovah, I
offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. So Gad
came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come
unto thee in thy land? Or wilt thou flee three months before thy foes while they
pursue thee? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in thy land? Now advise thee,
and consider what answer I shall return to him that sent me" (24:11-13).

1. Though David had humbly confessed, "I have sinned," there nonetheless
remained consequences for such an action. Such an act of numbering the armed
forces of Israel illustrated faith in the arm of man rather than God. Jehovah
could in no way permit such an action from going unchecked. The surrounding
nations would hear and their fear would not be directed toward Jehovah God but
rather the great army Israel had amassed. The wrong signal was sent by David to
the world. Jehovah, once again, would correct the world view of His deity.

2. The Lord sends the prophet Gad to give David three choices of punishment.
David could do one of the three following things. First, David had the
opportunity of experiencing seven years of famine. Secondly, David is given a choice to flee from his enemies for three months. Lastly, David could choose a three day pestilence over the land.

E. "And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of Jehovah; for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man. So Jehovah sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed; and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, Jehovah repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; now stay thy hand. And the angel of Jehovah was by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite" (24:14-16).

1. How would you like to be given such a choice? You know that any punishment that you chose because of your sin will cause great sorrow and loss of life among your own nation. Any choice would be devastating. David chooses to suffer at the hand of Jehovah because "his mercies are great."

2. The Lord then sends his angel of death to claim the lives of seventy thousand men of Israel. The angel was about to stretch out his hand against Jerusalem when Jehovah stopped him and said enough is enough. Second Chronicles tells us that the angle had his sword stretched out over Jerusalem (see 1 Chron. 21:16).

F. "And David spake unto Jehovah when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done? let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house" (24:17).

1. David cries out in prayer after Jehovah smites 70,000 Israelites and says, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely" (see study # 25).

2. What was done was done and David, once again, could not reverse his sinful actions nor the consequences.

G. "And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto Jehovah in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. And David went up according to the saying of Gad, as Jehovah commanded. And Araunah looked forth, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto Jehovah, that the plague may be stayed from the people. And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, the oxen for the burnt-offering, and the threshing instruments and the yokes of the oxen for the wood: all this, O king, doth Araunah give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, Jehovah thy God accept thee. And the king said unto Araunah, Nay: but I will verily buy it of thee at a price. Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah 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 unto Jehovah, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. So Jehovah was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel" (24:18-25).

1. The book of 1 Chronicles follows out David's life to his death. He is depicted in his final days of old age as addressing all of Israel and instructing them to build Jehovah a house according to a divine pattern and secondly he anoints Solomon as the next king in his stead.

2. Samuel; however, ends his record of the life of David with the king's identity being that of a sinner who recognized the error of his ways. David had sinned
against Jehovah by numbering Israel's men of war. Jehovah, by David's choice, had brought a plague upon Israel. Seventy thousand men died and the only thing that caused God to mercifully stop the plague at Jerusalem was David's sacrifice at the instructions of Gad the prophet.

3. Interestingly David would not take Araunah's gracious offer of land and animals to sacrifice for his sin. David did not consider an offering to Jehovah that did not cost him anything a real sacrifice. This was the problem with Cain (see Gen. 4:1ff) and the people during the days of Malachi (see Mal. 1:6-8, 13-14) (see study # 25).