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THE  
SECOND BOOK  
OF  
SAMUEL.

BY THE  
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## PREFACE.

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THE Second Book of Samuel is one of a series of manuals on the books of the Old Testament, which are primarily intended for the use of Students preparing for the Local Examinations of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The Introduction treats fully of the several subjects with which the Student should be acquainted, comprising full Geographical and Biographical Notes, and other important details, which are clearly set forth in the Table of Contents. The special features in the narrative are fully commented upon.

The chief alterations of the Revised Version are pointed out in footnotes, the Student being referred to the Revised Version.

In the Appendix will be found (1) a Commentary upon the most important differences between the Authorised and Revised Versions, the alterations being pointed out and explanations given of the reasons for the changes; (2) an Explanation of words and phrases, thus avoiding constant reference to the text and notes.

The general arrangement of the series will, it is believed, be found helpful to Teachers and Students. Each manual is illustrated with the necessary Maps.

Each volume is complete in itself, requiring from the Student no reference to Atlas, Biblical Dictionary or other aids.

### Works of Reference useful for Students, and referred to (among others) in this Work :

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.  
The Holy Bible with notes (Bishop Wordsworth).  
The Speaker's Commentary.  
The Old Testament Commentary for English Readers (Ellicott).  
Israel under Samuel, Saul and David (Dr. Edersheim).  
Early History of the Hebrews (Sayce).  
Bible Illustrations (Kitto).

*Mileham.*

The Land and the Book (Thomson).  
Sinai and Palestine (Stanley).  
Lectures on the Jewish Church (Stanley).  
Keil's Commentary.  
Pearson on the Creed (Art. ii.).  
Undesigned Coincidences (Blunt).  
Heroes of Hebrew History (Wilberforce).  
History of Israel (Ewald).  
The Land of Israel (Tristram).  
Bible Research (Robinson).

F. M.

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# INTRODUCTION.

## TITLE.

**The Second Book of Samuel**, otherwise called the **Second Book of Kings**.

To understand the double title we must consider the two Books of Samuel along with the two Books of Kings.

In the Hebrew MSS. we find *two* books, not *four*, viz. :

I. and II. Samuel as *one* book.

I. and II. Kings as *one* book.

And these books are under different names.

In the Septuagint the books are divided and regarded as *four* books on the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, *i.e.* :

| <i>Hebrew.</i>        |                | <i>Septuagint.</i>    |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| First Book of Samuel  | <i>becomes</i> | First Book of Kings.  |
| Second Book of Samuel | <i>becomes</i> | Second Book of Kings. |
| First Book of Kings   | <i>becomes</i> | Third Book of Kings.  |
| Second Book of Kings  | <i>becomes</i> | Fourth Book of Kings. |

**The Vulgate** follows the same division as the Septuagint.

**The Authorised Version** follows the Septuagint in dividing the books into four, but retains the Hebrew names of Samuel and Kings.

Thus we get an explanation of the double title.

**Second Book of Samuel** = the second portion of the Hebrew writing, styled in their MSS. the Book of Samuel.

**Second Book of Kings** = the second portion of the four divisions into which the writers of the Septuagint divided the Hebrew books of Samuel and Kings.

Either title is appropriate, for as both Saul and David were anointed by Samuel, the Books—or rather, Book—of Samuel may appropriately bear the name of the great prophet; not because he wrote it, but because it describes his great work.

The title, "Second Book of Kings," may also be regarded as appropriate if we view the work in the light of its being a record of the foundation of the monarchy.

N.B.—In dealing with many questions, such as Date, Authorship, etc., it will be necessary to regard the two books as a connected whole.

## THE AUTHOR.

**The Books of Samuel must be regarded as a compilation from various sources.** They cannot be the work of Samuel entirely, even if he wrote a portion of the First Book, for his death is recorded in 1 Sam. xxv. 1.

There is no indication to guide us in assigning the compilation to any

particular writer, and it is not probable that Samuel himself wrote any portion of the Books.

The Books of Samuel are evidently the work of one and the same writer.

## THE DESIGN OF THE WRITER IN THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

The history of Israel may be divided into three great periods:—

### I. The Theocracy.

*Commencing* with the call of Abraham (as a family), and by the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai (as a nation).

*Ending* with the overthrow of the worship at Shiloh by the Philistines.

### II. The Monarchy.

*Commencing* with the establishment of the House of David upon the throne. Saul is the first to have the title of king, but the monarchy proper does not commence till the reign of David.

*Ending* with the destruction of Solomon's Temple by the Babylonian armies.

### III. The Hierarchy.

*Commencing* at the return from the Babylonish Captivity.

*Ending* with the destruction of the last Temple of Jerusalem by the Romans.

The Books of Samuel deal with the transition period between the fall of the Theocracy and the establishment of the Monarchy.

It is the design of the writer to show how this came about according to the Divine plan.

He does not attempt to give a full historical account of the period, but contents himself by selecting events which illustrate his purpose.

1. **Eli's Judgeship.** Nothing more is told us than the overthrow of the Tabernacle services at Shiloh and the causes which led to it, viz. the decay of the national and religious life, and particularly the degradation of the services of the Sanctuary through the greed and immorality of the sons of Eli.
2. **The Life of Samuel.** Very little is said of the details of his work. His early life is given fully, to show why and how he was called and prepared for his great work in reviving the *religious* feeling of the nation.
3. **Saul.** Much of his reign is purposely omitted. The circumstances of his election are given in detail, as being needed to illustrate the inauguration of the Monarchy. Sufficient of his exploits is

recorded to show that the choice of Saul was a wise one for the purpose of leading the people to victory. He was worthy to be king, but he was a king *after the people's heart*.

The causes which led to his rejection are fully recorded, to show that such a king is not the ideal monarch *after God's heart*.

The Second Book of Samuel deals with David's reign and the establishment of the Monarchy on a permanent basis. We cannot consider the Monarchy established till Solomon succeeded David.

Viewing the history in this light we can clearly grasp the design of the writer. He is concerned not with a history of the times, but selects events which point out the great purposes of Jehovah in guiding the fortunes of His chosen people.

## DESIGN OF THE WRITER IN THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

The aim of the author is very apparent in the Second Book of Samuel, where we have David's reign marked in two distinct divisions, viz. :—

**First Division.** David's rise and prosperity, chapters i.—ix. ; of which only chapters v. and viii. are connected with David's wars, which must have occupied a considerable part of the first fifteen years of his reign at Jerusalem.

The writer is concerned mainly with God's dealings with the chosen king, thus :—

1. How the kingdom came to him through a series of natural events. David's patience and self-restraint in waiting upon the pleasure of Jehovah are very conspicuous. This section occupies chapters i.—iv.
2. The capture of Jerusalem, and the removal of the Ark to the capital, take up part of chapter v. and the whole of chapters vi.—vii.
3. The wars are mentioned very briefly, and simply give us the manner in which David extended his dominions.

The period ends with a nation united both politically and religiously, and with the kingdom comprising the full extent promised by Jehovah to His people. So an enumeration is given of David's officers.

**Second Division.** David's sin and its consequences. The war with Ammon is described in detail, because David committed his great sin during the progress of this war. Chapters x.—xx. relate the personal history of David, beginning with his great sin and tracing in detail the consequences resulting therefrom.

The section ends with a second enumeration of David's officers, thus telling us of the restored prosperity of his reign.

The lessons are : Sin and its punishment. Repentance, bringing forgiveness and re-establishment. But the marks of the sin are not effaced.

The Appendix gives us God's visitations on the people.

1. For Saul's cruelty to the Gibeonites, and for his breach of the covenant made with them.
2. For David's sin in numbering the people.

Note. How historical facts are related briefly, whilst circumstances that illustrate the principle of Divine rule are given in detail.

## DATE.

The Earliest Date that can be assigned is after the division of the kingdom.

Reasons :

1. There are various references to a period later than the recorded events, e.g. :—
  - (a) The priests of Dagon do not "tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day" (1 Sam. v. 5).
  - (b) The stone Abel is said to remain "unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite" (1 Sam. vi. 18).
  - (c) David caused his decision on the division of the spoil taken from the Amalekites to become "a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day" (1 Sam. xxx. 25).
2. The mention of the Kings of Judah in connection with Ziklag. "Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day" (1 Sam. xxvii. 6).
3. The whole length of David's reign is mentioned. "David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years" (2 Sam. v. 4).
4. In the Septuagint text there are two allusions to events in the reign of Rehoboam.

Conclusion. The Books of Samuel must have been written after the death of David, and the reference to the Kings of Judah is almost conclusive that they were written after the division of the kingdom into Israel and Judah.

If the Septuagint text be correct, we have positive evidence on this point.

Latest Date cannot be long after the division.

Reasons :

1. There is no allusion to the decay of the Kingdoms.
2. There is no allusion to the Captivity.
3. The Hebrew is remarkably pure, and free from Chaldaisms and later forms of Hebrew, differing substantially from the language of the Books of Kings, where the Hebrew used evidently belongs to a later date.

We may reasonably conclude that the Books of Samuel were drawn up not long after the division of the kingdom.

## SCOPE AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

The Second Book of Samuel (with which should be included 1 Kings i. and ii.) comprises the reign of David, and therefore extends over a period of **Forty Years**. There is only one event accurately marked in time, viz., the anointing of David as King over all Israel, which took place  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years after the death of Saul. But important events are—

1. The Length of Ish-bosheth's reign.
2. The Capture of Jerusalem.
3. The Philistine Wars.
4. The Bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem.
5. David's Resolution to build a Temple.
6. David's Wars and Victories.
7. David's Kindness to Mephibosheth.
8. David's Sin.
9. Absalom's Rebellion.
10. The Three Years' Famine. The Expiation of Saul's sin towards the Gibeonites.
11. The Numbering of the People and the Pestilence.

To what parts of David's reign may these events be assigned?

### I. The Reign of Ish-bosheth.

We have the following notes of time:—

- (a) "*Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years*" (ii. 10).
- (b) That immediately after the death of Ish-bosheth all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron to make him king over Israel (v. 1).
- (c) That David reigned at Hebron over Judah seven years and six months (v. 4).

Do the two years of Ish-bosheth's reign coincide with the *earlier* or the *latter* part of David's reign at Hebron?

If these two years coincide with the earlier part of David's reign at Hebron, we must conclude that David continued to reign five years and a half at Hebron after the deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth. *This is most improbable.*

It is better to adopt the view that Abner was occupied some five years after the death of Saul in recovering the land taken by the Philistines on the west of Jordan. At the conclusion of this period he caused Ish-bosheth to be crowned, and then marched south against David, meeting the forces of Joab at Gibeon (see Abner, p. xci.).

### II. The Capture of Jerusalem.

"*In Jerusalem*" David "*reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah*" (v. 5).

So this event took place immediately after the anointing of David at Hebron as king over Israel. He may have taken advantage of the

great assembly at Hebron, which would furnish him with an adequate force to undertake the enterprise.

### III. The Philistine Wars.

The two battles with the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim took place immediately after the capture of Jerusalem (v. 17), and before David could have fortified the city and have erected his palace (see p. 19).

### IV. The Bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem.

Most probably after the two defeats of the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim and before the great series of wars by which David consolidated his kingdom.

### V. David's Resolution to build a Temple.

This is said to have taken place "*when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies*" (vii. 1).

We gather from this—

- (a) that David's palace was built, and so the date must be some few years at least after the capture of Jerusalem.
- (b) That it was a time of peace. This time of peace cannot be after the great war with Ammon, which is coincident with David's sin, otherwise Nathan would have referred to that sin as a reason why David could not be allowed to build the Temple, and David would himself have considered such sin as excluding him from the honour of building God's house. It is reasonable to assume that David may have formed the resolution after the great campaign in which he crushed the Philistines and captured Gath, thus securing the great highway on the west coast. "*All his enemies*" may well refer to the conquest of the Philistines, for which purpose he was accepted as king by all Israel at Hebron. The final suppression of Philistine domination may thus well be described as a period of rest.

### VI. David's Wars and Victories.

The Wars of David are given in a brief summary in chapter viii., whilst the war against Ammon is given very fully as being connected with David's great sin. They commenced soon after the capture of Jerusalem and ended about the middle of his reign.

The age of Solomon assists us in determining this date. He was the youngest of the four sons of Bathsheba, and was of sufficient age to be crowned king in his father's last days. So we may conclude that David's wars occupied a period of about thirteen years, concluding in the 20th year of his reign.

With these wars are connected the exploits mentioned in chapters **xxi. - xxiii.**

**VII. David's Kindness to Mephibosheth.**

This must have occurred about the middle of the reign. The indications of time are two only.

- (a) Mephibosheth was five years old when Saul died (iv. 4).
- (b) When David took notice of him he "*had a young son whose name was Micha*" (ix. 12).

So we may conclude that the incident is connected with a period that may include the fifteen or twenty years after the commencement of David's reign.

**VIII. David's Sin.**

Some two or three years at least previous to the birth of Solomon (see David's wars), and so about the 20th year of his reign.

**IX. Absalom's Rebellion.**

We get the following notes of time:—

- (a) Absalom was born at Hebron after David began to reign.
- (b) Two years elapsed after the outrage on Tamar before Absalom took vengeance on Amnon (xiii. 23).
- (c) Absalom was three years in exile at Geshur (xiii. 38).
- (d) He was two full years in Jerusalem before he was fully reconciled to David (xiv. 28).
- (e) It is said that "*it came to pass after forty years*" (xv. 7) that Absalom requested to be allowed to go to Hebron to perform his vow. The time "*forty years*" is generally considered to be an error for four years. Four years would give ample time for the winning of the hearts of the men of Israel. So the rebellion could not have taken place earlier than eleven to twelve years after David's sin with Bathsheba.

**X. The Three Years' Famine.**

There is no note of time, but two circumstances in the reign give some indication of the time of the occurrence.

- (a) It is specifically mentioned that David "*spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan*" (xxi. 7).
- (b) Shimei in cursing David taunts him that the rebellion of Absalom is a return from the Lord for "*all the blood of the house of Saul*" (xvi. 8). As David was clearly innocent as regards the deaths of Saul and his sons, and of the murders of Abner and Ish-bosheth, it is most probable that Shimei is referring to the execution of the seven sons of Saul (xxi. 6).

If this conjecture on Shimei's action be correct, the famine must have occurred *after* the kindness shown to Mephibosheth, and *before* the rebellion of Absalom.

**XI. The Numbering of the People.**

There is no note of time save the word "*again*" in the first verse of chapter xxiv, which seems to indicate that the incident occurred

after the restoration of David to the throne and the re-establishment of civil authority. The motives which induced David to take the census (see p. xxxviii.) are a further confirmation that the taking of the census must be assigned to the closing years of the reign.

With these preliminary observations we may draw up a table of the chief events of the reign with approximate dates.

## CHRONOLOGY.

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| David's reign .. .. .   | B.C. 1055—1015 |
| Reign at Hebron .. .. .   | „ 1055—1048    |
| Reign at Jerusalem .. .. .  | „ 1048—1015    |
| Ish-bosheth's reign and war between David and Ish-bosheth .. .. .                 | „ 1050—1048    |
| Capture of Jerusalem, followed by bringing the Ark to Jerusalem .. .. .           | „ 1048         |
| David's wars and victories .. .. .  | „ 1046—1035    |
| In this period must be placed   |                |
| (1) The Kindness shown to Mephibosheth.   |                |
| (2) A Period of Peace (vii. 1), probably at the conclusion of the Philistine war. |                |
| (3) The Three Years' Famine (xxi.).   |                |
| Ammonite War: Sin with Bathsheba .. .. .  | „ 1038         |
| Amnon's sin .. .. .   | „ 1034         |
| The Murder of Amnon by Absalom .. .. .  | „ 1032         |
| Absalom at Geshur .. .. .   | „ 1032—1029    |
| Absalom at Jerusalem in disgrace .. .. .  | „ 1029—1027    |
| Absalom's Rebellion .. .. .   | „ 1023         |
| Renewed Prosperity and Consolidation of the Kingdom .. .. .                       | „ 1023—1015    |
| In this period must be placed the census and the subsequent plague.               |                |

## SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE.

It is impossible to assign the sources from which the compiler drew his material, but reasonable conjecture may assume that the following sources were open to him:—

1. **Contemporary Literature.** On this point there is a definite statement in 1 Chron. xxix. 29: "*Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the Book of Samuel the seer, and in the Book of Nathan the prophet, and in the Book of Gad the seer.*"
2. "The Chronicles of King David," mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24.
3. "The Manner of the Kingdom," *i.e.* a document containing, we may assume, the details connected with the election of Saul, and

prescribing the duties of the divinely appointed king, and limiting his powers. This has been well termed "*the Charter of the Kingdom.*" (See 1 Sam. x. 25.)

4. The National Songs and Poems, particularly the Book of Jasher. (See 2 Sam. i. 18.)
5. The Psalms of David.
6. The National Collection of Genealogies.
7. Prophetical Records, preserved in the Schools of the Prophets.

As regards these different sources, we may fairly assume that we may assign to them somewhat as follows:—

1. *To the Book (or Acts) of Samuel.* The sayings and doings of Samuel, which are evidently written from the point of view which Samuel would adopt. Thence may have been taken the story of Samuel's life, which includes the greater part of Saul's reign.
2. *The National Collection of Genealogies or Chronicles.* To these the compiler may be indebted for—
  - (a) Saul's genealogy (1 Sam. ix. 2).
  - (b) Saul's victory over the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi. 1-11).
  - (c) The statement as regards the length of Saul's reign (1 Sam. xiii. 1).
  - (d) The summary of Saul's wars, and account of his family (1 Sam. xiv. 47-52).
  - (e) The reign of Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. ii. 8-11; iv. 1-5).
  - (f) Particulars of David's reign, capture of Jerusalem, David's family, and list of State officials (2 Sam. v. 4-16).
  - (g) David's conquests (2 Sam. viii.).
  - (h) Second list of State officials (2 Sam. xx. 23-26).
  - (i) David's heroes and their exploits (2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39).
3. *Prophetical Records.* The visit of David to Nob, and the subsequent massacre of the priests (1 Sam. xxi., xxii.).
4. *The Book of Gad.*
  - (a) The story of David's flight from Saul, and his adventures before he became king.
  - (b) The flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xv., xvi.).
  - (c) The famine (2 Sam. xxi.).
  - (d) The pestilence (2 Sam. xxiv. Note verses 11 and 18).
5. *The Book of Nathan.*
  - (a) David's desire to build a Temple, and the message of God conveyed by Nathan, with David's Prayer and Thanksgiving (2 Sam. vii.).
  - (b) The sin with Bath-sheba, Nathan's parable with the prophecy of David's subsequent troubles (2 Sam. xi., xii.).
6. *National Songs and Poems—*
  - (a) The song of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 1-10).
  - (b) The song of the women on the exploits of Saul and David (1 Sam. xviii. 7).

This source is strongly marked in 2 Samuel by the Elegy on Saul and Jonathan (taken from the Book of Jasher) (2 Sam. i. 17-27), and the Elegy on Abner (2 Sam. iii. 33, 34).

7. *Psalms*. On this heading, see p. 119.

## THE ARK.

Contained originally:—

1. The Two Tables of Stone (the Tables of the Covenant), on which were written the Ten Commandments.
2. A golden pot containing an omer of manna.
3. Aaron's rod which budded.

In the time of Solomon it contained only the Two Tables of Stone (1 Kings viii. 9).

### History of the Ark.

- (1) It led the Israelites under Joshua across the Jordan on dry land (Josh. 4).
- (2) It was carried round the walls of Jericho once a day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day, and then the walls of Jericho fell down (Josh. vi. 1-20).
- (3) On entering Canaan the Ark was set up at Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1).
- (4) In the judgeship of Eli the Ark was taken into the camp of the Israelites when they were advancing against the Philistines. The Israelites were defeated; Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were slain, and the Ark was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv.).
- (5) The Ark was placed by the Philistines in the house of their god Dagon, at Ashdod. When Dagon's image fell before it, and the Philistines were smitten with emerods, they sent the Ark from Ashdod to Gath, from Gath to Ekron (1 Sam. v.).
- (6) Finally the Ark was sent back to Israel in a cart drawn by two milch kine, who of their own accord drew it to Beth-shemesh (1 Sam. vi. 1-18).
- (7) The men of Beth-shemesh were struck dead for looking into the Ark. So it was conveyed to the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam. vi. 19; vii. 2).
- (8) In the time of Saul the Ark is mentioned as being with Saul at Gibeah (1 Sam. xiv. 18). But this may be an error, and for "Ark" we should read "*Ephod*."
- (9) Afterwards it was again at Kirjath-jearim, whence David conveyed it in a new cart, but when Uzzah was struck dead for touching it on the journey it was taken to the house of Obed-edom (2 Sam. vi. 1-11).
- (10) David subsequently conveyed it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi. 12).

- (11) When David fled from Absalom, Zadok and Abiathar accompanied the king in his flight, and took the Ark with them, but David sent it back to Jerusalem (2 Sam. xv. 24-29).
- (12) It was finally placed by Solomon in the Temple.
- (13) Manasseh set a carved image in the house of God, and probably removed the Ark to make room for it (2 Chron. xxxiii. 7).
- (14) It was re-instated in the Temple by Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 3).
- (15) It was either destroyed or lost at the time of the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and was wanting in the second Temple.

On the Ark in David's reign (see p. xxvi.).

**NOTE 1.**—On the length of time the Ark was at Kirjath-jearim.

From 1 Sam. vii. 2, "*And it came to pass, while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all Israel lamented after the Lord.*"

It would appear from this that the Ark was at Kirjath-jearim for only twenty years. This conveys a wrong impression, for:

The Twenty Years refers to period of Philistine domination after the sack of Shiloh, during which time Samuel was labouring earnestly in his work of the spiritual reformation of Israel. At the conclusion of the twenty years, he gained the great victory signalized by setting up the stone of Ebenezer.

The Ark was at Kirjath-jearim till removed by David (2 Sam. vi. 1-10). So it was at Kirjath-jearim during the twenty years of the Philistine oppression during the judgeship of Samuel, the forty years of Saul's reign, and some eight to ten years of David's reign, about eighty years in all.

## PROPHETS AND PROPHECYING.

**Prophet.** *It is a common error* to associate the name only with one who utters predictions of the future.

The Hebrew word "*nabi*" signifies "one who announces or pours forth" the declarations of God. The Greek word signifies one who speaks for another.

Thus Aaron is appointed as Moses' prophet (Ex. vii. 1). In Ex. iv. 16, he is termed the spokesman of Moses.

The prophets usually prefaced their utterances with "*Thus saith the Lord,*" and their messages are constantly called "*The word of the Lord.*"

They spoke then in the name of the Lord, and their utterances might contain predictions of the future, but foretelling future events was not necessarily the object of their message.

*It is also a common error* to regard the prophets as isolated individuals, inspired at some crisis in the history of the nation to come forward and declare the word of Jehovah. On the contrary, there was a trained Prophetic Order.

**The Prophetic Order.** Though there were prophets before the time of Samuel, yet to him belongs the honour of establishing systematic religious training of the prophets. He saw that the priesthood had failed in the religious instruction of the people, and determined to remedy the evil by a system of trained teachers.

So he gathered the students into bodies, known as—

"*The sons of the Prophets*," i.e. the students under one teacher, the chief or instructor being styled "father." (Compare *Abbot* = father, as head of a monastery.)

"*Schools of the Prophets*," a title which can hardly have been known in Samuel's day. Schools, in the sense of Theological Colleges, belong to a later period, though Samuel appears to have gathered a band of students under his own personal teaching at Ramah. *Naioth* appears to be the name of the dwelling which formed their common residence, and we find Samuel at the head of the students directing their religious exercises (1 Sam. xix. 20).

Later we find prophets collected at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal, where schools or theological colleges appear to have been established (2 Kings ii. 3-5; iv. 38).

#### *Their training.*

These students were instructed in sacred learning and religious exercises, and were led to cultivate, especially by psalmody and music, the devotional feelings which might fit them, when occasion called, to become the messengers of God and teachers of the people.

Some, after their period of training, returned to their own homes and to their ordinary occupation, and thus, as preachers and teachers, became the means of keeping alive the spiritual life of the nation in the villages and remoter districts.

Others were employed in keeping a record of events. To the writings of these prophets we owe the histories of Elijah and Elisha. The writings of Samuel, Nathan, Gad and others are specially mentioned as authorities consulted by the compiler of the Books of Kings.

**Prophecying**, as mentioned in the First Book of Samuel, has no reference to the prediction of future events. It is descriptive of the religious excitement bringing about an ecstatic condition under the inspiration of hymns, or other religious exercises. Even Saul's fit of frenzy in which he threatened David's life is described as "prophecying" (1 Sam. xviii. 10). The dervishes of the Arab tribes present a fair illustration of "prophecying."

But this ecstatic excitement was not the essence of Hebrew prophecy, and the latter soon divested itself of it.

**Prophet and Seer.** In the days of Samuel the title given to inspired men is changed. "*For he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer*" (1 Sam. ix. 9).

**Seer.** Heb. *Roeh* = seer, or *Hoseh* = gazer, denotes one who sees visions, i.e. receives the will of God by dreams or visions.

**Prophet.** Heb. *Nabi*. The root of the word signifies "to boil or bubble over."

Its actual meaning is "to pour forth exciting utterances."

Biblical meaning, "to speak under divine impulse," as the forth teller, the expounder or interpreter of the Word of God.

The three methods of inquiry of God are mentioned in 1 Sam xxviii. 6:—

- (1) **Dreams**—this corresponds to the title "seer."
- (2) **Urim**—this would be the duty of the "priest."
- (3) **Prophets**—this would be the duty of the "prophet," as the interpreter of the Word of God.

The first two methods seem to have disappeared. The "seer" quickly disappears in the early monarchy. The "Urim" was lost at the destruction of the Temple, but the prophets remained as the recognized expounders of God's purposes.

In the transition period of "seer" and "prophet" we find:—

**Samuel, Gad and Heman** (Samuel's grandson) called "seers."

**Nathan and David** are invariably referred to under the new name of "prophet."

### FAMILY OF SAUL

(For Table of Saul's Family, see p. 126.)

**Saul**, slain at Gilboa.

**Jonathan**, the great friend of David, slain at Gilboa (see p. cix.).

**Ishui**, supposed to be identical with Abinadab; if so he fell at Gilboa.

**Melchi-shua**, slain at Gilboa.

**Abinadab** (see Ishui). If these two are not identical, we must suppose that Abinadab was the fourth son of Saul, and that he perished with his father on Mount Gilboa, whilst Ishui must have died previously.

**Merab**, see p. cxi.

**Michal**, see p. cxi.

**Ish-bosheth**, see p. ciii.

**Mephi-bosheth**, see p. cix.

**Abner**, see p. xci.

This short summary of the family of Saul is given to illustrate—

1. How the assassination of Abner and the subsequent murder of Ish-bosheth removed all effective opposition to David's rule on the part of the house of Saul. The living male representative of Saul's house was Mephi-bosheth, whom David bound to himself by ties of gratitude, and who, from his physical infirmities, was not fitted to reign in such troublous times.
2. Why David was so determined on the restoration of his wife Michal. This marriage was a connecting link between the houses of David and Saul.

**NOTE.**—Yet there was opposition to David's claims by a certain section of the tribe of Benjamin. Shimei appears to have been the leader of this party. When Shimei was put to death by Solomon, the tribe of Benjamin finally united its fortunes with the tribes of Judah, and remained constant to the alliance at the period of the great schism in the reign of Rehoboam.

## DAVID.

(For Family of Jesse and Family of David, see pp. 127, 128.)

### HIS CHARACTER AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

#### His appearance.

1. Of short stature. This is implied in the contrast with his tall brother Eliab (1 Sam. xvi. 7).
2. Ruddy, *i.e.* with reddish or auburn hair, in contrast to the darkness of complexion generally associated with his country and race.
3. Bright eyes. The beauty of his eyes is specially mentioned, "*withal of a beautiful countenance*" (1 Sam. xvi. 12).
4. Remarkable for his graceful appearance, "*goodly to look to*" (1 Sam. xvi. 12).
5. Of wonderful strength and activity. Compared "to the wild gazelle with feet like hart's feet, with arms strong enough to break a bow of steel" (Ps. xviii. 33, 34). The family appear to have been noted for agility and speed of foot, *e.g.* :  
*Asahel, "light of foot as a wild roe"* (2 Sam. ii. 18).  
*Joab was the first to scale the walls of Jerusalem* (1 Chron. xi. 6).

#### His accomplishments.

He was accomplished in the arts of his age and country.

1. A Poet. As evidenced in the Psalms.
2. A Musician. His instrument was a "harp," so called, a light and portable stringed instrument, somewhat like a lyre.  
 To this instrument he sang the verses which he composed, and thus solaced the lonely hours spent in watching his flock. His remarkable skill on the harp was well known throughout the neighbourhood, and became the means of his introduction to the court of Saul.
3. A student of God's Word. "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*" He was known to be a man of God.

#### Some of his qualities :

1. A man of deep feelings, a faithful friend, and an affectionate father.
2. A born ruler, possessing the power of exerting an extraordinary influence over the minds and hearts of others.
3. He inspired a passionate loyalty in his subjects, for they felt that his own personal affection entered into his public life, and that he was devoted to his people.
4. He was emphatically a man "after God's own heart" (see p. xxi.).  
 "He was a born king of Israel by his natural gifts. His immense activity and martial spirit united him by a natural succession to the earlier chiefs of Israel, whilst his accomplishments and genius fitted him especially to exercise a vast control over the whole future greatness of the Church and Commonwealth" (STANLEY).

## HIS EARLY LIFE,

**His occupation** was

The keeping of his father's flocks round Bethlehem.

Such an occupation was attended with difficulty and danger. The sheep were pastured in the wild, desolate wilderness of Judæa. The sheep had to be protected from the depredations of robber bands and from the attacks of fierce beasts of prey, and often to be rescued from serious straits in the mountains.

Amidst the rugged hills, David and his companions became thorough mountaineers, accustomed to exercise, inured to fatigue, and trained to perpetual watchfulness.

In his lonely watchings he learned to commune with God. The simple faith with which he ascribes his deliverance, from the lion and the bear, to the Lord, and with which he advances to meet the Philistine, sufficiently indicates the early piety of David.

## LIFE AT SAUL'S COURT.

We notice his advancement in the court—

1. Saul's armour-bearer.
2. His friendship with Jonathan.
3. Captain over a thousand.
4. Captain over the king's body-guard, second only to Abner the captain of the host.
5. The king's son-in-law.
6. Occupying a special seat at the king's table.

His popularity with the people, and his influence with the army, quickly aroused the jealousy of Saul. So David had a very difficult part to play. Throughout his behaviour was most discreet. He behaved himself wisely (1 Sam. xviii. 30).

He was distinguished for his prowess and modesty, whilst his integrity and loyalty to Saul were most marked.

His head was not turned by success. Even if his successes and rapid advancement appeared to indicate that he was the destined successor of Saul, he never showed by deed, word, or look that he had any designs on the throne.

This training in the court, and the spiritual discipline of self-restraint, were great factors in moulding the character of David, and in fitting him to fill the throne.

## DAVID IN EXILE.

On the exile of David we may remark—

1. **His motive.** Simply to secure his own safety. David and his four hundred men were not in rebellion against Saul.
2. **The Object.** The training of David spiritually and outwardly.
 

*Spiritually.* David was being fitted for his calling by being taught constant dependence upon God.

*Outwardly.* David was being fitted to rule. The experience gained in controlling a band of men under such trying circumstances was of great service to the future king.

The military training, *e.g.* endurance of hardships, daring in battle, boldness in conception, swiftness in delivering a blow, all combined to train a force which later enabled David to do what Saul, diverted by his murderous hate of David, was incapable of doing, *viz.*, to meet and rout the enemies of Israel, and thus to firmly establish the kingdom.

"Thus in the Providence of God, the inward and outward training of David were the result of circumstances over which he had no control, and which seemed to threaten consequences of an entirely different character. How in those times of persecution outlaws became heroes, and of what deeds of personal bravery they were capable in the wars of the Lord, we learn from the records of their names (1 Chron. xii.) and of some of their achievements (xxiii. 13, etc.; comp. 1 Chron. xi. 15)" (EDERSHEIM).

3. His occupation. When not concerned with securing his own safety, David appears to have employed his men in protecting the south of Judah from the depredations of the marauding tribes.

#### 4. Effect on David's Character.

1. A development of that ready sagacity, natural to one who had so long moved with his life in his hand.  
The Psalms of this period of his life teem with images drawn from personal reminiscences.
2. The growth of his dependence upon God, nurtured by his hairbreadth escapes.
3. The confidence that he has been delivered from dangers and distress for some great purpose.

"The means by which this deliverance was achieved were, as far as we know, those which we see in the Books of Samuel—the turns and chances of Providence, his own extraordinary activity, the faithfulness of his followers, the unexpected increase of his friends. But the act of deliverance itself is described in the language which belongs to the descent upon Mount Sinai in the Passage of the Red Sea. It was the Exodus, though in a single soul, yet of a soul that reflected the whole nation. It was the giving of a second Law, though through the living tablets of the heart, deeper and vaster than the whole legislation of Moses. It was the beginning of a New Dispensation" (STANLEY).

5. How the throne came to David. Partly by acts over which he had no control; partly through his own prudence and foresight.

##### 1. His own acts.

- (1) His wise conduct and daring exploits whilst at the court of Saul, winning the esteem of the people and the affection of the army.
- (2) His protection of the south of Judah against raids, and his conciliation of the people by presents.
- (3) His self-restraint in sparing Saul.
- (4) His execution of the murderers of Saul, of Abner, and of Ish-bosheth.

## 2. Acts beyond his control :

- (1) The persecution of Saul, which resulted :—
- (a) In giving David a band of devoted followers.
  - (b) In the admirable training for government, and in the art of war, given to David in his exile.
  - (c) In the alienation of the nation from the house of Saul.
- (2) The death of Saul and his sons at Gilboa, removing any *great rival* to his authority.
- (3) The deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth.

"And thus, at last, not by his own act, but through circumstances over which he had no control—allowed by Him who gives full liberty to each man, though he overrules even the darkest deeds of the wicked for the evolving of good, David was left undisputed claimant to the throne of Israel. Faith, patience and integrity were vindicated; the Divine promises to David had come true in the course of natural events; and all this was far better than even if Saul had voluntarily resigned his place, or Abner succeeded in his plans" (EDWARDSISM, p. 162).

## DAVID CONTRASTED WITH SAUL

**Saul, a king after the people's heart.**

Saul exactly represented the feeling of the nation, both outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly he represented the majesty and dignity associated with the regal state in other countries. He was an autocrat, yielding his will to no one. He ruled as a man, as a despot, owning no submission to Divine command.

**David, a king after God's own heart.**

He was eminent for his personal qualities, but these alone would not have qualified him for the high distinction of establishing a dynasty.

His life is tainted with sin and immorality. But these in themselves are not a disqualification. In spite of his failings and sins his heart was right. He never lost hold of the principle of subjection to the will of God, *e.g.* :—

- (a) His conduct when his sin with Bath-sheba is brought home to him by Nathan (xii. 1-23)
- (b) His submission to God's will when bidden by God to choose his punishment for his sin in numbering the people. "*Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man*" (xxiv. 14).

The Penitential Psalms tell us how real was David's contrition for his sins, contrasting strongly with Saul's attitude on the occasion of his sin against Amalek. Saul endeavoured to excuse himself by putting the blame on the people. He was more concerned about the punishment than the sin, and desired Samuel "to honour him before the people."

David's heart was right; his public principle was right; he recognised that the principle on which the monarchy of Israel was founded must be spiritual, Divine—a kingdom in which the will of the earthly king should be in avowed subjection to that of the heavenly King.

And so he and his kingdom were the type of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. Jesus came not to do His own will, but that of His Father in heaven.

We may remark another contrast between Saul and David :—

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>As king.</i> Saul put his will before the Divine will.   | David subordinated his will to the Divine will.  |
| <i>Prophet.</i> Saul rebelled against the advice and control of Samuel acting as prophet in telling him God's will. | David, himself a prophet, had Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer, as his counsellors and advisers. |
| <i>Priests.</i> Saul massacred the priests.   | David established and organized the worship at Jerusalem.  |

Saul may be compared to Esau, David to Jacob. Esau, with his manly qualities, is a picture of the noble, valiant king. But he valued the birthright so little, and so despised the spiritual privileges of the chosen people, that he bartered his spiritual heritage for a mess of pottage. So Saul failed to grasp the spiritual principle of the Hebrew monarchy. Grasping at the shadow of an earthly kingdom, he missed the fundamental principle of the ideal kingdom.

Jacob, in his human frailty, compares with David and his sins. But, as Jacob never lost hold of the "promise," his faith in it being the principle of his life, so David never forgot the typical idea of the Kingdom of God.

How could David, who sinned so grievously with Bath-sheba, be a "man after God's own heart"? Thomas Carlyle thus comments upon this point :—

"David, the Hebrew king, had fallen into sins enough; blackest crimes; there was no want of sins. And thereupon the unbelievers sneer, and ask, Is this your man after God's own heart? The sneer, I must say, seems to me but a shallow one. What are faults, what are the outward details of a life, if the inner secret of it, the remorse, the temptations true, often-baffled, never-ended struggle of it, be forgotten? . . . David's life and history, as written for us in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given us of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul towards what is good and best. Struggle often baffled, sore baffled down as into entire wreck; yet a struggle never ended; ever, with tears, repentance, true unconquerable purpose, begun anew." (*Heroes and Hero Worship*, p. 56.)

## THE REIGN OF DAVID.

### The Situation at the death of Saul.

1. David and his followers homeless at Ziklag.
2. The army of Saul defeated. The King and his sons slain.
3. The North in the hands of the Philistines.
4. Abner and the remnant of Saul's adherents at Mahanaim, beyond Jordan.

**The Work before David.**

To found the Monarchy in its true sense, *i.e.* :—

1. To form the disorganized and jealous tribes into a united nation.
2. To restore religious worship at a national religious centre.
3. To teach the nation that the temporal monarchy was to be in subordination to Divine Rule.

**His Difficulties.**

1. Saul's misgovernment had caused internal disorganisation.
2. Abner still commanded the allegiance of the partisans of Saul's house. A rival monarchy existed in David's own nation.
3. The tribes were divided by conflicting interests. They had not yet learned to pull together to form a united nation.
4. A great part of the country was in the hands of the Philistines.
5. There was no sacred place, or worship, sufficiently established to be a rallying point for the nation.

So David dared not make any open or decided effort to unite the kingdom. The Philistines might have crushed him had he done so.

**FIRST PERIOD.****The Reign at Hebron. (*Seven years and six months.*)**

The death of Saul made it no longer necessary for David to remain in exile. The sack of Ziklag by the Amalekites had removed any domestic ties binding the exiles to Philistia.

But David does not act without Divine guidance. After inquiry of the Lord he takes up his abode at Hebron, where he is anointed king over the house of Judah. And there he sits down to wait God's pleasure.

We may note at this stage David's politic conduct—

1. His defence of the south, and his presents to various cities had gained him the esteem and friendship of Judah.
2. His immediate punishment of Saul's murderer.
3. His message to the men of Jabesh-gilead, thanking them for their conduct with regard to the dead bodies of Saul and Jonathan.
4. His waiting policy. \* He neither roused the suspicions of the Philistines nor did he attack Abner.

\* Sayce concludes that David was a sort of tributary princelet to the Philistines. But their tacit acquiescence in David's rule at Hebron may be explained readily :—

1. By the fact that David had resided some time in Philistia, and if he had shown such diplomacy during his stay as to win the confidence of Achish, we may credit him with similar sagacity to hide his purpose till strong enough to break with the Philistines.
2. Abner evidently fought hard and successfully to recover the north and centre of Palestine from the Philistines. Fully occupied with Abner, it would be the policy of the Philistines to act friendly towards David. They would naturally regard him as a check to Abner's schemes.

And so \*five and a-half years passed till Abner had recovered for the house of Saul the north and centre of Israel. Gilead, on the east of Jordan, had always remained in his power. And now he endeavours to push southward. He is defeated at Gibeon, and from henceforward the fortunes of David advance steadily whilst the cause of the house of Saul declines.

The quarrel between Abner and Ish-bosheth causes Abner to decide upon transferring his allegiance to the cause of David. It may be that the † offence given by Abner may have been committed purposely with the intent of causing a breach between himself and the puppet king.

