

## Read the Bible in A Year: Chronological

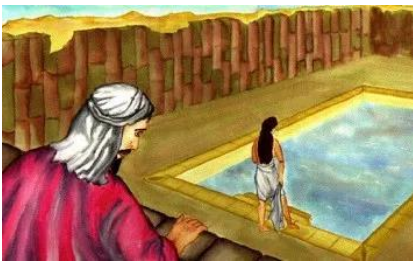
### Readings for April 26-May 2, 2020

**1 Chronicles 3:5-9; 14:3-7; 20:1-8; 21; 22**

**2 Samuel 5:14-16; 11-22; 24**

**Psalm 3; 7; 18; 51; 63**

**At this point in Israel's history, many accounts are recorded both in 1 and 2 Samuel, and in 1 and 2 Chronicles. In this packet, passages from 1 or 2 Samuel will be in regular type and those from 1 or 2 Chronicles will be in italic type. You will see the repeated stories and accounts and how they work together to give a more complete history...**



*Now at the beginning of the year when kings would go out to war, Joab led the army and devastated the land of the Ammonites. He came and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. So Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it.*

In the spring of the year, the time when the kings go out to battle, David sent out Joab and his officers, all of Israel with him. They brought to ruin the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah, but David remained in Jerusalem.

One evening when David arose from his bed and was walking on the roof of the king's house, from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. So, David sent someone to inquire about the woman. And it was asked, "Is this not Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" So David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her. When she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. The woman conceived. So she sent a message and reported to David, "I am pregnant."

Then David sent an order to Joab, "Send Uriah the Hittite to me." So, Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked about the welfare of Joab, the people, and the fighting. Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house. Wash your feet." So Uriah left the house of the king, and a gift from the king followed him. But Uriah slept at the entrance of the house of the king with all of the servants of his lord; he did not go down to his house.

When they reported to David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" Uriah responded to David, "The ark, Israel, and Judah dwell in makeshift shelters. My lord Joab and the officers of my lord are camping in the open field. But I may enter my house to eat, to drink, and to sleep with my wife? As you live and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing!" So David said to Uriah, "Remain here another day, and I will send you back tomorrow." Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the following day. Now David invited him to eat in his presence, and he drank until he got Uriah drunk. In the evening, he went to lie down in his lodging with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

That morning, David wrote a message to Joab and sent it by way of Uriah. He wrote in the message, "Send Uriah to the front of the line where the fighting is heaviest then withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die." So as Joab was besieging the city, he stationed Uriah in a place where he knew fierce men were. When the men of the city came out, they fought with Joab, and some people among those who served David fell; Uriah the Hittite died among them.

Joab sent word to inform David of all of the events of the battle. He instructed the messenger, "When you finish telling the king all the details of the battle, if his anger rises and he says to you, 'Why did you approach so near to the city? Did you not know that they might shoot from the city wall? Who killed Abimelek the son of Jerub-Besheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the city wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you approach so near to the city wall?' You shall then say, 'Additionally your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.'"

So the messenger departed and came to report to David everything that Joab had sent with him. The messenger reported to David, "The men prevailed over us when they came out against us in the open field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. Then the archers shot at your servants from upon the city wall, and some of those who serve the king are dead. Even your servant Uriah the Hittite died." So David replied to the messenger, "Thus you shall report to Joab, 'Do not allow this thing to dismay you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Sustain your attack against the city and bring it to ruin.' Encourage him with this reply."

When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. When the time of mourning was concluded, David sent for her and brought her to his house. She became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was displeasing to the LORD.



The LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were two men in a certain city. One was wealthy, but the other was poor. The wealthy man had a very large flock and herd, but the poor man had nothing except a single small ewe lamb that he had acquired. He nourished it and raised it together with himself and his sons. From his crumbs, it would eat; from his cup, it would drink; and in his arms it would lie. It was like a daughter to him. There came a visitor to the wealthy man, but he was unwilling to take from his own flock or herd to

prepare a meal for the wanderer who had come to him. Instead he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared food for the wanderer who had come to him."

David became very angry because of this man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die. And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Then Nathan told David, "You are this man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you as king over Israel and I rescued you from the hand of Saul. I gave to you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms, and I gave to you the house of Israel and Judah. If this were too little, I would have continued to do for you much more. Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and you took his wife as a wife for yourself. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now the sword will never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

"Thus says the LORD: See, I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house. I will take your wives before your eyes and will give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. Although you did it secretly, I will do this thing before all of Israel, and under the sun."

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan said to David, "Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die.

## Psalm 51

**A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone taken Bathsheba.**

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgment.  
Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being;  
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.  
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing<sup>[c]</sup> spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.  
Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.  
For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.  
The sacrifice acceptable to God<sup>[d]</sup> is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;  
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,  
then you will delight in right sacrifices,  
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became very ill. David therefore pleaded with God for the child; David fasted, and went in and lay all night on the ground. The elders of his house stood beside him, urging him to rise from the ground; but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. On the seventh day the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, "While the child was still alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us; how then can we tell him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm." But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, he perceived that the child was dead; and David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They said, "He is dead."

Then David rose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the LORD, and worshiped; he then went to his own house; and when he asked, they set food before him and he ate. Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you rose and ate food." He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

Then David consoled his wife Bathsheba, and went to her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he named him Solomon. The LORD loved him, and sent a message by the prophet Nathan; so he named him Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

These are the names of the children born to David in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

*Now David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David became the father of more sons and daughters. These are the names of the children who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.*

*David reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem. Now these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four sons by Bathsheba the daughter of Ammiel; then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, <sup>7</sup>Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine. These were all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and Tamar their sister.*

Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and assumed control of the royal city. So Joab sent messengers to David and reported, "I have fought against Rabbah, and I have occupied the water supply of the city. Now gather the remainder of the people, lay siege to the city, and take it. Otherwise, I myself will capture the city, and it will be called by my name." So David gathered all of the people and they went to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it. David took the crown of their king from his head, and its weight was a talent of gold and precious stone. It was placed upon the head of David. He brought out large quantities of plunder from the city. He brought out the people who were in it, and he put them to work with saws, and iron picks, and iron axes, and sent them to work in the brick kiln. Thus he did to all of the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all of the people returned to Jerusalem.

*Then David took the crown of their king from his head and found it weighed about a talent of gold with a precious stone set in it. And it was placed on David's head. He also brought out a great abundance of plunder from the city. He brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws, sharp iron tools, and axes. Thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites, and then he and all the people returned to Jerusalem.*



After this, Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David fell in love with her. It depressed Amnon to the point of falling ill that Tamar his sister was a virgin, but it was impossible for Amnon to pursue her. Now Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, the brother of David, and Jonadab was a very crafty individual. He asked him, "Why are you, the son of the king, so sullen morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Amnon told him, "I am in love with Tamar, the sister of Absalom my brother." Jonadab instructed him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please allow Tamar, my sister, to come and prepare some food for me. She should make the food here, so that when I see it, I may eat it from her hand.'"