The negotiations are interesting. Abner consulted with the elders of Israel and pointed out to them the hopelessness of their position, and thus won them over to join him in opening communication with David. He also secured the acquiescence of the tribe of Benjamin to his plans. He then sent messages to David, suggesting an agreement between himself and David which should unite the tribes and put an end to the civil war. David laid down one condition as a preliminary to discussing terms. He required the restoration of Michal, his wife. This being granted, Abner, with an escort of twenty men, conducts Michal to Hebron and has a private conference with David. What the actual terms of agreement were is not stated, but Abner seems to have been satisfied, for he departed from Hebron for the purpose of calling an assembly of Israel for the election of David as king. His subsequent murder by Joab is fully recorded (iii. 22-27).

The noteworthy points of these two years are:—

1. The power of Abner contrasted with the feebleness of Ish-bosheth.
2. Abner in the character of king-maker. He would be the "Earl of Warwick" of the period.
3. That David appears to have kept his negotiations with Abner secret from Joab. We may assume that, as in the case of Amasa (xix. 13), David had pledged himself to place Abner at the head of his army. David's desire to win the support of the powerful Abner leads him to make two great mistakes.
  - (a) He would reward a traitor for an act of treachery.
  - (b) He would act unfairly to Joab and his staunch supporters during his exile. Faithful service is disregarded—friends are passed over, and Abner, his malevolent private enemy and determined public opponent, is to be rewarded.

Joab recklessly shatters the king's plans by putting Abner to death under the § plea of avenging the death of his brother Asahel.

\* It is thus we account for the statement that Ish-bosheth "reigned two years" (ii. 10), i.e. Abner was five and a-half years ere he reinstated the house of Saul over the north and centre. Then the reign of Ish-bosheth may be said to commence. It lasted two years, which, with the five and a-half years of struggle with the Philistines, agrees with the seven and a-half years of David's reign at Hebron.

† The offence (iii. 6-11) was not only a gross personal insult to Ish-bosheth, but also a claim to regal position on the part of Abner. It was impossible for Ish-bosheth to ignore the gravity of the indignity offered to him.

§ For further comments on this act see Joab, pp. civ.-cviil, and Notes, p. 109.

4. The gradual decline of the house of Saul.
5. The absence of any mention of the Philistines. Abner must have broken their power effectually in the north.

The murder of Abner is followed almost immediately by the murder of Ish-bosheth. The motives that induced Baanah and Rechab to commit this act are variously given, viz. :—

1. That they determined to assassinate the weak prince in order to bring about a peaceable settlement of the kingdom, and that they hoped by the act to secure the favour of David.
2. That connected with Gibeon, and perhaps of Canaanite blood, they may have had a blood-feud with Saul on account of the massacre of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 2).

It is probable that they were actuated by some motives of private revenge.

And thus the way was open for David to ascend the throne (see pp. xx., xxi.).

### David anointed king over the whole nation.

This event occurred at Hebron, shortly after the death of Ish-bosheth. The advance was made by the northern tribes, previously incited by Abner. Now that Ish-bosheth was dead, they saw no hope for unity save in the recognition of David as king.

They advance three reasons for their approaching David.

1. Kinship.—“ *Behold we are thy bone and thy flesh.*”
2. David's military skill and generalship. “ *Also in time past, when Saul was King over us, thou wast he who leddest out and broughtest in Israel.*”
3. The chosen of Jehovah. “ *The Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel.*”

**Capture of Jerusalem.** David would appear to have taken advantage of the great gathering at Hebron to make an attack upon Jerusalem. On this city David had “with singular prescience” fixed as the site of his new capital. He was guided by political and military considerations.

**Politically.\*** Situated partly in Judah and partly in Benjamin, Jerusalem might be said to unite the royal houses of David and Saul, and to bind together the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. These two tribes remained loyal to Rehoboam at the Great Schism. Moreover, “it was on the ridge of the backbone of hills, which extend through the whole country from the desert to the plain of Esdraelon” (STANLEY), and thus was well situated for communication with both north and south.

**Military.** It was a natural fortress guarded by deep ravines on three sides, and formed a natural bulwark against invasion from the north

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\* “Jerusalem was an ideal centre for such a kingdom as his. It lay midway between Judah and the northern tribes, and thus as it were bound them together. At the same time it belonged to neither; its associations were Canaanite, not Hebrew, and its choice as a royal residence would excite no jealousies. Moreover, the absence of past associations with the history of Israel enabled David to do with it as he liked; it contained nothing the destruction or alteration of which would offend the prejudices of his countrymen” (SAYCE).

and west, whence attack was most to be feared. The strength of the position was such that up till the time of David it had successfully resisted the attacks of the Israelites (see p. lxxxvii.).

**The Capture.** Such was the strength of the position that the Jebusites met David with taunts and jeers, boasting that a garrison of blind and lame would be sufficient to defend the fortress. David met this taunt by offering the post of commander-in-chief to the soldier who should first scale the cliffs and mount the walls. Joab won the coveted position, climbing up the steep cliff by "the gutter" or watercourse.\*

Thus was taken "the stronghold of Zion," the hill on the north-west of Moriah, and which became afterwards known as the City of David. David extended the fortifications of the work called "The Millo," thus securing the defence of the city on the north, whilst Joab "repaired the rest of the city" (1 Chron. xi. 5).

### THE ARK IN DAVID'S REIGN.

The Ark was at Kirjath-jearim, where it had rested nearly eighty years (see p. xv.), and during that time there had been no centre for the national worship.

A war with the Philistines had been the occasion of its removal from Shiloh. Now that the power of the Philistines was broken, and the God-appointed capital had at last been won, the time had come for the removal of the Ark to Jerusalem.

This must be a national act, so thirty thousand representatives of Israel joined with David in solemn procession. But David made a fatal omission. Doubtless he intended the restoration of the Ark as an evidence of the return of the nation to the Lord, and as an act of submission to Jehovah.

But such submission must be absolute and complete, and the departure from the ordained manner in which the Ark should be conveyed would be fatal to the idea of absolute obedience to Jehovah.

According to the Law the Ark was to be handled by the Levites only, no one else was allowed even to touch it. And it must be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, and in no other manner (Numb. iv. 5-15).

But David arranged to convey the Ark in a cart, following the method by which the Philistines had sent it back to the land of Israel (1 Sam. vi. 7-15). Such a method could not meet with Divine approval, and so, when at the threshing floor of Nachon,† the oxen drawing the cart stumbled, and Uzzah, one of the sons of Abinadab, took hold of the Ark to steady it, "God smote him for his error."

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\* "The gutter," *lit.* "watercourse," may have been a gully in the face of the rock worn by the descent of water, or some subterranean aqueduct, by which the citadel was supplied with water. It has been suggested that this subterranean outlet was betrayed to Joab by one of the garrison, and that this accounts for the sparing of the inhabitants of the city.

† Nachon (2 Sam. vi. 6) = the stroke. Chidon (1 Chron. xiii. 9) = "accident."

At first David was "displeased" (*i.e.* vexed) at this check to his plans, but subsequently fear of the Lord caused him to carry the Ark to the house of Obed-edom, a Kohathite Levite of Gath-rimmon, and thus one of that branch of the Levites to whom the carrying of the Ark had been assigned by Moses (Numb. iv. 15). From this it is clear that David grasped the full meaning of the judgment that fell upon Uzzah.

The Ark remained three months in the care of Obed-edom. The natural blessings that were poured upon the household of Obed-edom encouraged David to renew the attempt, and on this occasion all the ordinances of the Law were complied with. (Full particulars are given in 1 Chron. xv. 1-25.)

The Levites, who had been previously sanctified, bore the Ark upon their shoulders by the staves (1 Chron. xv. 15).

Singers and musicians accompanied the procession (1 Chron. xv. 16).

After they had gone six paces David halted and sacrificed oxen and fatlings (2 Sam. vi. 13).

David himself, dressed in an ephod—as a priestly king representing the priestly nation—took part in the procession, and joined in the dances and the singing.

When the Ark was set in the tabernacle prepared for it, David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings (vi. 17). (Seven bullocks and seven rams, 1 Chron. xv. 26.)

A cake of bread, a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine were dealt out to each person (2 Sam. vi. 19).

Only one incident marred the happiness of the festive day. Michal, Saul's daughter, and David's wife, taunted the king with lowering his kingly dignity in thus taking part in the proceedings, and placing himself on a level with the priesthood (see p. cxii.).

## THE WARS OF DAVID.

These, as mentioned in order in the Book of Samuel, are—

1. Two invasions of the Philistines, both defeated at Rephaim (v. 17-25).
2. The subjugation of the Philistines (viii. 1).
3. The conquest of Moab (viii. 2).
4. The defeat of the Syrians of Damascus (viii. 3-8).
5. The conquest of Edom (viii. 13, 14).
6. The subjugation of the Syrians and the Ammonites (x.-xii).

Of all the campaigns, save that against Ammon, we find but brief notices in Samuel. The sacred historian indeed gives a summary of the nations conquered, but little more. The war with Ammon is given in detail, because with it is connected David's sin and fall.

Careful consideration leads to the conclusion that the wars of David may be divided into two sections, viz.—

1. The wars with the Philistines and the Moabites.
2. The campaigns against Ammon, Syria and Edom, all arising out of the insult to David's ambassadors by Hanun, king of the **Ammonites**.

The wars seem to have been wars of defence against provocation rather than of aggression on the part of David.

## SECTION I.—WARS WITH THE PHILISTINES AND THE MOABITES.

### I. Wars with the Philistines.

#### (a) The Two Invasions.

The Philistines may have been well content to leave David alone whilst he was contending with Abner. Indeed, they may have regarded him as fighting their battles against the northern tribes. But the union of the two kingdoms made David a formidable opponent who must be crushed at once, and so they invaded the land with their whole forces.

They appear to have taken David by surprise, and to have cut him off from help from the northern tribes. They occupied the Valley of Rephaim, and even seized Bethlehem. David was forced to retire to the "hold" of Adullam. During this campaign occurred the incident of the three heroes breaking through the lines of the Philistines, and fetching water from the well of Bethlehem (xxiii. 13-17). At last David, following Divine guidance, swept suddenly down from the hills upon the Philistines in the plain below. His onslaught is likened to the outbreak of water through a breach in a dyke, sweeping all before it in its mighty rush. The Philistines fled precipitately, leaving behind them the images of their gods, which they had brought with them into the field to aid them in the fight, and which the Israelites took and burned as the Law ordained (Deut. vii. 5-25). Thus the capture of the Ark at Ebenezer, and the defeat at Gilboa, were in part avenged. The sudden onrush of David's men gave its name to the battle, which was known as Baal-Perazim, "the place of breaches."

But the strength of the Philistines was not yet broken. Once more they invaded the land, and again occupied the valley of Rephaim. David, following the counsel of Jehovah, attacked them in the rear, the sound of the approaching Israelites being drowned in the rustling of the mulberry trees. This time the invaders were completely broken. They fled from Gibeon (the true reading for Geba, v. 25) to Gezer.

#### The Subjugation of the Philistines.

The complete reduction of the Philistines was effected by the capture of Gath. In the campaign or campaigns against the famous city occurred those famous single combats between the mighty men of David's warriors and the giant race of Gath (xxi. 15-22, and xxiii. 8-12). And here we have recorded the last personal display of David's own prowess, when he narrowly escaped death at the hands of the giant Ishbi-benob. He escaped so narrowly, through the assistance of Abishai, that henceforth he was not allowed to take part in the actual fighting, his life being too valuable to be risked in the fighting line.

By this war the power of the Philistines was broken, and the supremacy which they had exercised was gone for ever.

#### War with Moab. (On its causes, see p. lxxx.)

The war with the Philistines was followed by one with Moab. The campaign seems to have taken place in the depth of winter. The Moabites

were vanquished, and terrible punishment was inflicted upon them. Two-thirds of the fighting force were remorselessly put to death, and only one-third left alive. The result was the complete destruction of Moab as a military power, and it was not till the reign of Ahab that Moab recovered strength sufficient to revolt.

It was in this war that Benaiah "slew two lion-like men of Moab" (1 Chron. xi. 22), and gained a place among the "thirty heroes," probably also his position as commander of David's bodyguard.

## SECTION II.—WARS WITH THE \*AMMONITES, SYRIANS AND EDOMITES.

This was the great war of David's reign, and ended in the subjugation of the whole country east of Jordan as far as the Euphrates.

The insult to David's ambassadors (x. 1-5) was the cause of the war, and we must combine the accounts of the campaigns against Hadadezer and Edom (viii. 3-8; viii. 13, 14) with the detailed account of the war with Ammon to obtain a connected narrative of the campaigns.

The insult to his ambassadors was one which the Ammonites knew that David could not overlook, and they prepared for war by enlisting as their allies the Syrians, and other tribes beyond Jordan.

The war may be divided into four distinct campaigns.

### First Campaign.—Leader, Joab.

The Syrians, subsidised by Ammon, attacked Medeba, a strong Reubenite city, commanding the great road through Moab (1 Chron. xix. 7). Joab, probably knowing that Medeba could stand a siege without immediate danger of capture, marched straight against Rabbah. But the Syrians broke up their camp and marched after Joab, who thus found himself confronted by the Ammonites, drawn up in front of Rabbah, whilst his rear was threatened by the Syrian host. But Joab was equal to the occasion. He threw himself boldly upon the Syrians with his picked troops, leaving the rest of the army in charge of Abishai to hold the Ammonites in check. The issue was never in doubt. The Syrians were completely defeated and fled, whereupon the Ammonites retired into the city without striking a blow. Joab returned to Jerusalem to recruit his forces.

### Second Campaign.—Leader, David in person.

The important stage in David's wars. The routed Syrians gathered themselves for a fresh effort, and Hadadezer summoned the vassal princes of Syria to his aid, with contingents from Mesopotamia and the Euphrates. David recognised the gravity of the situation. The contest was now a struggle for the supremacy of Western Asia. The king took the field in person, and determined to crush Syria before attempting the capture of Rabbah. A small force could watch the Ammonite capital, whilst the

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\* The campaign against Ammon is mentioned last, and in detail because with it is connected the sin and fall of David.

main army encountered the Syrians. Unless the account in viii. 2-4 refers to the defeat of the army under Shobach, the war is marked by three great events :—

1. The defeat of Hadadezer (viii. 2-4).
2. The total overthrow of the combined Syrian forces under Shobach at Helam (x. 15-19).
3. The capture of Damascus (viii. 5-8).

#### Results of the War.

1. The empire of David was extended as far as the Euphrates, and Israelite garrisons were placed in the Syrian towns to secure the country.
2. The spoils of Syria enriched Jerusalem. The golden shields carried by the bodyguard of Hadadezer were brought to Jerusalem. Immense stores of brass or bronze found at Betah (or Tibhath) and Berothai were carried off. This brass was afterwards used by Solomon for the great vessels of the Temple.
3. The embassy of Toi, king of Hamath, congratulating David on his victory, and bringing costly presents to secure his good will.

#### Third Campaign.—Against Edom.—Leaders, Abishai, Joab, David.

From Ps. lx., which refers to the conquest of Edom, we gather there had been some disaster in this war. May it not be that, whilst David was conducting the campaign against Syria in the north, the Edomites had taken advantage of the absence of David's army to make some attack on the south ?

Combining 1 Chron. xviii. 12, 1 Kings xi. 15-16, and Psalm lx., we may conjecture that there are three stages in the war :—

1. The decisive battle won by Abishai in the valley of Salt, when 18,000 of the Edomites perished.
2. The completion of the conquest by Joab, who spent six months in exterminating as far as possible the male population of Edom (1 Kings xi. 15-16). Such terror did Joab inspire that only the news of his death could induce the fugitive prince of Edom to return to his native land.

Settlement of the country by David. He "*gat him a name,*" *i.e.* erected a pillar or other monument of the victory, established garrisons to hold the passes, and reduced the inhabitants to slavery.

#### Fourth Campaign.—Against Ammon. Leader, Joab; later David.

How long the siege of Rabbah lasted is uncertain, probably more than a year. The siege is marked by David's sin with Bath-sheba, and by the murder of Uriah.

The lower or royal city was taken by Joab. David was present in person at the capture of the citadel. The great crown of Ammon was reserved for David, the city was spoiled and the people punished with great severity. The fall of Rabbah concludes the wars of David.

**Result of the Wars.**

1. Extension of David's dominions from Egypt and Arabia on the south to Asia Minor and the Euphrates on the north, from the Mediterranean on the west, to the desert on the east.
2. He commanded all the trade routes from Egypt and Arabia to Asia Minor and Mesopotamia.

**Prophecies and Divine Promises Fulfilled.**

1. **To Abraham.** "*Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates*" (Gen. xv. 18).
2. **To Moses.** "*I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines (i.e. the Mediterranean), and from the desert unto the river (i.e. the Euphrates);*" (Ex. xxiii. 31).
3. **To Joshua.** "*From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast*" (Josh. i. 4).
4. **The Prophecy of Balaam** foretells the conquest of Moab and Edom. "*A Sceptre shall arise out of Israel and shall smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the kingdom of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies*" (Numb. xxiv. 17-18).
5. **Isaac, in blessing Esau,** predicts the supremacy of the descendants of Jacob. "*And by thy sword thou shalt live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break the yoke from off thy neck*" (Gen. xxvii. 40).

**DAVID'S SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.****Sin.** Twofold.

1. Adultery with Bath-sheba.
2. The murder of Uriah.

**Punishment.**

As pronounced by Nathan, it consisted of three parts.

1. "*The sword shall never depart from thine house*" (xii. 10). This is the punishment for the murder of Uriah.
2. "*I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them to thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun*" (xii. 11). This is the punishment for his adultery with Bath-sheba.
3. "*The child also that is born unto thee shall surely die*" (xii. 14). An immediate act, showing that though David's sin might be pardoned, there must be a sharp judgment on the offence.

**Fulfilment of the Punishment.**

1. "*The sword shall never depart, etc.*" Three of his sons died violent deaths.

(a) Amnon murdered by Absalom (xiii. 28, 29).

(b) Absalom fell in battle in revolt against his father (xviii. 14).

(c) Adonijah executed by Solomon as a traitor (1 Kings ii. 25).

All these events are traceable to David's own sin, for—

Amnon suffered the penalty of his lust.

Absalom's rebellion followed naturally from the sin of Amnon.

Adonijah's intrigue for the throne was an attempt against the sovereignty of Solomon, the son of Bath-sheba.

2. "*I will take thy wives, etc.*" Fulfilled by Absalom, who, following the advice of Ahithophel, openly took possession of the royal harem at Jerusalem. His followers would see in this act—

(1) A claim to actual possession of the throne, not merely an assertion of succession to his father.

(2) An intimation that the war could end only by the death of either David or Absalom. There was now no fear that in the event of failure Absalom could negotiate terms for himself, whilst leaving his pursuers to David's vengeance.

Thus we can note—

1. How exactly the punishment followed the lines of the crime.

2. How the events followed naturally from David's own conduct. For as the sin originated in lust, the punishment followed through David's self-indulgence. Unlike the stern and ascetic Saul, David multiplied to himself wives and children. Polygamy, which has weakened the strength and destroyed the prosperity of the most powerful dynasties in the oriental world, brought with it its usual curse.

We can trace three groups in the royal harem.

1. Amnon, as the firstborn, regarded himself as the heir to the throne, and acted as if he were not bound by the ordinary laws. David's own example encouraged laxity of morals.

2. Maachah, the daughter of the king of Geshur, appears to have claimed precedence for herself and her son Absalom as being of royal blood.

3. Bath-sheba (as we know from 1 Kings i.) was ever on the watch to further the interests of Solomon.

The intrigues of the harem weakened the stability of the throne. David's excessive indulgence\* of his sons tended in the same direction.

\* Of this fatal indulgence overriding his judgment we have three notable examples :—

1. Amnon, not punished for his outrage on Tamar.

2. Absalom. David's excessive grief upon his death.

3. Adonijah. "*His father had not made him sorry all his days, saying, Why hast thou done so?*" (1 Kings i. 6.)

The sin of Amnon was the fruit of David's polygamy and of his indulgence towards his sons. It was the fatal outburst which clouded the latter years of David's life with the crimes and rebellions of his family.

The passing over of Amnon's sin led to the murder of that prince by Absalom. The pardoning of Absalom gave him the opportunity for rebellion, whilst his rebellion indicated that David's power after all was lacking in stability. Absalom grasped the situation, and secretly prepared for an attempt upon the throne.

### Notable points in Absalom's Rebellion.

1. The estrangement of Absalom from his father, gradually growing stronger and stronger. Caused by
  - (a) The impunity of Amnon after his sin.
  - (b) Absalom's three years' exile in Geshur.
  - (c) His two years' residence in Jerusalem deprived of the king's favour and apart from public life. It was a grave mistake to leave the proud, headstrong Absalom brooding for two years over supposed wrongs.
2. The popularity of Absalom, brought about by
  - (a) His personal beauty and ingratiating manners.
  - (b) Sympathy with him as regards his sister Tamar. The dastardly outrage committed by Amnon had passed unpunished. The avenger Absalom remained in banishment three years.
  - (c) To the people he might well appear as a hero rather than an offender.
3. The preparations made by Absalom, viz.
  - (a) The assumption of royal state.
  - (b) His cordial interest in the people—his suggestions of how, if he were king, he would right their grievances.
  - (c) His sounding of those discontented with David's rule and conduct.
- 3a. The widespread character of the conspiracy and the secrecy with which the conspirators worked the plot.
  - (a) *It was widespread.* Secret agents had gone through the land preparing the malcontents to revolt at the given signal (xv. 10).
  - (b) *It was secret.* David and his adherents were taken utterly by surprise. The visit to Hebron was acquiesced in by David, apparently without any suspicion that the reason given was only a pretext for the meeting of the head conspirators.
4. The causes of dissatisfaction.
5. The narrow margin between success and failure. The success of the conspiracy depended upon its sudden movement. Had Absalom followed the advice of Ahithophel, and promptly pursued

David, it is probable that he would have won the throne. Delay was a fatal mistake, and Ahithophel recognised from that hour that the cause was lost.

6. The minute details recorded of the day\* of David's flight.

We have

- (1) The coming of the messenger with tidings of the grave nature of the revolt (xv. 13).
- (2) The decision to abandon the city (xv. 14). A wise step, for David had not sufficient force to defend Jerusalem. By flight he gained time to gather his adherents.
- (3) The halt at the Far House, where David's troops passed in review before him over the Kidron.
- (4) The enumeration of his forces. Only his own bodyguard. The sudden and unexpected revolt gave no time for the assembling of Joab's men.
- (5) The fidelity of Ittai.
- (6) The Ark sent back. Note the details here.
  - (a) The Ark halted whilst the people passed on.
  - (b) Abiathar went up to the Mount of Olives, and subsequently returned.
  - (c) The king's reasons for sending back the Ark.
  - (d) The scheme for communication between the king and the priests.
- (7) David's grief during the ascent of the Mount of Olives; here he first learns of the defection of Ahithophel.
- (8) The arrival of Hushai, who is commissioned to pretend to join the conspiracy, but really for the purpose of defeating the advice of Ahithophel. Note how careful David is to point out to him the pre-arranged plan of communication.
- (9) The arrival of Ziba with provisions. He overtakes David a little past the summit of Olivet. Note the details.
- (10) The cursing by Shimei at Bahurim as David and his band pass on to Jordan.
- (11) The halt at some place beyond Bahurim.

The scene now changes to Jerusalem, where the proceedings of the rebel party are described with the same minute detail. We have

- (1) The arrival of Absalom, and his acceptance of the proffered services of Hushai.
  - (2) The taking possession of the royal harem by the advice of Ahithophel.
  - (3) The Council Meeting, at which the advice of Ahithophel, though at first favourably received, was rejected for that of Hushai.
- We may here note the subtlety and sagacity of Ahithophel.

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\* "There is no single day in the Jewish history of which so elaborate an account remains as that which describes this memorable flight" (STANLEY).

*Subtle.* The entering into the harem made reconciliation with David impossible for Absalom. Ahithophel had, therefore secured himself from the risk that Absalom might make terms with David and leave his followers to their fate. In that case Ahithophel would have been the first to suffer.

*Sagacious.* He recognised that Absalom's chief chance of success lay in a quick, decisive stroke, which would render a protracted campaign unnecessary. David's cause was by no means lost if time were given for Joab's veterans to join him, and for the inevitable reaction to set in.

His plan being rejected, Ahithophel quickly decided on his own course. He returned to Giloh, set his affairs in order, and committed suicide.

- (4) The warning given to David,—his immediate crossing of the Jordan,—and now a surprise was impossible.

7. **The Battle.** Here we must note—

- (1) The site—Wood of Ephraim, on the east of Jordan (see p. lviii.).
- (2) The character of the battle-field, full of pitfalls, morasses, and forest.
- (3) The confidence of David's men. They marched out of the city as if fully assured of victory, taking for granted that Absalom would be defeated. The only orders given by David are that they should "deal gently" with Absalom, *i.e.*, spare his life.
- (4) The death of Absalom at the hand of Joab. Joab judged more wisely than the king. As long as Absalom lived there would be constant trouble, even if the rebellion were suppressed, and, should he be restored to favour again, and possibly succeed in gaining the throne, there would be little mercy shown to David's supporters.
- (5) The manner in which the tidings of the victory was conveyed to David.
- (6) David's grief for Absalom.

### The return to Jerusalem.

Here we may notice two fatal mistakes on the part of David, viz. :

- (1) His secret negotiations with the tribe of Judah. He returned to Jerusalem on the invitation of that tribe alone, and thereby caused the rebellion of Sheba to become possible.
- (2) The secret appointment of Amasa as commander-in-chief in the room of Joab. A great mistake politically, however incensed David may have been against Joab. But for Joab's staunch loyalty the rebellion of Sheba might have proved both dangerous and formidable. The appointment of Amasa also led to his being murdered by the unscrupulous Joab, who did not hesitate to seize the first opportunity to rid himself of his rival, as he had previously, and in the same manner, removed Abner.

The return is also marked by three further episodes.

- (1) The advent of Shimei, bringing one thousand of his own tribe Benjamin, to welcome the return of the king. As these were the only persons outside the tribe of Judah who assembled to welcome David, it would have been almost impossible not to pardon Shimei. But the king's rebuke of Abishai gives evidence of how deeply the king resented the influence of the sons of Zeruiah, though he was compelled to accept their powerful assistance. That David did not in his heart forgive Shimei, and that he recognised that his profession of loyalty was assumed as a matter of policy, is clear from his dying charge to Solomon to put Shimei to death (1 Kings ii. 8, etc.).
- (2) The appearance of Ziba, followed shortly by the meeting of David with Mephibosheth (see pp. cix.-cxi.).
- (3) The parting with Barzillai, who accompanied the king as far as Jordan.

### The Rebellion of Sheba.

But David's troubles did not end with the crossing of Jordan. His impolitic act in not waiting till he was recalled by the nation led to fierce contention between Judah and the northern tribes. Sheba seized the opportunity of the bitterness that had been roused, and appealed to the other tribes to leave David to rule over the one tribe which had selected him as king, and as David's own conduct had made this revolt possible, so his impolitic act in the appointment of Amasa as commander seemed likely to give the rebel chief time to gather forces and to spread general dissatisfaction. Prompt action was necessary to quash the movement ere it gained strength. Amasa either was half-hearted in his movements, or distrusted by the veteran soldiers, so once more \* Joab and Abishai were called upon to save the king from the consequences of his indiscretion. The veterans readily rallied to their tried leader, and the revolt was quickly suppressed.

### A.

### The Three Years' Famine.

1. **Time.** Not definitely stated, but it must have happened *after* the kindness shown to Mephibosheth (xxi. 7), and *before* the rebellion of Absalom (see p. xi.).
2. **Duration.** Three years.
3. **How caused?** By a failure of the winter rains. A famine invariably follows a failure of the winter rains. Such famines are not uncommon in Palestine, but one continuing for three successive years was of a character to cause alarm and to suggest some especial cause.
4. **Reason.** Because Saul had in his "zeal" put some of the Gibeonites to death.

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\* The account gives only David's communication to Abishai, but as Joab evidently was in command, it is most likely that David employed Abishai to communicate with Joab.

We have no means of deciding when this was done, but we know that Saul had "cut off those that had familiar spirits and the wizards out of the land" (1 Sam. xxviii. 9). In a similar fit of religious zeal he may have endeavoured to put an end to the remnant of the heathen population, and have included some of the Gibeonites. Or some of them may have perished in the massacre at Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 19).

5. **Sin. Murder.** For Joshua and the princes of Israel had pledged themselves to spare the lives of the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 19, 20). So these people were specially exempted from the extermination pronounced by Jehovah upon the other nations of Canaan.

Saul came, therefore, under the penalty of blood-guiltiness (see p. 109).

6. **Why was the land punished for Saul's sin?** Because to shed innocent blood was to defile the land, and such defilement could be removed only "by the blood of him that shed it" (Numb. xxxv. 33).
7. **Why was the punishment not inflicted in the time of Saul?** To teach the lesson of continuity in the life of the nation, and its continued responsibility from time to time.
8. **Why should the punishment have fallen upon David and the people, who had no share in the sin?** Saul had slain the Gibeonites as king of Israel, and so had involved the nation in a breach of the national oath.
9. **The demand of the Gibeonites.** They were strictly within the letter of the law, for
- (1) Blood-guiltiness could not be compensated for by money (Numb. xxxv. 31).
  - (2) It is a universally acknowledged principle in the Old Testament that the family shared the guilt of any member of it, *e.g.* Achan and all his family put to death by Joshua (Josh. vii. 24).

Consequently the sin of Saul could not be atoned for, nor the land relieved from pollution, save by the execution of some representative of the house of Saul.

10. **The victims.** Two sons of Rizpah, the concubine of Saul, and five sons of Merab, the daughter of Saul, making seven in all, the number of completion.

We may note that David spared Mephibosheth in accordance with the covenant between himself and Jonathan (1 Sam. xx. 14-16).

They were put to death, and their bodies were either impaled or hung upon a cross.

The execution took place at the beginning of barley harvest, *i.e.* about the middle of April, and the bodies hung on the stake till the descent of the October rains. During that time (about

six months), Rizpah devotedly watched by the bodies, protecting them from wild beasts and from birds of prey. The advent of the rains assured the nation of the Divine forgiveness, and the bodies were then buried.

11. The bones of Saul and Jonathan removed from Jabesh-gilead to the family tomb of the house of Kish at Zelah in Benjamin.

David may have been influenced by two motives—

- (1) He may have been affected by the story of Rizpah's devotion.
- (2) He may have desired to show that he entertained no enmity against the house of Saul. It was important to show the nation that he had not conceded the demand of the Gibeonites with the object of removing possible claimants to the throne from the house of Saul. The honour paid to the remains of Saul and Jonathan, combined with the sparing of Mephibosheth, must have made it clear to the nation that David had no ulterior motives in granting the demand of the Gibeonites.

## B.

### Sin in Numbering the People (xxiv.).

Facts are:—

1. It was a census to ascertain the military strength of the nation.
2. David's command to Joab was, "Go, number Israel and Judah" (xxiv. 1).
3. The number was given as Israel 800,000, Judah 500,000 (xxiv. 9).
4. The people were guilty of some sin along with David. "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel" (xxiv. 1).
5. David's confession of sin caused Jehovah to stay the plague. That confession contains a plea for the people, "These sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house" (xxiv. 17).
6. The punishment exactly fitted the sin. The number of the people was considerably lessened, no less than 70,000 perishing of the pestilence.

In what the sin did not consist—

1. It did not consist in the taking of a census, for that was actually provided for in the Law (Ex. xxx. 12, 13), where it is enacted that whenever the number of the people should be taken, half a shekel should be the offering of each man to the Lord.
2. It did not consist in the omission to levy this tax, for—
  - (a) David was not the man to neglect such a precept.
  - (b) Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, members of the king's council, would take care to see that the tax was paid.

The sin consisted not in the act, but in the motives.

It was a military census to ascertain the fighting strength of the nation.

The motives generally assigned are **Pride** and **Ambition**, viz. :

- (a) **Pride** in the prosperity and wealth of the nation.
- (b) **Ambition** to make Israel as one of the surrounding nations.

There may have been no intention of foreign conquest, but at least there must have been some idea of ascertaining the military strength of the nation for the purposes of resisting a foreign enemy, and for the preservation of the high position and dignity which Israel at that time enjoyed in the eyes of the neighbouring nations.

Taking this view, the sin lay in forgetting that the true strength of Israel lay not in the number of its people, but in the protection of Jehovah.

**NOTE.**—(1) The sin for which Saul was rejected. He would not subordinate his royal office to the will of Jehovah. He failed to recognise that he was only the representative of Jehovah, who Himself was the true King of Israel.

- (2) The pride of Michal, who taunted David with humiliating himself and abrogating his royal dignity when he danced before the Ark (vi. 20-23).

*The Pride and Ambition in numbering the people, viewed in this light, becomes a phase of the same sin for which Saul was rejected from being king.*

But may there not have been another and deeper motive, that of **Party Spirit**?

Consider the rebellion of Sheba. It gives an instance of the readiness of the northern tribes to range themselves on one side against David, whilst the tribe of Judah alone adhered firmly, and as one man, to his cause.

Though this rebellion was crushed almost as soon as it broke out, we may surmise that David, in the later years of his reign, would notice the existence of this factious spirit.

This factious spirit may well be the sin for which Jehovah punished the people.

This spirit is met by a counter-spirit of worldly policy on the part of David. He wished to see what the strength of Judah was, if pitted against all\* the tribes.

David wanted to know, not so much the number of the whole people, as the number of Judah, the royal tribe—David's own tribe—compared with the number of the rest of Israel.

God had made him king over the whole people; and Satan tempted him to consider himself king of the one tribe particularly, and to govern in the interests of that tribe, rather than in the interests of the whole people.

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\* Mark that Levi and Benjamin were not included in the census (1 Chron. xxi. 6)

**Party Spirit**, then, would appear to be at the bottom of the numbering—a sin common to both David and the nation.

*To David*—in the selfish motive of promoting the glory of his own tribe, and following the worldly policy of ascertaining how far the strength of Judah compared with the rest of Israel would enable him to force his policy on the nation.

*To the People*—in their jealousy at the exaltation of David and his tribe.

In support of this view we may remark that the moment David surrendered the partiality, which had been the real root of the mischief (xxiv. 17), God at once turned and remitted the punishment.

**The Lesson.** The punishment was intended to warn David and his dynasty from what was undoubtedly their natural and selfish policy, viz. to govern by, and in the interest of, the tribe of Judah alone.

If Solomon and Rehoboam had learnt the lesson, the schism in the reign of Rehoboam might, *humanly speaking*, have been avoided, for—

1. The burdensome taxation of Solomon was mainly caused by the extravagant expenditure of his court, and by the vast sums which went to build, not merely a national place of worship (for to this they might have given consent, the command being of God), but for the construction of palaces for princes, never again to be of their own line, and for the beautifying of Jerusalem and other cities of Judah.
2. The avowed and insolent determination of Rehoboam to persist in this line of policy, undoubtedly occasioned the great schism in the latter's reign.

## THE LAST YEARS OF DAVID.

The political history of David as related in the Second Book of Samuel concludes with the suppression of Sheba's rebellion. Accordingly we find a second list of the officials of the kingdom. The remaining chapters (xxi.-xxiv.) are clearly in the form of an appendix. The account of the numbering of the people, and the subsequent pestilence, lead us on to consider David's work during the latter years of his reign. We gather the particulars from Chronicles.

The purchase of the threshing floor of Araunah, and the sacrifice on that spot sanctified by fire from heaven, pointed out the place where the temple should be built. So we may reasonably conceive that from henceforth David was preparing for the reign of Solomon, first, in thoroughly establishing his government, and secondly, in preparing material for the temple.

His preparations included :

- (a) Selection of the site, viz., the threshing floor of Araunah (1 Chron. xxii. 1).

- (b) The gathering of skilful workmen together (1 Chron. xxii. 15).
- (c) A census of the \* strangers in the land as labourers (1 Chron. xxii. 2).
- (d) The drawing of the plan (1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12).
- (e) Provision of materials.
  - (1) From Tyre and Sidon, *cedar wood* (1 Chron. xxii. 4).
  - (2) Hewn stone and marble (1 Chron. xxii. 2; xxix. 2).
- (f) Offerings, *viz.*—
  - (1) Dedicated offerings (1 Chron. xxii. 14; xxix. 2).
  - (2) His own contributions (1 Chron. xxix. 4).
  - (3) The freewill offerings of the chiefs of the land (1 Chron. xxix. 7).
- (g) A solemn charge to Solomon "to build an house for the Lord God of Israel" (1 Chron. xxii. 6-16).
- (h) A national assembly at which he presented Solomon as his successor, and called for national co-operation with him in the work of building the Temple (1 Chron. xxii. 17-19; xxiii. 1, 2; xxviii. 1-10). At this assembly the organization of the temple services was arranged.

The accession of Solomon and the attempt of Adonijah to secure the succession are recorded in the First Book of Kings. These events and David's last charge to Solomon to put Joab and Shimei to death, and to show kindness to Barzillai, are referred to in Biographical Notes (Joab, p. cvii., cviii.; Shimei, p. cxv.; Barzillai, p. xcvi.).

### David's Work.

"David died leaving behind him a name which his countrymen never forgot. He became the ideal of a patriot king. He had founded a dynasty and an empire, and though the empire soon fell to pieces, the dynasty survived and exercised a momentous influence upon the religious history of the world" (САУСЕ).

His religious work was more lasting than his political achievements. Under David was established the true idea of the theocratic monarchy, a king ruling a kingdom that was not his own but God's, passing on to the spiritual idea of a never-ending kingdom, a never-passing king, realized in the person of the Messiah, the son of David.

### David as a type of the Messiah.

The kingdom of God in Israel was intended to be typical of the spiritual kingdom of God, and so everything of Israel was intended to be typical of Christ "the King of kings." But David particularly united in his own person the threefold character of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King.

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\* These were the descendants of the original inhabitants of the land. They were employed as carriers and bearers (1 Kings v. 15).

1. **Prophet.** Note the last words of David (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7), where he speaks of the future of his kingdom, and expressly states that he utters the prediction by the spirit, "*The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*" (xxiii. 2).
2. **Priest.** (a) He wore the ephod, the priestly garment (vi. 14).  
 (b) He sacrificed on several occasions.
  - (1) When bringing the Ark to Jerusalem (vi. 13).
  - (2) When the Ark was set up in its place (vi. 18).
  - (3) At the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite (xxiv. 25).
 (c) He appointed Abiathar and Zadok as high priests (viii. 17).
3. **King.** In his conception of the Monarchy he had clear ideas of its subordination to God, *viz.* that his kingship was pre-eminently exhibited in his obedience to God's will; and in this he was conspicuously a type of our Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom. Jesus came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father in heaven.

We may note also—

1. That David is the only king who is awarded the title of "the servant of Jehovah." This title is distinctive of Christ, "*Behold my servant whom I have chosen*" (St. Matt. xii. 18; Is. xlii. 1). (See also Acts iii. 13-26, where "his Son Jesus" should be "his servant Jesus," as in the R.V.)
2. That the Messiah is styled "the Son of David."
3. That David was born at Beth-lehem, the designated birthplace of the Messiah (Mich. v. 2; St. Matt. ii. 6; St. John vii. 42).
4. David alone really mourned for Saul, who had persecuted him. So Jesus alone of all wept over Jerusalem, which was to betray and crucify Him.
5. David was taken from the sheepfolds to feed (*i.e.* to be the shepherd of) his people Israel (Ps. lxxviii. 70-72). So Jesus is the "good Shepherd" (St. John x. 11).
6. David made his way to the throne through persecution, trials and sufferings. So Jesus won His spiritual throne through His Agony and Death.
7. Ahithophel, David's familiar counsellor, joined the rebellion of Absalom. So Jesus was betrayed by Judas, one of the Apostles.

### Instances of David's Weakness.

1. In his passing over the murder of Abner by Joab.

Here his hands were tied—

- (1) By the plausible reason given by Joab (see p. 109);
- (2) By his need of the support of Joab and his family.

2. In his not avenging the death of Amasa.

Here again David dared not remove Joab, who was his confidant

in the death of Uriah. But the king leaves his son Solomon the legacy of exacting retribution upon Joab for these two murders.

3. His leniency towards Amnon, arising from

- (1) His consciousness of a similar sin on his own part.
- (2) His over-indulgence and love of his children.

This weakness had fatal consequences, and furnished Absalom with fresh impulse to his purpose of revenge. This revenge coincided with ambition. The death of Amnon would open the way to the throne, as well as avenge the outrage on Tamar.

4. His conduct towards Absalom.

For two years after his return to Jerusalem, Absalom was not allowed to appear at court. His offence was pardoned, but he himself was not received with favour.

After two years David received Absalom into favour, and gave him the kiss of peace.

The two years' restriction irritated Absalom, and prevented hearty reconciliation. His subsequent restoration to favour gave Absalom the opportunity to prepare for an effort to oust his father from the throne (see p. xciv.).

5. The appointment of Amasa as captain of the host in place of Joab (see also p. xxxv.).

This step was designed—

- (1) to secure the adherence of the rebel general and his army;
- (2) to punish Joab for the death of Absalom.

But it lacked prudence, for

- (1) it removed the loyal Joab, and set the rebel Amasa in his place. It rewarded disloyalty and punished loyalty.
- (2) Joab was not likely to acquiesce tamely in thus being pushed aside.
- (3) It led to the murder of Amasa.

6. His grief at the death of Absalom.

The remonstrances of Joab with the king for allowing his grief on account of his son's death to cause him to forget the services of his faithful friends, show how nearly the king alienated the affections of his supporters.

### Indications of a Separation between Judah and Israel.

The distinction between Judah and Israel is marked as early as the days of Saul. When that king numbered the people at Bezek, preparatory to his march to relieve Jabesh-gilead, \*separate numbers are recorded of the "*men of Judah and the men of Israel.*"

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\* This distinction between Judah and Israel may be taken as an indication that the Books of Samuel were compiled after the disruption of the kingdom (see p. viii.). But it may also be taken as being an early indication of a tendency for Judah to be considered as apart from the northern tribes.

In 2 Samuel there are many occasions in which Judah is mentioned as being distinct from Israel, e.g.:

1. Uriah, on his visit to Jerusalem, speaks of "*the Ark, and Israel and Judah*" abiding in tents, as a reason why he should not visit his own house (xi. 11).
2. Joab goes out to "*number Israel and Judah*" (xxiv. 1), and returns the number separately for Israel as 800,000, and for Judah as 500,000 (xxiv. 9).
3. The men of Judah excited the jealousy of the men of Israel when the former took the initiative in bringing David back to Jerusalem (xix. 41-43).
4. This dispute led to the rebellion of Sheba, who was supported by the northern tribes, and whose rallying-cry, "*We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel!*" (xx. 1), is identically the same as that of the Ten Tribes when revolting from Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 16).

The fact that David reigned for seven and a half years at Hebron over Judah, whilst Ish-bosheth and Abner ruled separately over the northern tribes, must have tended to make a breach, which only time and judicious government could close. When practically the kingdom was under a single government, there were many causes which tended to keep up the distinction between Israel and Judah.

The early claims of Ephraim to supremacy are as follows:

1. In their demand from Joshua for more territory, because they were "*a great tribe*" (Josh. xvii. 14-18).
2. In their expostulation with Gideon for not summoning them to the expedition against the Midianites (Judges viii. 1-3).
3. In their insolent behaviour towards Jephthah because he had not called them to aid the eastern tribes against the Ammonites (Judges xii. 1-3).

Such terms as "*Ephraim*" and "*House of Joseph*" were often applied to the ten tribes of Israel as distinguished from Judah. Shimei claims to be the first of the "*house of Joseph*" (i.e. of the ten tribes, as distinct from Judah) to welcome David on his return to Jerusalem (xix. 20).

**Israel.** This word is used in two senses in this Book.

First, to indicate the northern tribes. The instances are:

1. Abner makes Ish-bosheth king "*over all Israel*" (ii. 9, 10).
2. Abner offers to bring "*all Israel*" over to David (iii. 12). See also iii. 19.
3. "*All the tribes of Israel*" came to Hebron to anoint David as king (v. 1).
4. "*Israel*," to whom Sheba appeals, are "*the northern tribes*" (xx. 1). See also xx. 14.
5. Wherever Israel is mentioned as distinct from Judah.

Secondly, to indicate the whole nation. Instances are :

1. David, and " *all the house of Israel*," played before the Lord at the entry of the Ark into Jerusalem (vi. 5).
2. In the message of God to David, delivered by Nathan, " *My people Israel*" (vii. 7, 8, 11), and in David's prayer and thanksgiving (vii. 23, 24, 26, 27).
3. The detachment chosen by Joab to fight the Syrians, " *the choice men of Israel*" (x. 9).
4. David gathered " *all Israel together*" against Hadadezer (x. 17). (See also verses 18, 19 and xi. 1).
5. In the history of the rebellion of Absalom " *Israel*" means the whole nation, for it is clear that the south were strong supporters of the rebel prince, especially in the early stages of the conspiracy (see xv. 2, 6, 10; xvi. 15, 21, 22; xvii. 4, 10, 11, 14, 24; xviii. 6).

In this revolt " *the people*" = David's army; *Israel* = that part of the nation which supported Absalom.

For other instances, see xii. 7, 12; xix. 22; xxi. 4, 5, 15.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE KINGDOM.

I. **The Royal Family.** Of their position and offices we have the following notices—

1. The princes were brought up by Jehiel (1 Chron. xxvii. 32), with the exception of Solomon, who appears to have been under the charge of Nathan (2 Sam. xii. 5).
2. The princes were " *chief rulers*" (viii. 18).
3. They had separate residences in Jerusalem.
  - (a) Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house (xiii. 7).
  - (b) Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house (xiii. 20).
4. Each had his royal mule. On the murder of Amnon each prince mounted " *his mule and fled*" (xiii. 29).
5. The princesses were distinguished by the long sleeves\* of their robes (xiii. 18).

## II. Civil Organization.

The Court or Council, consisting of—

1. *The Commander-in-chief*—Joab.
2. *The Recorder or Historian*—Jehoshaphat.
3. *The Two Priests*—Zadok and Abiathar.

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\* Tamar is recorded as wearing a garment of divers colours (xiii. 18). A tunic with long sleeves is probably meant.

- 4 *The Scribe or Secretary of State*—Seraiah or Sheva.
- 5 *The Captain of the Body Guard*—Benaiah.
- 6 *Chief Rulers or Ministers*\*—David's sons.
- 7 *The superintendent of the tribute or forced levy*—Adoram or Adoniram. Adoram is not mentioned in the first list of officers. His appointment indicates the great progress made in the civil administration in the later days of David's reign.

Other counsellors are mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 32-33, viz. ·

- (a) Joatham, David's uncle; a counsellor and a scribe.
- (b) Ahithophel, the king's counsellor.
- (c) Hushai, the Archite, the king's companion.

Gad, "the seer," and Nathan, "the prophet," though not actual members of the Council, were the confidential advisers of the king.

### Administration.

From 1 Chronicles xxvi.-xxvii. we gather many details concerning the administration of the kingdom, e.g.—

1. Officers and judges were appointed (1 Chron. xxvi. 29-32).
2. A ruler was appointed for each tribe (1 Chron. xxvii. 16-22).
3. Officials to manage the revenues and royal estates were appointed (1 Chron. xxvii. 25-31).

### III. Military Organization.

1. *The King's Body Guard*—the Cherethites and Pelethites (see p. 111), commanded by Benaiah.
2. *The Gibborim, or Mighty Men*, commanded by Abishai.

This band was the nucleus of David's standing army. It originated in the band of 600 men, who had gathered round him in his exile. In memory of those days the number of 600 was always preserved.

This body was divided into thirty bands of twenty each, commanded by thirty officers, one for each band, known as "The Thirty" (2 Sam. xxiii. 24-39).

Ten of these bands, forming 200 men, were united in one division. Thus the 600 were in this manner divided into three large companies of 200 men, and commanded by three officers, one for each band, known as "The First Three" (2 Sam. xxiii. 19).

The whole band was commanded by one chief, "the captain of the mighty men." This captain was Abishai.

3. *The Host*, consisting of all males capable of bearing arms, commanded by Joab. This force was summoned only for war. But

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\* This post was filled later by Ira, the Jairite. The intrigues of the princes and the rebellion of Absalom probably caused David to remove his sons from official authority.

in order to provide for an effective army, David formed a force of militia, consisting of twelve divisions, each numbering twenty-four thousand men. Each division was on duty for training one month in the year, and a special officer was appointed over each division (1 Chron. xxvii. 1-15).

#### IV. Religious Organization.

1. **The Prophets**, represented by Gad "the Seer," and Nathan "the Prophet."
2. **The High Priests**, Zadok, of the family of Eleazer, officiating at the Tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar, of the family of Ithamar, officiating at Jerusalem.
3. **The Priests**, divided into twenty-four classes or courses, sixteen of the family of Eleazer, and eight of the family of Ithamar. They executed their office week by week.
4. **The Levites**, divided into—
  - (a) Singers and musicians for the Temple worship.
  - (b) Porters or guardians of the gates.
  - (c) Guardians of the Treasury.

These special arrangements were elaborated in the later part of the reign, when David made preparations for the building of the Temple.

## PALESTINE, PHYSICAL.



## GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

## THE LAND.

**Extent.** About 140 miles in length, forty in average breadth, and in area about the size of Wales.

**Boundaries.** The land of Canaan proper, *i.e.* the territory west of the Jordan, is hemmed in on all sides.

**West.** By the Mediterranean Sea.

**East.** By the gorge of the Jordan.

**North.** By the ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanus, and the ravine of the Leontes.

**South.** By the deserts to the north of the Sinaitic Peninsula.

And even if we include the Trans-Jordanic territory, we find a similar barrier to the East in the Arabian Desert.

A glance at the map (p. xlviii.) shows a peculiar system of strips running almost parallel to each other from north to south. Thus, working eastward from the Mediterranean, we notice:

1. A maritime plain.
2. A tract of lowland country.
3. A central tract of hill country.
4. A deep river valley. (The valley of the Jordan, *or Arabah*.)
5. A further mountain range. (The mountains of Gilead.)

1. **The Maritime Plain** is broadest in the south and narrows towards the north, till it is suddenly interrupted by the ridge of Carmel, which strikes out from the central mass in a north-easterly direction, rises considerably above the general level, and terminates in a bold promontory at the very edge of the Mediterranean.

On the northern side of Carmel the plain stretches right across the country from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Jordan, forming the famous plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel, the battle-ground of Palestine.

Further north the plain resumes its course along the sea coast till again interrupted by a mountain range extending to the sea.

2. **The Lowlands.** Bordering the central hills is a belt of lowland deep below the level of the hills, which rise abruptly, forming a formidable barrier. This tract divides the central hills from the maritime plain. The only means of communication from the lowlands to the highlands is up the beds of the torrents which discharge the rainfall of the hill country. The lower half of the lowlands south of Mount Carmel is the Plain of the Philistines, *or the Shephelah*. The upper part is the Plain of Sharon, famous for its fertility.
3. **The Central Range, or the Highland.** This is a mass of limestone forming what may be considered one range. In the north it is crossed

by the Plain of Esdraelon. In the south it sinks gradually into the *Negeb*, the dry land. The southern portion was known as the hill country of Judah, the central as Mount Ephraim, and the portion north of the Plain of Esdraelon as Mount Naphtali. The average elevation above sea level is about 2,500 feet.

4. **The Valley of the Jordan.** *THE ARABAH.* An extraordinary depression considerably below the sea level, lying between the central range and the mountains of Gilead (the eastern range), and consisting of two parts, viz., the Upper Jordan from Mount Hermon to the Sea of Galilee, and the Lower Jordan from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea.
5. **The Eastern Range,** or the Mountains of Gilead, stretching from Mount Hermon to the south of the Dead Sea.

**The Negeb**—the south country. A tract of hill country, situated below Hebron, and lying between the hills of Judah and the desert. Being near the desert and removed from the drainage of the hill country, this district was drier and less productive than the north. (The name "*Negeb*" signifies dry land.)

"Almost sudden was the transition to the upland wilderness, the '*Negeb*,' or south country, a series of rolling hills, clad with scanty herbage here and there, especially on their northern faces" (TRISTRAM).

The student should carefully observe that "south" very often means the *Negeb*—the south land.

The Revisers invariably distinguish the *Negeb* by printing "south" with a capital S.

**The Wilderness of Judæa** represents the portion of the *Arabah* within the territory of Judah. It is bounded by the hill country on the west and by the Dead Sea on the east.

**The configuration of the land** is of importance in explaining the Philistine campaigns, and in accounting for the fact that though the Israelites were often oppressed and made tributaries they were never totally conquered. It also explains much of the later history of Israel. The road by which the great Eastern Empires—Assyria and Egypt—could approach each other lay up through the maritime plain of Palestine, and onward through the plain of Lebanon to the Euphrates. An Egyptian or Assyrian army marching along the plain would have the abrupt mountain ranges of Judah and Ephraim on its flank. On this western side the steep declivities and the rugged ascents up the torrent ravines rendered attack most difficult, and at the same time the advancing army could not venture to leave the formidable hill men of Judah on their flank as a menace to their communications. Thus it was essential for Egypt or Assyria to become masters of Judah ere venturing to pass further north or south respectively.

How far the extreme difficulty of the western passes affected the

military aspect of the invasion of Judah can be gathered from the following facts in history:

1. Nebuzar-adan led the captive Jews northward from Jerusalem by way of Jericho.
2. Pompey attacked Jerusalem from Damascus by way of Jericho.
3. Vespasian led his troops from the plain of Lebanon eastwards, and advanced against Jerusalem through Jericho.

On the other hand, Bethhoron on the western side is the scene of two great Jewish victories over invading armies.

David's wars should be followed on the physical map (p. xlviii.) as well as on the map (p. ii.). Thus:

1. **Wars with the Philistines.** The conquest of Philistia gave Israel the key to the great maritime road leading from Egypt to Syria, and thus opened the way for the extensive commerce that was carried on with Egypt in the reign of Solomon.
2. **Conquest of Moab and Edom.** These victories secured the passes leading to the Red Sea, and also the caravan routes to Arabia. So in Solomon's reign a fleet was equipped at Ezion-geber on the Red Sea.
3. **Subjugation of Ammon.** The conquest of Ammon secured Gilead on the East, and opened the trade route through Tadmor for Solomon.
4. **Conquest of Syria.** The supremacy of David over Syria, and his hold on Damascus, caused the extension of Israelite influence as far as the Euphrates. Thus, in Solomon's reign, Israel dominated the whole of the trade routes leading from Central Asia to Egypt and Arabia.

## PLACES.

**Abel-beth-maachah.** A town of some importance, situated in the extreme north of Palestine, and described as a "*city and \*mother in Israel*" (2 Sam. xx. 19). Here Sheba took refuge in his revolt. Joab pursued him, and besieged the city, which was saved from capture by the inhabitants, in obedience to the advice of a wise woman, throwing the head of the rebel over the wall to Joab.

### Subsequent History.

- (1) It was captured by Benhadad, king of Syria, when he advanced against Baasha, king of Israel, at the request of Asa, king of Judah (1 Kings xv. 20).
- (2) It was captured by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, when he invaded Israel in the reign of Pekah.

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\* **Mother in Israel.** This signifies that Abel-beth-Maachah was a metropolitan town, having other cities dependent upon it. It was a mother-city or local capital.

**Abel-meholah.** In the plain of Jezreel, near Beth-shean.

It was the native place.

- (1) Of Adriel the Meholahite, to whom Saul gave his daughter Merab to wife, though he had previously promised her to David (1 Sam. xviii. 19).
- (2) Of Elisha, the prophet (1 Kings xix. 16).

It is also mentioned in connection with the rout of the Midianites by Gideon (Judges vii. 22).

**Adullam,** a city in the low country of Judah. Joshua captured it and slew the king thereof in his great southern campaign.

It was situated on a height commanding the road from Philistia, and was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7). In the neighbourhood are limestone cliffs containing many caves.

#### Notice in I. Samuel.

When David left Achish king of Gath after his first visit, he took refuge in the cave of Adullam, where he was joined by his brethren and his father's house, evidently because they did not feel themselves safe at Bethlehem from Saul's revenge.

It is not uncommon in the East for the offence of an individual to be visited by putting to death the whole of his family.

Here, too, David was joined by those of his countrymen who had grievances, viz. those who suffered under Saul's oppression, those oppressed with debt, and those dissatisfied with the government of Saul—400 men in all, who formed the nucleus of David's band, and ripened into hardened veterans under his command during his long exile.

#### Notice in II. Samuel.

- (1) In the Philistine invasion, immediately after David had captured Jerusalem, it is said that David "*went down to the hold.*" This hold, or stronghold, is generally supposed to be Adullam, which would command the valley of Elah, the route generally taken by the Philistines in their incursions.
- (2) During the above invasion, and whilst David was posted at Adullam, three of his mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem, though that place was watched by a military post of the Philistines (2 Sam. xxiii. 13-17).

**Anathoth,** a priestly city in the tribe of Benjamin, lying on or near to the great road from the north of Jerusalem. It has been identified with *Andia* on a ridge N.N.E. of Jerusalem.

#### Notices.

- (1) It was the native place of Abiezer and Jehu, two of David's mighty men.

- (2) Abiathar, the high-priest, had possessions at Anathoth, for Solomon banished him to that place for his share in the conspiracy of Adonijah, when that prince had asked for Abishag, the Shunammite, for wife (1 Kings ii. 26).
- (3) It was the birthplace of Jeremiah, the prophet. During the last siege of Jerusalem, Jeremiah bought the land which his cousin Hanameel possessed at Anathoth, and thus proclaimed his confidence in the ultimate restoration of his country (Jer. xxxii. 16-22).

**Arab.** A city in the neighbourhood of Hebron, the birthplace of Paarai the Arbite, one of David's mighty men (xxiii. 35).

**Archite** (see Hushai, p. ci.).

**Aroer** (1). A city on the Arnon, and in the territory of Sihon. It was assigned to Reuben. It was situated partly on the Arnon and partly on an island in the river. It marks the southern boundary of the tribe of Reuben.

#### Notices in II. Samuel.

When Joab and the other officers took the census of the people they are said to have "*pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad and toward Jazer*" (xxiv. 5).

This passage may be best translated "that lieth in the midst of the valley toward Gad and toward Jazer." Following this emendation we have an accurate description of Joab's route. He crossed the Jordan, and encamped at Aroer on the Arnon, the southern boundary of Reuben, and then made his way north through the country east of Jordan.

**Aroer** (2). A city in the tribe of Gad, described as "*Aroer that is before Rabbah*" (Josh. xiii. 25). Some commentators regard this Aroer as the one visited by Joab (xxiv. 5).

**Ashdod** (Azotus, Acts viii. 40) was one of the chief Philistine cities, Gaza, Gath, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Ekron. It was situated midway between Gaza and Joppa, about three miles from the southern frontier of Palestine. It owed its importance to the fact that it commanded the caravan route to Egypt. It was never subdued by the Israelites, and even in the time of Nehemiah retained its distinctiveness of race and religion (Neh. xiii. 23, 24).

#### Notice in I. Samuel.

The Ark, when captured by the Philistines in the judgeship of Eli, was brought first to Ashdod and set in the house of Dagon (1 Sam. v. 1-7).

#### Other Notices.

1. It was besieged and captured by Tartan, the general of the Assyrians, in the reign of Hezekiah.
2. Philip the Evangelist preached at Azotus (Ashdod) (Acts viii. 40).

**Askelon.** One of the five cities of the Philistines next in importance to Gaza. It was the religious capital of Philistia.

Samson went down from Timnath to Askelon, and slew thirty of the Philistines to obtain the changes of garments wherewith to pay the wager he had lost to those who had solved his riddle (Judges xiv. 19).

Herodotus names a famous temple of Venus at Askelon. This was probably "*the house of Ashtaroth*," in which the Philistines hung the armour of Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 10).

David would not proclaim the deaths of Saul and Jonathan lest there should be rejoicing in Askelon (2 Sam. i. 20).

Askelon played an important part in the struggles of the Crusades.

**Baale of Judah**, another name for Kirjath-jearim (see p. lxvii). Baalah appears to be the earlier or Canaanite name for the place (Josh. xv. 9, 10).

**Baal-hazor**, a place near Ephraim, where Absalom appears to have had a sheep farm, and where Amnon was murdered at the feast with which Absalom celebrated the shearing of his sheep (xiii. 23-29).

It is identified as *Tell Assur*, five miles north-east of Bethel.

**Baal-perazim.** The name given to the scene of David's first great victory over the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim. The name signifies "*place of breaches*," or "*place of bursting forth*." We may assume that David dashed down from the hills upon the Philistines encamped below, and scattered them like a vast mass of water bursting through a dam sweeps all before it as it rushes down a slope. Isaiah refers to this battle, "*the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim*" (Is. xxviii. 21), thus confirming the view that David and his men were on the hills whilst the Philistines were encamped in the valley below.

**Bahurim**, a village either on or close to the road leading from Jerusalem to the Jordan valley.

#### Notices.

- (1) Here lived Shimei the son of Gera, who cursed David at or near Bahurim on his flight from Jerusalem to Jordan (2 Sam. xvi. 5).
- (2) Jonathan and Ahimaaz took refuge in the well in the courtyard of a house at Bahurim, when in danger of capture by the servants of Absalom sent to overtake them, in their mission of carrying tidings from Jerusalem to David (2 Sam. xvii. 17-21).
- (3) Phaltiel, the husband of Michal, Saul's daughter, bade farewell to her at Bahurim, when he was compelled by Ish-bosheth to restore her to David, her first husband (2 Sam. iii. 13-16).

**Beeroth**, one of the four Gibeonite cities (Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim), which made a league with Joshua. These four cities were allotted to Benjamin, but the native Gibeonites continued

to dwell in them. The assassins of Ish-bosheth were Baanah and Rechab, of Beeroth. At this time Beeroth was destitute of its Gibeonite inhabitants, who had fled to Gittaim, and continued there as sojourners (iv. 3). It may well be conjectured that this flight of the Beerothites is connected with the cruelty of Saul towards the Gibeonites. If so, it is significant that the assassins of Ish-bosheth should have come from a Gibeonite city.

**Beer-sheba**, one of the oldest places in Palestine; it formed the southern limit of the country. The name may have been derived from the "*seven ewe lambs*" set apart by Abraham, or from the seven wells, for there are at present there two large wells and five smaller ones. *Sheba* is the Hebrew word for "*seven*."

It is famous in the days of Samuel, from the fact that he placed his sons Joel and Abiah as judges at Beer-sheba.

"**From Dan to Beer-sheba**," became the general expression for the whole of the Promised Land, equivalent to our "from Land's End to John o' Groat's house" as signifying the whole of Great Britain.

This is the meaning in the command given by David to Joab, "*Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people*" (xxiv. 2).

Beer-sheba has a peculiar interest in the history of the Philistines as being connected with Abraham and Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Abraham dug a well at Beer-sheba. The servants of Abimelech seized the well, so Abraham met Abimelech and Phichol at Beer-sheba, and made a treaty, Abraham setting apart "*seven ewe lambs*" as a token of the ratification of their agreement (Gen. xxi. 25-32).

The agreement would seem to have been broken, for it was renewed by Isaac with Abimelech and Phichol (Gen. xxvi. 23-33).

**Berothai**, one of the cities of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, from which David "*took exceeding much brass*." It is probably the same as Berothah (Ezek. xlviii. 16), where it is placed between Hamath and Damascus. It is named "*Chun*" in 1 Chron. xviii. 8. With the brass taken from Berothai and Betah Solomon made the brazen sea, the brazen columns and vessels for the Temple.

**Betah**, one of the cities of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, from which David "*took exceeding much brass*." It is named "*Tibhath*" in 1 Chron. xviii. 8. The site is unknown, but it is conjectured that it took the name from Tebah, one of the sons of Nahor, the brother of Abraham (Gen. xxii. 24).

**Bethlehem** (of Judah) (*house of bread*), situated about five miles south of Jerusalem. Its ancient name was Ephrath or Ephrath. It is often called Bethlehem-Judah, to distinguish it from Bethlehem in Zebulun.

It was the birthplace of our Lord (St. Luke ii. 4).

Notices in the Books of Samuel.

- (1) It was the birthplace of David (1 Sam. xvii. 12).
- (2) Samuel anointed David at Bethlehem (1 Sam. xvi. 13).

- (3) David was sent from Bethlehem by his father Jesse to visit his brethren in the camp of Saul. The scene of David's encounter with Goliath was only about ten or eleven miles north-west of Bethlehem.
- (4) The false excuse given by Jonathan to Saul to explain the absence of David from the feast, was that David had been summoned by his eldest brother Eliab to attend a sacrificial feast at Bethlehem (1 Sam. xx. 6, and 28, 29).
- (5) Three of David's mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines, and fetched water for David from the well of Beth-lehem (2 Sam. xxiii. 13-17).

The well to which tradition has given the name of "David's Well" lies about half a mile to the north-east of Beth-lehem.

The incident occurred in the first Philistine invasion immediately after the capture of Jerusalem by David (2 Sam. v. 17).

#### Other Notices.

1. The Levite who became a priest in the household of Micah, and who afterwards accompanied the Danites to Laish, came from Bethlehem (Judges xvii. 7).
2. The wife of the Levite (Judges xix.) came from Bethlehem.
3. The history of Ruth is connected with Bethlehem.

**Beth-phelet** or **Beth-palet**, a town in the extreme south of Judah, mentioned in connection with Beer-sheba (Josh. xv. 27). It is supposed to be the native place of Helez, the Paltite, one of David's mighty men (xxiii. 26).

**Beth-rehob**, a city lying to the south of Hamath, and the capital of a small Syrian kingdom. The Ammonites are said to have hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, among others, to assist them in their war against David (x. 6).

**Beth-shean** or **Beth-shan**, a town in the plain of Jezreel about four miles west of Jordan, just at the commencement of the steep descent into the Jordan valley. Though in the territory of Issachar, it was one of the cities assigned to Manasseh.

After their victory on Gilboa, the Philistines fastened the bodies of Saul and his sons to the walls of Beth-shan. The men of Jabesh-gilead crossed the Jordan by night, took the bodies from the walls of Beth-shan, burnt the bones, and buried the remains at Jabesh.

**Bithron** (more accurately "*the Bithron*") = *the gorge*. It is no doubt the name of the gorge or ravine leading from the Jordan to Mahanaim, being the route taken by Abner in his retreat to Mahanaim after his defeat at the pool of Gibeon (ii. 29).

**Carmel**, the name of a town in the hill country of Judah, famous in the history of Nabal, and apparently the native place of Abigail, "*the Carmelitess*," one of David's wives (1 Sam. xxvii. 3).

Carmel is about a mile to the north of Maon. Nabal lived at Maon, and had his establishment (*possessions*) at Carmel. This signifies that his business was at Carmel, whilst he lived at Maon.

Saul erected a monument at Carmel as a record of his victory over the Amalekites (1 Sam. xv. 12).

It was the native place of Hezrai, the Carmelite, one of David's mighty men (xxiii. 35).

**Damascus**, the great city of Syria, situated in a fertile plain of some thirty miles in diameter, lying to the east of Anti-Lebanus. It is one of the most ancient cities in the world. Abraham's steward Eliezer was a native of Damascus (Gen. xv. 2)

#### Notice in II. Samuel.

The Syrians of Damascus came to the assistance of Hadadezer in his war with David. They were totally defeated, and David captured Damascus. He placed garrisons in the country, and the Syrians became tributaries to him (2 Sam. viii. 5, 6).

Damascus did not continue long in the occupation of Israel, for, as early as the reign of Solomon, Rezon, the adversary of Solomon, founded a kingdom for himself at Damascus, and was a source of trouble to Solomon throughout his reign (1 Kings xi. 23-25).

The Syrian kingdom of Damascus was the great opponent of the kings of the northern kingdom, from the reign of Ahab till Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, attacked Syria and captured Damascus (2 Kings xvi. 9).

**Dan-jan**, probably the same as Dan or Laish. It is mentioned in the route taken by Joab when numbering the people.

**Dan** (the city), not the tribe of that name, but a town in the extreme north of Palestine. Its original name was Laish, and the story of its capture by the Danites is told in Judges xviii.-xix. After the capture the Danites gave the town the name of their own town.

"From Dan to Beer-sheba" was the common expression for the whole of the land (see Beer-sheba, p. lv.).

Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves at Dan, partly because it was the northern extremity of his kingdom, and partly because the Danites had established there a kind of religious worship, presided over by the young Levite, who had accompanied them from the house of Micah in Mount Ephraim, taking with him the ephod, the teraphim, the graven image, and the molten image which Micah had made.

**En-rogel** (*the fountain of the fuller*), a spring or fountain which formed one of the landmarks on the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin. It is probably the same as the present "fountain of the Virgin," whence comes the water to the pool of Siloam. Women still resort to this fountain for the purpose of washing clothes.

**Notices in Scripture.**

- (1) It is mentioned as being on the border of Judah (Josh. xv. 7), and in the border of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 16).
- (2) Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed at En-rogel, outside Jerusalem, in order to be free to take tidings of the doings of Absalom to David. The place was well chosen. Hushai communicated with Zadok and Abiathar, who sent the message by a woman. A woman could go to the well under cover of fetching water, and thus avoid suspicion. But in spite of the precaution, a lad saw her give the message to the sons of the priests, and went and told Absalom. Jonathan and Ahimaaz escaped by hiding in a well at Bahurim (2 Sam. xvii. 17-21).
- (3) Adonijah held a feast, and gathered his supporters to him in his attempt to secure the succession, at the stone of Zoheleth, near En-rogel (1 Kings i. 9).

**Ekron**, the most northerly of the five cities of the Philistines. It was assigned to Judah, forming one of the land-marks on the northern boundary. It seems to have been afterwards given to Dan.

**Notices in I. Samuel.**

It is one of the cities which received the Ark when captured by the Philistines. Noting the plagues that visited Ashdod and Gath, the Ekronites made vehement, but unavailing, protest against receiving the Ark into their city.

The Ark was drawn by the kine from Ekron to Bethshemesh.

**Other Notices.**

Ahaziah, king of Israel, sent to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from the injuries sustained by falling through a lattice from his upper chamber (2 Kings i. 2).

**Ephraim, Wood of.** Some district east of Jordan where the forces of David under Joab, Abishai, and Ittai the Gittite met and defeated the army of Absalom. There Absalom met his death.

It is generally considered that the district took the name from the defeat and slaughter of the Ephraimites by Jephthah (Judges xii. 6).

**Ephraim, Mount.** The title is misleading. It should be "the hill country of Ephraim." What is meant is the hilly part of the territory of Ephraim, one of the most fertile and beautiful regions of Palestine. Shechem and Samaria were situated in this district. The district was almost inaccessible on the western side. It was the highway for all roads from the south. It appears to have been successfully invaded from the north from the Plain of Esdraelon.

**Esdraelon, Plain of,** known also as the Plain of Jezreel, extending across Central Palestine from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, separating the mountain ranges of Carmel and Ephraim from those of Naphtali.

It is celebrated as being the great battlefield of Palestine, and four great encounters are recorded in Scripture:

1. The battle of Kishon, in which Sisera's host was routed by Deborah and Barak (Judges iv. 15).
2. The defeat of the Midianite horde by Gideon (Judges vii.).
3. The battle of Gilboa, in which Saul lost his life (1 Sam. xxxi.).
4. The battle of Megiddo, where Josiah fell in the endeavour to check the march of Pharaoh-nechoh as he advanced northwards to the Euphrates (2 Kings xxiii. 29).

"The situation of the plain of Esdraelon may be compared with the plain of Stirling, situated in a similar manner at the entrance to the Highlands of Scotland. As the plain of Esdraelon was the battle ground of Palestine, so almost all the great battles of Scottish history were decided in the plain of Stirling" (STANLEY).

### The Site of the Battle of Gilboa.

The reason why the scene of battle was laid so far north, distant alike from the cities of Philistia and the residence of Saul, was not, as many suppose, in order to gain supremacy in the north similar to that already obtained by the Philistines in the south. They had not overcome Saul in the south, and did not, at the conclusion of his reign, possess a supremacy over the land at all comparable to the oppression they had exacted in the days of Eli.

It is clear that Saul's military organization had been sufficiently strong to keep back any formidable invasion from the west. The Philistines may have held the towns immediately contiguous to their territory, but it is probable that their defeats at Ebenezer (Samuel) and in the valley of Elah had convinced them that Central Palestine was not to be won by an army advancing from the west.

Consequently they turned northward, and, marching along the coast, came through the pass dividing the hills of Manasseh from Mt. Carmel, and encamped in the plain of Esdraelon. A great victory there would not only cut the land, so to speak, in two, but give them the key both to the south and the north. This district they could hope to hold permanently with their chariots and cavalry. The slopes of Gilboa were not too steep for their horsemen and chariots. Here they would not have to ascend from the plain along the rocky ravines of the torrent beds. They pushed, therefore, across the plain to Shunem. At this point the great plain is broken by two mountain ridges. "On the southern side of the valley, which is here about three miles wide, are the mountains of Gilboa, and at their foot, or rather spur, lies Jezreel, where the spring which gushes down is gathered into a pool of considerable size," possibly the same as the well of Harod, where Gideon tested his men. On this ridge the Israelites pitched their camp.

On the northern side of the valley are the hill of Moreh and Mount Tabor. At Shunem and Aphek, to the south of Moreh, lay the Philistine host. Round the further side of the hill, distant some seven

or eight miles from Gilboa, was the village of Endor. Saul's journey, the night before the battle, was doubly hazardous. Not only did the path lie over difficult ground, but caution was necessary if he were to slip past the Philistines unnoticed.

The Plain of Esdraelon is connected with many events in subsequent history.

Here Ahab built his capital, Jezreel, on the spur of Gilboa, abutting the plain, commanding the view to Jordan on the east, and visible from Carmel on the west.

On the ridge of Carmel Elijah slaughtered the priests of Baal, and ran before Ahab along the plain.

At Beth-shan, on the west, the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the city walls.

Past Beth-shan, from the east, came Jehu from the camp at Ramoth-gilead to execute vengeance on the house of Ahab.

From Jezreel fled Ahaziah, king of Judah, making for Judah by the western pass, and receiving his death wound at Megiddo.

At Aphek, in the plain, Benhadad, king of Syria, suffered a severe defeat at the hands of Ahab.

**Gallim**, a place between Gibeah of Saul and Jerusalem. It was the native place of Phalti, or Phaltiel, to whom Saul gave in marriage Michal, his daughter, David's wife, when David fled from court.

**Gath**, one of the five cities of the Philistines. It occupied a strong position on the border of Judah and Philistia, and from its strength and resources formed the key of both countries.

It is intimately connected with the history of David.

It was the native place of the giant Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 4).

David fled from Saul to Achish, King of Gath (1 Sam. xxi. 10; xxvii. 3).

Gath was the political capital of Philistia. David captured it (2 Sam. viii. 1). The fall of Gath carried with it the subjugation of Philistia.

Many of the heroic deeds of David's men appear to have been performed in the neighbourhood of Gath (xxiii. 15-22).

**Gath-rimmon**, a town of Manasseh, assigned to the Levites. It was apparently the native place of Obed-edom the Gittite (see Obed-edom, p. cxiv.).

**Gaza, or Azzah**, one of the five cities of the Philistines, and the last town in the south-west of Palestine on the frontier of Egypt. It occupied a position of great strength. Joshua was not able to subdue it, and though the tribe of Judah once obtained possession of it, they did not hold it for long. During the times of Samuel, Saul, and David it was in the hands of the Philistines, and appears to have been the capital. Solomon gained possession of it, and it is said that his territory extended from "*Tiphisah even to Azzah*" (1 Kings iv. 24).

It was the scene of one of Samson's exploits, viz., the carrying away of the gates of Gaza (Judges xvi. 1-3).

**Geba.** The modern *Jeba*, standing at the south side of the passage or pass of Michmash, whilst Michmash is on the north. The Philistines had established a military post at Geba to command the pass. Jonathan commenced the war of independence by surprising the garrison holding this post (1 Sam. xiii. 3).

In his second victory over the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim, David is said to have smitten them from Geba to Gazer (v. 25). In the parallel passage 1 Chron. xiv. 16, we have "*Gibeon*" instead of "*Geba*." "*Gazer*" is clearly "*Gezer*."

With these corrections we have a clear indication of the line of the Philistine flight, *i.e.* from Gibeon down the pass of Beth-horon and then on to Gezer, much the same route as that taken by the five kings defeated by Joshua.

**Geshur.** A small kingdom in the north-east corner of Bashan. The Geshurites successfully maintained their independence, and were in existence at the time of David. Maachah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur, was one of David's wives, and the mother of Absalom, who, after the murder of Amnon, took refuge in Geshur with his grandfather Talmi (xiii. 37).

**Gezer** or **Gazer**, an important city in the south, commanding the approach from Egypt. Though assigned to the Kohathites as a city of refuge (Josh. xxi. 21), it remained in the possession of the Canaanites (Josh. xvi. 10). It was captured by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who put to death the Canaanites who dwelt there, and gave it to his daughter as a marriage portion, when she became the wife of Solomon (1 Kings ix. 16).

Solomon fortified the city as a protection on the south.

#### Notice in II. Samuel—

It is mentioned in connection with the second defeat of the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim. David pursued them down the pass of Beth-horon, as far as Gezer, which lies between lower Beth-horon and the sea (v. 25).

**Gibeon**, a well-known city of the Hivites situated in the tribe of Benjamin, and lying about four miles to the north of Jerusalem.

The inhabitants made a league with Joshua and the Israelites by a clever device. They thus escaped the fate of Jericho and Ai, but though their lives were spared, they were condemned to be perpetual bondsmen, "*hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation; and for the altar of the Lord*" (Josh. ix. 27).

#### Notices in II. Samuel—

- (1) At the pool of Gibeon occurred the contest between Abner's men and Joab's men, notable for the death of Asahel in his pursuit after Abner (ii. 12-31).
- (2) Joab slew Amasa at "*the great stone that is in Gibeon*" (xx. 8-13).
- (3) Saul appears to have behaved cruelly to the Gibeonites, for in David's reign the kingdom was afflicted with famine, pronounced

by the Lord "to be for Saul and his bloody house because he slew the Gibeonites." Two sons of Rizpah, the wife of Saul, and five sons of Merab, Saul's eldest daughter, were handed over to the Gibeonites. They were hanged on the hill of Gibeah of Saul, and the famine ceased (xxi. 1-14).

Gibeon was of importance in the reign of Solomon, for

- (1) The tabernacle and the brazen altar were at Gibeon.
- (2) Zadok was the high priest at Gibeon, and Abiathar at Jerusalem.
- (3) Joab fled to the Tabernacle at Gibeon, and there was put to death by Benaiah (1 Kings ii. 28-34).
- (4) Solomon sacrificed at Gibeon, where God appeared to him in a dream (1 Kings iii. 5-13).

**Gibeonites**, see p. lxxviii.

**Gibeon (Pool of).** Gibeon was on the slope of a hill, overlooking a wide, fertile valley. On the east of the hill is a copious spring, which issues in a cave excavated in a limestone rock, so as to form a large subterranean reservoir. The overflow is stored in a large tank or reservoir lower down, about 120 ft. long by 100 ft. broad. This may be "the pool of Gibeon." There is a reference to it in Jer xli. 12, "*the great waters that are in Gibeon.*"

The existence of this pool, with the plain at the foot of the hill, probably accounts for the selection of Gibeon as the site of the tabernacle. The plain would accommodate the worshippers—the pool would supply water.

**Gibeon** (The great stone at). Notable as the spot where Joab and Amasa met, and as marking the murder of Amasa. It may have been some well-known landmark.

**Gibeah** (hill town) is a name given to many places in Palestine.

The Gibeah of 2 Samuel is Gibeah of Benjamin, or Gibeah of Saul. It was situated four miles north of Jerusalem, to the right of the road leading from Hebron to Jerusalem, and then northwards.

The strength of its position is indicated by the successful resistance which the Benjamites made against the attack of the united tribes. They were at last defeated by stratagem and the town taken (Judges xxi.).

The Gibeonites hanged the two sons of Rizpah and the five sons of Merab in Gibeah as the blood atonement for the cruelty of Saul (xxi. 6).

**Gilboa** (see Plain of Esdraelon). A mountain range at the east of the plain of Esdraelon, forming its southern boundary, and rising above Jezreel. It is the scene of the defeat and death of Saul.

**Gilead**, a mountainous district on the east of Jordan, bounded on the north by Bashan and on the south by Moab and Ammon. Mahanaim,

**Jabesh-gilead**, and **Ramoth-gilead** were the chief towns. The name is often applied to the whole district east of Jordan.

Gilead was the natural retreat of the Israelites from a western invasion. When the Philistines advanced against Saul, many of them "*went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead*" (1 Sam. xiii. 7).