So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come here to make a couple of cakes, so that I may be nourished from her hand." Then David sent word to Tamar at the house, "Please go to the house of Amnon your brother, and prepare food for him." So Tamar went to the house of Amnon her brother, where he was lying. She took the dough, kneaded it, and made the cakes before him. Then she baked them. Then she took the baking tray and served the cakes to him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, "Send everyone away." So they all left him. Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes that she had made and brought them in the bedroom to Amnon her brother.

When she brought them close for him to eat, he took hold of her and said, "Come, lie with me, my sister." She pled with him, "No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not to be done in Israel. Do not carry out this awful thing. As for me, where could I escape my disgrace? And you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." But he refused to listen to her. So, being stronger than her, he overpowered her and lay with her. Then Amnon hated her greatly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go away." She said to him, "No, because this great offense of dismissing me is worse than the other which you did to me." But he refused to listen to her. He called his personal servant and said, "Send this woman out from me, and secure the door behind her." Now she was wearing a long robe, because the virgin daughters of the king were clothed in such garments. So his servant put her out and secured the door behind her. So Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and left, wailing as she went.

Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Keep silent for now, my sister. He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart." So Tamar stayed in the house of Absalom, her brother, a desolate woman. When King David heard about these things, he was very angry. And Absalom would not speak with Amnon, either pleasantly or angrily; but Absalom hated Amnon because he had raped his sister Tamar.



Two full years later, the sheepshearers of Absalom were in Baal Hazor, near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all of the sons of the king. Then Absalom came to the king and requested, "Your servant has sheepshearers; will the king and his servants kindly go with your servant?" The king said to Absalom, "No, my son, we must not all go or we will be a burden to you." When he urged him, he refused to go, but gave him his blessing. Absalom said, "If not, allow my brother Amnon to go with us." But the king replied to him, "Why should he go with you?" But Absalom urged him until he sent Amnon and all of the king's sons along with him.

Now, Absalom had commanded his servant, "Look for Amnon to become carefree on account of the wine. Then I will say to you, 'Strike Amnon, and kill him.' Do not be afraid, for am not I myself commanding you? Be strong and brave." So, the servants of Absalom did to Amnon that which Absalom had commanded. Then the sons of the king arose, each mounting his mule, and fled. While they were on the way, the report reached David: "Absalom struck down all of the sons of the king, and there is not one of them remaining." Then the king arose, tore his garments, and lay on the ground, while all of his servants who were standing nearby tore their garments. But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, said, "My lord should not think that they have killed all of the servants who are the king's sons. Amnon alone is dead, for this has been determined from the day he raped Tamar, his sister, by the very declaration of Absalom. Now, my lord the king should not take this matter to heart, thinking that all of the king's sons are dead. Instead Amnon alone is dead." Absalom fled.

Now when the servant who was keeping watch looked up, he saw many people coming on the road beyond him, around the hill. So Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons are coming. As your servant spoke, so it is." As soon as he had finished speaking, the sons of the king arrived, lifted their voices, and wept. The king and all of his servants also wept loudly. Now Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur, but David mourned over his son every day. When Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he was there for three years. Then King David longed to go out to Absalom, for he was consoled over the death of Amnon.



Now Joab the son of Zeruiah recognized that the king's mind was on Absalom. So Joab sent a request to Tekoa and brought from there a wise woman. He instructed her, "Act as if you are observing mourning rites. Put on mourning garments, and do not anoint yourself with oil, but act like a woman who has been mourning over the dead like this for many days. Then come to the king and speak to him in this manner." Thus Joab put the words in her mouth. As the Tekoan woman spoke to the king, she fell on her face toward the ground and bowed low. Then she said, "Help me, O king." The king said to her, "What troubles you?" She responded, "Alas, I am a widow, and my husband is dead. Furthermore, your servant had two sons. The two of them were fighting in the field, but there was no one to

separate them. One struck the other and killed him. Now the entire family has risen up against your maidservant, and they said, 'Deliver him who struck his brother, so that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he killed, and we will destroy the heir also.' So they will extinguish my remaining ember, and leave my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth." Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." The Tekoan woman responded to the king, "May guilt rest upon me and the house of my father, my lord the king, and may the king and his throne be blameless." The king said, "Whoever speaks to you, bring him to me, and he will not cause you harm again." Then she said, "May the king remember the LORD your God so that the avenger of blood will not continue to destroy, lest they exterminate my son." He said, "As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son will fall to the ground." Then the woman said, "Allow your servant to speak a word to my lord the king." So he said, "Speak."

The woman said, "Why have you planned like this against the people of God? The king's speaking this word is like a self-conviction, for the king has not brought back his own banished one. We will surely die and are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away a life; He devises plans so that His banished ones will not be cast out from Him. So now I have come to speak to my lord the king about this matter because the people have made me afraid. So, I thought, 'I will speak to the king. Perhaps the king will perform the request of his servant. For the king may accept my request to deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son from the inheritance of God.' So, your servant thought, 'May the word of my lord the king provide rest. For like the angel of God, my lord the king discerns good from evil. May the LORD your God be with you.'"

Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not conceal from me anything that I ask you." The woman said, "May my lord the king please speak." The king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all of this?" The woman answered and said, "As your soul lives, my lord the king, there is no turning right or left from anything that you spoke, my lord the king, for your servant Joab is the very one who commanded me and placed all of these words in my mouth. In order to change this situation, your servant Joab did this thing; but my lord is wise, as with the wisdom of the angel of God, so as to discern everything happening in the land."

Then the king said to Joab, "This is what I will do. Go and bring back the young man Absalom." Then Joab fell with his face to ground and bowed low and blessed the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, since the king has granted the request of his servant." Then Joab arose and went to Geshur, and he brought Absalom to Jerusalem. The king said, "Let him turn to his own house. He shall not come into my presence." So Absalom turned to his house and did not come into the king's presence.

In all of Israel, there was no man as handsome as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the top of his head, there was not a blemish on him. When he cut the hair of his head (and at the end of every year he cut it, for it was heavy on him), he weighed the hair from his head at two hundred shekels, according to the king's standard. There were born to Absalom three sons and one daughter whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman. Absalom lived in Jerusalem for two full years without coming into the king's presence. Then Absalom sent a message to Joab, requesting that he send him to the king, but he was not willing to come to him. So he sent a second message, but still he was not willing to come. Then he said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go, set it on fire." So the servants of Absalom set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, came to Absalom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my plot of land on fire?" Absalom said to Joab, "I sent a message to you, saying: Come, so that I may send you to the king, asking, 'Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still.' Now, let me go before the king, and if there is still guilt with me, may he put me to death." So Joab came and reported this to him. Then he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king, bowed low to him, his face on the ground before the king; then the king kissed Absalom.



After this Absalom acquired for himself a chariot, horses, and fifty men to run before him. Absalom would go early and stand beside the way into the gate. When any man who had a dispute concerning which he had come to the king for a judgment approached, Absalom would call to him and say, "Which city are you from?" And he would say, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claim is good and right, but there is no one to hear you on behalf of the king." Absalom would continue, "If I were appointed a judge in the land, then every man who had a claim could come and I would give him justice." When a man would approach to bow before him, he would reach out, embrace him, and kiss him. Absalom acted this way toward every Israelite who came to the king for a judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

After forty years, Absalom said to the king, "Please allow me to go fulfill my vow that I made to the LORD in Hebron. For your servant made a vow when I was dwelling in Geshur in Aram, saying: If indeed the LORD will bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD." The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent scouts throughout all of the tribes of Israel, saying, "When you hear the sound of the horn, say: Absalom has become king in Hebron." Now two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem, invited and unsuspecting; they did not know anything. Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, the

advisor of David, from his city Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. Now the conspiracy was strong, for the number of people with Absalom was continually growing.

A messenger came to David and said, "The hearts of the men of Israel are following Absalom." David said to all of his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Get up. We must flee or there will be no escape from Absalom for us. Hurry up and leave, or he will soon reach us and bring disaster upon us, striking the city with the edge of the sword." The king's servants said to the king, "Whatever our lord the king decides, we are your servants."

So the king left with his entire house after him, but he left behind ten women, concubines, to watch over the house. So the king left with all of the people after him, and they came to a stop at the furthest house. Now all his servants passed on beside him, all the Kerethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

The king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also going with us? Go back and dwell with the king, for you are a foreigner and, moreover, exiled from your own place. You came only yesterday. Shall I cause you to go roaming around with us today? I am going where I go. Go back, and take back your brothers with you. Mercy and truth be with you." Ittai answered the king and said, "As the LORD lives and as lives my lord the king, only in the place where my lord the king is, whether for death or for life, there alone will your servant be." So David said to Ittai, "Go on, pass by." So Ittai the Gittite passed by, along with all of his men and all of the children and elderly who were with him. The whole land wept with a loud voice as all the people passed by. Now the king was crossing over the brook Kidron, and all of the people were crossing over on the road to the wilderness.

And also Zadok and all of the Levites with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, and Abiathar came up until all of the people had finished passing from the city. The king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I have found favor in the eyes of the LORD, He will bring me back and allow me to see both it and its resting place. But if He should say now, 'I take no delight in you,' here I am. May He do to me what seems good to Him." The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace with your two sons, your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word from you comes to inform me." So Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went. His head was covered and he went barefoot. Then all of the people who were with him each covered his head and went up, weeping as they went. Now it was reported to David that Ahithophel was conspiring with Absalom, and David said, "O LORD, make the advice of Ahithophel folly." When David came to the summit where he would worship God, Hushai the Arkite approached him with his coat torn and dirt on his head. David said to him, "If you pass on with me, you will be a burden to me. But if you return to the city, you may say to Absalom, 'I am your servant, O king, as I was a servant of your father. As I was then, so now I am your servant,' so as to counter the advice of Ahithophel. Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be with you there? You shall report everything that you hear from the king's house to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Their two sons Ahimaaz the son of Zadok and Jonathan the son of Abiathar will be there with them. You shall send word of everything that you hear to me by their hand." So Hushai, the friend of David, came to the city as Absalom entered Jerusalem.

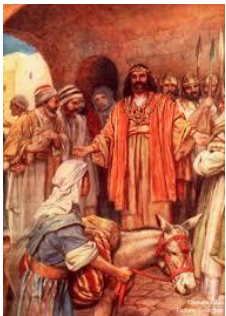
When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of saddled donkeys carrying two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and one skin of wine. The king said to Ziba, "Why do you have these things?" Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the household of the king to ride. The bread and the summer fruit are for the servants to eat. The wine is for those who become weary in the wilderness to drink." The king said, "And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to the king, "He is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today they will return to me the house of Israel and my



father's kingdom." Then David said to Ziba, "Everything that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." Ziba replied, "I bow before you. May I find favor in your sight, my lord the king."

When King David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul came out. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he came out continuously cursing. He threw stones at David and all of the servants of King David, as well as all of the people and all of the warriors who were at his right and left. Shimei said when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you scoundrel! The LORD has returned upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. And the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. You are taken in your own evil, because you are a man of blood."

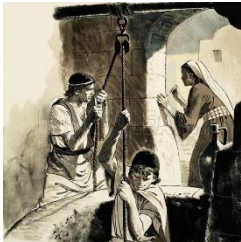
Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "How can this dead dog curse my lord the king! Let me go over and remove his head." The king responded, "What do you have against me, sons of Zeruiah? Suppose that he curses because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who shall then say, 'Why do you do so?'" David then said to Abishai and to all of his servants, "My son who came from my own body seeks my life, and now also this Benjamite. Leave him alone and let him curse if the LORD has so instructed him. Perhaps today the LORD will look upon my guilt and return kindness instead of his cursing." So David and his men continued on the road, and Shimei went along on the hillside beside them, cursing, throwing stones, and flinging dust at them as he went. The king and all of the people who were with him arrived at their destination exhausted, but he refreshed himself there.



Now Absalom and all of the Israelite people entered Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him. When Hushai the Arkite, the friend of David, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" Then Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this the extent of your commitment to your friend? Why have you not gone with your friend?" Hushai said to Absalom, "No! For whom the LORD, this people, and all men of Israel have chosen, his I will be and with him I will remain. Furthermore, whom shall I serve? Should it not be his son? As I served your father, so shall I be with you." Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your advice. What shall we do?" Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Lie with your father's concubines, whom he left to watch over the palace. When all Israel hears that you have made yourself abhorred by your father, then the hands of all who are with you will be strong." So they set up a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all of Israel. In those days, the advice that Ahithophel gave was as when one inquired a word from God. Such was all of the advice of Ahithophel, whether that which he gave to David or to Absalom.