On the death of Saul, Ish-bosheth set up his court at Mahanaim in Gilead, and David fled to the same place of refuge to escape from Absalom.

**Gilgal**, situated on a hillock or rising ground in the plains of Jericho, about five miles from the Jordan and two miles from Jericho.

It was the site of the first camp of the Israelites after the crossing of the Jordan. The twelve stones which had been taken from the river were set up at Gilgal.

The word means "*the rolling*," and thus kept in remembrance the "*rolling away of the reproach of Egypt*" (Josh. v. 9).

Joshua fortified "*the camp*," and made it the base of his military operations against the Canaanites, and a place of safety where the women, children, etc., could be left.

#### Notice in II. Samuel.

The men of Judah came to meet David at Gilgal on his return to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom (xix. 15).

#### Notices in I. Samuel.

1. It was one of the three towns, Beth-el, Gilgal and Mizpeh, which Samuel visited in turn as judge of the people (1 Sam. vii. 16).
2. The Philistine hold upon the country caused Gilgal to become a centre of religious and national life. As long as Israel held the eastern side of the passes, Gilgal was safe from Philistine raiders.

So we find Samuel sacrificing at Gilgal (1 Sam. x. 8), holding a judicial court there (1 Sam. vii. 16), Saul publicly confirmed in his election as king (1 Sam. xi. 14, 15), and also mustering his army for his great war of independence (1 Sam. xiii. 4-7).

At Gilgal, Saul first shows the wilfulness of his character in sacrificing without waiting for the arrival of Samuel, who had appointed to meet the king at Gilgal. His disobedience causes Samuel to pronounce the first sentence against Saul. "*Thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart*" (1 Sam. xiii. 14). Thus Gilgal has a melancholy connection with the fate of Saul.

#### Other Notices.

1. The rite of circumcision took place after the crossing of Jordan (Josh. v. 2-9).
2. The Passover was celebrated (Josh. v. 10-12).
3. The treaty was made with the Gibeonites, who came to the "*camp at Gilgal*" (Josh. x. 6).

4. From Gilgal Joshua hastened to the rescue of the Gibeonites when they were attacked by the southern kings (Josh. x. 7).
5. Joshua returned to Gilgal after the conquest of the south of Canaan (Josh. x. 43).
6. Caleb claimed Hebron as his inheritance before Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. xiv. 6).
7. After the conquest of the land, the Tabernacle was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1).
8. The angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim (Judges ii. 1).
9. Ehud turned back from the quarries by Gilgal to assassinate Eglon (Judges iii. 19).

**Giloh**, a town in the hill country of Judah, famous as the native place of Ahithophel.

**Gittaim**, mentioned as being the place to which the native Canaanites of Beeroth fled (iv. 3).

It is also mentioned as being one of the places where the Benjamites dwelt after the captivity (Neh. xi. 33).

"Gittaim is the dual form of the word Gath, which suggests the Philistine plain as its locality. But there is no evidence for or against this" (B. D.).

A position in the Philistine plain, and not in the tribe of Benjamin, is consistent with the suggestion that the Canaanites of Beeroth abandoned that city in consequence of Saul's severities towards the Gibeonites.

**Gob**, a place mentioned as the scene of two encounters between David's men and the Philistines.

1. Sibbechai slew Saph, one of the sons of the giant, at Gob (xxi. 18).
  2. Elkanan slew the brother of Goliath, the Gittite, at Gob (xxi. 19).
- [In the parallel passage (1 Chron. xx. 4) *Gezer* is given as the scene of the battle. The Septuagint has *Gath*.]

It is generally considered that Gob is some unknown place near Gezer, or that Gath was the scene of all the battles.

**Gad, River of** (see xxiv. 5). The A.V. is here incorrect in translation. Probably the Hebrew text is corrupt, and the Revisers translate "*in the middle of the valley of Gad*," and give an alternative in the margin of "*toward*" for "*of*." In this they follow the Septuagint.

**Hamath**, an important city of Upper Syria, in the valley of the Orontes, which it commanded. The valley was the main entrance to Palestine from the north, and was the way traversed by the armies of Assyria and Babylon when they invaded the country.

Toi, king of Hamath, sent an embassy to David to congratulate him on his victory over Hadadezer, king of Zobah.

Solomon built store cities at Hamath (2 Chron. viii. 4), and Hamath was one of the kingdoms tributary to him.

The "*entering in of Hamath*" signifies the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, which valley may well be termed the gateway into Palestine from the north.

Solomon's kingdom extended from the "*entering in of Hamath to the river of Egypt*" (1 Kings viii. 65).

**Hebron**, a city of Judah, twenty-nine miles south of Jerusalem, and twenty miles north of Beer-sheba. The ancient name was Kirjath-arba, the city of Arba, so called from Arba, the father of Anak.

#### Notices.

- (1) Abraham pitched his tent "*in the plain of Mamre, which is Hebron*" (Gen. xiii. 18).
- (2) Sarah died at Hebron; and there was the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham purchased as a burial-place from Ephron, the Hittite (Gen. xxiii.).
- (3) In the division of the land Hebron fell to the lot of Caleb (Josh. xv. 13).
- (4) It was the capital of David on the death of Saul. There he reigned seven years and six months (2 Sam. v. 5).
- (5) It was the scene of the murder of Abner by Joab (iii. 27).
- (6) Here Absalom commenced his rebellion against his father David, going to Hebron under the pretence of fulfilling a vow which he had made whilst dwelling in exile at Geshur (2 Sam. xv. 7-12).

Hebron thus plays a very important part in the reign of David.

It was chosen by him as his first capital, and here he reigned for seven years and a-half over Judah.

At Hebron were born Amnon, Chileab, Absalom, and Adonijah, Shephatiah and Ithream.

At Hebron Joab and Abishai murdered Abner.

#### Why did David choose Hebron as the capital of Judah

1. In obedience to the guidance of Jehovah.
2. For its central position in the tribe of Judah.
3. For its traditions. It was—
  - (a) A priestly city.
  - (b) An ancient capital, and closely connected with the times of Abraham and the patriarchs.
4. Its defensible situation in a hilly district.
5. David, in exile, had been in the country to the south of Hebron, and had many sympathizers in the city.

#### Why did Absalom choose Hebron as the centre of his rebellion?

1. Because Judah was the centre of disaffection.
2. Because the citizens of Hebron may have been displeased at

Jerusalem having been selected as the capital of the new kingdom.

3. Because it was near Giloh, the native place of Abithophel, the life and spirit of the rebellion.
4. Because there was a straight road from Hebron to Jerusalem, so that when his plans were complete he could strike a swift, decisive blow upon the capital ere David could be ready.

Thus Hebron, in the south, was more suitable as the centre for the gathering. Joab and his men could have held the road from the north whilst levies were gathered in Judah, and an attack from the north, developed in the northern tribes, would certainly have caused the tribesmen of Judah, in their jealousy of Israel, to unreservedly support David.

**Helam.** The scene of the great battle between David and the united forces of the Syrians collected by Hadadezer. Shobach, the captain of the host, and 40,000 Syrians fell. The Syrian power was completely broken.

There is no indication of its exact position, but it must have been some place east of Jordan and west of the Euphrates.

**Helkath-hazzurim.** The name given to the piece of ground near the pool of Gibeon where twelve men of Benjamin and twelve of Joab's men fought as champions for their respective armies. Such was the animosity of the contending warriors that, neglecting self-defence, they attacked each other so fiercely that all fell in mutual slaughter.

The name is variously explained as the field—

- (a) *of the enemies*, as indicating the contest;
- (b) *of strong men*, as indicating the valour of the combatants;
- (c) *of the rocks*, as indicating the obstinacy with which they fought;
- (d) *of the plotters*, or *liers in wait*, i.e. suggestive of some treacherous conduct;
- (e) *of the sides*, i.e. with allusion to the phrase "thrust his sword in his fellow's side."

**Jabesh-gilead.** One of the chief cities of Gilead beyond the Jordan.

The history of Jabesh-gilead is intimately connected with the tribe of Benjamin and the house of Saul.

We read that Jabesh-gilead was the only town that had not taken part in the exterminating war against the tribe of Benjamin (Judges xxi. 9). At the conclusion of the campaign the survivors of Benjamin were supplied with wives by the sack of Jabesh-gilead (Judges xxi. 8-24).

Jabesh-gilead was the scene of Saul's first military exploit. He relieved Jabesh-gilead from the attack of Nahash, the Ammonite king. It is curious that their cry for help against Nahash should be responded to by Saul, the first king of the tribe of Benjamin.

The men of Jabesh-gilead remembered the promptness with which Saul had responded to their call. When the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and his sons on the walls of Beth-shan, the men of Jabesh, in gratitude for their deliverance from Nahash, came by night and took down the bodies, conveying them to Jabesh-gilead, and buried them there, after first burning them (1 Sam. xxxi. 11-13).

On being anointed king over Judah at Hebron, David sent a message to the men of Jabesh-gilead, thanking them for their kindness to Saul.

In this he doubtless had a double object:—

- (1) Making it public that the death of Saul was a grief to himself.
- (2) Making an appeal to the men of Jabesh-gilead to accept himself as the successor of Saul.

Later, after the hanging of the seven sons of Saul by the Gibeonites, David took the bones of Saul and Jonathan from Jabesh-gilead, and buried them at Zelah, in Benjamin, in the sepulchre of Kish, the father of Saul (xxi. 14).

**Jazer** or **Jaazer**, a town on the east of Jordan, in or near to Gilead. It was taken from the Amorites by Israel after Heshbon, and on their way to Bashan. It is mentioned in the route taken by Joab on the east of Jordan, when he was engaged in taking the number of the people (xxiv. 5).

**Jebus**, the ancient name of Jerusalem (see pp. lxxxv.-lxxxviii.).

**Jezreel**. A town in southern Judah in the neighbourhood of Carmel. Thence David took his wife Ahinoam, who is known as Ahinoam *the Jezreelitess*, from the name of her native town (ii. 2).

It must not be confounded with the more famous Jezreel in the Plain of Esdraelon.

**Kabzeel**, a city in the tribe of Judah, situated in the extreme south. It is celebrated as the native place of the famous Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, the captain of David's bodyguard (xxiii. 20). It was re-occupied after the Captivity, and then appears under the name of *Jekabzeel*.

**Kidron**. The brook flowing through the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the eastern side of Jerusalem. It is joined by the Gihon at the south-eastern extremity of the valley.

**Kirjath-jearim** (*the city of the woods*). A town of Judah about nine miles to the north-west of Jerusalem, lying on the border of Judah and Benjamin. It was a Gibeonite city (Josh. ix. 17).

When the Ark was restored by the Philistines it came to Beth-shemesh. The men of Beth-shemesh were smitten for the sin of looking into the Ark, so they entreated the men of Kirjath-jearim to come and fetch it. The Ark was placed in the house of Abinadab on the hill at Kirjath-jearim, and his son Eleazer was sanctified as its keeper or guardian. The Ark rested at Kirjath-jearim for twenty years during the reign of Saul, and was brought thence by David (vi. 3).

On the bringing of the Ark from Kirjath-jearim, see p. xxvi.

**Lo-debar**, a town on the east of Jordan, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Mahanaim. It was the native place of Machir, one of the chiefs of Gilead who entertained David on his flight from Absalom.

At Lo-debar Mephibosheth was brought up and supported by Machir after the death of Saul and Jonathan.

Ziba went to Lo-debar to fetch Mephibosheth (ix. 4, 5).

**Maachah**. A small Syrian kingdom in the north-east of Bashan. The king of Maachah furnished 1,000 men in support of the Ammonites in their first campaign against David (x. 6).

**Mahanaim**, a town on the east of Jordan in the mountains of Gilead.

#### Notices.

- (1) When Jacob parted from Laban at Mount Gilead he "went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim" (Gen. xxxii. 1, 2).
- (2) The position was strong and well fortified, so Mahanaim was chosen by Abner as the capital of Ish-bosheth (ii. 8-12). Here Ish-bosheth was murdered by Baanah and Rechab (iv. 1-7).
- (3) David, for the same reason, took refuge at Mahanaim when compelled by Absalom to flee from Jerusalem. Here he was received and entertained by Barzillai and others (xvii. 21-29).
- (4) From Mahanaim David's men, under Joab, Abishai and Ittai, marched to meet the forces of Absalom in the wood of Ephraim.
- (5) Cush and Ahimaaz brought the news of the defeat and death of Absalom to David at Mahanaim.

**Medeba**, a city of Reuben, four miles south-east of Heshbon. It is mentioned in 1 Chron. xix. 7 as the scene of the battle between Joab and the two armies of the Syrians and Ammonites (see p. xxix).

**Metheg-ammah**. In order to understand what is meant by this expression, it is well to put the parallel passages in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles side by side.

2 Samuel viii. 1.

1 Chronicles.

"And David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines."

"David . . . took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines."

Metheg-ammah = the bridle of the metropolis, or of the mother city. "To take the bridle of a mother city out of the hand of its rulers is to dispossess them of its government, as a man who takes the reins into his own hands out of those of the driver of a chariot, or rider of a horse, and deprives them of control over it" (WORDSWORTH).

David may have obtained control over Philistia by the capture of Gath, as named particularly in Chronicles, but whatever the nature of his victory it is clear that the Israelites, for the first time in their history, obtained the command over the high road of trade which

passed from Egypt and Arabia into Asia, by the great maritime route through the plain of Philistia. The command of this route was one great source of the commercial prosperity of the kingdom in the reign of Solomon.

**Millo**, see p. lxxxv.

**Moriah**, see p. lxxxv.

**Olives (Mount of) or Olivet**, see p. lxxxv.

**Pas-dammin**, mentioned in 1 Chron. xi. 13 as the place where Eleazar, the son of Dodo, defeated the Philistines (see also 2 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10). It is probably the same as **Ephesdammin** (1 Sam. xvii. 1), the modern Damim, between Shochoh and Azekah, the actual site of the Philistine encampment where David met Goliath. As the name signifies "*bound of blood*," and as the place lies on the ravine leading from Gath to Hebron, it is probable that it is so called because it was the scene of many encounters with bands of Philistine raiders.

**Pirathon**, "*in the land of Ephraim, in the Mount of the Amalekites*" (Judges xii. 15).

- (1) The native place of Abdon the judge, and where he was buried (Judges xii. 15).
- (2) The native place of Benaiah the Pirathonite, one of David's mighty men (xxiii. 30).

**Rabbah** or **Rabbath of Ammon**, the capital of the Ammonites on the east of Jordan. It was situated in the narrow valley of the upper Jabbok, on both sides of the stream. It consisted of two parts:—

- (1) **The lower town**, or "*city of waters*," so called from its containing the perennial stream which rises in and still flows through it. It is also described as the "*royal city*" (xii. 26).
- (2) **The citadel**, or "*city*" (xii. 28), rising abruptly on the north side of the lower town, a position of very great strength.

Joab captured the "*city of waters*" (xii. 27), and thus was probably able to deprive the citadel of its water supply. The fate of the citadel was then only a matter of time. Joab sent for David in order that the king might have the honour of capturing the citadel in person (xii. 28).

On the Ammonite war, see p. xxix.

**Amman (Rabbath Ammon)**.

"Just before reaching Ammon, the gorge takes a sudden turn to the north, and then swells into a narrow plain, covered with luxuriant grass, and embosomed in low, round hills. The fish-stocked stream, with shells studding every stone and pebble, winds in the midst, a narrow channel, receiving occasional affluents in its course, and making Rabbah most truly a "*city of waters*." It is paved at the bottom, and its little quays of fine masonry run uninterruptedly on both sides for a distance of about a mile and a half" (TRISTRAM, p. 544).

**Rephaim, Valley of** = *valley of the giants*. A plain to the south-west of Jerusalem, deriving its name from the race of giants by whom it

was formerly peopled. It was noted for its rich cornfields. It is famous as the scene of two encounters with the Philistines soon after David had taken Jerusalem and made it his capital.

1. In this campaign it would seem that David had sallied forth from Jerusalem and taken up his position at Adullam, commanding the approach from the Shephelah up the valley of Elath. The Philistines appear to have advanced up the valley of Sorek, thus marching past David's right flank, and posting themselves in the fertile valley of Rephaim, where they would cut him off from Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Apparently, it is during this invasion that the three mighty men made their way through the Philistine host and fetched water from the well at Bethlehem (xxiii. 13-17).

After inquiring of God, David suddenly descended from the hills down upon the Philistines in the plain. His dashing and irresistible attack is compared to the descent of a mountain torrent swollen by sudden storm, sweeping everything away in its course. David captured and burnt the images of the Philistine idols, which they had brought with them (v. 17-21).

2. In the second campaign David attacked them from the rear, and pursued them from Gibeon to Gezer (v. 18-25).

**Rogelim.** Some place on the east of Jordan not far from Mahanaim. It was the native place of "*Barzillai, the Gileadite of Rogelim*" (xvii. 27), one of the three chiefs of Gilead who entertained David and his men on their flight from Jerusalem.

**Salt, Valley of.** The broad open plain at the southern end of the Dead Sea. It lies between the sea and a range of mountains about six miles to the south. It formed the boundary between Edom and Judah.

It is the scene of two great victories over Edom.

1. In the reign of David, when 18,000 Edomites were slain (viii. 13). Abishai is said to have commanded the forces (1 Chron. xviii. 12). (For particulars, see p. xxx.).
2. In the reign of Amaziah, who completely crushed the Edomites (2 Kings xiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxv. 11).

**Sirah, Well of.** The place at which the messengers sent by Joab to recall Abner to Hebron overtook him. It is evidently on the great north road from Hebron. There is a spring and a reservoir on the western side of this road, about one mile from Hebron, called *Azi Sdrh*. This is in all probability the "well of Sirah."

**Tøhtim-hodshi.** One of the places visited by Joab whilst taking the census (xxiv. 6). It is mentioned as being between Gilead and Dan-jaan. The name has puzzled all commentators. We can only infer that it means some district north of Gilead, and on the east of Jordan.

**Tekoah**, a city in the south of Judah, about six miles to the south of Bethlehem, and still known as *Tektā*. This may explain Joab's knowledge of the woman.

Near Tekoah is a rough, wild district known as the wilderness of Tekoah. It abounds with caves, in one of which the wise woman may have had her dwelling similarly to the witch of Endor.

#### Notices.

1. It was the home of the wise woman of Tekoah, employed by Joab to effect a reconciliation between David and Absalom (xiv. 2).
2. It was the native place of Ira the Tekoite, one of David's mighty men (xxiii. 26).
3. It was fortified by Rehoboam at the beginning of his reign as a defence against invasion from the south (2 Chron. xi. 6).
4. It is chiefly memorable as the birthplace of the prophet Amos. It is situated in an agricultural district, hence Amos is styled one of "*the herdmen of Tekoa*" (Amos i. 1.).

**Thebez**, identified with Tubas, thirteen miles north of Shechem. The inhabitants of Thebez appear to have sided with Gaal in his revolt against Abimelech.

Abimelech met with his death at the siege of the tower of Thebez. During the siege Abimelech approached near the tower. A woman on the roof seized the opportunity, and hurled down upon him a piece of a millstone with such violence as to fracture his skull. Abimelech fell, but in his fall desired a soldier's death, and, like Saul on Mount Gilboa, called upon his armour-bearer to slay him, and thus save him from the ignominy of meeting his death at the hand of a woman (Judges ix. 46-57). This event passed into a kind of proverb as a warning against too near an approach to a besieged city. So Joab refers to it in his message to David conveying the tidings of the death of Uriah (xi. 21).

**Tob**. Jephthah, when banished from the home of his father Gilead, took refuge in the land of Tob.

It was evidently in the land of Syria, for Syrians of Ish-tob (*men of Tob*) assisted the Ammonites against David (x. 5-8).

**Tyre**. Tyre and Sidon are well known as the two great cities of Phœnicia, situated on the Mediterranean. Tyre was especially famed for its commerce, skill in arts, and wealth.

Tyre is first mentioned in the Book of Joshua (Josh. xix. 29), where it is referred to as a fortified city. There is no record of any war between the Israelites and Tyre, and friendly relations seem to have existed from early times, but close commercial intercourse appears to date from David's reign, and to have been especially strong in the reign of Solomon.

Several causes contributed to these friendly relations, viz. :

1. **Language**. Similarity of language. Phœnician closely resembling Hebrew, enabled the two nations readily to understand each other.

2. Proximity rendering intercourse easy.
3. Each country mutually dependent upon the other. Tyre drew its food supplies, especially corn and oil, from Palestine, and in return sent to that country timber and artificers for the erection of the Temple and of the palaces erected by David and Solomon. Through Tyre were also supplied other articles of commerce entering by sea.

The act of the men of Tyre and Sidon, in desiring to be on friendly terms with Herod Agrippa, "*because their country was nourished by the king's country*" (Acts xii. 20), is an illustration of how largely Tyre was dependent upon Palestine for its food supply.

#### Tyre in the reign of David.

1. Hiram, king of Tyre, sent ambassadors to David to cultivate friendly relations with Israel (v. 11). He supplied David with cedar-wood and workmen for the erection of a palace.
2. Tyre is mentioned in the description of the route taken by Joab in numbering the people (xxiv. 7).

This visit would probably be made for the purpose of taking a census of the Israelites living there, and thus furnishes indirect confirmation of the close intercourse between the Tyrians and the northern tribes.

#### Tyre in the reign of Solomon.

1. Hiram supplied Solomon with cedar and fir, and with skilled workmen for the building of the Temple and the palaces. In return Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 measures of wheat, and 20 measures of pure oil yearly (1 Kings v. 10, 11).
2. In response to the request of Solomon, Hiram the king sent him Hiram, a worker in brass, who cast all the brass work for the Temple (1 Kings vii. 13-46).
3. When Solomon had finished all the great buildings, it would seem that the cost of them had been so great that he could not pay Hiram in produce. Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee, whilst Hiram paid Solomon 120 talents of gold, apparently to balance the account between them. Hiram appears not to have been pleased with the bargain, for he termed the cities "*Cabul*" (=displeasing), an epithet which long remained as descriptive of the district (1 Kings ix. 10-14).

#### Tyre in later history.

On the secession of the Ten Tribes friendly relations appear to have continued, for Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of Eth-baal, king of the Zidonians (1 Kings xvi. 31). This marriage, by the introduction of Baal worship, was fatal to both Israel and Judah.

**The King's Dale**, mentioned as the place where Absalom erected a monument to himself in his own life-time, assigning as a reason that he had no son to keep his name in remembrance.

Abraham, on his return from the rescue of Lot and other captives from Chederlaomer, was met by the king of Sodom "at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale" (Gen. xiv. 17).

Apparently, "the king's dale" referred to was near Sodom. If so, Absalom erected his monument in the south.

But Josephus describes Absalom's monument as being in the valley of the Kidron, about a quarter of a mile from Jerusalem. As Melchisedek, king of Salem, is mentioned as bringing "forth bread and wine" (Gen. xiv. 18), and blessing Abraham in close connection with the visit of the king of Sodom, it is possible that the meeting described in Genesis took place near Jerusalem. But the original Hebrew *emek* is descriptive of a broad, open valley, entirely opposed to the character of the narrow, stony ravine of the Kidron (Heb. *nachal*).

**Zelah**, a city of Benjamin, the site of which has not been identified. It is noteworthy as containing the family tomb of Kish, the father of Saul. After the execution of the seven sons of Saul as a propitiatory offering for his sin in slaying the Gibeonites, David removed the bones of Saul and Jonathan from Jabesh-gilead, and buried them "in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish, his father" (xxi. 14).

**Zidon or Sidon**, an ancient and wealthy city of Phœnicia, on the Mediterranean, about twenty miles north of Tyre (see Tyre, p. xxi.).

In early times it is clear that Zidon was the more important of the two cities, for the reason why Laish was not succoured when attacked by the Danites is given as because "it was far from Zidon" (Judges xviii. 28).

Had Tyre been of any importance at that time help could have been sent more readily from that city, seeing that it is much nearer Laish. The importance of Zidon in the time of Joshua and the Judges is confirmed by the fact that the Phœnicians, or northern Canaanites, are often described as Zidonians.

**Ziklag**. A town in that part of the territory of Judah allotted to Simeon. It was in the south of the Negeb, and lay to the north of the brook Bezor, which was crossed by David and his men in their pursuit of the Amalekites.

In the reign of Saul it was in the possession of the Philistines, for it was, at David's request, bestowed upon him by Achish, king of Gath.

David undoubtedly desired to have some town assigned to him, so that he might remove himself from close supervision by the Philistines, and also avoid exciting their jealousy. He resided there one year and four months, and during this period no doubt exercised himself in governing and organising the numerous refugees.

From Ziklag David made raids upon the neighbouring tribes dwelling in the south, as far as the wilderness of Shur. He sent part of the spoil to Achish, and reported that he made the raids against the south of Judah. In order that his deception might not be discovered, he left none alive to betray his proceedings.

During David's absence, when he was compelled to march northwards with the Philistine army, the Amalekites seized the opportunity of swooping down upon the defenceless Ziklag, burning the city, and carrying off the women and children as slaves. On his return David and his men pursued, overtook, and slaughtered the Amalekites, recovering the spoil, and capturing much booty in addition.

David was at Ziklag when he heard of the death of Saul (i. 1-16).

The city seems to have become the private possession of the kings of Judah (1 Sam. xxvii. 6).

It is mentioned once again in connection with Beersheba as having been reinhabited on the return of the Captivity (Neh. xi. 28).

**Zion**, see p. lxxxv.

**Zobah**. A portion of Syria forming a separate kingdom in the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. Assyrian inscriptions place it between Hamath and Damascus.

**In the reign of Saul.**

Saul fought against and defeated the kings of Zobah (1 Sam. xiv. 47).

The inference is that at this period Zobah was governed by a number of kings under no common chief.

**In the reign of David.**

- (1) The Syrians of Zobah assisted the Ammonites in the great war of David's reign. Joab defeated the Syrians whilst Abishai held the Ammonites in check (x. 6-14).
- (2) David defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah, taking from him a thousand chariots and other spoil, including the shields of gold, which he carried off to Jerusalem (viii. 3-7).
- (3) The Syrians of Zobah made a last effort and were completely crushed at Helam (x. 16-19).

**In the reign of Solomon.**

- (1) Rezon of Zobah was an adversary to Solomon (1 Kings xi. 23-25).
- (2) Solomon appears to have waged a campaign against Zobah. "*Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it*" (2 Chron. viii. 3).

## NATIONS AND TRIBES MENTIONED IN II. SAMUEL.

**Ammonites**, descendants of Ben-Ammi, the son of the younger daughter of Lot (Gen. xix. 38). Moab was the son of the elder daughter. In Scripture history these two nations are always closely connected. The territory of Moab is clearly defined, but the territory of Ammon is not ascertainable. We may infer from this that the descendants of Lot were divided into two portions, the Moabites representing the settled and civilized section, whilst the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion of the nation.

**Religion.** Their god was Molech or Milcom, "*the abomination of the children of Ammon.*" Molech was a fire-god to whom the Israelites sacrificed their children in the valley of Hinnom.

The Ammonites are distinguished for cunning, cruelty, and their hatred of Israel.

The Ammonite or Moabite was precluded from joining the congregation of Israel to the tenth generation. The reasons given for this ban of exclusion are—

- (a) Because they refused assistance to the Israelites on their approach to Canaan.
- (b) Because they hired Balaam to curse Israel (Deut. xxiii. 3, 4). These reasons are recapitulated in Neh. xiii. 1.

Evidently their share in the hiring of Balaam was the chief cause of the detestation in which the Ammonites were held by the Israelites. Their conduct was the less excusable, because, as regards the children of Ammon, the Israelites had been enjoined, "*distress them not, nor meddle with them*" (Deut. ii. 19).

#### Previous Notices.

They oppressed the district of Gilead, on the east of Jordan, and were defeated by Jephthah (Judges xi.).

Saul rescued the men of Jabesh Gilead from Nahash, king of Ammon, and completely defeated the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi.).

#### Notices in II, Samuel.

Their war with David, in consequence of the insults offered to his ambassadors by Hanun, king of Ammon. This is the principal war in David's reign, and is famous for the siege and capture of Rabbah and the death of Uriah (2 Sam. x.-xii.) (see pp xxix.-xxx.).

#### Subsequent History.

1. War with Jehoshaphat, when they suffered so signal a defeat that three days were occupied in collecting the spoil (2 Chron. xx. 25).
2. Jotham prevailed against them, and made them pay tribute (2 Chron. xxvii. 5).
3. Later on we find them occupying the cities of Gad (on the east side of Jordan), from which the Israelites had been removed by Tiglath-pileser (Jer. xlix. 1-6).

In the days of Nehemiah we may note:—

1. That they were still the bitter enemies of Israel, and, led by Tobiah the Ammonite, constantly opposed Nehemiah.
2. That the passage from Deuteronomy xxiii. 3-6 was read, in which it was "written that the Ammonite and Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever."

**Amorites** = the Mountaineers. The Amorite is given as the fourth son of Canaan (Gen. x. 16).

They are contrasted with the Canaanites (the Lowlanders).

Thus the Canaanites and the Amorites formed the two great sections of the inhabitants of Canaan.

The Amorites occupied the barren heights west of the Dead Sea.

At the time of the conquest of the land they had crossed the Jordan, for we find Sihon in possession of the country lying between the Arnon and the Jabbok.

Sihon was vanquished, and his land occupied by the Israelites under Moses.

The Amorites on the west of Jordan were dispossessed of their land by Joshua in his southern campaign.

Notice in II, Samuel,

*"Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites"* (xxi. 2) (see Gibeonites, p. lxxviii.).

**Ashurites.** Abner is said to have made Ish-bosheth *"king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim and over Benjamin"* (ii. 9).

The only reasonable explanation is to read *"Asherites,"* and to suppose that *"Asher"* stands for the tribes north of the plain of Jezreel.

If so, Abner's progress in restoring the kingdom of Israel to the house of Saul follows the natural course of the features of the land, thus:—

1. He made the power of Ish-bosheth secure east of Jordan.
2. Then crossing to the west of Jordan he recovered the northern tribes of Asher, Naphtali and Zebulun.
3. Proceeding southwards he won back the plain of Jezreel and the hill country of Ephraim.
4. Finally he advanced into Benjamin, and then came in contact with David.

**Berites.** If we take this expression as a proper name it must refer to some tribe or people, who, as being named with Abel and Beth-maachah, were therefore situated in the north of Palestine. They are mentioned only in connection with Joab's pursuit of Sheba (xx. 14).

Some commentators follow the Septuagint and Vulgate, and read *"all the chosen men were gathered together."*

Others suggest that the expression *"all the Berites"* should be rendered *"all the fortresses."* The sense will then be that Joab pursued Sheba through all the fortresses in the north, and finally tracked him to Abel-beth-maachah.

**Canaanites,** or the descendants of Canaan, son of Ham.

The name is used in two senses in the Old Testament.

1. The people generally who inhabited the whole land of Canaan or Palestine.

2. Certain tribes who occupied portions only of the country.

In this latter sense *Canaanites* signifies Lowlanders, *i.e.* the dwellers in the low lands or plains.

They occupied distinct districts, *viz.*:—

- (a) The lowlands lying between the shore of the mediterranean and the hills of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim.
- (b) The plain of Esdraelon, and extending along the sea coast as far north as Tyre and Sidon.
- (c) The plain of the Jordan on the west side.

**Notices in II. Samuel.**

Joshua in taking the census is said to have come "to the stronghold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites" (xxiv. 7), *i.e.* to the towns in the tribes of Naphtali, Zebulon, and Issachar (or the subsequent province of Galilee), in which the Canaanites had not been exterminated by the Israelites, but had been made tributary only.

The Hivites are mentioned because they dwelt principally in the north of Palestine, and may have survived in considerable numbers. The Canaanites would include any other descendants of the original inhabitants.

**Edomites** are descendants of Esau, the eldest son of Jacob. Edom = *red*, and was a name given to Esau from the red colour of the pottage for which he sold his birthright (Gen. xxv. 29-34).

Edom, known also as Mount Seir, and Idumæa, lay to the east of the valley of the Jordan, extending southward to Elath. Bozrah, near the northern border, was the ancient capital, but later Sela seems to have been the great stronghold. Elath and Ezion-Geber were the seaports.

The "brook Zered" seems to have been the eastern boundary separating Edom from Moab (Deut. ii. 13).

When Israel marched to the conquest of Canaan, the Edomites refused to allow them to pass through their land (Num. xx. 18-20).

**Notices in the Books of Samuel.**

1. Edom is mentioned among the conquests of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47), but no particulars are given.
2. Abishai overcame them in the "Valley of Salt," and Joab completed the victory by destroying nearly all the male population (2 Sam. viii. 13, 14) (see p. xxx.).

**Subsequent History.**

1. Hadad escaped from the massacre, and took refuge in Egypt. On the death of Joab he returned to Edom and endeavoured to rouse the Edomites against Solomon. Failing in the attempt he made his way to the north, where he founded a kingdom in Syria, and became a persistent opponent of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 14-22).

2. Edom joined with Israel and Judah in suppressing the rebellion of Moab (2 Kings iii. 9).
3. Edom joined with Ammon and Moab in revolt against Jehoshaphat, but were miraculously destroyed in the Valley of Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 22-26).
4. Edom revolted against Jehoram, the successor of Jehoshaphat, and regained their independence (2 Chron. xxi. 8-10).
5. Amaziah completely crushed them and captured Selah (2 Kings xiv. 7).
6. They assisted Nebuchadnezzar in his campaign against Jerusalem, and at the capture of the city appear to have received the whole south between Judah and Palestine, *i.e.* the modern Idumæa.

The Edomites appear to have acted with great cruelty to the inhabitants of Judah, and are the subjects of severe denunciation by the later prophets.

**Geshurites.** The inhabitants of a small kingdom in the north-east corner of Bashan. They successfully maintained their independence, and were in existence at the time of David. Maachah, daughter of Talmi, King of Geshur, was one of David's wives, and the mother of Absalom, who, after the murder of Amnon, took refuge in Geshur with his grandfather Talmi (xiii. 37).

**Gibeonites.** (See Gibeon, p. lxi. Also see p. 109.)

The Gibeonites were a section of the Hivites, and are incorrectly described as "*of the remnant of the Amorites*" (xxi. 2). But the title "Amorites" is often applied to denote any of the ancient inhabitants occupying the hill country. It is so applied in the passage quoted, and in that respect describes the Gibeonites, not by race, but as settled in the hill country, near Jerusalem, where their cities were.

**Gittites.** 1. Obed-edom the Gittite. He was called the Gittite from his native place, the Levitical city of Gath-rimmon in the tribe of Dan. This city was assigned to the Kohathites. Obed-edom was a Levite of the family of the Kohathites.

2. Ittai the Gittite. A Philistine captain, a native of the Philistine city of Gath, who had joined David not long before the rebellion of Absalom (see p. civ.).
3. The Gittites. "*All the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath passed on before the king*" (xv. 18).

This may mean:—

- (1) That David's bodyguard included not only the Cherethites and Pelethites, but also six hundred Philistines from Gath.
- or (2) That the six hundred were his six hundred old companions in arms, the men who gathered round David on his flight from Saul

and emigrated with him to Gath (1 Sam. xxvii. 1-2), who afterwards lived with him at Ziklag (1 Sam. xxvii. 8), and eventually followed him to Hebron and Jerusalem (2 Sam. ii. 3, v. 6).

The latter is the more probable hypothesis, for these men might well have formed a separate company of well-trying veterans, comprising a part of David's bodyguard, and known as the Gittites from their former residence in that city.

**Hivites.** The Hivite is given as the sixth son of Canaan (Gen. x. 17).

They were an important section of the original inhabitants of the land, and occupied two distinct districts.

1. The extreme north, where the main body was located "*under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh*" (Josh. xi. 3).
2. The central hill country of Ephraim and Benjamin.
  - (a) At the time of Jacob's return to Canaan Shechem was in the possession of the Hivites, Hamor the Hivite being "*the prince of the land*" (Gen. xxxiv. 2).
  - (b) The inhabitants of the four cities of the Gibeonites, viz. Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth and Kirjath-jearim were Hivites (Josh. ix. 7 and 17).

**Notice in II. Samuel.**

The Hivites are mentioned (xxiv. 7), probably because they dwelt in the north of Palestine and may have survived in considerable numbers.

**Moabites**, the descendants of Moab, the son of Lot's elder daughter. Ammon was the son of the younger daughter. In Scripture history the two nations are closely connected. Moab appears to have represented the settled and civilized section of the descendants of Lot, whilst the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion.

The territory of Moab proper is definitely defined. It lay to the east of the Dead Sea, having the river Arnon as the northern boundary. This district is described as "*the field of Moab*" (Ruth i. 1, 2). Before the invasion of the Ammonites, Moab extended northwards along the Jordan to the hills of Gilead.

The Moabites were a pastoral people, rich in flocks. In the days of Ahab they paid an annual tribute of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams with the wool (2 Kings iii. 4).

**Early History.**

1. At the time of the conquest of the land, the Ammonites had dispossessed the Moabites of the land north of the Arnon.
2. The Moabites refused the Israelites a passage through their land.
3. Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. xxii.—xxiv.).
4. Eglon, King of Moab, seized Jericho and oppressed Israel for eighteen years. Ehud relieved Israel from the oppression (Judg. iii. 12-30).

**Notices in the Books of Samuel.**

1. Moab is mentioned in the conquests of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47), but no particulars are given.
2. David went from the cave of Adullam to Mizpeh of Moab, taking his father and mother with him. He entrusted his parents to the care of the king of Moab, when he himself returned unto the land of Judah at the bidding of Gad (1 Sam. xxii. 3-5). David was descended from Ruth, the Moabitess, and this explains why he left his parents in the land of Moab.
3. David conquered Moab and dealt with the Moabites with ferocious cruelty. It is conjectured that the king of Moab had killed the parents of David, and that David exacted this fearful penalty in revenge for the breach of trust (viii. 2). (See p. 107.)

**Subsequent History.**

1. At the division of the kingdom, Moab appears to have been subject to Israel, not to Judah, and to have paid the enormous tribute of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams annually.
2. At the death of Ahab they revolted against Jehoram, but were totally routed by the confederate kings of Israel, Judah and Edom, who were miraculously assisted by Elisha. The pursuit and carnage was stayed at the horrible sight of the king of Moab openly sacrificing his son as a burnt-offering on the wall of his capital (2 Kings iii.).
3. In the reign of Jehoiakim the Moabites acted in concert with the armies of Nebuchadnezzar in harassing Judah (2 Kings xxiv. 2).
4. Four or five years later, in the reign of Zedekiah, an alliance was made, or at least negotiated, between Judah, Edom, Moab, Ammon and Tyre, to form a confederation against Babylon (Jer. xxvii. 3).
5. After the captivity, Sanballat the Horonite, a Moabite, was a persistent adversary to Nehemiah.

**THE PHILISTINES.** A nation said to have come from Caphtor, "*the Philistines from Caphtor*" (Amos ix. 7). "*The Caphtorims which came forth out of Caphtor*" are said to have destroyed the Avims (Deut. ii. 23). Their name, "*the strangers,*" points to their being settlers from some foreign country.

Modern research identifies Caphtor with the island of Crete.

Egyptian monuments tell us that they were pirates from the islands and coasts of the Greek seas, who took part in the invasion of Egypt in the reign of Rameses III., and finally settled in the Shephelah and the southern part of Palestine.

**Their Country.** Their land consisted of the southern portion of the Shephelah (see p. xlix.), stretching from Ekron in the north to the river of Egypt (the *El-Arish*) in the south.

**Their Wealth and Importance.** They occupied an extremely fertile country. Dean Stanley writes thus of the country: "The cities are all remarkable for the extreme beauty and profusion of the gardens which surround them. . . . But the most striking and characteristic feature of Philistia is its immense plain of cornfields, stretching from the edge of the sandy tract right up to the very wall of the hill country of Judah" (Sinai and Palestine). They held the gateway of the great road from Egypt to the Euphrates valley, and gave their name to the route, which is described as "*the way of the Philistines.*"

The strength and importance of this nation is further indicated by the fact that they gave their name to the land of Canaan—**Palestine** = the land of the Philistines.

**Their Towns and Government.** Their chief towns were Gath, Gaza, Ekron, Askelon and Ashdod, which were ruled by chiefs known as the five lords of the Philistines. Clearly each lord had independent jurisdiction in his own district, whilst all were bound together in one confederation as an offensive and defensive alliance.