Ahithophel also said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men so that I may arise and pursue David tonight. I will overtake him while he is weary and weak and strike him with terror; all of the people who are with him will flee. Then I will strike only the king, and I will return all of the people to you. When all return except the man whom you are seeking, all of the people will be at peace." The advice pleased Absalom and all of the elders of Israel. So Absalom said, "Summon Hushai the Arkite so that we may hear what he has to say as well." When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "This is what Ahithophel had advised. Should we do this thing? If not, you should tell us." Hushai said to Absalom, "At this time, the advice that Ahithophel has given is not good." Moreover, Hushai said, "You know that your father and his men are warriors, and they have been provoked like a bear robbed of her cubs. Your father is a veteran of warfare. He will not spend the night with the people. Even now, he has hidden himself in a ravine or some other place, and when one of them falls in the first attack, whoever hears will say, 'It was a defeat for the people who follow Absalom.' Then even the valiant one, whose heart is like that of a lion, will completely despair, for all of Israel knows that your father is a warrior, and those who are with him are brave. Therefore, my advice is for all of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, to be completely gathered to you like the multitude of the sand along the shoreline and for you to go to battle in

person. We will come upon him in one of the places where he may be found, and we will fall upon him like the dew upon the ground. Neither he nor any of the men who are with him will remain, not a single one. If he withdraws into a city, then all of Israel will bring ropes to that city. We will raze it until it is a valley, until there cannot be found there even a pebble.” Then Absalom and all of the men of Israel said, “The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than the advice of Ahithophel.” For the LORD had decided to undermine the prudent advice of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring calamity to Absalom.



Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, “Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do one thing, but I advised them to do another thing. Now quickly send someone to report to David, ‘Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness, but instead cross over. Otherwise, the king and all of the people who are with him will be swallowed up.’”

Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En Rogel. A servant girl would go report to them, and they would go report to King David, because they could not be seen entering the city. But a young man saw them and reported this to Absalom. So the two of them went quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it. The wife took a covering and spread it over the opening of the well. Then she scattered grain over it so that nothing could be discerned. The servants of Absalom came to the woman at the house and said, “Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?” She said, “They crossed over the brook of water.” When they searched, they could not find them. So they returned to Jerusalem. After they left, they came up from the well, went, and reported to King David. They said to David, “Arise and quickly cross over the water because thus has Ahithophel advised against you.” So David and all of the people who were with him arose and crossed over the Jordan. By daybreak, there was not one left who had not crossed over the Jordan.

When Ahithophel realized that his advice was not followed, he saddled his donkey and returned to his house in his own city. He gave instruction to his household, then he hanged himself and died; he was interred in the tomb of his father.

David came to Mahanaim as Absalom crossed the Jordan, he and every Israelite with him. Now Absalom had placed Amasa over the army in the place of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man named Jether the Ishmaelite, who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab. Israel and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead. When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, Makir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim brought bedding, metal bowls, ceramic vessels, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, honey, curds, sheep, and cheese from the livestock for David and the people who were with him to eat and use. For they said, “The people are hungry, exhausted, and thirsting in the wilderness.”

### **Psalm 3**

#### **A Psalm of David, when he fled from his son Absalom.**

O LORD, how many are my foes!  
Many are rising against me;  
many are saying to me,  
“There is no help for you in God.”

But you, O LORD, are a shield around me,  
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.

I cry aloud to the LORD,  
and he answers me from his holy hill.

I lie down and sleep;  
I wake again, for the LORD sustains me.  
I am not afraid of ten thousands of people  
who have set themselves against me all around.

Rise up, O LORD!  
Deliver me, O my God!  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;  
you break the teeth of the wicked.

Deliverance belongs to the LORD;  
may your blessing be on your people!

### **Psalm 63**

#### **A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.**

O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.  
Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.

So I will bless you as long as I live;  
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips  
when I think of you on my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.

But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth;  
they shall be given over to the power of the sword,  
they shall be prey for jackals.  
But the king shall rejoice in God;  
all who swear by him shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.



David mustered the people who were with him, and he set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. Then David dispatched the people, one-third under the command of Joab, one-third under the command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah and brother of Joab, and one-third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. Then David said to the people, "I myself will go out with you." But the people said, "You should not go, for if we retreat, they will not be concerned about us. Even if half of us die, they will not be concerned about us. But now you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore, it would be better to assist us from the city." The king said to them, "I will do what seems best to you."

So the king stood beside the gate while all of the people went out by hundreds and thousands. The king commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, "Deal gently with the young man Absalom." All of the people heard the king instruct the commanders concerning Absalom. So the people went out toward Israel in the field, but the fighting occurred in the forest of Ephraim. The people of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David. That day the defeat was extensive, twenty thousand men. The fighting spread across the land, and the people consumed by the forest were more numerous than those consumed by the sword that day.

Absalom was encountered by some of the servants of David. Now Absalom was riding on his mule. When the mule went under the branches of a very large tree, his head was caught in the tree. He was left in midair while the mule that was under him kept going. One man saw him and reported it to Joab, saying, "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree." Joab said to the man who was reporting to him, "What? You saw him? Why did you not strike him on the spot, sending him to the ground? I would have given you ten shekels of silver and a belt." The man said to Joab, "Not even if I had felt the weight of a thousand shekels of silver in my hand would I have laid a hand on the king's son. In our hearing the king commanded you, Abishai, and Ittai saying: Beware lest anyone touch the young man Absalom! Otherwise, I would have worked falsehood against my own life. For nothing is hidden from the king, and you yourself would have set yourself against me." Then Joab said, "I will not waste any more time with you." He took three spears in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the midst of the tree. Then ten young men, armor bearers for Joab, gathered around and struck down Absalom, killing him. When Joab blew the horn, the people returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab held back the people. Then they took Absalom, disposed of him in a large pit in the forest, and piled over him a very large heap of stones. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his home. Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a memorial stone in the Valley of the King, for he said, "I have no son by whom my name may be remembered." So he named the memorial stone after himself; and to this day, it is called the monument of Absalom.



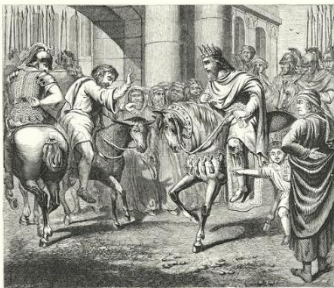
Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Allow me to run and bring the news to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the hand of his enemies." But Joab said to him, "You will not be a man who bears news today; you may bear news another day. Today you will not bear news because the king's son is dead." Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, report to the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed to Joab, then ran off. Ahimaaz again said to Joab, "Whatever may happen, let me run also, after the Cushite." Then Joab said, "Why is it that you want to run, my son? There is no messenger's reward for you to obtain." "Whatever happens, I want to run." So he said to him, "Run." So Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and passed the Cushite.

Now David was sitting between the two gates when the watchman went up to the roof of the gate, to the city wall. He lifted his eyes and saw a man running by himself. The watchman called and told the king. The king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And he came ever closer. Then the watchman

saw another man running. The watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "Look there is another man running alone." The king said, "He also is bringing news." The watchman said, "I think that the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz." The king said, "He is a good man and comes with good news." Then Ahimaaz called to the king and said, "All is well." He bowed down to the ground before the king and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God who has handed over the men who raised their hand against my lord the king." The king said, "Is it well for the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz said, "I saw a great commotion when Joab sent the servant of the king, your servant, but I do not know what it was." The king said, "Step aside and stand here." So he stepped aside and stood in position. Then the Cushite came and said, "Good news for my lord the king, for today the LORD has delivered you from those who rose up against you." The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well for the young man Absalom?" The Cushite said, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who would rise up against you to do harm become as the young man is." The king was deeply moved and went up to the upper chamber of the gate and wept. As he went he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! If only I could have given my death in your stead, Absalom, my son, my son!"

It was reported to Joab that the king was weeping and mourning over Absalom. The victory that day was turned into mourning for all of the people, for the people heard that day, "The king is grieving for his son." So the people entered the city by stealth that day, as a people who have been disgraced steal away when they flee from battle. The king covered his face and called with a loud voice, "My son Absalom, my son, my son!"

Then Joab came to the king in his house and said, "Today you have shamed the faces of all of your servants who saved your life today, as well as the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines, by loving those who hated you and hating those who love you. You have shown today that commanders and servants are nothing to you. I know that if Absalom were alive instead today and all of us were dead, then this would be right in your eyes. Now go out and speak reassuringly to your servants, for I swear by the LORD that if you do not go out, no man will stay with you this night, and this will be worse for you than any calamity that has come against you from your youth until now." So the king arose and took his seat in the gate, and the people were all told, "The king is sitting in the gate." So all the people came before the king, but the children of Israel had fled, each to his tent.



Now all of the people began to quarrel throughout all of the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies, and he saved us from the hand of the Philistines, but now he has fled from the land on account of Absalom. But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now why are you idle to bring back the king?" Then David sent word to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, "Speak to the elders of Israel, saying, 'Why are you last to bring the king back to his house when the word of all Israel has come to the king, to his house? You are my brother. You are my bone and my flesh. Why are you last to bring back the king?' Say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh?

May God do to me, and more so, if you are not commander of the army before me from now on in the place of Joab.'" He swayed the heart of every man of Judah as though they were one man, and they sent a message to the king: "Return, you and all of your servants."

So the king returned and came as far as the Jordan, and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and bring the king across the Jordan. Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite who was from Bahurim, hastened to go down with the men of Judah to meet King David. With him were a thousand men from Benjamin. And Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan before the king. They crossed the ford to bring the household of the king across and to do what was pleasing in his eyes. Shimei the son of Gera fell before the king as he was crossing the Jordan, and he said to the king, "Do not regard me as

guilty, my lord, or remember how your servant went astray the day when my lord the king went out from Jerusalem. May the king not take it to heart. For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore, I have come this day, first from all of the house of Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king.” Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, “Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the anointed of the LORD?” David said, “What do you sons of Zeruiah have against me that you should become an adversary to me today? Should any man in Israel be put to death today? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?” The king said to Shimei, “You will not die.” The king gave him his oath.

Then Mephibosheth the son of Saul went down to meet the king. He had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he came back in peace. When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, “Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?” He said, “My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, ‘I will saddle the mule for myself in order to ride on it and go with the king,’ because your servant is lame. But he has slandered your servant to my lord the king. Still my lord the king is as the angel of God, so do what seems best to you. For all my father’s house were but dead men before my lord the king. Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What right do I have to cry out any more to the king?” The king said to him, “Why do you still speak of your affairs? I say that you and Ziba shall divide the field.” Mephibosheth said to the king, “Let him even take everything, since my lord the king has come safely to his house.”

Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim in order to see the king across the Jordan. Barzillai was very old, eighty years old. But he sustained the king during his stay in Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man. The king said to Barzillai, “Cross over with me and I will sustain you with me in Jerusalem.” Barzillai said to the king, “How many days are left in my life that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am now eighty years old. Can I discern what is pleasant from what is harmful? Can your servant taste what I eat and what I drink? Can I still hear the voices of men and women who sing? Why, then, should your servant be a burden to my lord the king? Your servant is merely crossing over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with this reward? Now allow your servant to return, that I may die in my own city with the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Kimham. He will cross over with my lord the king. Do for him what seems best to you.” The king said, “Kimham will cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems best to you. Whatever you require of me, I will do for you.” All of the people crossed over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him and he returned to his own place.

The king passed on to Gilgal, and Kimham went on with him; all of the people of Judah and half of the people of Israel passed on with the king. Now all of the men of Israel were coming to the king and said to the king, “Why have our brothers, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king and his household across the Jordan, and all of the men of David with him?” All of the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, “Because the king is our close relative. Why are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense? Has he given any gift to us?” And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, “We have ten shares in the king. Therefore we also have more claim on David than you. Why then did you treat us with contempt? Were we not the first to advise bringing back our king?” But the words of the men of Judah were harsher than the words of the men of Israel.



There happened to be a worthless man there whose name was Sheba the son of Bikri, a Benjamite. He sounded the trumpet and said: “We have no share in David, nor do we have an inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel.” So every man of Israel withdrew from following David and followed after Sheba the son of Bikri, but the men of Judah stayed with their king, from the Jordan as far as Jerusalem.

When the king came to his house in Jerusalem, he took the ten women, the concubines whom he had left to keep watch over the house, and he placed them in custody. He provided for them but did not go in to them. They were shut up until the day of their deaths, living as in widowhood. Then the king said to Amasa, "Summon for me the men of Judah in three days, then present yourself here." So Amasa went to summon Judah, but he delayed beyond the deadline determined for him.

So David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bikri will cause more harm for us than Absalom. You take your lord's servants and pursue after him. Otherwise, he will find fortified cities and escape from our sight." The men of Joab went out after him, along with the Kerethites, the Pelethites, and all of the warriors; and they went out from Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba the son of Bikri. When they were at the large stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was dressed in his battle armor, and fastened on it was a belt with a sword in its sheath at the waist. As he went forward, it fell out. Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" and he took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. Amasa was not on guard against the sword in the hand of Joab, and he struck him in the midsection spilling his entrails on the ground. He died without being struck a second time. Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bikri. Now one of the young men of Joab stood by him and said, "Whoever favors Joab and whoever is for David, *let him follow Joab.*" Now Amasa was wallowing in his own blood in the middle of the path. When the man saw that all of the people stood still, he moved Amasa from the path to the field and threw a covering over him, when he observed that everyone who passed by would stop. Once he removed him from the path, all of the men passed by, following Joab in pursuit of Sheba the son of Bikri.