Their military organization was far superior to that of Israel. The plain was admirably adapted for the development of their military power, for it permitted of the use of chariots and cavalry, whilst the occasional elevations rising out of it offered secure sites for towns and strongholds.

These chariots made them extremely formidable to the Israelites, whose forces consisted of footmen, whilst their towns resisted all efforts to capture them in the early days of Israel.

It is probable that David gained much of his military skill during his residence in Philistia, and that he copied their military system in organizing his own army.

**Their Religion.** They were extremely superstitious. They carried their idols with them in their campaigns, and on one occasion David captured their images (2 Sam. v. 21).

They ascribed their victories to their gods, evidenced by:

1. They attributed the capture of Samson to their god Dagon (Judges xvi. 24)
2. They placed the Ark in the temple of Dagon (1 Sam. v. 2).
3. They placed the armour of Saul in the temple of Ashtaroth (1 Sam. xxxi. 10), and proclaimed their victory over the fallen monarch in the temples of their idols.

The principal idols were **Dagon**, **Ashtaroth** and **Baal-zebul**.

**Dagon** (*Dag* = fish) was the principal male deity of the Philistines. His chief temples were at Gaza (where Samson died), and at Ashdod (where the Ark was placed). The idol seems to have been a human body with the tail of a fish.

The fish-like form was an emblem of fruitfulness, and one often adopted as a representation of their gods by nations bordering on the sea-coast.

**Ashtaroth**, a representation of the Moon or Venus. The temple in which the armour of Saul was hung was doubtless the famous temple of Venus at Askelon mentioned by Herodotus.

**Baal-zebub**. The Lord of Flies. There was a temple to this god at Ekron.

Elijah rebuked Ahaziah, king of Israel, for sending to inquire of Baal-zebub at Ekron (2 Kings i. 2-4).

**Their Characteristics.** Like the Cretans, they were employed as mercenaries (*vide* David's bodyguard of Cherethites and Pelethites, etc.).

Like the Cretans, they were distinguished for their strength and variety of armour (*vide* Goliath of Gath)

They appear to have been of vast stature.

Unlike the rest of the inhabitants of Canaan, they were uncircumcised, and the epithet "*uncircumcised*" is constantly applied to them as a term of contempt and reproach, and they also appear to have stood on a lower level of civilization.

"They were almost, it may be said, the laughing-stock of their livelier and quicker neighbours from their dull, heavy stupidity; the easy prey of the rough humour of Samson, or the agility and cunning of the diminutive David" (STANLEY).

**Their Early History.** They first appear in the lives of Abraham and Isaac, both of whom had dealings with Abimelech, the sheik of the Philistines (Gen. xxi. 32-34, xxvi. 1-33).

Their territory, as having once belonged to the Canaanites, was assigned to Judah, but no conquest was made in the time of Joshua, nor did Judah get possession of their cities (Judges iii. 1-3).

They soon began to attack Israel, and Shamgar (Judges iii. 31) and Samson (Judges xiii.—xvi.) are celebrated for their individual achievements against them.

### The Wars in the time of Samuel.

The Books of Samuel introduce us to the times of the great Philistine oppression, which lasted forty years, and ended with Samuel's great victory at Ebenezer.

This period is marked by their great victory at Ebenezer, when they captured the Ark (1 Sam. iv.). This victory is followed by the sack of the sanctuary at Shiloh, and terminates the period of the Theocracy. The sojourn of the ark in Philistia was long remembered under the title of "*The Captivity*." For many years the Israelites were practically subject to the Philistines, who deprived them of their arms and removed all smiths from the land, in order to prevent the manufacture of warlike weapons.

This was effected by placing garrisons of armed posts to command the passes.

The Israelites were relieved from this oppression by the great victory gained by Samuel at Ebenezer, although Israel suffered many subsequent disasters, including the terrible defeat at Gilboa.

### The Wars of Saul.

Whilst Saul was continually in conflict with the Philistines, his reign is marked by three great campaigns—one recorded in 1 Sam. xiii.—xiv., another when David slew Goliath, and the last at the end of his reign.

**First Campaign.** The Philistines had evidently pressed far up the passes, and Saul with Jonathan held only the extreme eastern pass, which they defended by posting their slender force at Michmash, thus barring the passage to the descent to the Jordan valley.

The campaign is marked by the following events:—

1. The capture of a Philistine garrison by Jonathan (1 Sam. xiii. 3), which roused the Philistines to a great effort (1 Sam. xiii. 5-7).
2. The exploit of Jonathan at the pass of Michmash, followed by the panic and rout of the Philistines (1 Sam. xiv.).

**Second Campaign.** The Philistines made a second attempt to force the western passes, and were met by Saul in the valley of Elah. It will be seen that the Israelites had recovered their hold on the central district, for they were meeting the Philistines at the western extremity of the passes, and not at the far east as in the previous campaign.

This struggle is marked by the combat of David with Goliath, and the subsequent rout of the Philistines, pursued by the victorious Israelites to the gates of Ekron and Gath.

From this time the contest between the two nations was a series of raids and small skirmishes, in which David highly distinguished himself (1 Sam. xviii. 30). It was in one of these raids that David won the hand of Michal, Saul's daughter. Other small engagements mentioned are:—

1. The rescue of Keilah by David (1 Sam. xxiii. 1-6).
2. The relief of David from the pursuit by Saul, who was compelled to abandon his purpose in order to repulse an invasion by the Philistines (1 Sam. xxiii. 27).

**Third Campaign.** An attack from the north. The Philistines marched northwards along the maritime plain, turned eastward through the pass leading into the plain of Esdraelon, and were met by Saul, who faced them at Jezreel, with the slope of Gilboa in his rear. The disastrous defeat of Israel on the heights of Gilboa, and the death of Saul, gave them possession of the plain and the cities of Esdraelon, and left the road to the centre of Ephraim open to them (see Esdraelon, pp. lviii.-lx.).

Notices in II. Samuel (for particulars, see p. xxviii.).

1. On the appointment of David to be king over the whole of the nation, the Philistines again invaded the land and were twice defeated by David at Rephaim (v. 17-25).

On the first of these occasions the Philistines pushed forward as far as Bethlehem (1 Chron. xi. 16).

2. Subsequently David captured Gath (1 Chron. xviii. 1).

**Subsequent history.**

1. In the reign of Solomon, Philistia was included in his empire.
2. At the division of the kingdom, the Philistines revolted against Rehoboam, who fortified Gath against them (2 Chron. xi. 8).
3. The Philistines seized Gibbethon, one of their towns in the territory of Israel, and held it against the kings of Israel. Here Nadab was murdered by Baasha (1 Kings xv. 27, 28), and Omri was captain of the besieging force in the reign of Elah (1 Kings xvi. 15-17).
4. Hazael, king of Syria, captured Gath in the reign of Jehoash, king of Judah (2 Kings xii. 17).
5. Uzziah made war against them and captured Gath and Ashdod (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), but they again recovered their independence in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). They appear as enemies of Israel to the days of Maccabees, and did not lose their nationality till the time of the Roman Conquest, when Syria became a Roman province.

**Syria.** Syria is the high road between Asia and Africa. The sea connects it with the Western World. As it is the high road between Asia and Africa, it has always been the Debateable Ground between those two continents, *i.e.* between the great kingdoms of Assyria, Babylonia, and later Persia as representing Asia, and Egypt as representing Africa.

In the reign of David we find no mention of either Egypt or any empire on the banks of the Euphrates. The reason is—

- (1) That Egypt was then a divided nation. The Tanite Pharaohs held the Delta of the Nile, whilst Upper Egypt was held by the priests of Ammon.
- (2) That Babylonia and Assyria were wasting their strength in mutual rivalry. Babylonia had succumbed, but Assyria was not yet strong enough to assume the aggressive.

Thus the Aramæans of Syria had risen into prominence, and held the country north and east of Palestine as far as the Euphrates. In the time of Saul the Syrians of Zobah were still disunited. Saul fought against "*the kings of Zobah*" (1 Sam. xiv. 47). In the time of David they were united, if not as one nation yet as a confederacy under Hadadezer or Hadarezer. Thus the Syrian war (for particulars see p. xxix.), gave David the command of the country as far north and east as the Euphrates.

The regaining of their independence by the Syrians, their incursions into Palestine, with their final overthrow by Assyria, leading on to the greater contest between Asia and Egypt, are connected with the Books of Kings.

## TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM.

Briefly we may describe Jerusalem as built upon a broad, elevated promontory within the fork of the two valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom.

The **Valley of Jehoshaphat** runs along the eastern side of the city, and joins the valley of Hinnom at the south-east corner.

The river or brook Kidron flows through this valley, and is joined by the Gihon a little distance above En-rogel. The east side of the valley is formed by the Mount of Olives and the Mount of Offence.

The **Valley of Hinnom** runs along the west and south sides of the city, and joins the valley of Jehoshaphat at the south-east corner.

The brook Gihon flows through this valley and joins the Kidron a little distance above En-rogel.

Thus the north-west corner was clearly the more assailable part of the city. Against this corner the Babylonians in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar made their main attack.

The city itself was divided into two portions or separate hills divided by the Tyropæon valley, which was subsequently filled up in the time of the Maccabees.

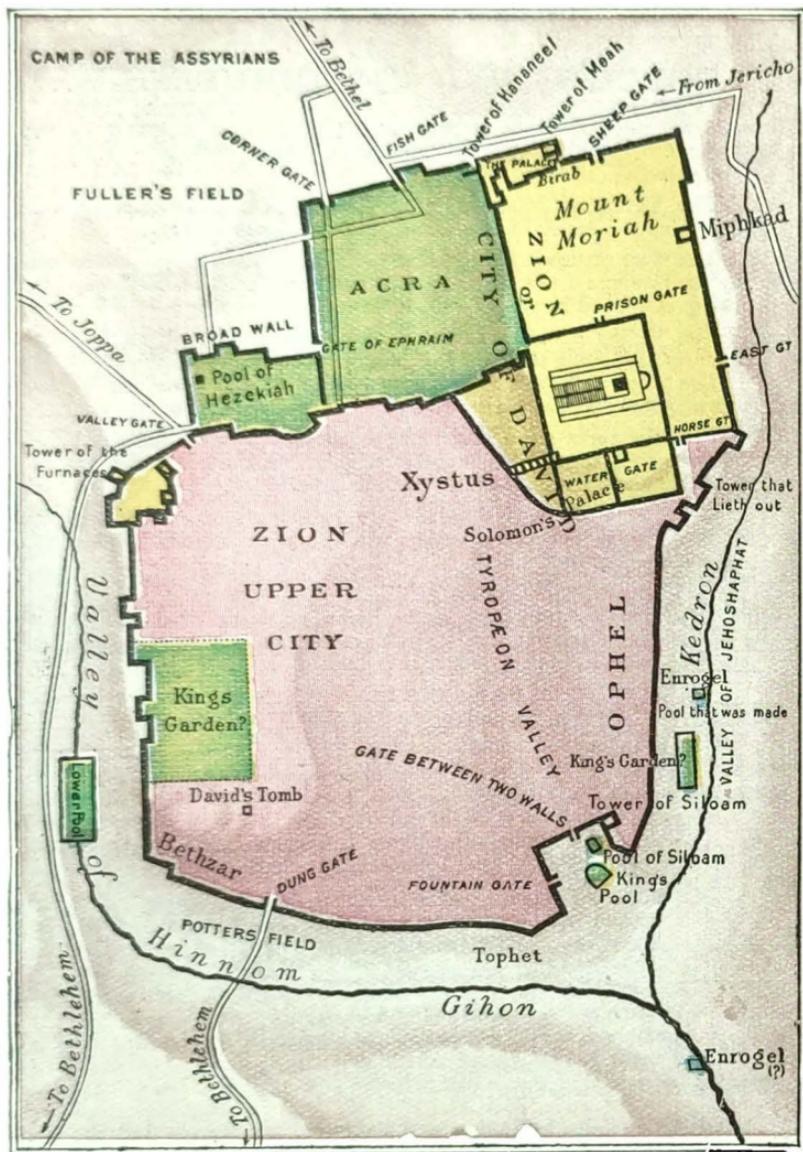
We find four distinct portions—

- I. **The Upper City**, long identified with Zion, built on the western spur, and separated by walls from the other hill. This hill is 103 feet higher than Moriah.
- II. **The City of David** (the true Zion), called Acra by Josephus, occupying the north-west portion of the second hill.
- III. **Moriah**, on which was built the Temple, occupying the western portion of this hill. The City of David was higher than the Temple; its summit was lowered by the Maccabees in order that it might not overlook the Temple-Mount. The material thus obtained was thrown into the Tyropæon valley, and the hill is now 100 feet lower than the Temple-Mount.
- IV. **Ophel**, the southern continuance of the Temple hill, a long narrowish promontory separating the Tyropæon valley from the valley of Jehoshaphat, and sloping off on its southern side into the valley of Hinnom. On the eastern side is the "Fount of the Virgin," and at its foot the lower outlet of the same spring—the Pool of Siloam.

Ophel appears to have been assigned to the Levites for their residence.

Other spots of interest are:

- i. **Millo**, or **The Millo**, for in the original we always find the word with the definite article. Its exact site has not been determined, but it was evidently a part of the fortifications of the old Jebusite city taken by David (2 Sam. v. 9). Wherever the word occurs it is in connection with the walls or fortifications of Jerusalem. Its



PLAN OF JERUSALEM, TO ILLUSTRATE THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

repair was one of the great works upon which Solomon employed his levy of forced labour (1 Kings ix. 15-24; xi. 27). Hezekiah also "*repaired Millo in the city of David*" (2 Chron. xxxii. 5), in preparation to meet the Assyrians. In the Septuagint it is generally rendered ἡ ἀκρόσ = the citadel, and the same word is used for the fortress on Mount Zion occupied by the party of Antiochus in the Maccabean wars. As the word signifies "piling or heaping up," it has been suggested that the Millo was a raised work defending that part of the city of David where the hill of Zion slopes down into the Tyropæon valley, or that it was a defence against attacks from the north.

2. **Mount of Offence**, the southern summit of the Mount of Olives, the range of hills on the east of Jerusalem separated from the city by the valley of Jehoshaphat. Solomon built high places "*on the hill that is before Jerusalem*" (1 Kings xi. 7). This can only be the Mount of Olives, and tradition places the high places erected for idol worship by Solomon as being upon the southern summit, which thus gained the name of Mount of Offence.
3. **Topheth**, or **Tophet**, the place "*in the valley of the children of Hinom*" (2 Kings xxiii. 10), where sacrifices were offered to Molech. Josiah defiled the spot, and it became the place where the refuse of Jerusalem was deposited.

### Early History of Jerusalem, or Jebus.

1. Adoni-zedec, king of Jerusalem, headed the great confederacy of southern kings, and was defeated by Joshua at the battle of Beth-el (Josh x.).
2. After the death of Joshua, Judah and Simeon defeated Adoni-bezek, king of Jerusalem, and later took Jerusalem (Judges i. 5-8). This must refer to the capture of the lower city only, whilst the citadel still held out.
3. Subsequently Benjamin advanced against the citadel, but could not capture it (Judges i. 21).

From the expression, "*the Jebusites dwell with the children of Israel in Jerusalem unto this day*" (Judges i. 21), it is clear that the Jebusites were not deprived of their possession of the citadel till its capture by David. From the fact that the Levite turned aside from Jebus, "*as the city of a stranger*" (Judges xix. 11), it appears that the Jebusites had regained full control over the whole city.

This possession of Jerusalem by the Jebusites had a material effect upon the history of the nation previous to its capture by David. It commanded the high road from the south to the north, and thus as long as it was a Jebusite city it severed Judah from the northern tribes. A united Israel was impossible as long as their territory was thus cut in two by a belt of hostile country (SAYCE).

**What David did for Jerusalem.**

He captured the citadel, but allowed the inhabitants to remain.

He gave the name "City of David" to the portion captured.

He fortified it.

Joab repaired the rest of the city.

David built his palace, and bought from Araunah the site on Moriah where subsequently the Temple was built.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.**

**Abiathar**, high priest; in succession to his father Ahimelech. He was fourth in descent from Eli.

**Notices in I. Samuel:**

Abiathar escaped from the slaughter of the priests by Doeg the Edomite, and from the massacre at Nob (I Sam. xxii.).

Abiathar thus became high priest, and joined David either at Keilah or just before David advanced to the relief of that city.

As Abiathar took an ephod with him when he made his escape from Nob, David was enabled to inquire of the Lord by means of Abiathar, viz.—

- (a) When David was in doubt as to the good faith of the men of Keilah (I Sam. xxiii. 7-15).
- (b) For advice whether to pursue the Amalekites, who had sacked Ziklag in his absence (I Sam. xxx. 7).

(David also inquired of the Lord to ascertain if he should deliver Keilah from the Philistines (xxiii. 4). It is not said that this inquiry was made through Abiathar, but as the account of Abiathar joining David at Keilah is recorded (xxiii. 6), it is probable that that statement is made in order to account for David having been able to make inquiry.)

**Subsequent History in II. Samuel and I. Kings.**

(1) David inquired of the Lord, through Abiathar—

- (a) To decide if he should return to Judah after the death of Saul. In reply, Hebron was named (ii. 1).
- (b) On the occasion of his attack on the Philistines at Rephaim (v. 19).
- (c) When the land suffered under a famine for three years (xxi. 1).

- (2) Abiathar was with David whilst he reigned at Hebron (ii. 1.3).
- (3) He carried the Ark before David when it was brought up to Jerusalem (I Chron. xv. 11, 12).
- (4) During the reign of David he was associated with Zadok in the priesthood.
- (5) He continued faithful to David during the rebellion of Absalom (xv. 24). Zadok and Abiathar would have carried the Ark with the king in his flight, but by David's orders took it back again

xv. 29). David bade them communicate with him by means of Jonathan the son of Abiathar, and Ahimaaz the son of Zadok (xv. 27-36).

On this occasion Abiathar appears to have ascended Olivet while Zadok stayed with the Ark at the Kidron.

- (6) Abiathar and Zadok communicated to David the counsel given by Ahithophel to Absalom (xvii. 15-22).
- (7) After the death of Absalom, Abiathar and Zadok were urged by David to suggest to the tribe of Judah that they should take the lead in recalling their king to Jerusalem (xix. 11).
- (8) In the closing days of David's reign, Abiathar took an active part in promoting the conspiracy of Adonijah, and was present, probably in his priestly character, at the feast at the stone of Zobeith (1 Kings i. 7, 9).
- (9) On the renewal of Adonijah's plot, Abiathar was banished to his native city of Anathoth. Solomon spared his life because he had been David's faithful companion in his wanderings (1 Kings ii. 26).

It is probable that Abiathar joined the conspiracy of Adonijah through jealousy of Zadok, who seems to have advanced in favour with David. Therefore Abiathar desired to secure the support of David's successor.

It is remarkable how two events,

- (1) The massacre of the family of Ahimelech at Nob,
- (2) The political error of Abiathar in joining the conspiracy of Adonijah,

led to the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the house of Eli (1 Sam. ii. 30-36).

### The double high-priesthood.

During David's exile Abiathar was with him. But the office of high priest would be taken by one of the priests left in the kingdom of Saul. Thus we can account for the origin of the double high-priesthood.

Abiathar was with David at Hebron, where Zadok also joined the king (1 Chron. xii. 28), where he is described as "*a young man mighty in valour.*" From this time we read of "*Zadok and Abiathar the priests.*"

It is conjectured that Abiathar officiated at Jerusalem, where the Ark was, and that Zadok presided at Gibeon, where the Tabernacle was in the times of David and Solomon.

### Abigail. Known as the *Carmelitess*, from her residence at Carmel.

She was the wife of Nabal, a rich sheep farmer at Carmel. When Nabal churlishly refused the request of David, Abigail went to meet David, took the blame upon herself, supplied David with provisions, and by her wise and politic speech caused David to desist from his purpose of revenge. David was won by the beauty, intelligence and wisdom of Abigail, and when Nabal died ten days after, he sent for her and made her his wife. Abigail was with David in his subsequent wanderings, and was carried off captive by the Amalekites, when they sacked Ziklag. David recovered her in the pursuit.

She was with David during his seven years and a-half reign at Hebron, and there she bore him his second son, called Chileab in iii. 3, but Daniel in 1 Chron. iii. 1.

**Abishai**, the eldest of the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister, and brother to Joab and Asahel. He is the first to be mentioned of the famous brothers, and was the companion of David in the night expedition to the camp of Saul, when, but for the restraint of David, he would have ended the quarrel between Saul and David by despatching the king with his own spear. They crept back from the camp as stealthily as they had come, carrying with them Saul's spear and the cruse of water which stood at his head (1 Sam. xxvi. 6-12).

Abishai was probably a close companion of David in his wanderings, and at one time rescued David from a gigantic Philistine, Ishbi-benob (2 Sam. xxi. 17), though this feat was probably accomplished during David's reign.

One time he fought single-handed against three hundred, and his exploits gained him the place as captain of the second three of David's mighty men (2 Sam. xxiii. 18).

In David's reign Abishai is notable :

- (1) As being present at the battle at the pool of Gibeon, when Asahel met his death whilst pursuing Abner (2 Sam. ii. 18).
- (2) As joining with Joab in the treacherous assassination of Abner (iii. 30).
- (3) In the war with the Ammonites, commanding one division of the army against the Ammonites and driving them headlong into the city, whilst Joab defeated the Syrians (x. 10-14).
- (4) As taking a leading part in the campaign against the Edomites in the valley of Salt, when 18,000 fell (1 Chron. xviii. 12).
- (5) As accompanying David in his flight from Jerusalem, when he offered to avenge the taunts of Shimei (xvi. 9). On David's return Abishai urges that Shimei should be put to death (xix. 21).
- (6) As commanding a third part of the army which defeated Absalom's army in the wood of Ephraim (xviii. 2, 5, 12).
- (7) As being summoned by David to collect troops to pursue after the rebel Sheba, when Amasa delayed pressing the pursuit vigorously (xx. 6).

He appears to have been the commander of David's mighty men.

**Character.** Fierce and impetuous, a thorough soldier and able commander. Of devoted loyalty to David, and apparently not involved in the intrigues of his brother Joab.

His fierce impetuosity is prominent on three occasions :—

- (1) When he would have slain Saul as he lay sleeping in the camp (1 Sam. xxvi. 6-9).
- (2) When he would have put Shimei to death as he cursed David on the way to the Jordan (2 Sam. xvi. 9).
- (3) When he urged upon David that Shimei should be put to death when he came to meet David on his return (xix. 21).

**Abner**, the son of Ner, the brother of Kish, the father of Saul. Thus Abner was Saul's first cousin. From Chronicles it would appear that Abner was Saul's uncle (see Table, p. 126).

### Notices in I. Samuel :

- (1) He was made commander-in-chief of the army by Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 50).
- (2) When David had slain Goliath, Abner was commissioned by Saul to inquire who David was and to bring him to the king (1 Sam. xvii. 55-58).
- (3) He had a seat at the royal table, and was present at the feast at which Jonathan drew Saul to openly declare his intention to slay David (1 Sam. xx. 25).
- (4) He was with Saul at Hachilah in pursuit of David, when David and Abishai entered the camp by night and spared the life of Saul (1 Sam. xxvi. 3-14).

### Subsequent History in II. Samuel.

1. After the death of Saul, Abner espoused the cause of Ish-bosheth, whom he crowned king at Mahanaim (ii. 8, 9).
2. He was defeated by Joab at Gibeon. In his flight from the battle he killed Asahel, the brother of Joab (ii. 12-32).
3. He gave great offence to Ish-bosheth by his marriage with Rizpah, the concubine of Saul. As a result of the quarrel, Abner went over to David. He was favourably received by David at Hebron, and returned for the purpose of winning over the people of Israel to David's party. He was enticed back by Joab, and treacherously murdered by him and his brother Abishai, ostensibly in revenge for the murder of Asahel, but mainly, no doubt, through jealousy, lest he should gain a high place in David's favour. David grieved for the death of Abner, and ordered a public funeral, himself following the corpse as a mark of respect. Joab and Abishai were, however, too powerful for David to be able to punish them for the murder (iii. 7-39).

In his last charge to Solomon, David enjoined him to put Joab to death for his crimes in murdering Abner and Amasa (1 Kings ii. 5, 6).

### Abner's Influence.

Abner held a position of great influence. He was "captain of the host." Abner, Jonathan and David had special seats at the king's table.

David says to him, "*Who is like to thee in Israel?*" (1 Sam. xxvi. 15.)

His influence and power are shown by his being able to proclaim Ish-bosheth king, and to maintain a lengthened contest with David.

It is generally supposed that Abner used his influence with Saul to the prejudice of David, and that David alludes to Abner with others when he appeals to Saul at Engedi, "*Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?*" (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.)

It may have been his prejudice against David that decided Abner to proclaim Ish-bosheth king.

What happened after the death of Saul was probably as follows :—

Immediately after the battle of Gilboa, Abner rallied the Israelites on the eastern side of Jordan. For some five years he was engaged in reviving the fortunes of the northern tribes, gradually consolidating his power first in Gilead and then over Asher and the other tribes to the extreme north, then working southward past the plain of Jezreel to Ephraim and Benjamin. This is the fair interpretation of the passage that he brought Ish-bosheth "*over to Mahanaim, and he made him king over Gilead, and over the Asherites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel*" (2 Sam. ii. 9).

Meanwhile David had been organizing his government over Judah at Hebron, and now after five years or so Abner and David must necessarily come in conflict, seeing that Abner's power had extended as far south as Benjamin.

Abner had no right to the kingdom itself, and at the same time was not prepared to submit himself to David, though he knew that David was the divinely-appointed instrument of God to free His people from their enemies, for in his negotiations with the elders of Israel he says, "*the Lord 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 their enemies*" (iii. 18). It would seem therefore that at this period, viz. about five years after the death of Saul, Abner made Ish-bosheth king, a mere puppet in his hands, for the purpose of rallying the adherents of the house of Saul to assist him in crushing David. With David out of his way, he would probably have found means to remove Ish-bosheth from his path and have made himself master of Israel.

Much, then, as we may admire the ability of Abner, may appreciate his work, and may deprecate his assassination by Joab, we feel that to some extent he deserved his fate, and that his removal from the scene rendered David's progress to the throne, and his task of consolidating the tribes into a united kingdom, natural and easy.

**Absalom**, the third son of David by Maachah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. He was born at Hebron in the early days of David's rule there.

The name, which signifies "*Father of Peace*," is sadly inconsistent with the story of his life. Absalom and his sister Tamar appear to have been the only children of David who could claim royal descent, and both appear to have been distinguished for their personal beauty. Of Absalom it is said that "*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*" (xiv. 25).

He appears to have been bold, vindictive, ambitious and vain whilst possessed of an attractive personality.

**Bold**, evidenced in—

- (1) The murder of Amnon.
- (2) The burning of the fields of Joab.

**Vindictive**, evidenced in—

- (1) His nursing his vengeance against Amnon for two years.
- (2) His resentment of his father's treatment of himself.

**Ambitious**, evidenced in his attempt to gain the throne.

**Vain**. He was vain of his personal appearance, whilst Hushai evidently played upon his vanity, when he suggested that Absalom should signalise his attainment of the throne by a great victory over David.

His vanity proved his ruin, for it led him to adopt the counsel of Hushai which appealed to the vainglorious side of his nature, instead of following the wiser and more practical advice of Abithophel.

**Attractive personality**. His personal beauty and gracious manner completely "*stole the hearts of the men of Israel*" from David (xv. 6). The principal events of his life are—

- (1) His reception of his sister Tamar after the outrage by Amnon (xiii. 20).
- (2) His murder of Amnon, after nursing his resentment for two years (xiii. 23-29).
- (3) His flight to Geshur, where he remained three years (xiii. 37-39).
- (4) His return to Jerusalem through the \*good offices of Joab, who won the king over by means of the wise woman of Tekoah (xiv. 1-24).
- (5) His two years' residence in Jerusalem in disgrace. During this period he was not permitted to present himself at court (xiv. 28).
- (6) His burning of Joab's fields, thus securing the mediation of Joab to restore him to his father's favour (xiv. 29-33).
- (7) His preparations for rebellion, lasting four years (xv. 1-6).
- (8) His rebellion and death (see pp. xxxiii.-xxxvi.)

### **Causes of the Rebellion.**

1. The murder of Amnon, and the probable early death of Chileab, had left Absalom the eldest surviving son of David.

#### \* Why did Joab negotiate for the return of Absalom?

Joab was indispensable to David, but may there not already have been indications of court intrigue for the succession to the throne?

Joab may have been obnoxious both to the priestly faction headed by Zadok and to the prophetic party headed by Nathan. The curious alternation of Joab's dismissal from his post of commander-in-chief, to be followed by re-instatement when he unscrupulously removed his rivals, gives some indication that there was a party at court (headed by Nathan possibly, and whose influence through Bath-sheba had considerable effect with David) which was desirous of removing Joab from all authority.

Joab acted against this party when later he espoused the cause of Adonijah (1 Kings i. 7).

May not his leaning to Absalom be explained that he desired the return of the heir-apparent as a support to his own measures against the opposite political party?

He cannot have foreseen that Absalom would raise the standard of rebellion in David's life time, so, when the rebellion breaks out, he is loyal to David. This loyalty on Joab's part is the finest trait in his character.

2. Absalom was of royal blood on his mother's side.

So Absalom may reasonably have considered himself as the legitimate successor to his father.

3. His estrangement from David caused by—

(a) David's unpardonable leniency to Amnon.

(b) Absalom's long exile in Geshur.\*

(c) His public ostracism from the king's favour for two years after his return from exile. Evidently Absalom was confined to his house, for he was compelled to send for Joab (xiv. 29-32).

David's conduct towards Absalom was most unwise. The pardon should have either been withheld entirely or granted unconditionally. For two years Absalom brooded over his fancied wrongs.

4. The suspicion, if not the actual knowledge, that Solomon was destined to be the successor to the throne.

The above may have been the reasons which prompted Absalom to secure the succession for himself. Having formed the design he proceeded to develop his plot in a most artful and clever manner.

(1) By assuming royal state.

(2) By ingratiating himself with the people.

(3) By taking advantage of some disaffection of the people, especially of the disaffection of David's own tribe.

**Adoram or Adoniram.** An officer appointed by David over the tribute, or forced levy of the people compelled to labour in the public works undertaken by David.

His name does not appear in the first list of David's officers (viii. 15-18) but is found in the second list (xx. 23-26).

Adoram held the office during the reign of Solomon. The system of forced levies appears to have been most oppressive during

\* Evidently David was greatly incensed against Absalom on account of the murder of Amnon.

The view commonly taken of David's feelings towards Absalom is—

(1) That he longed for his return from Geshur. "*David's heart was towards Absalom*" (xiv. 1).

(2) That the king's orders to his generals to deal gently with Absalom in battle, and his subsequent grief on hearing the news of his death, indicate David's extreme affection for his rebellious son.

But as regards these two views we may remark—

on (1) (a) That Absalom's long exile, and the elaborate means taken by Joab to bring about his recall, indicate David's extreme anger against his son. It is much better to read, "*David's heart was against Absalom*" (xiv. 1), i.e. toward him in a hostile sense. Then we have an intelligible reason to account for Absalom's lengthened stay at Geshur, and for Joab's artful scheme to win the king to adopt a more lenient attitude to his erring son.

(b) That David's refusal to allow Absalom to leave his house, and to be received at court—a refusal extending over two years—can be explained only on the supposition that the king's anger was not entirely appeased.

on (2) David was passionately fond of his children, and so, when Absalom's life was in danger, the father's heart forgot the crimes of the son against Amnon and against himself. Such a change of feeling is quite consistent with David's impulsive, generous, and affectionate nature.

Solomon's reign, and especially obnoxious to the northern tribes, who found themselves forced to contribute labour for the beautifying of Jerusalem in the tribe of Judah, and not in their own territory. On the revolt of the Ten Tribes, Rehoboam sent Adoram to Shechem to appease the irritated people. The indignant tribes, incensed at the choice of ambassador, rose up in fury and stoned Adoram. Rehoboam then fled to Jerusalem.

**Adriel**, the Meholahite, *i.e.* an inhabitant of Abel-meholah, to whom Saul gave his daughter Merab, although he had previously promised her to David (1 Sam. xviii, 19). David handed over five of his sons to the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 8).

**Ahimaaz**. Son of Zadok, the high-priest, and famed for his swiftness of foot.

He appears on two occasions—

- (1) When David fled from Jerusalem on the revolt of Absalom, Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, were specially told off to remain behind in order to bring news to David of what might happen in the city (2 Sam. xv. 36). They remained at En-rogel, outside the city. The information concerning the advice of Ahithophel was brought to them by a maid, who came to the well as if for the purpose of fetching water (xvii. 17). Jonathan and Ahimaaz, however, were seen by a lad who gave information to Absalom, but they escaped capture by concealing themselves in the well of a house at Bahurim, and brought the news safely to David, who immediately took steps to cross the Jordan (xvii. 18-22).
- (2) On the defeat and death of Absalom, Ahimaaz pressed Joab to allow him to carry the news to David. Joab, knowing David's feelings well, did not wish that Ahimaaz should be the bearer of the tidings of the death of Absalom, and sent Cushai instead. After Cushai had set out, Ahimaaz was so urgent to be allowed to run that Joab yielded to his importunity. By taking a shorter or an easier way by the plain, he arrived before Cushai, and reported to David the news of the victory, whilst suppressing his knowledge of Absalom's death, leaving Cushai to report that. He thus cleverly managed to be the first to bring the good tidings without incurring the king's displeasure on hearing of the death of his son (xviii. 19-32).

**Ahimelech**. In 2 Samuel viii. 17 we read, "*and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests.*"

Clearly there is an error, and the reading should be, "*Abiathar the son of Ahimelech.*"

This Ahimelech was the son of Ahitub, and high-priest at Nob in the days of Saul. When David finally fled from the court of Saul he came to Nob, and, under the plea of being on a mission for the king, persuaded Ahimelech to give him the shewbread for himself and his young men, and the sword of Goliath for his own use. Ahimelech appears to have inquired of God for David (1 Sam. xxii. 10, 13, 15).

Doeg the Edomite disclosed the transaction to Saul, so Saul sent for Ahimelech and the priests to Gibeah to answer the charge. Despite Ahimelech's assurance of innocence, Saul commanded Doeg to put the priests to death. Eighty five priests wearing the Ephod were put to death, and the whole population at Nob was afterwards destroyed.

Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, alone escaped massacre, and fled to David at Keilah.

**Ahio**, son of Abinadab of Kirjath-jearim. When David removed the Ark from Kirjath-jearim, Ahio and his brother Uzzah drove the cart conveying the Ark (vi. 3-4). (See Uzzah p. cxviii.).

**Ahithophel**, a native of Giloh, in the hill country of Judah, and one of David's counsellors.

His reputation for wisdom was so great that it was compared to the "*oracle of God*" (xvi. 23).

It would appear (see Bath-sheba, p. xcix.) that Ahithophel was probably the grandfather of Bath-sheba. This will explain his defection from David, and his readiness to join Absalom, who sent for him from Giloh, apparently well assured that the offended statesman would give him the support of his great authority (xv. 12).

David had reached the summit of Olivet when he learned of the treachery of Ahithophel. He prayed that God would "*turn his counsel into foolishness*," and sent Hushai into the city to pretend to join Absalom for the express purpose of foiling the counsel of Ahithophel.

Ahithophel gave Absalom two pieces of advice.

(1) To open up appropriate the concubines left by David in Jerusalem.

The object of this step—

(a) To put forward an unmistakable claim to the kingdom.

(b) To strengthen the rebellion. All Absalom's adherents would recognise that Absalom had taken a step which put him beyond the hope of pardon. Thus there was no chance of Absalom being induced to make terms with David for himself whilst abandoning his followers. It was war to the death. The rebellion must end in either the complete victory of Absalom or his utter downfall.

(2) To allow him to pursue David with 12,000 picked men. Ahithophel saw clearly that Absalom's success depended upon swift measures. A sudden blow securing the person of the king meant success. If David was given time he would be able to rally the loyalists of the nation to himself.

Absalom preferred to follow the advice of Hushai (see p. cii.), whereupon Ahithophel, recognising that the revolt was doomed to fail, returned to Giloh, put his affairs in order, and hanged himself, preferring to put an end to his own life rather than to suffer a traitor's death when David should have suppressed the rebellion.

**Abithophel** has been regarded as the type of Judas, thus:—

| Abithophel.  | Judas.  |
|--|---|
| 1. The counsellor of David, his familiar friend.                         | 1. The apostle of Jesus, in familiar and daily intercourse with his master.   |
| 2. He joined the conspiracy of Absalom.                                  | 2. Judas betrayed his master, and sold Him to his enemies, the chief priests. |
| 3. On the rejection of his advice by Absalom, Abithophel hanged himself. | 3. Judas in remorse committed suicide by hanging.                             |

**Amasa**, the son of Abigail, David's sister. His father's name was Jether, or Ithra.

#### Notices in Samuel:

- (1) He supported Absalom in his rebellion, and was appointed commander-in-chief of the rebel army (2 Sam. xvii. 25).
- (2) He was defeated by Joab in the wood of Ephraim (2 Sam. xviii.).
- (3) When David was displeased with Joab for killing Absalom, he forgave Amasa his part in the rebellion and appointed him as commander-in-chief in the place of Joab, and thus secured Amasa's influence to regain the favour of the people (2 Sam. xix. 13-14).
- (4) At the rebellion of Sheba Amasa was bidden to collect forces and pursue the rebel. He was so dilatory in this that David commanded Abishai to take up the task. Abishai and Joab came up with Amasa at the stone of Gibeon, where Joab, approaching him with the pretence of friendly salutation, treacherously stabbed him (2 Sam. xx. 4-12).

#### Notice in Kings:

David in his last charge to Solomon enjoined him to put Joab to death for his crimes in murdering Abner and Amasa (1 Kings ii 5-6). (See also Joab, p. civ.).

**Ammiel.** The father of Machir (see p. civ.).

**Amnon.** The eldest son of David by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess. He was born at Hebron, in the early days of David's reign.

Amnon is notorious for the outrage committed on Tamar the sister of Absalom (xiii. 1-20).

Absalom nursed his revenge for two years, and then murdered Amnon at a sheep-shearing feast held at Baal-hazor (xiii. 21-29).

**Araunah** or **Ornan**, the Jebusite, from whom David bought the threshing floor on Mount Moriah, where he sacrificed and stayed the plague (xxiv. 18-25).

Araunah was threshing at the time, and when David offered to buy the threshing floor Araunah offered the floor, the oxen, the threshing instruments, and the yoke of the oxen without payment. David refused to take them as a gift, and paid fifty shekels of silver for them (xxiv. 24-25).

In 1 Chron. xxi. 25, the price is given as 600 "shekels of gold by weight" for the place. We may reconcile the two statements by supposing that the threshing floor, oxen, etc. were sold for fifty shekels of silver, whilst "the place," *i.e.* the whole area upon which the Temple was subsequently erected, cost six hundred shekels of gold.

The passage, "*all these did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king*" (xxiv. 23), has been variously explained—

- (1) That Araunah was the former king of Jebus. Following this, Dean Stanley gives a graphic description of the meeting of the two kings.
- (2) That Araunah betrayed to David the existence of the watercourse by which Joab stormed the citadel of Jebus.

The word "*king*" should probably be omitted, as it is in both the Septuagint and the Vulgate. All that is certain is that Araunah (and probably other Jebusites) was allowed to remain in Jebus after the capture, and to retain his property.

**Armoni**, son of Saul by Rizpah. One of the members of Saul's house who were handed over to the Gibeonites by David (see p. xxxvi.-xxxvii.).

**Asahel**, the youngest of the three sons of Zeruah, David's sister. He was "*light of foot as a wild roe*" (ii. 18).

When Abner and his men fled after the battle at the pool of Gibeon, Asahel persistently pursued Abner, who repeatedly exhorted him to desist from his purpose. Clearly Abner was desirous of sparing the youth, for his death would mean a blood feud with Joab, and would also militate against a reconciliation with David should the latter gain the upper hand in the struggle for the kingdom with Ish-bosheth and the house of Saul.

Asahel refused to abandon the pursuit, so Abner in self-defence smote him with the hinderpart of his spear, evidently with the intention of wounding him only so as to stay his course, but, unfortunately, the wound was fatal.

Joab and Abishai murdered Abner in revenge for the death of Asahel (iii. 27) (see p. 109).

**Baanah**, see Ish-bosheth, p. ciii.

**Barzillai**, a wealthy Gileadite, who dwelt at Mahanaim.

Notices in II. Samuel.