He passed through all of the tribes of Israel toward Abel Beth Maakah, also passing by all of the Bikrites. Once assembled, they also came after him. They came and besieged him in Abel Beth Maakah. They constructed a siege ramp against the city, standing it against the rampart. As all of the people who were with Joab were battering the city wall in order to bring it down, a wise woman called from the city, "Listen! Listen! Say to Joab, 'Come closer so that I may speak with you.'" When he came near, the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He said, "I am." She said to him, "Listen to the words of your servant," and he said, "I'm listening."

She said, "In former times, they would say, 'Let them inquire carefully in Abel,' and thus they would resolve an issue. I am a trustworthy and faithful one of Israel. You are attempting to destroy a city, even a mother, in Israel. Why do you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?" Joab responded, "Far be it, far be it from me to swallow up or destroy. That is not true. But a man from the hill country of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bikri by name, has lifted his hand against King David. Only deliver him, and I will depart from the city." And the woman said to Joab, "His head will be thrown to you over the wall." The woman, with her wisdom, came to all of the people in the city, and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bikri. When they threw it to Joab, he blew the horn, and they dispersed from the city, each going to his own tent. Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

Now Joab was over the entire army of Israel. Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and Pelethites. Adoniram was over conscripted labor. Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was secretary. Sheva was scribe. Zadok and Abiathar were priests, and also Ira the Jairite was priest to David.

### **Psalm 7**

**A Song of David which he sang to the LORD concerning Sheba the Benjamite who rebelled against him**

O LORD my God, in you I take refuge;  
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,  
or like a lion they will tear me apart;  
they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.

O LORD my God, if I have done this,  
if there is wrong in my hands,  
if I have repaid my ally with harm  
or plundered my foe without cause,  
then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,  
trample my life to the ground,  
and lay my soul in the dust.

Rise up, O LORD, in your anger;  
lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies;  
awake, O my God; you have appointed a judgment.  
Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered around you,  
and over it take your seat on high.  
The LORD judges the peoples;  
judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness  
and according to the integrity that is in me.

O let the evil of the wicked come to an end,  
but establish the righteous,  
you who test the minds and hearts,  
O righteous God.  
God is my shield,  
who saves the upright in heart.  
God is a righteous judge,  
and a God who has indignation every day.

If one does not repent, God will whet his sword;  
he has bent and strung his bow;  
he has prepared his deadly weapons,  
making his arrows fiery shafts.  
See how they conceive evil,  
and are pregnant with mischief,  
and bring forth lies.  
They make a pit, digging it out,  
and fall into the hole that they have made.  
Their mischief returns upon their own heads,  
and on their own heads their violence descends.

I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness,  
and sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David called upon the LORD. The LORD said, "There is blood guilt upon Saul and upon his house because he put the Gibeonites to death." So the king summoned the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not from the children of Israel. Instead they were a remnant of the Amorites. Although the children of Israel had made a pact with them, Saul attempted to destroy them in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah. David said to the Gibeonites, "What must I do for you, and with what may I appease you that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?" The Gibeonites said to him, "We have no concern for silver or gold from Saul or his household, nor is it for us to put any man in Israel to death." He said to them, "What are you saying I should do for you?" They said to the king, "Regarding the man who put an end to us and planned to exterminate us from the entire territory of Israel, let



seven of his male descendants be handed over to us, and we will hang them before the LORD at Gibeah of Saul, the chosen one of the LORD.” The king said, “I will hand them over.”

But the king spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul on account of the oath of the LORD that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. So the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, Armoni and Mephibosheth, whom she had born to Saul, and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she had born to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite. He delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the mountain before the LORD; the seven of them fell together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, in the beginning of the barley harvest.

Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of the harvest until the rains poured on them from heaven. She did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the animals of the field by night. When it was reported to David that which Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh Gilead who had secretly taken them from the plaza in Beth Shan, where the Philistines had hung them the day the Philistines struck down Saul on Gilboa. He brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there, and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. They interred the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the land of Benjamin at Zela, in the tomb of Kish, his father. They did everything that the king commanded. After that God was entreated regarding the land.

Now once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel. So David went down and his servants with him to fight the Philistines, and David grew weary. Now Ishbi-Benob, who was among the descendants of the giant and was girded with new weaponry, had a spear weighing three hundred bronze shekels and had said that he would strike David down. But Abishai the son of Zeruah came to his aid. He struck down the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David made an oath with him, saying, “You shall no longer come out with us to battle, so that you do not extinguish the lamp of Israel.” Now afterwards there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbekai the Hushathite struck down Saph, who was among the descendants of the giant. Once again, there was a battle with the Philistines at Gob. On this occasion, Elhanan the son of Jaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite struck down Goliath the Gittite, whose spear shaft was like a weaver’s beam. Once again, there was war at Gath. There was a man of stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number. Now he also was born to the giant. When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah, the brother of David, struck him down. Now these four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

*Now after this, when war broke out in Gezer with the Philistines, Sibbekai of Hushah killed Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the giants, and they were humbled. Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose wooden spear was like a weaver’s beam. Yet again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also was descended from the giants. When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David’s brother, killed him. These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and his servants.*

Now on the day the LORD delivered him from the hand of all of his enemies and from the hand of Saul, David spoke to the LORD the words of this song. He said:

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;  
the God of my strength, in whom I will trust;  
my shield and the horn of my salvation,

my fortress and my sanctuary;  
my Savior, You save me from violence.  
I call upon the LORD, who is praiseworthy,  
and I am saved from my enemies.  
When the waves of death encompassed me,  
the currents of destruction made me afraid.  
The ropes of Sheol were wrapped around me;  
the snares of death were opposite me.  
In my distress I called on the LORD,  
and cried out to my God;  
from His temple He heard my voice.  
My cry *reached* His ears.  
Then the earth quaked and trembled;  
the foundations of the heavens rumbled and shook,  
because He was angry.  
Smoke rose from His nostrils,  
devouring fire from His mouth;  
coals blazed forth from Him.  
He bowed the heaven as He came down,  
with thick darkness under His feet.  
He rode upon a cherub as He flew,  
and appeared upon the wings of the wind.  
He made darkness canopies around Him,  
dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.  
From the brightness before Him  
embers of fire are kindled.  
The LORD thundered from heaven,  
and the Most High uttered His voice.  
He sent out arrows and dispersed them;  
*with* lightning He sent them into confusion.  
The channels of the sea appeared,  
the foundations of the world were exposed  
with the rebuke of the LORD,  
from the blast of breath from His nostrils.  
He reached from on high and took me;  
He drew me out of mighty waters.  
He rescued me from my strong enemy,  
from those who hate me;  
for they were stronger than I.  
They confronted me in the day of my disaster,  
but the LORD was my support.  
He brought me to the open expanse;  
He rescued me, for He delighted in me.  
The LORD did for me according to my righteousness;  
according to the cleanness of my hands He recompensed me.  
For I have kept the ways of the LORD,  
and I have not become guilty against my God.

For all His judgments are before me,  
and I have not abandoned His statutes.  
I am blameless toward Him,  
and I have kept myself from guilt.  
The LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,  
according to my cleanness in His sight.  
With the faithful You prove Yourself faithful;  
with the blameless You prove Yourself blameless;  
with the pure You show Yourself pure;  
but with the perverse You show Yourself shrewd.  
You deliver a humble people;  
but Your eyes are upon the exalted to bring them down.  
For You are my lamp, O LORD;  
the LORD illuminates my darkness.  
For by You I can run *over* a channel;  
by my God I can leap over a wall.  
As for God, His way is perfect;  
the word of the LORD is proven;  
He is a shield  
for all who take refuge in Him.  
For who is God except the LORD?  
And who is a rock except our God?  
God is my strong fortress,  
and He sets the blameless on His way.  
He makes my feet like hinds' *feet*;  
He sets me on my high places.  
He trains my hand for battle,  
so that my arm may bend a bow of bronze.  
You have given me a shield of Your salvation,  
and Your humility has made me great.  
You widen my stride under me,  
and my feet do stagger.  
I pursued my enemies and destroyed them;  
I did not turn back until they were consumed.  
I consumed them and shattered them so that they did not rise;  
they fell under my feet.  
You girded me with strength for the battle;  
You subjugated under me those who rose up against me.  
You caused my enemies to retreat from me;  
I destroyed those who hated me.  
They looked, but there was no one to save them,  
to the LORD, but He did not respond.  
I crushed them like the dust of the land,  
like the mud of the streets, I ground them and stamped them down.  
You have also delivered me from the strivings of my people;  
You have kept me as the head of the nations.  
A people whom I have not known will serve me.

Foreigners submit to me, cringing;  
as soon as they hear, they obey me.  
Foreigners lose heart;  
they gird themselves as they leave their fortresses.  
The LORD lives; blessed be my rock.  
May the God of the rock of my salvation be exalted,  
the God who gave me retribution  
and brought down peoples under me,  
who brought me out from my enemies.  
You exalted me above those who rose up against me;  
You delivered me from violent ones.  
Therefore, I praise You, O LORD, among the nations;  
I sing praises to Your name.  
He is a tower of salvation for His king,  
and He acts faithfully toward His anointed,  
toward David and his descendants forever.

### **Psalm 18**

**A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who addressed the words of this song to the LORD on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies.**

I love you, O LORD, my strength.  
The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,  
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,  
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.  
I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,  
so I shall be saved from my enemies.  
The cords of death encompassed me;  
the torrents of perdition assailed me;  
the cords of Sheol entangled me;  
the snares of death confronted me.  
In my distress I called upon the LORD;  
to my God I cried for help.  
From his temple he heard my voice,  
and my cry to him reached his ears.  
Then the earth reeled and rocked;  
the foundations also of the mountains trembled  
and quaked, because he was angry.  
Smoke went up from his nostrils,  
and devouring fire from his mouth;  
glowing coals flamed forth from him.  
He bowed the heavens, and came down;  
thick darkness was under his feet.

He rode on a cherub, and flew;  
he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.  
He made darkness his covering around him,  
his canopy thick clouds dark with water.  
Out of the brightness before him  
there broke through his clouds  
hailstones and coals of fire.

The LORD also thundered in the heavens,  
and the Most High uttered his voice.  
And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them;  
he flashed forth lightnings, and routed them.  
Then the channels of the sea were seen,  
and the foundations of the world were laid bare  
at your rebuke, O LORD,  
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

He reached down from on high, he took me;  
he drew me out of mighty waters.

He delivered me from my strong enemy,  
and from those who hated me;  
for they were too mighty for me.  
They confronted me in the day of my calamity;  
but the LORD was my support.  
He brought me out into a broad place;  
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;  
according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.

For I have kept the ways of the LORD,  
and have not wickedly departed from my God.  
For all his ordinances were before me,  
and his statutes I did not put away from me.  
I was blameless before him,  
and I kept myself from guilt.

Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,  
according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

With the loyal you show yourself loyal;  
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;  
with the pure you show yourself pure;  
and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.  
For you deliver a humble people,  
but the haughty eyes you bring down.  
It is you who light my lamp;  
the LORD, my God, lights up my darkness.  
By you I can crush a troop,  
and by my God I can leap over a wall.  
This God—his way is perfect;  
the promise of the LORD proves true;  
he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

For who is God except the LORD?  
And who is a rock besides our God?—  
the God who girded me with strength,  
and made my way safe.  
He made my feet like the feet of a deer,  
and set me secure on the heights.  
He trains my hands for war,  
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.  
You have given me the shield of your salvation,  
and your right hand has supported me;  
your help has made me great.  
You gave me a wide place for my steps under me,  
and my feet did not slip.  
I pursued my enemies and overtook them;  
and did not turn back until they were consumed.  
I struck them down, so that they were not able to rise;  
they fell under my feet.  
For you girded me with strength for the battle;  
you made my assailants sink under me.  
You made my enemies turn their backs to me,  
and those who hated me I destroyed.  
They cried for help, but there was no one to save them;  
they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them.  
I beat them fine, like dust before the wind;  
I cast them out like the mire of the streets.  
You delivered me from strife with the peoples;  
you made me head of the nations;  
people whom I had not known served me.  
As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me;  
foreigners came cringing to me.  
Foreigners lost heart,  
and came trembling out of their strongholds.  
The LORD lives! Blessed be my rock,  
and exalted be the God of my salvation,  
the God who gave me vengeance  
and subdued peoples under me;  
who delivered me from my enemies;  
indeed, you exalted me above my adversaries;  
you delivered me from the violent.  
For this I will extol you, O LORD, among the nations,  
and sing praises to your name.  
Great triumphs he gives to his king,  
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,  
to David and his descendants forever.

Again the LORD became angry against Israel, and He incited David against them, saying, "Go and count the people of Israel and Judah." The king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, "Go throughout all of the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and muster the people so that I may know the number of the people." Joab said to the king, "May the LORD your God add to the people however many they are one hundred times over in the sight of my lord the king. But why does my lord the king so desire this thing?" However, the king's word prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from before the king to register the people of Israel. They crossed the Jordan and camped at Aroer, south of the city, in the middle of the ravine of Gad toward Jazer. They went toward Gilead to the land of Tahtim Hodshi. Then they went toward Dan Jaan and around to Sidon. They went to the fortress of Tyre and all of the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites. They went to the Negev and Beersheba. They went throughout the entire land, and after nine months and twenty days, they came to Jerusalem. Joab gave the count of the census of the people to the king. There were eight hundred thousand capable men who could draw a sword in Israel, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand.