- (1) On David's flight from Jerusalem, during Absalom's rebellion, Barzillai and others received him hospitably at Mahanaim (xvii. 27-29).
- (2) Barzillai accompanied David to Jordan on his return to Jerusalem. The King besought Barzillai to accompany him. Barzillai excused himself on the ground of age, but sent his son, Chimham, in his place (xix. 31-40).

Notice in Kings.

In his last charge to Solomon David enjoined him to show kindness to the sons of Barzillai (1 Kings ii. 7).

The name of his son Chimham remains in Jer. xli. 17. The Jews, after the murder of Gedaliah, made preparations to escape to Egypt, and halted at Bethlehem, "*and they departed, and dwell in the*

*habitation of Chimham, which is by Bethlehem, to go to enter into Egypt*" (Jer. xli. 17). From this it would seem that the descendants of Barzillai had been kindly treated and land had been assigned them in or near Bethlehem, David's own city.

On the return from the captivity the descendants of his daughter were unable to prove their genealogy (Ezra ii. 61).

**Bath-sheba**, the daughter of Eliam, the son of Abithophel (xi. 3, and xxiii. 34), and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

(The story of David's sin with Bath-sheba and the death of Uriah is found in xi., xii.). The child born to her died. Subsequently Solomon was born, and the name Jedidiah was given him by God through the mouth of Nathan (xii. 25).

Solomon was early destined to succeed his father, and it would appear that David had given Bath-sheba a solemn promise that Solomon should reign after him (1 Kings i. 17).

#### Notices in Kings.

- (1) When Adonijah aimed at the succession, Bath-sheba, instigated by Nathan, went in unto King David to inform him of the plot and to remind him of his promise (1 Kings i. 11-21).
- (2) On the accession of Solomon Adonijah requested her, as queen-mother, to ask for him Abishag the Shunammite in marriage (1 Kings ii. 13-22).

She was the mother of four sons, Solomon, Shimea, Shobab and Nathan. Solomon was the youngest of the four.

**Benaiah** was the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest (1 Chron. xxvii. 5) and so of the tribe of Levi though a native of Kabseel (xxiii. 20).

He was appointed by David over the bodyguard of Cherethites and Pelethites (viii. 18).

In the enumeration of David's mighty men he occupied a middle rank between the first three and the thirty. "*He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three*" (xxiii. 23).

Three of his exploits are mentioned—

- (1) He slew two lion-like men of Moab (xxiii. 20).
- (2) He slew a lion in the midst of a pit in the time of snow (xxiii. 20).
- (3) He slew an Egyptian with his own spear (xxiii. 21).

#### Notices in Kings.

- (1) He was faithful to Solomon during Adonijah's attempt upon the crown (i. 8), and was commanded by David to make the necessary military arrangements for the anointing of Solomon at Gihon (i. 32-39).
- (2) At the orders of Solomon he put Adonijah and Joab to death when Adonijah asked for Abishag to wife (ii. 26, 29-34).
- (3) He was appointed by Solomon as commander-in-chief over the army in place of Joab (iii. 35).

**Chileab**, the second son of David by Abigail the Carmelitess, the former wife of Nabal. He was born at Hebron in the early days of David's reign. In 1 Chron. iii. 1, his name appears as "*Daniel*."

There is no other mention of his name, and it is conjectured that he died at an early age.

**Chimham** (see Barzillai).

**Cushi**. Properly "the Cushite," "the Ethiopian," and probably a foreigner attached to the service of Joab.

He was selected by Joab to carry to David at Mahanaim the tidings of the death of Absalom and of the defeat of his forces, but Ahimaaz, who started after him, ran by the way of the plain and outran Cushi.

The facts that the person of Cushi was unknown to the watchman who spied the runners whilst at a distance, and that Cushi was apparently ignorant of the Jordan valley, present further corroboration that Cushi was a foreigner.

**Dodo**. Elhanan, one of David's heroes, was the son of Dodo of Bethlehem (xxiii. 24).

**Eglah**, one of David's wives and the mother of Ithream, who was born at Hebron. According to Jewish tradition, Eglah is another name for Michal.

**Elhanan**, one of David's heroes, the son of Dodo of Bethlehem (xxiii. 24).

**Eliam**, the father of Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (xi. 3).

An Eliam is mentioned in the list of David's heroes as being "*the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor*."

As Uriah was also one of David's heroes, it is conjectured that Eliam, the father of Bath-sheba, and Ahithophel, the son of Ahithophel, are one and the same person. If so the defection of Ahithophel from David and his support of Absalom are readily intelligible.

**Esh-baal** (= *Man of Baal*) the original name of Ish-bosheth (1 Chron. viii. 33). The change was probably made in order to avoid uttering the name of the idol god Baal.

Similar changes are: Mephibosheth for Meribbaal (see p. cxi.); Jerubbesheth for Jerubbaal (Gideon).

**Gad**. Generally described as "the seer" or "the king's seer," *i.e.* David's seer. He is first mentioned as joining David when "in the hold" in Moab, *i.e.* at Mizpeh of Moab. Probably he was sent by Samuel, for he commanded David to leave Moab and go into the land of Judah (1 Sam. xxii. 5).

#### Other Notices :

1. When David committed the sin of numbering the people, Gad was sent to give him the choice of three punishments, *viz.* (a) Seven years of famine. (b) Three months' defeat by his enemies, (c) Three days' pestilence (2 Sam. xxiv. 11-19).

2. He was one of the chroniclers of David's reign (1 Chron. xxix. 29).
3. Along with Nathan he assisted David in the arrangements for the musical service in the Temple (2 Chron. xxix. 25).

**Hadadezer**, or **Hadarezer**, the son of Rehob, the king of the Syrian state of Zobah. He was twice defeated by David :

- (1) "as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates" (2 Sam. viii. 3) ;
- (2) at Helam, where Shobach the captain of the host and 40,000 Syrians fell (x. 15-19).

The spoil of gold and brass taken from Hadadezer was devoted to the beautifying of the Temple.

For particulars of the campaign, see p. xxix.

**Hanun**, son of Nahash, and king of the Ammonites. His outrageous treatment of the ambassadors of David led to the Ammonite war, and to the final crushing of the power of Ammon. (For particulars see chap. x. 1-6.)

**Hiram**, king of Tyre, who provided David with "cedar trees, and carpenters and masons" for the building of David's palace (2 Sam. v. 11).

For particulars of this king and his friendly relationship with David and Solomon, see I. Kings.

**Hushai the Archite**, the friend and counsellor of David.

Hushai first appears as meeting David at the summit of Olivet, when the king fled from Jerusalem. It would appear that Hushai must have been absent from Jerusalem at the breaking out of the rebellion, and had hastened to come from his native city to join the king. He came "with his coat rent and earth upon his head," signs of mourning for the great calamity.

It is to be noted that David had just received the tidings that Ahithophel had joined Absalom, and had uttered a prayer that God would "turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." Hushai's coming appears to have been a kind of answer to David's prayer. David at once perceived how Hushai could be of service to him. If he went with David he would be "a burden" to him—(so probably Hushai was of considerable age)—but if he went back to Jerusalem, and pretended to join the party of Absalom, it might be possible for him to thwart the designs of Ahithophel.

An elaborate plan of communication was devised as follows :—

Hushai was to offer his services to Absalom, and thus gain knowledge of that prince's plans. Hushai was then to impart this knowledge to Zadok

\* The Archite = a native of Archi, which is mentioned as on the line of the boundary between Ephraim and Benjamin, which boundary line is described as going "out from Beth-el to Lux, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth" (Josh. xvi. 2). The word is derived from Erech, a city in Mesopotamia, the modern Edessa. It may be that there was near Beth-el a place bearing this Babylonian name, or that emigrants from Babylon had settled near the spot.

and Abiathar, with whom he could communicate under the pretext of some religious observance.

These priests would then send Jonathan and Ahimaaz, their sons, with the news to David.

The plan succeeded in every detail.

Hushai met Absalom, who received him without any suspicion.

Hushai defeated the \*counsel of Ahithophel.

Hushai's advice appealed to the vanity of Absalom, who threw over the practical counsel of Ahithophel, and adopted the plan propounded by Hushai.

Hushai immediately communicated with Zadok and Abiathar, and bade them inform David of his danger.

The priests sent the tidings by a girl who went to the well of En-rogel, apparently for the purpose of fetching water, but really in order to convey the news to Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who were in hiding near the well, not daring to appear in the city.

The two young men, though their presence was discovered and pursuit made, succeeded in escaping to David.

David, thus warned, passed over Jordan the same night, and so placed the river between himself and Absalom.

From that moment the conspiracy was doomed to failure. Time was given for the loyal to rally to the aid of their king. The forces of Absalom were defeated, and he himself was put to death by Joab.

*Thus Hushai attained the object for which he returned to Jerusalem, viz. to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.*

On Hushai, Dean Stanley writes: "Hushai's conduct is certainly no model of Christian uprightness. It is therefore curiously instructive to see it made the warrant of a similarly questionable act in modern times. Sir Samuel Morland, Secretary of State to Cromwell, in describing his betrayal of his master to Charles II., says, 'I called to remembrance Hushai's behaviour towards Absalom, which I found not at all blamed in Holy Writ, and yet his was a larger step than mine.'"

#### Lessons.

1. Scripture relates the actions of men often without condemnation. Absence of condemnation does not mean approval of these actions.
2. Such actions, natural in the age in which they occur, cannot be quoted in support of similar actions in a more enlightened age.

**Ishbi-benob.** "The meaning of the word is probably '*his dwelling is on the height*,' and may have been given to him because of his inaccessible castle" (Keil).

He was "*of the sons of the giant*" (xxi. 14) = a descendant of the giant race of the Rephaim. His spear weighed 300 shekels of brass,

\* **Ahithophel's counsel** was that a picked force of 12,000 men should start at once in pursuit of David, and come suddenly upon him before he was able to gather his troops. The capture of the king would put an end to any resistance to Absalom's usurpation.

**Hushai's counsel** was, that such a proceeding would be hazardous. A reverse, even if slight, would cause many defections. Better to gather an overwhelming force and completely crush David.

and he was girded with a new sword, *i.e.* probably new armour, or some new and terrible weapon.

David was exhausted in the fight, and was hard pressed by the giant. Abishai succoured the king and slew the Philistine. The danger incurred by David was so great that his followers compelled him to take an oath not to engage again in battle in person.

**Ish-bosheth**, the youngest of Saul's sons. His name appears to have been originally *Esh-baal* = the man of Baal, but to have been changed to *Ish-bosheth* = man of shame (see *Esh-baal*, p. c.).

For five years after Saul's death Abner was engaged in winning back the land east of Jordan, with the northern and central tribes, to the house of Saul. He then proclaimed Ish-bosheth, at that time forty\* years of age (ii. 10), as king over Israel.

Ish-bosheth reigned two years at Mahanaim, a king only in name. The conduct of the wars and of the government was entirely in the hands of Abner, who conducted the negotiations with David.

Distinct acts of Ish-bosheth recorded are:

1. The sending back of Michal to David, but this he did at the instigation, or more probably the command, of Abner.
2. His quarrel with Abner, who had taken Rizpah, one of Saul's wives, as his wife. The quarrel led to the defection of Abner to David, and his subsequent murder by Joab. The death of Abner deprived the house of Saul of the last remaining support. When Ish-bosheth "*heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all Israel was troubled*" (iv. 1).

Shortly after he was assassinated in his own house by Baanah and Rechab, who cut off his head, and carried it to David. David executed the murderers, and reverently buried the head of Ish-bosheth in the grave of Abner, at Hebron (iv. 9-12).

**Baanah and Rechab** (the assassins of Ish-bosheth), were two sons of a man named Rimmon, of the tribe of Benjamin, and natives of Beeroth, a Gibeonite city.

It is uncertain whether they were Gibeonites or Benjamites; probably the latter, for the native inhabitants of Beeroth are said to have fled from the city (iv. 3).

If they were Gibeonites, it is fair conjecture to suppose that they were actuated by the desire to avenge the cruelty of Saul towards their countrymen.

\* The age of Ish-bosheth is said to be forty years. If the full reign of Saul was forty years he must have been born five years after the accession of Saul to the throne.

If we include the 7½ years of David's reign at Hebron as belonging to Saul's reign, Ish-bosheth must have been born before the accession of Saul.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign in Hebron, so that Ish-bosheth would be forty years of age when David was thirty-five years old. Now, as Ish-bosheth was the youngest son of Saul, this calculation would make Jonathan, Saul's eldest son, to be several years older than David, which is improbable.

Consequently we may assume there is some numerical error in the text giving the age of Ish-bosheth as forty years.

If they were Benjamites, the death of Ish-bosheth came about by the act of men of his own tribe.

They were captains or leaders of bands in the army of Ish-bosheth, and took advantage of their position to enter the house under the pretence of fetching wheat, probably to provision the troops under their command.

They entered the house whilst Ish-bosheth was taking his mid-day rest according to the custom of hot countries, stabbed the king, and cut off his head, which they carried away, probably concealed in a sack. They hastened to David, bringing the head of Ish-bosheth as a proof that he was dead, and expecting to be rewarded. David had them put to death, and "*cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron*" (iv. 12).

*The feet, which "had been swift to shed blood."*

*The hands, which had been "put forth against the Lord's anointed."*

**Ithra**, or **Jether**, the father of Amasa, by Abigail, David's sister (see p. 127).

**Ittai, the Gittite**, a native of Gath, a Philistine in the service of David. He is distinguished for fidelity to David's cause during the rebellion of Absalom, for, when David suggested that he should return to Jerusalem, he steadfastly refused to abandon David in his trouble. He commanded one of the three divisions of David's army which defeated Absalom.

We gather the following facts about him :—

1. That he was a foreigner, a Philistine, "*Ittai, the Gittite,*" "*a stranger*" (2 Sam. xv. 19).
2. That for some reason he had been compelled to leave his native country. He was "*an exile*" (xv. 19).
3. That he had migrated with his family and a considerable number of followers. "*Ittai, the Gittite, passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him*" (xv. 22).
4. That he had joined David only a short time before Absalom's rebellion. "*Thou camest but yesterday*" (xv. 20).
5. That he was a capable leader and an experienced general, otherwise David would not have entrusted a division of his army to his command.

**Jedidiah** = *beloved of the Lord*, the name given to Solomon by Nathan at the command of Jehovah (see Solomon).

[Jedid = darling; Jah = Jehovah—darling of Jehovah. *Jedid* is another form of David, which signifies "darling."]

**Jerubbesheth**, another name of Gideon, occurring only in 2 Sam. xi. 21 (see Esh-baal, p. c.).

**Joab**, the most remarkable and best known of the three nephews of David, the children of Zeruah, David's sister. These nephews were Joab,

Abishai and Asahel, generally described as "*the sons of Zeruiah.*" On the death of Saul the three brothers naturally supported the cause of David. Probably they were companions of David in his wanderings during the reign of Saul. Abishai at least was with David at this time (1 Sam. xxvi. 6).

The principal events in Joab's career in the Second Book of Samuel are:—

- (1) The skirmish between David's men and Abner's men at the pool of Gibeon, when Asahel was slain whilst in pursuit of Abner (2 Sam. ii. 12-32).
- (2) The treacherous murder of Abner at Hebron when he deserted the cause of Ish-bosheth. Joab slew him in revenge for the death of Asahel (iii. 6-39).
- (3) Joab gained the chief command of the army ("captain of the host") by being the first to mount the walls of the city at the siege of Jebus (1 Chron. xi. 6).
- (4) As a general he conducted three campaigns—
  - (a) Against the allied forces of Syria and Ammon (2 Sam. x. 6-14).
  - (b) Against Edom, the final victory being gained by David himself (viii. 13).
  - (c) Against the Ammonites, when he captured \*Rabbah (xii. 26-28).
- (5) He was privy to the plot for encompassing the death of Uriah the Hittite (xi. 14-25).
- (6) He successfully brought about the reconciliation of David with his son Absalom (xiv.).
- (7) He commanded one of the three divisions of David's army in the battle against the forces of Absalom in the wood of Ephraim. After the battle, contrary to the command of David, he slew Absalom whilst hanging by his hair from an oak tree in the wood. For this disobedience David transferred the command of the army to Amasa (xviii. 1-17; xix. 13).
- (8) He slew Amasa treacherously whilst engaged in the pursuit of Sheba, the son of Bichri, whose revolt Joab quickly suppressed (xx.).
- (9) When commanded by David to number the people Joab remonstrated with David on the folly of such a step (xxiv. 3).

#### Notices in Kings.

- (1) Along with Abiathar, Joab sided with Adonijah, and took part in the feast at the stone of Zobelet, near En-rogel. At this feast it was Joab who was the first to notice the movement in the city for the coronation of Solomon. "*Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?*" (1 Kings i. 41).

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\* At this siege occurred the death of Uriah the Hittite. David (summoned by Joab) was present in person at the actual capture of the citadel (xii. 27-29).

- (2) David left it as a charge to Solomon to punish Joab for the treacherous murders of Abner and Amasa (1 Kings ii. 5-6).
- (3) When Solomon put Adonijah to death for asking for Abishag the Shunammite for wife, Joab fled for sanctuary to the tabernacle at \*Gibeon. On his refusing to quit the sanctuary Benaiah, in obedience to the orders of Solomon, slew him in the tabernacle (1 Kings ii. 28-34).
- (4) He was buried " *in his own house in the wilderness* " (ii. 34).

### The Character of Joab.

**Bold and brave, evidenced by—**

- (1) His being the first to scale the walls of Jebus (1 Chron. xi. 6).
- (2) His many campaigns (2 Sam. viii.-xxii.).

**Treacherous, cruel and revengeful, evidenced by—**

- (1) The murder of Abner (iii. 6-39).
- (2) The murder of Amasa (xx. 8-10).

**Unscrupulous, evidenced by—**

- (1) His ready acquiescence in the plan of David for the removal of Uriah (xi. 16-17).
- (2) His flagrant disobedience in putting Absalom to death contrary to the express command of David (xviii. 5-15).

**A skilful general, evidenced by his successful campaigns, especially against the Ammonites (viii.-xxii.).**

**Of clear judgment, quick decision, and prompt action, evidenced by—**

- (1) The promptness with which he hastened to despatch Absalom, seeing clearly that the death of that prince meant the collapse of the rebellion (xviii. 14).
- (2) The swift decisive measures by which he suppressed the revolt of Sheba (xx. 7).

**Loyal and devoted to the cause of David, evidenced by—**

- (1) His adherence to David's cause in the revolt of Absalom.
- (2) His continued support of David after he had been deprived of the command of the army because of his disobedience with regard to Absalom.
- (3) The prompt manner in which he responded to the call to pursue Sheba, when David saw that Amasa's delay might be serious. Though Joab had been deprived of the command of the army, and had seen Amasa promoted to the post, he at once hurried to the assistance of the king at this crisis.
- (4) His remonstrance with David on the occasion of the numbering of the people.

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\* Thus Joab was slain at the scene of the murder of Amasa, for the tabernacle was now at Gibeon (1 Kings iii. 4).  
Amasa was slain at the " *great stone which is in Gibeon* " (2 Sam. xx. 8-10).

How, then, came Joab to side with Adonijah?

This is an important point, and is emphasised by the sacred historian, "for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom" (1 Kings ii. 28).

It may be noted that Joab, though loyal to David, was obnoxious to the king, who was particularly displeased with him on account of—

- (1) The treacherous murder of Abner.
- (2) The death of Absalom.
- (3) The treacherous murder of Amasa.

For each and any of these acts David might well have ordered the death of Joab. Why did he not do so?

- (1) At the death of Abner David was not fully established on the throne, and could not dispense with the services of Joab and Abishai. "*I am this day weak though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me*" (2 Sam. iii. 39).

Yet David rebukes Joab and compels him to mourn for Abner (iii. 31).

The king is not yet completely in the toils of Joab.

- (1) At the death of Absalom, Joab, so far from making excuses to David for his act, chides the king for his grief at the death of his rebellious son (xix. 5-8).

And the king obeys the order of Joab.

- (2) The death of Amasa seems to have been passed over by David without comment.

Yet how bitterly the king felt the disgrace upon his honour can be gathered from his last words to Solomon: "*Thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether,*" etc. (1 Kings ii. 5), when he left the charge to Solomon that he should put Joab to death.

The secret of David's inability to cope with Joab is connected with the death of Uriah. Joab, and probably Joab alone, knew the secret of Uriah's death. The letter written by David to Joab (xi. 15) gave the latter a hold upon the king. David dared not punish Joab, for he was afraid of him.

But Joab knew how the King resented the deaths of Abner, Absalom and Amasa. Whilst David lived Joab's possession of the King's secret ensured his safety, but David's successor would not be so bound to him, so Joab is ready to advance the cause of Adonijah. If the conspiracy were successful, his claim to the gratitude of Adonijah would render his position secure.

It is remarkable how easily Joab fell before Solomon, who was not held back by a guilty conscience as David had been.

NOTE.—David's advice to Solomon as regards Joab, Shimei, and Barzillai. David's advice was probably given from motives of policy, and not entirely from feelings of revenge.

Solomon was confronted with three dangers.

- (1) An unscrupulous military party headed by Joab,
- (2) A dissatisfied priestly faction headed by Abiathar ready to plot and join any rebellious movement.
- (3) Ill-suppressed tribal jealousies, in which Shimei was probably the chief intriguer.

It is but natural that David should have pointed out these dangers and have warned Solomon against his probable opponents.

In fact David reviewed the chief dangers of his own reign, and referred to the great public crimes which had necessarily been left unpunished. Then he warned Solomon of the difficulties he would have to meet, named the individuals who would thwart him, and in allusion to their past hinted at events which justified their punishment.

David's advice may be summed up—

Beware of Joab and Shimei.

Do not hesitate to crush them. They deserve the extreme penalty for former crimes.

Do not forget the past services of Barzillai and such as he.

But while such feelings and such advice were natural and even lawful on the part of David, we feel that he is speaking as a man and as an Eastern monarch—that there is no Divine warranty for his action or Divine approval of his words.

**Jonadab**, the son of Shimeah, David's brother, and so nephew to David. He is described as "*a very subtle man*" (2 Sam. xiii. 3). [The original means "wise," generally in a good sense, but as applied to Jonadab it means "*crafty*." The Boer expression "*slim*" is the exact description of Jonadab's character.]

He appears to have been the friend and confidant of Amnon, the eldest son of David (xiii. 3).

His craftiness appears on two occasions:—

- (1) In the fatal advice he gave Amnon for ensnaring his sister Tamar (xiii. 5-6).
- (2) In the shrewd manner in which he read the real state of the case when the report reached David that all the princes had been murdered by Absalom. Jonadab is quick to gauge what had really taken place. The studied silence of Absalom for two years had not deceived the crafty Jonadab, so he hastens to assure David that only one of the princes, viz. Amnon, had fallen, and that his murder had been premeditated by Absalom.

**Jonathan**, the son of Abiathar, the high priest. He appears on two occasions.

- (1) When David fled from Jerusalem on the revolt of Absalom, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, and Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, remained behind in order to bring news to David of what might happen in the city (xv. 36). They remained outside the city, at En-rogel. The message concerning the advice of Ahithophel was brought to them there by a maid (xvii. 17). They were, however, seen by a lad, but escaped capture by concealing themselves in the well at the house of a man in Bahurim, and brought the news safely to David (xvii. 18-22).

- (2) On the day of Adonijah's conspiracy and Solomon's inauguration, he brought the news of the anointing of Solomon to the conspirators at En-rogel (1 Kings i. 42-48).

**Jonathan**, the son of Saul, and the friend of David.

In the Second Book of Samuel we may note—

- (1) His death on Mount Gilboa.
- (2) His skill in archery.
- (3) His friendship for David.

All these are described in the elegy pronounced over Saul and Jonathan by David.

- (4) The covenant he made with David, by which David pledged himself to show kindness to the house of Jonathan, when he himself should come to the throne.

David remembered his oath, and on his establishment in the kingdom sought out the survivors of the family of Saul, and protected Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan (2 Sam. ix. 1-13), especially when the Gibeonites demanded seven descendants of Saul to be put to death in propitiation for the slaughter of the Gibeonites, and to remove the famine which had been upon the land for three years (2 Sam. xxi. 1-7).

**Maachah**, daughter of Talmai, king of Gesbur, and married to David at Hebron. Probably the marriage was a political one to strengthen David in his struggle with Ish-bosheth and Abner.

Maachah was the mother of Absalom and Tamar. She appears to have been of considerable beauty, for her children were famed for their beauty. Tamar, the daughter of Absalom, was also a beautiful woman.

The name appears again in Maachab, the favourite wife of Rehoboam, and mother of king Asa. This Maachah was the daughter of Tamar, Absalom's daughter, and occupied the position of Queen-mother in the reigns of Abijah and Asa.

**Machir**, the son of Ammiel. A powerful and rich chief residing at Lo-debar on the east of Jordan.

He is distinguished:—

- (1) As having protected and brought up Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan (ix. 4-5).
- (2) As being one of the three Gileadite chiefs, who received and entertained David at Mahanaim, when the king fled from Jerusalem (xvii. 27).

The name "Machir," and the position of Lo-debar, justify the assumption that Machir was of the tribe of Manasseh.

**Mephibosheth**, son of Jonathan, and grandson of Saul.

At the time of the disastrous battle on Gilboa, when Saul and his son Jonathan were slain, Mephibosheth was an infant but five years old. On receipt of the sad tidings his nurse fled, carrying the infant with her, but

unfortunately in her hurry she let the child fall. This accident deprived him for life of the use of both feet.

He was brought up at the house of Machir, a powerful Manassite chieftain, at Lo-debar, on the eastern side of Jordan.

When David had thoroughly vanquished his enemies and established his kingdom, he sought for the surviving members of Saul's house, in order to keep his oath to Jonathan, and to show kindness to them. Ziba, a servant of the house of Saul, told the king of the existence of Mephibosheth. David sent and fetched Mephibosheth and his infant son Micha from Lo-debar, restored to him all the family property of Saul, with Ziba as the manager of the estate, and assigned to Mephibosheth himself a seat at the royal table.

Of the behaviour of Mephibosheth at the crisis of David's life there are two accounts, his own and Ziba's.

#### Ziba's account.

Ziba met David a little way past the summit of Olivet with two asses laden with refreshments for the king, and represented Mephibosheth as staying in Jerusalem in the hope of being made king through the quarrel of Absalom with David.

*On hearing the story, the king bestowed the estates of Mephibosheth upon Ziba.*

#### Mephibosheth's account.

That he had been deceived by Ziba, whom he had ordered to prepare asses to take him to David. That Ziba had, however, loaded the asses with provisions, and gone to meet David with his deceptive story, and had thus slandered him (Mephibosheth).

That he had remained in Jerusalem, having neither "*dressed his feet, trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes,*" in grief at the catastrophe that had befallen David.

And he throws himself upon David's kindness.

*On hearing this story the king divides the estates between Mephibosheth and Ziba.*

### Which was the true account?

Undoubtedly Mephibosheth's!

For (1) He owed his life and his position at court to David.

(2) There was no hope that the quarrel between David and Absalom would eventuate in the restoration of the house of Saul.

(3) His infirmity incapacitated him from reigning.

Therefore he had nothing to gain and everything to lose by deserting the cause of David, his father's friend.

But Ziba might hope to obtain a grant of the estate to himself, if he could persuade David of the disloyalty of Mephibosheth. *He had something to gain.*

### Explanation of David's conduct.

(1) His bestowal of the estates on Ziba might well have taken place on the impulse of the moment. At such a time the absence of Mephi-

bosheth probably gave David acute pain. So, without reflection and without inquiry, he deprives the supposed traitor of the estates.

- (2) On return the king evidently believes Mephibosheth's story. Else why restore the estates? David's award is generally supposed to be a compromise pronounced by one weary of the subject, and perhaps desirous of conciliating both parties.

But is it not possible that the original arrangement was that Ziba cultivated the land for Mephibosheth, taking a half share of the produce for his trouble and expense? If so, David falls back on the original arrangement.

Blunt, in his *Undesigned Coincidences*, argues that Mephibosheth was a traitor, and that Ziba's story was true. He contends that David spared Mephibosheth because of the covenant with Jonathan. The principal argument in support of this view is that David makes no mention of Mephibosheth in his last instructions to Solomon. But Mephibosheth may well have died in the interval of eight or nine years which elapsed between David's return to Jerusalem and his death.

**Merab**, the elder daughter of Saul. Saul promised her to David as wife, if David would fight his battles against the Philistines. The offer was made in the hope that David would be killed in battle, and thus be removed from Saul's path.

But Saul broke his word, and gave her to Adriel the Meholathite.

Five sons of Merab and Adriel were handed over to the Gibeonites and hanged in propitiation for the slaughter of the Gibeonites by Saul (xxi. 8, 9)

**Merib-baal** (= one who contends with Baal). The original name of Mephibosheth (= one who contends with shame). See Esh-baal, p. c.

**Micha**, the young son of Mephibosheth, who came with his father from Lo-debar to Jerusalem. In him the line of Saul was continued (1 Chron. viii. 34).

**Michal**, the younger daughter of Saul. She loved David, who won her for his wife by his slaughter of the Philistines (1 Sam. xviii. 20-29).

She assisted David to escape from the messengers sent by Saul to arrest him (1 Sam. xix. 12-17).

After David's flight, Saul gave Michal to Phalti to wife (1 Sam. xxv. 44).

When Abner would make a treaty with David, the latter insisted that Michal should be returned to him (2 Sam. iii. 13-16).

When David brought the ark to Jerusalem, Michal despised him for lowering his dignity in dancing before the procession. She may also have been jealous of David's preference for Ahinoam and Abigail. As a punishment for her conduct, it is said that she "had no child unto the day of her death" (2 Sam. vi. 23).

Two points are of interest connected with Michal.

1. Why did David demand her return to him as a condition of his treaty with Abner?

His motives were:—

(a) *Personal.*

- (1) His affection for her, and the memory of her love for him, especially exhibited in the part taken in saving his life.
- (2) A wish to wipe out the personal insult put upon him by the taking away of his wife, and by the giving of her to another man.

(b) *Political.*

Michal as Saul's daughter, and wife of David, formed a political bond uniting the families of Saul and David. Ish-bosheth's power was clearly on the decline. David desired to win the throne by diplomacy. The fact of a daughter of Saul being David's queen, would have a considerable effect on Saul's partisans.

Compare the marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth of York. The battle of Bosworth gave him the crown. His marriage conciliated the main body of the Yorkists.

2. Michal's conduct in despising David for dancing before the Ark.

This was clearly dictated by two motives:—

(a) Jealousy of David's other wives.

- (b) Pride. She could not conceive how a king could so far forget his dignity as to discard his royal robes, assume the ephod, and dance among the people like any common worshipper.

Like her father Saul, she looked upon royalty as superior to the priesthood. This sin led to the rejection of Saul, and David reminds her of this. What he (David) had done was in honour of the Lord, and in honouring Him there could be no degradation.

She "mentally contrasted the proud grandeur of her father's court with what she regarded as the triumph of the despicable priesthood at the cost of royalty" (EDERSHEIM).

**Nahash (I.),** king of Ammon, and father of Hanun. Nahash appears to have shown some special act of kindness to David, which caused David to send a message of sympathy to Hanun on his father's death. The gross insult to David's ambassadors was the cause of the great Ammonite war.

It is probable that this Nahash was either the son or grandson of the Nahash defeated by Saul at Jabesh-gilead, for that event occurred at least forty years before. "Nahash" is generally considered to be the title of the king of the Ammonites, rather than the name of an individual.

The kindness may have been shown to David in his wanderings. The Jewish tradition affirms that it consisted in his having received one of David's brothers, who escaped when Jesse and his family were murdered by the king of Moab.

**Nahash (II.).** A person mentioned only in the account of the parentage of Amasa. Amasa is stated to have been the son of Ithra by Abigail.

"daughter of Nahash and sister to Zeruah." Who was this Nabash? Several conjectures have been furnished:—

- (1) That Nahash and Jesse are identical. This is the Jewish tradition, but it is not supported by evidence.
- (2) That a Nahash was the former husband of the mother of Abigail.
- (3) That Abigail was formerly the wife of Nahash, the king of the Ammonites.
- (4) That Nahash was the name not of Jesse, nor of a former husband of his wife, but of his wife herself. The objection to this view is that Nahash is not a woman's name.

In 1 Chron. ii. 16 it is stated that Zeruah and Abigail were the sisters of Jesse's sons.

It is not said that they were Jesse's daughters.

This is consistent with the theory that a Nahash was the former husband of the mother of Abigail and Zeruah.

### **Nathan (I.)** the prophet.

#### Notices.

- (1) He was consulted by David with reference to the building of the Temple. At first he approved of the king's intention, but subsequently he was bidden by God to tell David that the erection of a house for Jehovah should be accomplished by his son (2 Sam. vii. 2-17).
- (2) He reproved David for his sin with Bath-sheba by the simile of the rich man and the ewe lamb (xii. 1-12).
- (3) On the birth of Solomon he was specially charged by the Lord to give him the name Jedidiah (xii. 25).
- (4) He appears to have been the tutor of Solomon.

#### Notices in Kings.

- (1) He was loyal to David and Solomon during the conspiracy of Adonijah (1 Kings i. 8).
- (2) He was the means of the appointment of Solomon to the succession.
  - (a) By his advice to Bath-sheba to go in unto David and tell him of the plot.
  - (b) By his own subsequent remonstrance with the king.
  - (c) By his presence and assistance at the inauguration of Solomon.

#### He was the compiler of

- (1) The Life of David. "*The acts of David, the king, first and last, behold they are written in the Book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer*" (1 Chron. xxix. 29).
- (2) The Life of Solomon. "*Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet?*" (2 Chron. ix. 29).

**Nathan (II.)**, the son of David, one of the four who were born to the king by Bath-sheba. He appears to have taken no part in the events of David's or Solomon's reign.

According to the genealogy of our Lord as given by St. Luke, Joseph traced his descent from David through Nathan (St. Luke iii. 31).

**Obed-edom.** A Levite of Gath-rimmon, a city of Manasseh, assigned to the Kohathites (Josh. xxi. 25). When Uzzah was struck dead for touching the ark on its removal from the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, David had it carried aside to the house of Obed-edom, where it remained three months.

We may note in connection with the selection of the house of Obed-edom—

- (1) That when the ark was taken from Kirjath-jearim it was conveyed in a new cart, contrary to the law which commanded it to be carried by means of staves on the shoulders of the Levites.
- (2) That when the ark was taken from the house of Obed-edom it was carried by the Levites.
- (3) That Obed-edom the Gittite (*i.e.* native of Gath-rimmon) was a Levite of the family of Kohath, and that the Kohathites were the family of the Levites originally appointed to carry the ark from place to place in the wilderness (Num. iv. 15).

Thus we see that David had a special reason for his choice of the house of Obed-edom as the temporary resting-place of the ark.

**Ornan**, see Araunah, p. xcvi.

**Phalti**, or **Phaltiel**. The son of Laish of Gallim, to whom Saul gave his daughter Michal, David's wife, in marriage, after David had been driven to take refuge in the south of Judah.

When David compelled Abner to restore Michal as a condition of peace, it is said that "*her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim.*"

**Rizpah**, daughter of Ahiah, and a concubine of king Saul, and mother of his two sons, Armoni and Mephibosheth.

After the death of Saul she appears to have retired with the rest of the royal house to Mahanaim. Here Abner took her to wife, thus offending Ish-bosheth, who regarded the act as an indication that Abner intended to dethrone him, and reign in his stead. This quarrel led to Abner's coming to terms with David.

She is best known in connection with the tragic story of the execution of Saul's sons in propitiation of that king's cruelty towards the Gibeonites. She watched over the corpses from barley harvest (April) till the autumn rains descended (October), a period of six months. Her object was to guard them against wild beasts and birds of prey, the invariable feeders on an unburied body.

**Rechab**, see Ish-bosheth, p. ciii.

**Shammah**, the son of Agee the Harasite, and one of the three greatest of David's mighty men. He won the position by an act of extraordinary valour in defending a piece of ground full of lentiles against the Philistines in one of their raids.

**Sheba**, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite, who seized upon the dispute between the men of Judah and the men of Israel on the return of David, as an opportunity to restore the sovereignty to the house of Benjamin.

He is described as a "man of Belial," *i.e.* a worthless fellow. But he must have been of some consequence, for, however popular the cause, he would not have succeeded in obtaining a large following had he been of no importance.

The rebellion was serious, and a rupture between the northern tribes and Judah imminent. It was, in fact, all but an anticipation of the revolt of Jeroboam. David might well say, "*Now shall Sheba, the son of Bichri, do us more harm than did Absalom*" (2 Sam. xx. 6). He was followed by the men of Israel from Gilgal, and proceeded northwards, blowing a trumpet as a signal of revolt, and rousing the people as he went.

The prompt action of Joab prevented the rebellion gaining any real strength. He followed Sheba in hot pursuit till the rebel took refuge in the fortress of Abel-beth-maachah in the far north. Here the prudence of the inhabitants saved the city. As Joab pressed the siege a wise woman of the city held a parley with Joab. His terms were—the head of Sheba. The inhabitants beheaded the rebel, threw his head over the wall to Joab, and the revolt ended.

**Shimei**, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, of the house of Saul. He lived at Bahurim (2 Sam. xvi. 5).

#### Notices in Samuel :

- (1) In his flight from Jerusalem during the revolt of Absalom David had to pass near Bahurim on his way to cross the Jordan. Shimei came out and followed David, cursing and throwing dust and stones. Abishai would have turned and slain him, but was forbidden by the king (xvi. 5-13).
- (2) On the king's return Shimei was the first person to meet him at the Jordan, and begged for pardon. Again Abishai would have put him to death, but the king granted him pardon and promised to spare his life (xix. 16-23).

#### Notices in Kings :

- (1) In his last charge to Solomon, David enjoined him to put Shimei to death as a punishment for his former conduct (1 Kings ii. 8-9).
- (2) Solomon called Shimei to him and notified that he must take up his residence in Jerusalem, and not go beyond the brook Kidron on pain of death (1 Kings ii. 36-38).
- (3) Shimei built himself an house in Jerusalem and kept to the arrangement for three years, at the end of which time he went to

Gath in quest of two of his servants, who had run away to Achish, king of Gath. For his breach of the compact made with the king he was executed by Benaiah (1 Kings ii. 39-46).

Two views might be taken of the end of Shimei—

- I. That David left to Solomon the legacy of putting Shimei to death in the spirit of revenge, and that Solomon laid a trap for him, inasmuch as Shimei would be sure to break the compact, either through forgetfulness or through lapse of time robbing it of its fatal significance.
- II. That Shimei, being of the house of Saul, was a bitter opponent of David, who had succeeded to the throne.

On his return from flight David would not mar the indemnity given to those who had supported Absalom, and so pardoned Shimei.

It would seem that Shimei did not feel grateful for the pardon, but continued in his animosity towards the house of David.

So whilst David would not break his word to Shimei that he would spare his life, he warned Solomon that Shimei was dangerous to the throne and must be put to death.

The latter view is the more probable, and causes us to regard the charge of David to Solomon as that of an experienced monarch pointing out to his youthful successor the political dangers he would be liable to as long as Joab and Shimei lived. And he need not have any scruples about his action, for both had deserved death, Joab by his murdering Abner and Amasa, Shimei by his cursing David in his trouble.

And thus we obtain a clear view of Solomon's action. He removes Shimei from his home at Bahurim, where he would have been free to plot against the king, and compels him to live at Jerusalem under his own eye. If he quitted Jerusalem he should be put to death.

Thus Solomon acted wisely towards Joab and Shimei from a political point of view. His prompt dealing with all those likely to plot against him established his rule immediately and completely.

**Shobi**, son of Nahash of Rabbah. He was one of the three Gileadite chieftains who received David at Mahanaim, and furnished supplies for his men on David's flight from Absalom.

**Sibbechai**, the Hushathite, who gained renown by slaying Saph, a Philistine giant, in the battle of Gob or Gezer (2 Sam. xxi. 18).

He was one of David's mighty men, and eighth captain for the eighth month of a division of 24,000 men (1 Chron. xi. 29; xxvii. 11).

**Shobach**. The general of Hadadezer, king of Zobah. He was defeated by David at Helam, and fell in the battle (2 Sam. x. 15-18).

**Talmi**. King of Geshur, father of Maachab, one of David's wives. He was the grandfather of Absalom, whom he received at Geshur after the murder of Amnon. Absalom remained three years at Geshur before he was recalled to Jerusalem.