*Now Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. Then David said to Joab and the leaders of the people, "Go count Israel from Beersheba to Dan and bring me a report, that I may know their number." But Joab said, "May the LORD increase the number of His people one hundred times more. My lord the king, are not all of them my lord's servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should it bring guilt on Israel?" Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab, so Joab departed and went throughout all Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem. Joab gave the results of the census of the people to David: All Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and in Judah four hundred and seventy thousand men drew the sword. However, he did not include the Levites and Benjamin because the word of the king was abhorrent to Joab. Now this thing was evil in the sight of God, and He struck Israel.*

**(Why was this census so wrong? This explanation from Rev. Rick Phillips is helpful: "A census was preliminary to a draft of soldiers and a levying of taxes. It seems, therefore, that David's intent was to increase the royal power in a way that contrasted with humble reliance on God. As Deuteronomy chapter 17 so strongly insists, the human kingship of Israel was to be noticeably dependent on God's divine kingship. For Israel's king to build up the same kind of power common to pagan kings was tantamount to repudiating God's over-kingship. This seems to have been the nature of David's sin so that God was angered and acted to nip it in the bud.")**

Now the heart of David struck him after he had counted the people. David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly by what I have done. Now may the LORD take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have behaved very foolishly." When David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, the seer for David, saying, "Go and speak to David: Thus says the LORD: Three options I am laying before you. Choose for yourself one of them, and I will do this to you." So Gad came to David and told him. He said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days of plague in your land? Now consider and advise what answer I shall return to Him who sent me." David said to Gad, "I am very distressed. Let us fall by the hand of the LORD, for His mercy is great. May I not fall by the hand of man." So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time. Seventy thousand men from the people died, from Dan to Beersheba. When the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the calamity. He said to the angel who was annihilating the people, "Enough! Now stay your hand." The angel of the LORD was at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. On seeing the angel who was striking down the people, David said to the LORD, "I am the one who has sinned and I am the one who has done wrong. These sheep, what have they done? Please, let your hand be against me and against the house of my father."

*Now this thing was evil in the sight of God, and He struck Israel. So David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in doing this thing. Now, please, take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly." And the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, "Go and speak to David, 'Thus says the LORD: Three things I offer*

*you; choose one of these for yourself that I may do to you.’ ” So Gad came to David and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Select for yourself, either three years of famine, or three months of being swept away before your foes while the sword of your enemy overtakes you, or three days of the sword of the LORD, even pestilence in the land, with the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.’ Now then consider what answer I shall return to Him who sent me.” David replied to Gad, “I am in great distress. Let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for His mercies are very great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man.” So the LORD sent a plague throughout Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he prepared to destroy it, the LORD looked and relented from the calamity. And He said to the angel bringing the destruction, “It is enough. Remove your hand.” The angel of the LORD was then standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven with his sword drawn in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, covered in sackcloth, fell on their faces. David said to God, “Was it not I who gave the command to number the people? I am the one who has sinned and surely done evil. But these sheep, what have they done? O LORD my God, I pray, let Your hand be against me and my father’s house, but do not let Your people be plagued.”*

Gad came to David that day and said to him, “Go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” So David went up according to the word of Gad, as the LORD commanded. When Araunah looked and saw the king and his servants coming toward him, he went out and bowed low to the king with his face on the ground. Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” David replied, “To purchase the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the LORD, so that the plague may be averted from the people.” Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him. Here are the oxen for the burnt offering and the threshing sledges and yokes of the oxen for wood. Everything, O king, Araunah gives to the king.” Araunah also said to the king, “May the LORD your God be favorable toward you.” However, the king said to Araunah, “No, for I will certainly purchase from you for a fair price. I will not offer up to the LORD burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David purchased the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. David built an altar to the LORD there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then the land pleaded with the LORD, and the plague was averted from Israel.

*Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to tell David that David should go up and raise an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. So David went up at the word of Gad which he delivered in the name of the LORD. Now Ornan turned and saw the angel, but his four sons who were with him hid themselves as Ornan threshed the wheat. As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David and went out from the threshing floor and bowed down before David with his face to the ground. Then David said to Ornan, “Give me the site of the threshing floor so that I may build an altar on it to the LORD. Sell it to me at full price so the plague on the people may be restrained.” So Ornan replied to David, “Take it for yourself, and let my lord the king do whatever seems good in his eyes. Look, I will give the oxen for the burnt offerings, the threshing wagons for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give it all.” Then King David said to Ornan, “No, for I will surely acquire it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David gave Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the site, and David built there an altar to the LORD and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings. He called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him by fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. So the LORD spoke to the angel, and he put away his sword in its sheath. <sup>28</sup> At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. For the tabernacle of the LORD and the altar of burnt offering that Moses had made in the wilderness were in the high place in Gibeon at that time. But David was unable to go before it to inquire of God, because he was terrified by the sword of the angel of the LORD. Then David said, “Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.”*





*So David gave instructions to gather together those sojourning in the land of Israel, and he appointed stonemasons to cut hewn stones for building the house of God. David also provided large quantities of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for the clamps as well as an abundance of bronze beyond measure, <sup>4</sup> and cedar logs without number, for the Sidonians and the Tyrians brought much cedar wood to David. Now David said, “Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all the lands. Therefore I will make preparation for it now.” So David made extensive preparations before his death.*

*Then David called Solomon his son and commanded him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. David said to Solomon, “My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and waged great wars. You shall not build a house for My name because you have shed much blood on the earth before Me. A son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. Solomon will be his name, and I will give peace and tranquility to Israel in his days. He will be the one to build a house for My name. He shall be a son to Me, and I will be a father to him, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’ “Now, my son, may the LORD be with you, and may you have success in building the house of the LORD your God just as He has spoken concerning you. Only may the LORD give you insight and understanding and give you charge over Israel so you may keep the law of the LORD your God. Then you will prosper if you carefully observe the statutes and the judgments which the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed. With great difficulty I have prepared for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver as well as innumerable quantities of bronze and iron, beyond measure. I have also prepared timber and stone to which you may add even more. Moreover you have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and men skilled in all kinds of work, craftsmen in gold, silver, bronze, and iron without number. Rise up and work, and may the LORD be with you.”*

*Then David commanded all the leaders of Israel to assist Solomon his son, saying, “Is not the LORD your God with you? Has He not given you rest all around? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and His people. Now dedicate your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Rise up and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that you may bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD along with the holy vessels of God into the house which is to be built for the name of the LORD.”*