**Tamar** (1). Daughter of David by Maachah, the daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur. She was the sister of Absalom, and renowned for her beauty. The story of her outrage by Amnon and how it was avenged by Absalom is told in Chapter xiii.

"The history is of interest in revealing to us the interior of the royal household beyond that of any incident of those times" (B. D.).

(1) The establishments of the princes. Each of them evidently had a separate house. David said to Tamar: "*Go now to thy brother Amnon's house*" (xiii. 7).

"*Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house*" (xiii. 20).

(2) The simplicity of the royal employments. Tamar appears to have been famous for the baking of certain cakes.

(3) The dress of the princesses. "*A garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled*" (xiii. 18).

(4) The relation of the king to the princes and to the law.

It was necessary for Absalom to obtain the king's consent ere he could invite his brothers to the feast (xiii. 26, 27).

The king appears to have had the right of pardoning a murderer, e.g. he pardoned Absalom.

Absalom was confined to his house by the king's order (xiv. 28).

**Tamar** (2). The daughter of Absalom, famed for the family beauty. She was the ancestress of Maachah, the notorious Queen-Mother in the reign of Asa.

**Toi**. King of Hamath on the Orontes. He appears to have been continually at war with Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and on the defeat of that monarch by David, he sent his son Joram or Hadoram to congratulate David, and to secure his good-will by presents of gold and silver and brass (2 Sam. viii. 9-12).

**Uriah** the Hittite. One of the thirty commanders of the thirty divisions of David's army (xxiii. 39).

His wife was Bath-sheba, a woman of great beauty, the daughter of a certain Eliam, possibly the same as Eliam the son of Abithophel, who was also one of the thirty commanders.

Uriah was with Joab at the siege of Rabbah, when David sinned with Bath-sheba. By order of the king Joab sent Uriah to Jerusalem. Desire to hear how the siege was progressing was the pretext, but the real reason was that his return might hide the sin of the king. The king's design was frustrated by the soldier-like spirit with which Uriah refused to indulge in ease whilst the army was in the field. Incidentally this furnishes evidence of the high state of training and discipline in David's army. Baulked in his purpose, the king could conceal his shame only by the death of Uriah, which was brought about with the connivance of Joab. The plan adopted was to order Uriah to make an observation of that part of the wall whence sallies were most frequent.

The device succeeded, for, on a sally being made, Uriah and his men advanced to meet the sortie, and pressing on too near the city Uriah was shot down by the archers lining the wall.

The death of Uriah enabled David to marry Bath-sheba.

**Uzzah**, son of Abinadab, of Kirjath-jearim. Uzzah and his brother Ahio superintended the removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim. Apparently Ahio walked before, perhaps leading the oxen, whilst Uzzah walked by the side. At the threshing floor of Nachon (or Chidon) the oxen stumbled. Uzzah put out his hand, and caught hold of the ark to save it from falling. He was struck dead by its side (see p. xxvi.).

**Zadok**, son of Ahitub, of the house of Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron, from whom he was eleventh in descent. During the reign of David Zadok is associated in the high priesthood with Abiathar.

#### Notices.

- (1) The first mention of Zadok is that he joined David at Hebron after the death of Saul. He is described as "*a young man mighty of valour*" (1 Chron. xii. 28). Up to this period it is probable he was a supporter of the house of Saul, but afterwards he was staunch in his fidelity to David.
- (2) At the revolt of Absalom, Zadok and Abiathar would have taken the ark with David in his flight, but at the express command of the king they returned to Jerusalem (2 Sam. xv. 24-29).
- (3) Ahimaaaz, the son of Zadok, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, were the means of communication between David and Hushai (xv. 35, 36), and brought tidings to the king of the counsel of Ahithophel (xvii. 15-22).
- (4) When Absalom was dead, Zadok and Abiathar, at the instigation of David, urged the people to invite the king to return (xix. 11-14).
- (5) Zadok did not join the conspiracy of Adonijah, but was faithful to the cause of Solomon (1 Kings i. 8).
- (6) At the command of David he anointed Solomon at Gihon (1 Kings i. 32-39).
- (7) When, on the renewal of Adonijah's schemes against Solomon, the king removed Abiathar from the priesthood, he rewarded Zadok for his fidelity by putting him in the place of Abiathar (1 Kings ii. 35).

There is no further mention of any acts of Zadok, but we find his name in the list of the state officials of Solomon. "*Zadok and Abiathar were the priests*" (1 Kings iv. 4). "*Zadok the priest*" (1 Chron. xxiv. 6).

It is suggested that Abiathar officiated in Jerusalem where the ark was, and that Zadok presided at Gibeon where the Tabernacle was during the reigns of David and Solomon. This conjecture is based on 1 Chron. xvi. 39.

"*And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon.*"

**Zeruiah**, the mother of Abishai, Joab and Asahel, the nephews of David (see p. 127).

**Ziba**. The servant of Saul from whom David learned of the existence of Mephibosheth. He was entrusted by David with the management of the private estates of Saul, assigned to Mephibosheth (2 Sam. ix. 1-13). For further particulars see Mephibosheth, pp. cix. cxi.

## ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

The Second Book of Samuel is divided naturally into Three Parts.

- PART I. **David, King at Hebron over Judah.** (I.—IV.)  
 PART II. **David, King over the whole Land.** (V.—XX.)  
 PART III. **Appendix.** (XXI.—XXIV.)

### PART I. DAVID KING OVER JUDAH.

*(Seven years and six months.)*

#### Div. I. How David received the News of Saul's Death. i

1. The Amalekite conveys to David the tidings of Saul's death. David's reception of the news . . . . . i 1—16.
2. David's lament for Saul and Jonathan . . . . . i. 17—27.

#### Div. II. David at Hebron. Rivalry with Ish-bosheth. ii—iv.

##### Section I. The Civil War between David and Ish-bosheth.

1. David anointed king of Judah at Hebron . . . . . ii. 1—4.
2. He thanks the men of Jabesh for their having rescued the bones of Saul and Jonathan from abuse by the Philistines . . . . . ii. 5—7.
3. Abner crowns Ish-bosheth king of Israel . . . . . ii. 8—11.
4. The fight at Gibeon . . . . . ii. 12—32.
  - (a) The encounter . . . . . ii. 12—17
  - (b) The pursuit and the death of Asahel . . . . . ii. 18—32
  - (c) David's cause grows stronger, whilst Ish-bosheth's becomes weaker. . . . . iii. 1.
  - (d) David's family at Hebron . . . . . iii. 2—5.

#### Div. III. How David obtained the Throne of Israel . . . . . iii. 6—iv.

1. Abner's quarrel with Ish-bosheth . . . . . iii. 6—11.
2. Abner negotiates with David . . . . . iii. 12

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| 3. David insists upon the return of his wife Michal . . . . .               | lii. 13—17  |
| 4. Abner and David agree upon terms . . . . .                               | iii. 18—21. |
| 5. Abner murdered by Joab and Abishai . . . . .                             | fii. 22—27. |
| 6. David expresses indignation, but does not punish the murderers . . . . . | iii. 28—30. |
| 7. David's lament over Abner . . . . .                                      | iii. 31—39. |
| 8. The murder of Ish-bosheth . . . . .                                      | iv. 1—7.    |
| 9. David puts the murderers to death . . . . .                              | iv. 8—12.   |

**Characteristics of the Period.**

1. David's admirable conduct. He is generous to his foes, takes no rash step, but patiently waits for Jehovah to fulfil His purpose in raising him to the throne.
2. The ambitious plans of Abner, and their failure.
3. The continued advance in David's fortunes and the corresponding decline of the house of Saul.
4. David's demand for the restoration of Michal. By this act he bound the family and tribe of Saul to his own house after the death of Ish-bosheth.
5. David does not appear to have been attacked by the Philistines.

**PART II. DAVID, KING OVER THE WHOLE LAND.***(Thirty-three years.)*

v.—xx.

**Div. I. Growth and Establishment of David's rule . . . . .**

v.—ix.

**Section 1. David establishes himself king at Jerusalem . . . . .**

v.

1. David elected and anointed king by the tribes of Israel at Hebron . . . . .
2. The capture of Jebus, which becomes the capital . . . . .
3. David makes alliance with Hiram, king of Tyre, and builds a palace . . . . .
4. The family of David . . . . .
5. Two victories over the Philistines at Rephaim. End of the Philistine domination . . . . .

v. 1—5.

v. 6—10.

v. 11—12.

v. 13—16.

v. 17—25.

**Section 2. David establishes Jerusalem as the religious centre . . . . .**

vi.—vii.

1. The ark removed from Kirjath-jearim . . . . .
2. Death of Uzzah. The ark at the house of Obededom . . . . .
3. The ark removed to Jerusalem . . . . .
4. David rebukes the pride of Michal . . . . .
5. Jehovah promises the perpetual continuance of the House of David . . . . .

vi. 1—5.

vi. 6—11.

vi. 12—19.

vi. 20—23.

vii

vii. 1—3.

vii. 4—11.

vii. 12—17.

vii. 18—29.

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| <b>Section 3. David's conquests and his administration of the kingdom.</b>       | viii.—ix.    |
| 1. David's victories and extension of his kingdom                                | viii. 1—14.  |
| (a) Conquest of the Philistines and Moabites                                     | viii. 1—2.   |
| (b) Conquest of the Syrians of Zobah and Damascus                                | viii. 3—8.   |
| (c) Toi, king of Hamath, sends an embassy and becomes a tributary king           | viii. 9—12.  |
| (d) Conquest of Edom   | viii. 13—14. |
| 2. Military and civil administration, with a list of the various state officials | viii. 15—18. |
| 3. David shows kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan                     | ix. 1—13.    |

#### Characteristics of the Period.

1. A period of continued prosperity.
2. Jerusalem becomes the political and religious centre.
3. David's zeal for religion. He restores religious unity in addition to welding the tribes into one nation.
4. The paucity of detail in the record of his conquests.

#### Div. II. David's Sin and its Punishment . . . . . x—xx.

##### Section 1. The war with Ammon . . . . . x.—xi. 1.

1. Hanun, king of the Ammonites, insults the ambassadors sent by David . . . . . x. 1—5.
2. *First stage.* Ammonites and their Syrian allies defeated by Joab and Abishai . . . . . x. 6—14.
3. *Second stage.* David totally defeats the Syrians under Hadarezer at Helam. Shobach, the captain, slain . . . . . x. 15—19.
4. *Third stage.* Siege of Rabbah . . . . . xi. 1.

#### Characteristics of the Period.

1. Full details of these campaigns, contrasting with the meagre account of David's previous wars.
2. David's tendency to remain at Jerusalem, whilst entrusting the command to Joab and other officers.
3. The large armies engaged, indicative of the complete organisation and great increase of David's military power.
4. The spread of David's rule on the east of Jordan, and in Syria on the north.

##### Section 2. David's Sin and Fall . . . . . xi. 2—27.

1. David commits adultery with Bath-sheba . . . . . xi. 2—5.
2. He sends for Uriah from the army to Jerusalem . . . . . xi. 6—13.
3. David's letter to Joab, planning the death of Uriah. The death of Uriah . . . . . xi. 18—23.
4. Joab sends news of the death of Uriah to David . . . . . xi. 18—25.
5. David immediately marries Bath-sheba. A son is born . . . . . xi. 26—27.

#### Characteristics of the Period.

1. This event is the key to the rest of David's reign. Hitherto we have had a record of prosperity and victory. Henceforth we note trouble, sorrow, and failure.
2. The devices adopted by David to conceal his sin.
3. The hold that Joab obtains over David through his knowledge of David's sin and crime.

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| <b>Section 3. The Repentance of David . . . . .</b>                        | <b>xli.</b> |
| 1. Nathan's Parable of the Ewe Lamb . . . . .                              | xli. 1—6.   |
| 2. Application of the Parable to David's sin. David's confession . . . . . | xli. 7—14.  |
| The punishment of David foretold in detail.                                |             |
| 3. The death of the son borne by Bath-sheba . . . . .                      | xli. 15—23  |
| 4. The Birth of Solomon. He is also named Jedediah by Nathan . . . . .     | xli. 24—5   |
| 5. The capture of Rabbah . . . . .   | xli. 26—21. |

**Characteristics.**

1. Confession and Repentance followed by Pardon.
2. The consequences of Sin remain.
3. David's subsequent troubles are all connected with this Sin; and have their origin in his own household.

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| <b>Section 4. Amnon's Sin and Absalom's Fratricide . . . . .</b>           | <b>xliii.—xli.</b> |
| 1. Amnon's Violation of his step-sister Tamar . . . . .                    | xliii. 1—22.       |
| 2. Absalom's Revenge and Flight . . . . .                                  | xliii. 23—37.      |
| 3. Absalom's Exile at Geshur . . . . .                                     | xliii. 38—39.      |
| 4. Absalom's return and reconciliation with David . . . . .                | xli.               |
| (a) The device by which Joab brought about the return of Absalom . . . . . | xli. 1—20.         |
| (b) The return of Absalom . . . . .  | xli. 21—24.        |
| (c) Particulars of Absalom's person and family . . . . .                   | xli. 25—27.        |
| (d) Reconciliation of Absalom with David . . . . .                         | xli. 28—33.        |

**Characteristics.**

1. Judgment on David brought about by sins and crimes of his sons.
2. Amnon's sin somewhat similar to that of David with Bath-sheba.
3. David to blame for these sins, partly because of his indulgence to his sons, partly because of his own bad example.
4. The impolitic treatment dealt out to Absalom, causing him to entertain an undying resentment towards his father.

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| <b>Section 5. Absalom's Rebellion and David's Flight . . . . .</b>   | <b>xv.—xviii.</b> |
| 1. Absalom wins the hearts of Israel . . . . .   | xv. 1—6.          |
| 2. The Conspirators meet at Hebron. The Rebellion commences . . . . .  | xv. 7—12.         |
| 3. The flight of David from Jerusalem . . . . .  | xv. 13—xvi. 14    |
| (a) David and his court quit Jerusalem . . . . .   | xv. 13—18.        |
| (b) Ittai the Gittite is faithful to David's cause . . . . .   | xv. 19—23.        |
| (c) David sends the Ark back to Jerusalem . . . . .  | xv. 24—29.        |
| (d) Hushai meets David at Olivet. David sends him to Jerusalem to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel . . . . . | xv. 30—37.        |
| (e) Ziba meets David with a present. David inquires after Mephibosheth . . . . .                             | xvi. 1—4.         |
| (f) Shimei curses David . . . . .  | xvi. 5—14         |

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| 4. Absalom enters Jerusalem . . . . .  | xvi. 15.        |
| (a) Hushai offers his services, and is accepted as a counsellor . . . . .                                  | xvi. 16—19      |
| (b) The counsel of Ahithophel. Immediate pursuit . . . . .   | xvi. 20—23      |
| (c) The counter counsel of Hushai—wait and collect a huge army . . . . .                                   | xvii. 1—14.     |
| (d) The counsel of Ahithophel communicated to David by Hushai through Jonathan and Ahimaaz . . . . .       | xvii. 15—21.    |
| (e) David crosses Jordan immediately . . . . .   | xvii. 22.       |
| (f) Ahithophel commits suicide when his counsel is rejected . . . . .                                      | xvii. 23.       |
| 5. The campaign . . . . .  | xvii. 24—xviii. |
| (a) Absalom appoints Amasa commander of his forces . . . . .   | xvii. 24—26.    |
| (b) David hospitably received at Mahanaim . . . . .  | xvii. 27—29.    |
| (c) The battle in the wood of Ephraim . . . . .  | xviii. 1—6.     |
| (d) Defeat of Absalom's forces . . . . .   | xviii. 7—8.     |
| (e) The death of Absalom . . . . .   | xviii. 9—18.    |
| (f) The grief of David on hearing the news . . . . .   | xviii. 19—32.   |
| Section 6. David reinstated in his kingdom . . . . .   | xix.—xx.        |
| 1. Joab rebukes David for his excessive grief over the death of Absalom . . . . .                          | xix. 1—8        |
| 2. Preliminaries to the return of David to Jerusalem . . . . .   | xix. 9—14.      |
| 3. Return of the king. Occurrences at the crossing of the Jordan . . . . .                                 | xix. 15—39.     |
| (a) Pardon of Shimei . . . . .   | xix. 15—23.     |
| (b) Meeting with Mephibosheth . . . . .  | xix. 24—30.     |
| (c) Barzillai comes to take farewell of David . . . . .  | xix. 31—39.     |
| 4. Quarrel between Judah and Israel about the restoration of the king . . . . .                            | xix. 40—43.     |
| 5. Sheba's rebellion . . . . .   | xx. 1—22.       |
| (a) The inception of the rebellion . . . . .   | xx. 1—2.        |
| (b) David returns to Jerusalem . . . . .   | xx. 3.          |
| (c) Amasa commanded to pursue Sheba . . . . .  | xx. 4—5.        |
| (d) Pursuit of Sheba. Joab murders Amasa . . . . .   | xx. 6—13.       |
| (e) Sheba takes refuge at Abel-maachah. Joab besieges the town . . . . .                                   | xx. 14—15.      |
| (f) End of the rebellion. The inhabitants of Abel-beth-maachah deliver the head of Sheba to Joab . . . . . | xx. 16—22.      |
| 6. David's Ministers of State . . . . .  | xx. 23—26       |

**Characteristics of the Period.**

1. The success of the rebellion. David narrowly escaped losing his throne.
2. The defection of the people.
3. Full details recorded of the rebellion. Reason—to indicate how severely David was punished for his sin.
4. The resignation of David to God's will. He recognised that he was suffering for his sin with Bath-sheba.
5. The quarrel between Israel and Judah—the first indication of that jealousy which was eventually to bring about the disruption of the kingdom.

## PART III.

## APPENDIX

xxi.—xxiv.

|           |   |               |
|-----------|---|---------------|
| Div. I.   | <b>The Three Years' Famine . . . . .</b>  | xxi. 1—14.    |
| 1.        | The execution of seven of Saul's sons . . . . .   | xxi. 1—10.    |
| 2.        | The burial of the bones of Saul and his sons . . . . .  | xxi. 11—14.   |
| Div. II.  | <b>Brief notices of acts of heroism performed in the wars with the Philistines</b>            | xxi. 15—22.   |
| Div. III. | <b>David's Psalms of Praise for deliverance out of the hands of all his enemies . . . . .</b> | xxii.         |
| Div. IV.  | <b>The last prophetic words of David . . . . .</b>  | xxiii. 1—7.   |
| Div. V.   | <b>A list of David's heroes, and their exploits</b>   | xxiii. 8—39.  |
| 1.        | The First Three . . . . .   | xxiii. 8—12.  |
| 2.        | Their feat in bringing water from the well of Beth-lehem . . . . .                            | xxiii. 13—17. |
| 3.        | The exploits of Abishai and Benaiah . . . . .   | xxiii. 18—23. |
| 4.        | The Thirty . . . . .  | xxiii. 24—39. |
| Div. VI.  | <b>Numbering of the People. The Pestilence</b>  | xxiv.         |
| 1.        | The Numbering of the People . . . . .   | xxiv. 1—9.    |
| 2.        | The choice of punishments . . . . .   | xxiv. 10—14.  |
| 3.        | The Pestilence . . . . .  | xxiv. 15—17.  |
| 4.        | David purchases the threshing floor of Araunah . . . . .                                      | xxiv. 18—24.  |
| 5.        | David offers sacrifice. The Pestilence ceases . . . . .                                       | xxiv. 25.     |

**Characteristics.** The centre of this last section of the history of David lies in the psalm of thanksgiving and the prophetic announcement of an exalted and blessed king, the former looking back to his own life and the latter looking forward to the fulfilment of the promise of the eternal duration of his house.

Besides, we have

1. Two divine visitations illustrating God's dealing with His people, teaching that sin calls for divine punishment, and must be expiated.
2. The heroic character of the times of David.

# THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

## TEXT AND NOTES.

### David receives the News of Saul's Death.

1. <sup>1</sup>Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the <sup>2</sup>Amalekites, and David had abode two days in <sup>3</sup>Ziklag; <sup>2</sup> It came even to pass <sup>4</sup>on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the <sup>5</sup>camp from Saul with his <sup>6</sup>clothes rent, and earth upon his head; and so it was, when he came to David, that he <sup>7</sup>fell to the earth, and <sup>8</sup>did obeisance. <sup>3</sup> And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, <sup>9</sup>Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. <sup>4</sup> And David said unto him, <sup>10</sup>How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, <sup>11</sup>That the people are fled from the battle, and <sup>12</sup>many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. <sup>5</sup> And David said unto the young man that told him, <sup>13</sup>How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? <sup>6</sup> And the young man that told him said, <sup>14</sup>As I happened by chance upon <sup>15</sup>mount Gilboa, behold, Saul <sup>16</sup>leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the <sup>17</sup>chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

<sup>1</sup> And. There is no break in the narrative. The Books of Samuel are a connected whole (Intro. p. v.).

<sup>2</sup> Who had sacked Ziklag (1 Sam. xxx. 26).

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lxxiii. Distant about 100 miles from Gilboa.

<sup>4, 5</sup> i. e. after David's return. Thus the battle of Gilboa was fought soon after David left Achish.

<sup>5</sup> So he was one of Saul's army.

<sup>6</sup> Marks of a great misfortune (see p. 114).

<sup>7</sup> Prostrated himself.

<sup>8</sup> Paid homage to David as the King now that Saul was dead.

<sup>9</sup> Further proof that he was with Saul (see Note below).

<sup>10</sup> Compare Eli's question (1 Sam. iv. 16).

<sup>11</sup> A triple disaster, viz.—

(1) Rout of the army.

(2) Great slaughter.

(3) Death of Saul and his sons.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Sam. xxxi. 6, has "*all his men.*" This must mean the body-guard of Saul, who were slain to a man.

<sup>13</sup> If he had fled himself, how did he know about Saul and Jonathan?

<sup>14</sup> The battle took place in the plain of Jezreel; the defeated Israelites fled up the slopes of Gilboa.

The Amalekite represents his meeting with Saul as accidental.

<sup>15</sup> Intro. p. lxii.

<sup>16</sup> For support.

<sup>17</sup> They could follow up the slopes of Gilboa (see p. lxii.). There is no doubt that the account in 1 Sam. xxxi., is the true version of Saul's death, and that he fell by his own hand.

The Amalekite was with the Israelite army (*ver.* 2-3), and had either come across Saul by chance after he was dead, or when he was roaming over the battlefield in search of plunder.

He plundered the dead body of the king, and hurried off with his spoil to David, hoping to receive a rich reward for the news of Saul's death.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me, And I answered, Here am I. 8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. 9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for <sup>18</sup>anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. 10 So I stood upon him, and <sup>19</sup>slew him, because I was sure that he could not live <sup>20</sup>after that he was fallen: and I took the <sup>21</sup>crown that was upon his head, and the <sup>22</sup>bracelet that was on his arm, and <sup>23</sup>have brought them hither unto my lord. 11 Then David took hold <sup>24</sup>on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: 12 And <sup>25</sup>they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the <sup>26</sup>people of the Lord, and for the <sup>27</sup>house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. 13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. 14 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand <sup>28</sup>to destroy the LORD's anointed? 15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and <sup>29</sup>fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. 16 And David <sup>30</sup>said unto him, Thy blood be

<sup>18</sup> Cramp or giddiness; preferably "cramp." Saul, unable to flee, was determined not to fall alive into the hand of the Philistines

<sup>19</sup> Contradictory to 1 Sam xxxi. 4-5, where Saul is recorded to have died on his own sword

<sup>20</sup> After his defeat, not after he had fallen down, or fallen on his sword.

<sup>21</sup> A kind of diademed helmet.

<sup>22</sup> A symbol of royalty (p. 110).

<sup>23</sup> By bringing these to David the Amalekite furnishes evidence of the truth of his story, and recognizes David as the future king.

<sup>24</sup> Of. A sign of mourning (see p. 114).

<sup>25</sup> Though the death of Saul opened the way to the throne for him, yet David mourned for the dead king and for the calamity which had befallen the nation. It was a pious, generous, unselfish and patriotic act David had felt real regard for Saul in spite of the persecutions he had suffered at his hands.

<sup>26</sup> The army defeated at Gilboa.

<sup>27</sup> The nation, united under Saul, and now shattered by the defeat.

<sup>28</sup> A two-fold crime.

1. Regicide, in killing the king; or,

2. Sacrilege, in taking the life of the Lord's anointed.

<sup>29</sup> Put him to death—execute him.

<sup>30</sup> David asserts that he is not bringing himself under the sin of blood-guiltiness by putting the man to death (see p. 109).

The Amalekite courts his fate for—

(1) If his story was true he was guilty of regicide.

(2) If false he had only himself to blame for being taken at his word

In either case he deserved death, not reward.

He was a foreigner, so not bound by allegiance to Saul

upon thy head; for thy mouth <sup>31</sup>hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.

<sup>31</sup> He had told six lies (v. 7-10)—

- (1) That Saul called him.
- (2) That he came in response to the call.
- (3) That Saul asked who he was.
- (4) That he gave a reply.
- (5) That he was commanded by Saul to kill him.
- (6) That he killed him, because he saw he could not survive.

### The Lament of David over Saul and Jonathan.

17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: 18 (And he bade them teach the children of Judah <sup>2</sup>the use of the bow: behold, it is written in <sup>3</sup>the book of Jasher.)

19 *The <sup>4</sup>beauty of Israel is slain upon <sup>5</sup>thy high places: How are the mighty fallen!*

20 *Tell it not in <sup>6</sup>Gath, Publish it not in the streets of <sup>7</sup>Askelon; Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of <sup>8</sup>the uncircumcised triumph.*

21 *Ye mountains of Gilboa, <sup>10</sup>Let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor <sup>11</sup>fields of offerings: For there the shield of the mighty <sup>12</sup>is <sup>13</sup>vilely <sup>14</sup>cast away, The shield of Saul, as though he had not been <sup>15</sup>anointed with oil.*

22 *From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, The <sup>16</sup>bow of Jonathan <sup>17</sup>turned not back, And the sword of Saul returned not empty.*

23 *Saul and Jonathan were <sup>18</sup>lovely and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided: They were swifter than <sup>19</sup>eagles, They were stronger than <sup>20</sup>lions.*

a see R.V. and comment, p. 97.      b see R.V. and comment, p. 97.

<sup>10</sup> David places the battle field under a curse.

<sup>11</sup> An imprecation on Gilboa that it should be so barren that not even enough may grow for an offering of first fruits (S.C.).

<sup>12</sup> Is defiled or polluted (see p. 4, note on verse 21).

<sup>13</sup> The loss of the shield was considered a great indignity.

<sup>14</sup> May refer either to Saul or to his shield (see note p. 4).

<sup>15</sup> His favourite weapon, in the use of which he was most skilful. It gives its name to this funeral elegy (see *ver.* 18). Jonathan gave his bow to David as a pledge of their friendship (1 Sam. xviii. 4).

<sup>16</sup> Descriptive of their invincibility. He recalls their many victories.

<sup>17</sup> Descriptive (1) of their characters, (2) of their mutual relations.

<sup>18</sup> The noblest of birds.

<sup>19</sup> The noblest of beasts.

<sup>1</sup> A technical expression for a funeral dirge or mournful elegy.

David laments over Abner (iii 33-34).

Jeremiah laments over Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv 25).

<sup>2</sup> Omit "the use of." The Bow is the title of the elegy (see p. x.). The people were to learn it by heart.

<sup>3</sup> The Book of the Upright (p. xiii.). A collection of national poems.

<sup>4</sup> Saul and Jonathan, the glory and ornament of Israel.

<sup>5</sup> The heights of Gilboa.

<sup>6</sup> The capital of Achish (Intro. p. lx.).

<sup>7</sup> The chief seat of religious worship (Intro. p. liv.). Thus these cities represent the political and religious life of Philistia, and so include the whole land.

<sup>8</sup> In the customary hymns and dances in celebration of a victory.

<sup>9</sup> The usual epithet for the Philistines—it means that they had no part in the covenant between Jehovah and Israel.

- 24 <sup>20</sup>Ye daughters of Israel, <sup>21</sup>weep over Saul,  
Who <sup>22</sup>clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,  
Who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
- 25 <sup>23</sup>How are <sup>24</sup>the mighty fallen <sup>25</sup>in the midst of the  
battle!  
O Jonathan, thou was slain in thine high places.
- 26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:  
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:  
<sup>26</sup>Thy love to me was wonderful,  
Passing the love of women.
- 27 How are the mighty fallen,  
And <sup>27</sup>the weapons of war perished!
- 24 The second part of the elegy. A special tribute to Jonathan.  
25 With their faces to the foe, scorning to flee, and fighting to the last.  
26 Jonathan's love for David surpassed that of David for Jonathan.  
David loved Jonathan as a brother.  
Jonathan loved David as a woman loves her husband or child.  
27 Must be taken figuratively. Jonathan and Saul, the heroes of the battle, represent the military strength of the nation.
- 20 Who had formerly celebrated his triumphs (1 Sam. xviii. 6-7).  
21 Now called upon to lament his death.  
22 *i.e.* with the spoils of his victories. An indication of Saul's great successes, and the abundant spoil taken from his enemies.  
23 The refrain of the elegy, repeated thrice (*ver.* 19, 25 and 27).

The elegy is divided into Three Stanzas, "which gradually diminish in force and sweep, and in which the vehemence of the sorrow is gradually modified and dies away" (KEIL).

Each stanza opens with the refrain, "How are the mighty fallen?"

#### First Stanza (*ver.* 19-24).

A praise of the fallen heroes, and a lamentation for their death (*ver.* 19).

A deprecation of the triumph of the Philistines (*ver.* 20).

An imprecation upon the battle-field of Gilboa (*ver.* 21).

A tribute to the bravery of Saul and Jonathan (*ver.* 22).

A testimony to their noble characters and mutual affection, their inseparable love (*ver.* 23).

Praise of Saul's virtues as a king (*ver.* 24).

#### Second Stanza (*ver.* 26).

Commemorative of the friendship between David and Jonathan.

#### Third Stanza (*ver.* 27).

"Simply utters the last sigh, with which the elegy becomes silent" (KEIL).

**Note.**—The elegy demonstrates the reality and sincerity of David's grief for Saul and Jonathan.

Throughout there is no reference to the tribulations which David had undergone through his persecution by Saul.

There is no mention of any national mourning for Saul. This is significant of how he had forfeited the respect and allegiance of the nation through his perverse persecution of David.

The only mourners are—

1. The men of Jabesh-gilead, who rescued his body from insult.

2. David, who had been so cruelly persecuted during the life of the king

In this he is a type of our Lord, "who alone wept over that Jerusalem which was preparing to betray and crucify Him" (EDERSHEIM).

**Note on verse 21.**—The A.V. reads as if Saul had not been anointed with oil, *i.e.* as king, thus conveying the idea that Saul fell like any common man, just as if he had not been king.

But the passage actually reads, "though not anointed with oil," and so most commentators refer it to the shield of Saul left upon the field of battle, besmeared with blood, and not cleansed and polished with oil.

It was the custom to keep shields oiled.

Either reading gives good sense, and to take "anointed" as referring to Saul, as in the A.V., makes the passage more forcible, and the indignity suffered by Saul more marked.

## DAVID, KING OVER JUDAH, AT HEBRON (ii.—iv.).

### David anointed King over Judah at Hebron.

2. And it came to pass <sup>1</sup>after this, that David <sup>2</sup>enquired of the LORD, saying, <sup>3</sup>Shall I go <sup>4</sup>up into any of the cities of <sup>5</sup>Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto <sup>6</sup>Hebron. <sup>2</sup> So David went up thither, and his two wives also, <sup>7</sup>Ahinoam the <sup>8</sup>Jezreelitess, and <sup>9</sup>Abigail Nabal's wife the <sup>10</sup>Carmelite. <sup>3</sup> And <sup>11</sup>his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the <sup>12</sup>cities of Hebron. <sup>4</sup> And the men of Judah came, and there they <sup>13</sup>anointed David king over the house of Judah.

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* after the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul.

<sup>2</sup> By means of the Urim and Thummin through Abiathar.

<sup>3</sup> The way to the throne is now clear for David, but he takes no step without Divine guidance.

<sup>4</sup> Up from the Negeb to the higher central land of Judah.

<sup>5</sup> Why was not David invited by Judah? Probably his stay in Philistia had not pleased them.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. lxxv. Admirably adapted through its central situation, and strong position for the capital of the south.

<sup>7</sup> See table p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Of Jezreel in Judah.

<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. lxxxix.

<sup>10</sup> Of Carmel in Judah.

<sup>11</sup> His band of exiles.

<sup>12</sup> David made Hebron the capital. His followers settled in the towns round Hebron.

<sup>13</sup> David is anointed king on three occasions—

1. By Samuel at Bethlehem (I Sam. xvi. 13).

2. At Hebron, as king of Judah (ii. 4).

3. At Hebron, as king over the whole nation (v. 3).

### David thanks the Men of Jabesh-Gilead for burying Saul and his Sons.

And they <sup>1</sup>told David, saying, That the <sup>2</sup>men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul. <sup>5</sup> And David <sup>3</sup>sent messengers <sup>4</sup>unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. <sup>6</sup> And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and <sup>5</sup>I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. <sup>7</sup> Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye

<sup>1</sup> Told to David probably to excite his anger against them.

<sup>2</sup> See I Sam. xxxi. 11-13.

<sup>3</sup> A politic act on David's part. By this act he publicly shows that the death of Saul was a subject of grief to him, not an occasion of rejoicing.

<sup>4</sup> Three points in the message—

1. Commendation for having buried Saul.

2. Exhortation to resist the Philistines.

3. A veiled suggestion that they should recognize him as king.

<sup>5</sup> *Lit.* I also will show you this good, *i.e.* I as king will not forget your kindness to the house of Saul.

<sup>6</sup>valiant: for <sup>7</sup>your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah <sup>8</sup>have anointed me king over them.

<sup>6</sup> *i.e.* to resist the Philistines and confine them to the west of Jordan.  
<sup>7</sup> Saul your lord.

<sup>8</sup> The message is clearly intended to win the men of Jabesh-Gilead to acknowledge David as king.

### Abner espouses the Cause of Ish-bosheth, the Son of Saul.

8 But <sup>1</sup>Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, <sup>2</sup>took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him <sup>3</sup>over to <sup>4</sup>Mahanaim; 9 And made him king over <sup>5</sup>Gilead, and over the <sup>6</sup>Ashurites, and over <sup>7</sup>Jezeel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. 10 Ish-bosheth Saul's son was <sup>8</sup>forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned <sup>9</sup>two years. But the <sup>10</sup>house of Judah followed David. 11 And the time that David was king in Hebron <sup>11</sup>over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. xci.

<sup>2</sup> Had taken.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* over Jordan.

<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii. Abner rallies Israel on the east of Jordan, and makes Mahanaim the capital.

<sup>5</sup> Here means the east of Jordan generally.

<sup>6</sup> Probably "*Asherites*," *i.e.* the tribe of Asher (Intro. p. lxxvi.).

Abner gradually won back the north and centre from the Philistines.

<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii. The plain of Jezeel.

Note the order of Abner's recovery of the land—

1. Gilead, *i.e.* the land east of Jordan.

2. Asher, *i.e.* the extreme north.

3. Jezeel, *i.e.* the plain of Jezeel.

4. Ephraim, *i.e.* the central highland.

5. Benjamin—and now he touches on Judah, and comes in contact with David.

<sup>6</sup> On this period, see p. cxiii.

<sup>9</sup> Probably it took Abner  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years to gain control over the north and centre, and so these two years refer to the last two years of the  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years in ver. 11 (see p. xxiv.).

<sup>10</sup> The tribe of Judah.

<sup>11</sup> Still kept from the sovereignty over the whole land. A long trial of faith, but David makes no move. He will not attack Abner; the encounter at Gibeon is the result of Abner's invasion.

### War between Ish-bosheth and David. The Encounter of Gibeon.

12 And <sup>1</sup>Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, <sup>2</sup>went out from <sup>3</sup>Mahanaim, to <sup>4</sup>Gibeon. 13 And <sup>5</sup>Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by <sup>6</sup>the pool of Gibeon: and they <sup>7</sup>sat down, the one

<sup>1</sup> Abner having gained the land east of Jordan, the north and centre, now pushes south towards Judah.

David instructs Joab to guard the frontier at Gibeon. The men of Israel are the aggressors. David, strong in faith, takes no action to gain the kingdom; he awaits God's own time.

<sup>2</sup> The technical term for going to war

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii.

<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. lxi.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. civ.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. lxii.

<sup>7</sup> Halted and encamped.

on the one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool. 14 And Abner said to Joab, <sup>8</sup>Let the <sup>9</sup>young men now arise, and <sup>10</sup>play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. 15 Then there arose and went over <sup>11</sup>by number twelve of <sup>12</sup>Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. 16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; <sup>13</sup>so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called <sup>14</sup>Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. 17 And there was a very sore <sup>15</sup>battle that day; and Abner <sup>16</sup>was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

### Abner slays Asahel.

<sup>18</sup>And there were <sup>1</sup>three sons of Zeruah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was as <sup>2</sup>light of foot as a wild roe. 19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he <sup>3</sup>turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. 20 Then Abner looked <sup>4</sup>behind, and said, Art thou Asahel? And he answered, I am. 21 And Abner said to him, <sup>5</sup>Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee <sup>6</sup>hold on one of the young men, and take thee <sup>7</sup>his armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him. 22 And Abner said again to Asahel, <sup>8</sup>Turn thee aside from following me: <sup>9</sup>wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I <sup>10</sup>hold up my face to Joab thy brother? 23 Howbeit he refused to turn aside:

<sup>8</sup> Abner suggests that the question of the monarchy should be decided by a combat between picked warriors on each side, and not by a battle between the two armies.

<sup>9</sup> Soldiers.

<sup>10</sup> Contend in combat, and exhibit their skill.

<sup>11</sup> *i.e.* a fixed number on each side.

<sup>12</sup> The men of Saul's own tribe, the natural champions of his house.

<sup>13</sup> In their fierce enmity they neglect defence and each man strikes down his opponent. The twelve pairs of combatants perish.

<sup>14</sup> *Field of sharp edges* (p. lxxvi.).

<sup>15</sup> Battle = general engagement.

<sup>16</sup> The combat of twelve a side was not decisive, so now the rival parties attack each other fiercely. The struggle ends in the defeat of Abner and his men.

<sup>1</sup> The death of Asahel is given in detail as explanatory of Joab's action in murdering Abner (iii. 30). Intro. p. xcvi.

<sup>2</sup> The family of David were remarkable for their activity and agility.

<sup>3</sup> Persistently bent on gaining the high distinction of overcoming Abner.

<sup>4</sup> As he fled.

<sup>5</sup> Abner does his best to persuade Asahel to abandon the pursuit.

<sup>6</sup> Slay one of the common soldiers.

<sup>7</sup> As a spoil and also a token of his prowess.

<sup>8</sup> Abner desires to avoid rousing the enmity of Joab, whose character as a vindictive, unscrupulous man must have been well known to him.

<sup>9</sup> Asahel was evidently no match for Abner.

<sup>10</sup> Look him straight in the face like an innocent man.

wherefore Abner with the <sup>11</sup>hinder end of the spear smote him <sup>12</sup>under the fifth rib, 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 <sup>13</sup>stood still.

- <sup>11</sup> This would be pointed so as to stick in the ground. Abner uses the hinder end in the desire to spare Asahel's life. The young man may have impaled himself in his eagerness to get to close quarters.  
<sup>12</sup> In the abdomen.  
<sup>13</sup> Halted, awe-struck at the death of Asahel.

### The Pursuit by Joab. Burial of Asahel.

24 Joab also and Abishai <sup>1</sup>pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of <sup>2</sup>Ammah, that lieth before <sup>3</sup>Giah by the way of <sup>4</sup>the wilderness of Gibeon. 25 And the children of Benjamin <sup>4</sup>gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the <sup>5</sup>top of an hill. 26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, <sup>6</sup>Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it <sup>7</sup>will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren? 27 And Joab said, As God liveth, <sup>8</sup>unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother. 28 So Joab <sup>9</sup>blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel <sup>10</sup>no more, neither fought they any more. 29 And Abner and his men <sup>11</sup>walked all that night through <sup>12</sup>the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all <sup>13</sup>Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim. 30 And Joab

- <sup>1</sup> Probably ignorant of their brother's death. It is not likely that the fierce Joab would have relaxed pursuit had he known the fate of Asahel.  
<sup>2</sup> Local names found only here. The writer is evidently familiar with the scene and circumstances of the combat.  
<sup>3</sup> The uninhabited pasture land near Gibeon.  
<sup>4</sup> Abner skilfully rallies the fugitives, and collects them into a compact band.  
<sup>5</sup> Where he had taken up a strong position to meet the pursuers.  
<sup>6</sup> Must we continue the fight any longer? "Abner who had made a jest of shedding blood, now professes repugnance for blood shed."  
<sup>7</sup> *Either*, it will be a fierce hard struggle before you get the upper hand; *Or*, if you prosecute the war further, you will rouse a feeling of bitter hostility between the contending factions.  
<sup>8</sup> Two meanings are assigned to this—  
 1. But for your challenge in the morning there would have been no strife.  
 2. Had you not spoken now the pursuit would have continued till morning.  
 The former is the probable meaning.

<sup>9</sup> The signal to halt and desist from the pursuit.

<sup>10</sup> *i.e.* on this occasion. Hostilities still continued and lasted some time (see *iii.* 1).

<sup>11</sup> Marched away in retreat, fearing the pursuit might be renewed.

<sup>12</sup> The Arabah, or Jordan valley.

<sup>13</sup> *Intro.* p. lvi. Some ravine through which they passed to Mahanaim.

<sup>14</sup>returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there <sup>15</sup>lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. <sup>31</sup> But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and three-score men died. <sup>32</sup> And they <sup>16</sup>took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of <sup>17</sup>his father, which was in <sup>18</sup>Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went <sup>19</sup>all night, and <sup>20</sup>they came to Hebron at break of day.

<sup>14</sup> Abandoning the pursuit.

<sup>15</sup> The losses are—

David's men, twenty,  
including Asahel.

Abner's men, 360.

David's men were tried,  
experienced warriors.  
This will account for the  
disparity in the losses of  
the respective forces.

<sup>16</sup> Carried his dead body.

<sup>17</sup> The husband of Zeruah;  
his name is not given.

<sup>18</sup> So he was a Beth-lehemite.

<sup>19</sup> The night after the burial  
of Asahel, not the night  
following the battle.

<sup>20</sup> Daybreak found them at  
Hebron.

**Verse 32.**—Joab must have halted and passed the night on the field of battle. Then next day he collected and counted the slain, buried them, and conveyed the corpse of Asahel to Beth-lehem. The following night he pressed on to Hebron. Bethlehem would be about five miles, Hebron twenty miles, from the field of battle.

### David's Cause Prospers. His Family.

**3.** Now there was <sup>1</sup>long war between the house of Saul and <sup>2</sup>the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. **2** And unto David were <sup>3</sup>sons born in Hebron: and his first-born was <sup>4</sup>Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; <sup>3</sup> And his second, <sup>5</sup>Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, <sup>6</sup>Absalom the son of <sup>7</sup>Maacah <sup>8</sup>the daughter of <sup>9</sup>Talmai king of <sup>10</sup>Geshur; **4** And the fourth, <sup>11</sup>Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; **5** And the sixth, Ithream, by <sup>12</sup>Eglah David's wife. <sup>13</sup>These were born to David in Hebron.

<sup>1</sup> No actual battles, but a state of hostility towards each other.

<sup>2</sup> Time was in David's favour. From 1 Chron. xiii. 19-22 we gather that there were continued accessions to David.

<sup>3</sup> For the family of David see p. 128.

No children were born during his exile.

<sup>4</sup> His great sin and miserable death are recorded in chap. xiii.

<sup>5</sup> Called "Daniel" in 1 Chron. iii. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See chaps. xiii.-xviii.

<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. cix.

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. cix. A political marriage to strengthen David's position.

<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. cxvi.

<sup>10</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii.

<sup>11</sup> See 1 Kings i.-ii.

<sup>12</sup> According to Jewish tradition, Eglah is another name for Michal, distinguished by the title of "David's wife."

<sup>13</sup> David's polygamy was the cause of all his family troubles.

## Abner quarrels with Ish-bosheth.

6 And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that <sup>1</sup>Abner made himself *a strong for* the house of Saul. 7 And Saul had a <sup>2</sup>concubine, whose name was <sup>3</sup>Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah : and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, <sup>4</sup>Wherefore hast thou gone in unto <sup>5</sup>my father's concubine? 8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, <sup>6</sup>Am I a <sup>7</sup>dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman? 9 <sup>8</sup>So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD <sup>9</sup>hath sworn to David, even so I do to him; 10 To <sup>10</sup>translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from <sup>11</sup>Dan even to Beer-sheba. 11 And <sup>12</sup>he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

a see R. V. and comment, p. 97.

<sup>11</sup> An expression for the whole land of Israel (p. lv.). It is probable that Abner had already given indications of his intention to go over to David, and that he had sounded the heads of tribes as to their willingness to follow his lead. So Ish-bosheth had some grounds for his suspicions against Abner.

<sup>12</sup> The impotence of Ish-bosheth is most marked.

<sup>1</sup> Ish-bosheth was a mere puppet king (see Intro. p. ciii.), and the fortunes of the house of Saul were absolutely dependent upon Abner.

<sup>2</sup> A secondary or inferior wife. Rizpah was a foreigner, an Edomite.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. cxiv. Her devoted conduct is related in xxi. 8-11.

<sup>4</sup> According to Eastern custom, Ish-bosheth took possession of his father's wives.

<sup>5</sup> The act of Abner was considered as a claim to regal power. Adonijah's request for Abishag was considered by Solomon to be an act of treason, and a plot to gain the throne (1 Kings ii. 22). See also xii. 8, and Absalom's conduct (xvi. 21).

<sup>6</sup> On verse 8 see R. V. and comment p. 98. Translate "*Am I a dog's head belonging to Judah?*"

<sup>7</sup> A term of contempt (see p. 111).

<sup>8</sup> A form of oath frequent in the Books of Samuel and Kings.

<sup>9</sup> There is no expression mention of such oath, but the intention of Jehovah was well known. See 1 Sam. xv. 28; xvi. 1; xxiii. 17; xxiv. 20; xxviii. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Transfer it from the family of Saul to David.

## Abner negotiates with David.

12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, <sup>1</sup>Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, <sup>2</sup>my hand shall be with thee, to <sup>3</sup>bring about all Israel unto thee. 13 And he said, Well; I

<sup>1</sup> *Either—*

(1) To whom does it belong except to thee, i.e. by Jehovah's promise?

or (2) Is it not mine to give to whom I will?

<sup>2</sup> I will be on your side.

<sup>3</sup> To turn, or win over.

will make a league with thee: but <sup>4</sup>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. 14 And David sent messengers to <sup>5</sup>Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I <sup>6</sup>espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines. 15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from <sup>7</sup>Phaltiel the son of Laish. 16 And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to <sup>8</sup>Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, <sup>9</sup>Go, return. And he returned.

<sup>4</sup> David demands Michal.

(1) Because he had affection for her.

(2) To wipe out the affront put upon him when she was given to Phaltiel.

(3) From motives of policy, to strengthen his own position, and to win over the house of Saul.

We may note that from this time Benjamin and Judah act together.

<sup>5</sup> Not to Abner. The league between Abner and David was secret, but Ish-bosheth was compelled to do as Abner told him. The restoration of Michal by Ish-bosheth was a public acknowledgment of the wrong done to David.

<sup>6</sup> See 1 Sam. xviii. 25-27.

<sup>7</sup> Phalti, 1 Sam. xxv. 24 (Intro. p. cxiv.).

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. liv. The home of Shimei (ix. 17).

<sup>9</sup> Abner did not intend that Phaltiel should witness his visit to Hebron.

### Abner visits Hebron, and makes a Covenant with David.

17 And Abner <sup>1</sup>had communication with <sup>2</sup>the elders of Israel, saying, <sup>3</sup>Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you: 18 Now then <sup>4</sup>do it: for the LORD <sup>5</sup>hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I <sup>6</sup>will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. 19 And Abner also spake in the ears of <sup>7</sup>Benjamin: and Abner went also <sup>8</sup>to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin. 20 So Abner <sup>9</sup>came to David to Hebron, and <sup>10</sup>twenty men with him. And David made Abner

<sup>1</sup> Had had communication, i.e. previously to opening negotiations with David.

<sup>2</sup> The representatives of the people.

<sup>3</sup> So many would have hailed David as king on the death of Saul. The influence of Abner had restrained them. The bands that joined David came from the northern tribes (1 Chron. xii.).

<sup>4</sup> Carry out your wish, and make him king.

<sup>5</sup> There is no record of this promise, but it may have been well understood by the people.

<sup>6</sup> Thus Abner appeals to them by the strongest of arguments.

<sup>7</sup> It was necessary to win over Benjamin, Saul's own tribe. The sight of Michal returning to David would have very great weight in

inducing Benjamin to acknowledge David as king.

<sup>8</sup> To convey to David the willingness of Israel to accept him as king, and the conditions they would lay down.

<sup>9</sup> Bringing Michal with him.

<sup>10</sup> The escort of Michal. Chosen by Abner from those privy to his designs.

and the men that were with him <sup>11</sup>a feast.  
21 And Abner <sup>12</sup>said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David <sup>13</sup>sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

the conditions that would be agreeable to the northern tribes.

<sup>13</sup> David accepts Abner's terms, and Abner returns.

### Joab assassinates Abner.

22 And, behold, <sup>1</sup>the servants of David and Joab came <sup>2</sup>from <sup>3</sup>*pursuing a troop*, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had <sup>3</sup>sent him away, and he was gone in peace. 23 When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, <sup>4</sup>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. 24. Then Joab came to the king, and said, <sup>5</sup>What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? 25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and <sup>6</sup>to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know <sup>7</sup>all that thou doest. 26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent <sup>8</sup>messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the <sup>9</sup>well of Sirah: but David <sup>10</sup>knew it not. 27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside <sup>11</sup>in the gate to speak with him <sup>12</sup>quietly, and

a see R. V. and comment, p. 98.

shadow would conceal Joab's action. Abner did not suspect treachery.  
<sup>12</sup> *i.e.* in private.

<sup>11</sup> A solemn sacrificial feast at which the covenant was ratified.

<sup>12</sup> The condition laid down by David that Michal should be restored to him being now fulfilled, Abner repeats his offer to win over Israel to David, and makes a covenant with David. No doubt Abner made terms for himself, and also put before David

<sup>1</sup> Abner may have timed his visit purposely in Joab's absence.

<sup>2</sup> *Lit.* from a troop, *i.e.* from a foray.

The only means of supporting an army.

<sup>3</sup> Taking good care, as he thought, that Abner and Joab should not meet.

<sup>4</sup> Joab's friends acquaint him immediately with what had taken place.

<sup>5</sup> Joab may have honestly doubted Abner's sincerity. Abner had been long in opposition to David, and now was revolting from Ish-bosheth. But he dared not state his true reason, which was personal enmity caused:

1. By the fear lest Abner should supplant him.

2. The desire to avenge the death of his brother Asahel.

<sup>6</sup> To spy out all thine undertakings.

<sup>7</sup> All thy plans.

<sup>8</sup> Probably in David's name. By his return Abner shows his complete confidence in David.

<sup>9</sup> About a mile from Hebron (Intro. p. lxx.).

<sup>10</sup> David was ignorant of the whole proceedings.

<sup>11</sup> The usual place for a conference (see p. 113).

*Lit.* in the middle gate, *i.e.* the space between the outer and inner gate. The

smote him there <sup>13</sup>under the fifth rib, that he died, <sup>14</sup>for the blood of Asahel his brother.

without justification, for Abner had killed Asahel in self-defence. Joab was bent on removing one who might prove a dangerous rival to himself.

### David curses Joab.

28 And afterward when David heard it, he said, <sup>1</sup>I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner: <sup>29</sup> <sup>2</sup>Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that <sup>3</sup>hath an issue, or that <sup>4</sup>is a leper, or that leaneth on <sup>5</sup>a staff, or that falleth <sup>6</sup>on the sword, or that <sup>7</sup>lacketh bread. <sup>30</sup> So Joab and Abishai his brother <sup>8</sup>slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

<sup>7</sup> Is in poverty.

<sup>8</sup> Murdered, a different word to "slain." It denotes a violent death.

The curse on Joab.

Three terrible calamities, *viz.*

1. Painful, loathsome diseases.
2. Violent death.
3. Poverty.

to be continually afflicting his family.

### David's Lament over Abner.

31 And David <sup>1</sup>said to Joab, and to <sup>2</sup>all the people that were with him, <sup>3</sup>Rend your clothes, and <sup>4</sup>gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier. <sup>32</sup> And they <sup>4</sup>buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. <sup>33</sup> And the king <sup>5</sup>lamented over Abner, and said, <sup>6</sup>Died Abner as a fool dieth?

The elegy gave additional proof of the king's innocence, and of the sincerity of his grief.  
<sup>1</sup> *Lit.* Should Abner die like a fool? *i.e.* was this ignominious death to be the fate of a great soldier such as Abner was?

<sup>13</sup> In the abdomen.

<sup>14</sup> Joab's plea was that he was acting as the *goel* or avenger of blood (see p. 109). But the plea was

Joab was bent on

<sup>1</sup> David disclaims complicity in the murder, and asserts that the sin of blood guiltiness cannot be laid to the charge of his house.

<sup>2</sup> Let it fall.

<sup>3</sup> Let there always be some one of his family afflicted in one of the following manners.

<sup>4</sup> Diseases that were incurable, rendering life miserable, and excluding the sufferer from the congregation.

<sup>5</sup> A crutch, *i.e.* is lame.

<sup>6</sup> By the sword, *i.e.* die a violent death.  
Hereditary disease or poverty was considered as a punishment of some great sin.

<sup>1</sup> David compels Joab to make a public humiliation for his crime.

<sup>2</sup> David's object is—

1. To show publicly his grief at the murder
2. To exhibit his displeasure at the crime.

<sup>3</sup> Signs of mourning (see p. 114).

<sup>4</sup> Abner's native place was either Gibeon or Zelzah (1 Chron. ix. 35. viii. 29-33). Burial in the royal city was a mark of high respect.

<sup>5</sup> Composed and sang the following elegy.

34 <sup>7</sup>Thy hands were not bound, nor  
<sup>8</sup>thy feet put into fetters :  
 As a man falleth before wicked men,  
 so fellest thou.

And all the people wept again over him.  
 35 And when all the people came <sup>9</sup>to  
 cause David to eat <sup>10</sup>meat while it was  
 yet day, David sware, saying, So do  
 God to me, and more also, if <sup>11</sup>I taste  
 bread, or ought else, till the sun be  
 down. 36 And all the people <sup>12</sup>took  
 notice of it, and it pleased them: as  
 whatsoever the king did pleased all  
 the people. 37 For <sup>13</sup>all the people  
 and <sup>14</sup>all Israel understood that day  
 that it was not <sup>15</sup>of the king to slay  
 Abner the son of Ner. 38 And the  
 king <sup>16</sup>said unto his servants, Know  
 ye not that there is <sup>17</sup>a prince and a  
 great man fallen this day in Israel?  
 39 And I am this day <sup>18</sup>weak, though  
 anointed king; and these men the sons  
 of Zeruiah be too hard for me; <sup>19</sup>the  
 LORD shall reward the doer of evil  
 according to his wickedness.

<sup>7</sup> And so free to defend  
 thyself.

<sup>8</sup> And so free to escape from  
 danger.

How then did so valiant a  
 man fall? Because he was  
 murdered treacherously.

Or, guiltless of crime, thou  
 didst not die like a criminal  
 in bonds and fetters, but  
 by assassination.

The contrast is between  
 Abner's valour and his  
 miserable death.

<sup>9</sup> Fasting was a customary  
 part of mourning.

<sup>10</sup> Food generally.

<sup>11</sup> David will not partake of  
 the funeral meal that  
 was held after the burial,  
 and fasts till sunset.

<sup>12</sup> The public mourning for  
 Abner convinced the nation  
 that David had had no  
 hand in the murder of  
 Abner.

<sup>13</sup> *i.e.* those who were present  
 at Hebron.

<sup>14</sup> *i.e.* the men of the northern  
 tribes.

<sup>15</sup> By his wishes, or with his  
 cognizance.

Contrast David's innocence  
 in the death of Abner, with  
 his guilty instigation of the  
 death of Uriah.

<sup>16</sup> David explains to his con-  
 fidential servants the  
 reason why he allows Joab  
 and Abishai to go un-  
 punished.

<sup>17</sup> A tribute to the high qualities of Abner, and a testimony to David's belief in Abner's good  
 faith.

<sup>18</sup> His throne was not sufficiently established for him to dispense with the powerful aid of  
 his nephews, Joab and Abishai.

<sup>19</sup> Unable to punish Joab himself, David leaves him in the hands of God. David left it a  
 charge with Solomon, his successor, to punish Joab for the murder of Abner and  
 Amasa (1 Kings ii. 5).

Verse 34.—The allusion may be to the manslayer who had taken shelter in a City of  
 Refuge. If, after trial, he was found guilty, he was handed over bound and  
 fettered to the avenger of blood.

### The Murder of Ish-bosheth.

4. And when <sup>1</sup>Saul's son heard that  
 Abner was dead in Hebron, <sup>2</sup>his hands  
 were feeble, and all the Israelites were  
<sup>3</sup>troubled. 2 And <sup>4</sup>Saul's son had two  
 men that were <sup>5</sup>captains of bands: the

<sup>1</sup> Ish-bosheth.

<sup>2</sup> He was thoroughly dis-  
 pirited.

<sup>3</sup> Disconcerted. Abner had  
 been the medium of the  
 negotiations with David.  
 How were these to be  
 carried on now?

<sup>4</sup> Ish-bosheth.

<sup>5</sup> Leaders of predatory bands.

name of the one was <sup>6</sup>Baanah, and the name of the other <sup>7</sup>Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for <sup>8</sup>Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin: 3 And the Beerothites fled to <sup>9</sup>Gittaim, and were sojourners there <sup>10</sup>until this day.) 4 And <sup>11</sup>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 <sup>12</sup>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 <sup>13</sup>Mephibosheth. 5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab, and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the <sup>14</sup>house of Ish-bosheth, *who* <sup>15</sup>lay on a bed at noon. 6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have <sup>16</sup>fetches wheat; and they smote him <sup>17</sup>under the fifth rib; and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. 7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and <sup>18</sup>beheaded him, and <sup>19</sup>took his head, and gat them away <sup>20</sup>through the plain all night.

*a* see R. V. and comment, p. 96.

### David puts the Murderers of Ish-bosheth to Death.

8 And they brought the <sup>1</sup>head of Ish-bosheth unto David to <sup>2</sup>Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, <sup>3</sup>which sought thy life; and the <sup>4</sup>LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of <sup>5</sup>Saul, and of his seed. 9 And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. ciii.

<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. ciii.

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. liv. One of the four Gibeonite cities (Josh. ix. 17) allotted to Benjamin. The clause is inserted to show that Ish-bosheth was murdered by men of his own tribe. The town appears to have been deserted at this time.

<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. lxiv. The reason of their flight is not given. It may have been, either because of the Philistines or on the murder of the Gibeonites by Saul.

<sup>10</sup> *i.e.* until the time of writing the narrative.

<sup>11</sup> This statement is inserted to explain that the death of Ish-bosheth left no one capable of maintaining the cause of Saul's house against David. A lame boy of about twelve years of age was the only representative left.

<sup>12</sup> *i.e.* from the battle field of Gilboa.

<sup>13</sup> Intro. p. cix.

<sup>14</sup> At Mabanaim.

<sup>15</sup> Taking his mid-day sleep; a usual practice in hot climates. The time for the assassination is well chosen.

<sup>16</sup> Probably for their men. The errand gave them an excuse for entering the house.

<sup>17</sup> In the abdomen.

<sup>18</sup> To be able to give David a proof of his death.

<sup>19</sup> They would readily conceal the head in one of the sacks of wheat.

<sup>20</sup> Through the Arabah or Jordan valley.

<sup>1</sup> As proof of the death of Ish-bosheth.

<sup>2</sup> The distance from Mabanaim is about 90 to 100 miles.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to Saul, not to Ish-bosheth. The antecedent of "which" is "Saul, thine enemy."

<sup>4</sup> What profanity! They actually claim to have executed the will of Jehovah.

<sup>5</sup> They evidently expected praise and reward.

Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, <sup>6</sup>As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity. <sup>10</sup>When <sup>7</sup>one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, <sup>a</sup>who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: <sup>11</sup>How much more, when <sup>8</sup>wicked men have slain a <sup>9</sup>righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now <sup>10</sup>require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the <sup>11</sup>earth? <sup>12</sup>And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and <sup>12</sup>cut off their <sup>13</sup>hands and their <sup>14</sup>feet, and <sup>15</sup>hanged them up over <sup>16</sup>the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it <sup>17</sup>in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

*a* see R. V. and comment, p. 98.

<sup>12</sup> After their death.

<sup>18</sup> Which had affected the murder.

<sup>14</sup> Which had been "swift to shed blood," and then swift to escape.

<sup>16</sup> In a place of public resort, as a public example.

<sup>16</sup> Two large reservoirs still exist at Hebron.

<sup>17</sup> The honourable depositing of the head of Ish-bosheth in the grave of Abner is in strong contrast with the degradation of the bodies of his murderers.

<sup>6</sup> David by this oath expresses his trust in God. God would perform his promises without the aid of such wicked deeds. The king will be no party to gaining the throne by murder. He awaits God's time. So he puts the assassins to death to show the whole nation his abhorrence of the deed. He cannot help profiting by it, but he will have no part in it.

<sup>7</sup> The Amalekite who asserted that he had put Saul to death on Mount Gilboa (i. 2-16).

<sup>8</sup> You, Baanah and Rechab, —wicked men.

<sup>9</sup> Ish-bosheth, an innocent man, who had done no one any harm.

<sup>10</sup> Avenge his murder by putting you to death.

<sup>11</sup> The land was supposed to be defiled, and under a curse till the murder was expiated by the execution of the assassin. A three years' famine visited the land, because Saul put the Gibeonites to death (xxi. 1).

## GOVERNMENT OF DAVID OVER ALL ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF HIS PROSPERITY (v.—ix.).

### David Anointed King over all Israel.

(See 1 Chron. xi. 1—3).

5. <sup>1</sup>Then came all the <sup>2</sup>tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, <sup>3</sup>saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. <sup>2</sup>Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou <sup>4</sup>wast

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Ish-bosheth, and very shortly after it (see note below).

<sup>2</sup> The northern tribes.

<sup>3</sup> Three reasons are given—  
1. They are blood-relations, equally descended from Jacob.

2. David's exploits under Saul had marked him as the fittest man to govern.

3. The Divine promise that David should be king.

David had won the hearts of Israel in the reign of Saul by his daring and successful feats against the Philistines.

he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, <sup>5</sup>Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a <sup>6</sup>captain over Israel. <sup>3</sup> So all <sup>7</sup>the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a <sup>9</sup>league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they <sup>9</sup>anointed David king over Israel. <sup>4</sup> David was <sup>10</sup>thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. <sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> *Lit.* "Thou shalt shepherd."

<sup>6</sup> Prince or leader.

<sup>7</sup> The representatives of the people.

<sup>8</sup> *Covenant, i.e.* the people taking the oath of allegiance, and the king pledging himself to rule according to the manner (charter) of the kingdom (1 Sam. x. 25). The covenant is solemnized by a religious ceremony.

<sup>9</sup> The third anointing of David (see note p. 5). The complete fulfilment of the commission given by Jehovah to Samuel to anoint David king over Israel (1 Sam. xvi. 1-12). "According to the word of the Lord through Samuel" (1 Chron. xi. 3).

<sup>10</sup> *Thirty years is the age:—*

(1) When Levites commenced their service (Num. iv. 3).

(2) When Joseph became ruler over Egypt (Gen. xli. 46).

(3) When Jesus was baptized and began to preach (St. Luke iii. 23).

This statement is important as giving a note of time. About ten years elapsed between the combat with Goliath and the death of Saul.

The anointing of David over Israel at Hebron marks an epoch in the history of the nation. It must have occurred shortly after the death of Ish-bosheth.

"The consummation to which events in God's Providence had been leading was now come. Saul and Jonathan, Abner and Ish-bosheth, were all dead; there was no one of the house of Saul capable of taking the lead; David was already at the head of a very large portion of Israel; the Philistines, and perhaps the remnant of the Canaanites, were restless and threatening; and it was obviously the interest of the Israelitish nation to unite themselves under the sovereignty of the valiant and victorious son of Jesse, their former deliverer, and the man designated by the word of God as their captain and shepherd" (S. C.).

#### THE ASSEMBLY AT HEBRON.

In 1 Chron. xii. 24-37 we have a list of the warriors and leaders who came to Hebron. viz.:

|                              | <i>Men.</i>    | <i>Leaders.</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Judah .. .. .                | 6,800          | ..              |
| Simeon .. .. .               | 7,100          | ..              |
| Levi .. .. .                 | 4,600          | ..              |
| With Jehoiada .. .. .        | 3,700          | ..              |
| Zadok and his father's house | ..             | <b>22</b>       |
| Benjamin .. .. .             | 3,000          | ..              |
| Ephraim .. .. .              | 20,800         | ..              |
| Half Manasseh .. .. .        | 18,000         | ..              |
| Issachar .. .. .             | ..             | <b>200</b>      |
| Zebulun .. .. .              | 50,000         | ..              |
| Naphtali .. .. .             | 37,000         | <b>1,000</b>    |
| Dan .. .. .                  | 28,600         | ..              |
| Asher .. .. .                | 40,000         | ..              |
| The 2½ tribes East of Jordan | 120,000        | ..              |
| <b>Total .. .. .</b>         | <b>339,600</b> | <b>1,222</b>    |

## The Capture of Jerusalem.

(See 1 Chron. xi. 4—9.)

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the <sup>2</sup>Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, <sup>3</sup>Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. 7 Nevertheless David took <sup>4</sup>the strong hold of <sup>6</sup>Zion: the same is the <sup>6</sup>city of David. 8 And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to <sup>a</sup>the <sup>7</sup>gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and <sup>8</sup>the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be <sup>9</sup>chief and captain. <sup>10</sup>Wherefore they said <sup>b</sup>*The blind and the lame shall not come into the* <sup>11</sup>house. 9 So David dwelt in the <sup>12</sup>fort, and called it the city of David. And David <sup>13</sup>built round about from <sup>14</sup>Millo and <sup>15</sup>inward. 10 And <sup>16</sup>David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him.

<sup>a</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 98.

<sup>b</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup> House cannot mean "the house of the Lord."

<sup>12</sup> The citadel, the stronghold of (ver. 7).

<sup>13</sup> The buildings thus erected became "the city of David" (see p. lxxxv.).

<sup>14</sup> See p. lxxxv.

<sup>15</sup> All the buildings were within the fortification of Millo, and thus lay to the south of it. The precipitous cliffs protected the city on the south, east, and west, so it may mean that David fortified the city on the north.

<sup>16</sup> "So David waxed greater and greater" (1 Chron. xi. 9).

Ver. 8. Various renderings are given of this verse.

1. "Everyone who smites the Jebusites, let him hurl down the watercourse (the gutter) both the lame and the blind (meaning the whole garrison), who are hateful to David." i.e. David commanded his men to give no quarter to the garrison.

2. Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, let him climb up the watercourse, and smite both the lame and the blind, hated of David's soul, i.e. David points out to his men the way to scale the cliff.

The R.V. follows this latter rendering (see p. 98).

<sup>1</sup> David takes advantage of the gathering at Hebron to attack Jerusalem. On the capture of Jerusalem, and its advantages as a capital, see Intro. p. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. lxxxvii. They had not lost their hold on the citadel of Jebus.

<sup>3</sup> Render "Thou shalt not come hither, but the blind and the lame shall keep thee off." i.e. these will be sufficient to defend the place. The Jebusites trusted to the natural strength of the place.

<sup>4</sup> The citadel.

<sup>5</sup> See p. lxxxv.

<sup>6</sup> See p. lxxxv.

<sup>7</sup> A channel worn by the water. Either on the face of the cliff, or some subterranean conduit.

<sup>8</sup> Either these were the defenders at this point, or David is contemptuously alluding to the Jebusite garrison (see note below).

<sup>9</sup> The prize was won by Joab (1 Chron. xi. 6).

<sup>10</sup> This term became a proverb, meaning "no intercourse shall be had with the Jebusites" (E.) or "have no dealings with objectionable persons."

## David's Palace, Wives and Children.

11 And <sup>1</sup>Hiram king of Tyre sent <sup>2</sup>messengers to David, and cedar trees, and <sup>3</sup>carpenters, and <sup>4</sup>masons; and they built David <sup>5</sup>an house. 12 And David <sup>6</sup>perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom <sup>7</sup>for his people Israel's sake. 13 And David took him <sup>8</sup>more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. 14 And these be <sup>9</sup>the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; <sup>10</sup>Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan and Solomon, <sup>15</sup>Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, <sup>16</sup>And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.

<sup>1</sup>Intro. p. cl. An ally of David, and of his son Solomon.

<sup>2</sup>Hiram had probably heard of the capture of Jerusalem, and wished to be on friendly terms with the rising monarch.

<sup>3</sup>The Israelites were never great builders.

<sup>4</sup>*Lit.* "Workers in stones for walls."

<sup>5</sup>A palace.

<sup>6</sup>The embassy would be a proof to David that his kingdom was established (*ver.* 12).

<sup>7</sup>David piously acknowledges that his position is bestowed upon him not merely for his own sake, but for the sake of God's chosen people.

<sup>8</sup>David falls into the common failing of Eastern despots, and multiplies his wives. He paid dearly in his subsequent domestic misfortunes for indulgence in polygamy.

<sup>9</sup>See 1 Chron. iii. 5-8 and xiv. 5-7.

<sup>10</sup>The first four are the sons of Bathsheba. Solomon appears to be the youngest of the four.

On the family of David (see p. 128).

## First Victory over the Philistines at Rephaim.

(See 1 Chron. xiv. 8-12.)

17 But <sup>1</sup>when the Philistines <sup>2</sup>heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines <sup>3</sup>came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to <sup>4</sup>the hold. 18 The Philistines <sup>5</sup>also came and spread themselves in the <sup>6</sup>valley of Rephaim. 19 And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I <sup>7</sup>go up to the Philistines?

<sup>1</sup>On the serious nature of this invasion (see p. xxviii).

<sup>2</sup>The Philistines could not afford to allow David to consolidate the kingdom. They prepared for invasion when they heard of his being crowned at Hebron. Whilst they made their preparations David dashed at Jerusalem and captured it. But as he had not had time to fortify it, he took up a position on the borders of his land to stay the inroad.

<sup>3</sup>From the lowlands of Philistia.

<sup>4</sup>Some strong post, probably Adullam, barring the usual route of the Philistines. It cannot be Jerusalem, for David "*went down*" to it, and "*up*" from it to attack the Philistines.

<sup>5</sup>By another route, outflanking David, and occupying the valley between his forces and Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup>A valley south-west of Jerusalem (Intro. p. lxi.). *The valley of the giants.*

<sup>7</sup>*i.e.* make a direct attack upon them.

wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will <sup>8</sup>doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand. <sup>20</sup> And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath <sup>9</sup>broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place <sup>10</sup>Baal-perazim. <sup>21</sup> And there they left <sup>11</sup>their images, and David and his men <sup>12</sup>burned them.

a see R.V. and comment, p. 99.

- <sup>8</sup> Without doubt, certainly.  
<sup>9</sup> David rushed down from the hills upon the Philistines in the valley. His onset is likened to the irresistible rush of waters breaking through the restraining dam.  
<sup>10</sup> Intro. p. liv.  
<sup>11</sup> *i.e.* of their idols, which they had brought with them. The sudden attack by Israel caused them to flee precipitately and abandon these images. The disgrace of the capture of the Ark is now wiped out.  
<sup>12</sup> *Lit.* "took them away." 1 Chron. xiv. 12 has "burned."

## Second Victory over the Philistines at Rephaim.

(See 1 Chron. xiv. 13-17.)

<sup>22</sup> And the Philistines came up <sup>1</sup>yet again, and <sup>2</sup>spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>23</sup> And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt <sup>3</sup>not go up; <sup>a</sup>but <sup>4</sup>fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the <sup>5</sup>mulberry trees. <sup>24</sup> And let it be, when thou hearest <sup>6</sup>the sound of <sup>b</sup>a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt <sup>7</sup>bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines. <sup>25</sup> And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from <sup>8</sup>Geba until thou come to <sup>9</sup>Gazer.

a see R.V. and comment, p. 99.

b see R.V. and comment, p. 99.

- <sup>1</sup> David had not followed up his previous victory. Probably, he was not yet prepared to take the offensive.  
<sup>2</sup> The Philistines invade the land in greater numbers.  
<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* not make a direct attack as before. The Philistines, warned by experience, would be prepared to meet such an attack.  
<sup>4</sup> Go round them and attack them from the rear.  
<sup>5</sup> See p. 115.  
<sup>6</sup> The sign of the advent of the heavenly host. The original conveys the idea of the march of an army (see p. 99).  
<sup>7</sup> Be quick to attack. Chron. has "*then thou shalt go out to battle,*" a very tame rendering.  
<sup>8</sup> Gibeon (see 1 Chron. xiv. 16 and Intro. p. lxi).

<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. lxi. Gezer, lying between Lower Bethoron and the city, thus on the direct line of the Philistine retreat.

## Removal of the Ark to Jerusalem.

I.—Removal from Kirjath-jearim. Uzzah struck dead for irreverence.

(See 1 Chron. xiii.)

6. Again, <sup>1</sup>David <sup>2</sup>gathered together all the <sup>3</sup>chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. <sup>2</sup> And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from <sup>4</sup>Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, <sup>5</sup>whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. <sup>3</sup> And <sup>6</sup>they set the ark of God upon a <sup>7</sup>new cart, and brought it out of the <sup>8</sup>house of Abinadab that was <sup>9</sup>in Gibeah; and <sup>10</sup>Uzzah and <sup>11</sup>Ahio, the <sup>12</sup>sons of <sup>13</sup>Abinadab, drove the new cart. <sup>4</sup> And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at <sup>14</sup>Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. <sup>5</sup> And David and all the house of Israel <sup>15</sup>played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of <sup>16</sup>fir wood, even on <sup>17</sup>harps, and on <sup>18</sup>psalteries, and on <sup>19</sup>timbrels, and on <sup>20</sup>cornets, and on <sup>21</sup>cymbals. <sup>6</sup> And when they came to <sup>22</sup>Nachon's <sup>23</sup>threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen <sup>24</sup>shook it. <sup>7</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled <sup>25</sup>against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his <sup>26</sup>error; and there <sup>27</sup>he died by the ark of God.

<sup>1</sup> see R. V. and comment, p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> see R. V. and comment, p. 100.

<sup>1</sup> From Chronicles we gather that David consulted with the captains and leaders.

<sup>2</sup> So the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem was a national act.

<sup>3</sup> Selected by the captains and leaders to represent the nation.

<sup>4</sup> Kirjath-jearim (Intro. p. lxxvii).

<sup>5</sup> Render "which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts, who sitteth upon (or is enthroned above) the cherubim" (also see R. V.).

<sup>6</sup> Lit. "They made to ride."

<sup>7</sup> And so unpolluted by use. He imitated the Philistines and did not comply with the law.

<sup>8</sup> Where it had been since it was sent back by the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 1), during a period of about eighty years (see p. xiv.).

<sup>9</sup> On the hill.

<sup>10</sup> Intro. p. cxviii.

<sup>11</sup> Intro. p. xcvi.

<sup>12</sup> Descendants, probably grandsons.

<sup>13</sup> Intro. p. xiv.

<sup>14</sup> On the hill. The house of Abinadab was on a hill near Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam. vii. 1).

<sup>15</sup> Signifying "dancing accompanied with music."

<sup>16</sup> Or cypress.

<sup>17</sup> See p. 115.

<sup>18</sup> See p. 115.

<sup>19</sup> See p. 115.

<sup>20</sup> Castanets, the sistrum of the Egyptians (see p. 115). Chron. has trumpets.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 115.

<sup>22</sup> Called in Chron. "Chidon." Site and name are both unknown.

<sup>23</sup> See p. 118.

<sup>24</sup> Chron. has "stumbled." The road was rough and difficult. Or the oxen may have turned aside suddenly to eat grain on the threshing floor.

<sup>25</sup> The sin was twofold.

1. The ark should have been carried, and by Levites only.

2. Even Levites were forbidden to touch the Ark. The penalty was death (Num. iv. 5, 15, 19, 20).

<sup>26</sup> Rashness. Chron. has "because he put his hand to the ark."

<sup>27</sup> The visitation was necessary to teach reverence for the Ark.

8 And David was <sup>28</sup>displeased, because the LORD had <sup>29</sup>made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place <sup>30</sup>Perez-uzzah to this day. 9 And David <sup>31</sup>was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, <sup>32</sup>How shall the ark of the LORD come to me? 10 So David <sup>33</sup>would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David <sup>34</sup>carried it aside into the house of <sup>35</sup>Obed-edom the Gittite. 11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD <sup>36</sup>blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

<sup>28</sup> Grief allied to anger. Vexed at the interruption to his plans, not angry with Jehovah.

<sup>29</sup> Had broken forth in anger against Uzzah.

<sup>30</sup> The breaking forth upon Uzzah.

<sup>31</sup> Impressed with awe of the majesty of Jehovah, and with reverence for the Ark.

<sup>32</sup> In what manner.

<sup>33</sup> A wise decision. Reflection caused him to see what his error had been.

<sup>34</sup> Not upon the cart, but by staves.

<sup>35</sup> Intro. p. cxiv. Of Gath-rimmon in the tribe of Manasseh. Obed-edom was a Levite.

<sup>36</sup> *i.e.* with visible signs of prosperity.

## II.—Removal of the Ark from the House of Obed-edom to Jerusalem.

(See 1 Chron. xv.; xvi. 1-4.)

12 And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath <sup>1</sup>blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David <sup>2</sup>with gladness. 13 And it was so, that when they that <sup>3</sup>bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he <sup>4</sup>sacrificed <sup>5</sup>oxen and fatlings. 14 And David <sup>6</sup>danced <sup>7</sup>before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen <sup>8</sup>ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. 16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, <sup>9</sup>Michal, Saul's daughter looked through <sup>10</sup>a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing

<sup>1</sup> David had abandoned his first essay through vexation and then fear. Now that Obed-edom is blessed, he sees that his fears were unfounded. So he prepares to bring the Ark to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> With music and dancing, and other festal rejoicings.

<sup>3</sup> On their shoulders by means of staves. In 1 Chron. xv., there is a detailed account of the preparations. The Levites were sanctified, and a musical service arranged.

<sup>4</sup> In thankfulness that the undertaking commenced successfully.

<sup>5</sup> Seven bullocks and seven rams (1 Chron. xv. 26).

<sup>6</sup> *i.e.* accompanied with music. These dances were usually performed by women. David's act was in honour to Jehovah.

<sup>7</sup> The Ark was the symbol of the presence of Jehovah.

<sup>8</sup> A dress denoting the priestly character of the wearer, and now worn by David as the head of the priestly nation of Israel.

<sup>9</sup> Called here the daughter of Saul, not David's wife, because she exhibited the disposition of Saul, her father.

<sup>10</sup> Of the palace, already erected.

before the LORD; and she <sup>11</sup>despised him in her heart. 17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of <sup>12</sup>the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered <sup>13</sup>burnt offerings and <sup>14</sup>peace offerings before the LORD. 18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he <sup>15</sup>blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19 And he <sup>16</sup>dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one <sup>17</sup>a cake of bread, and a <sup>18</sup>good piece of flesh, and <sup>19</sup>a flagon of wine. So all the people <sup>20</sup>departed every one to his house.

<sup>11</sup> *i.e.* as lowering his kingly dignity. The haughty princess of the proud house of Saul saw in the act not the honouring of Jehovah, but the degradation of the king (see p. cxii.).

<sup>12</sup> The tent, *i.e.* one specially erected, not the original tabernacle which was at Gibeon.

<sup>13</sup> To dedicate the newly-erected house of God.

<sup>14</sup> In thanksgiving, and for the purpose of teaching the people.

<sup>15</sup> So Solomon blessed the people at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii. 14).

<sup>16</sup> Dealt, *i.e.* distributed.

<sup>17</sup> The round cake, baked for sacrificial meals, "loaf" (1 Chron. xvi. 3).

<sup>18</sup> From the peace offerings.

<sup>19</sup> *Lit.* "a cake of raisins."

<sup>20</sup> *i.e.* after the sacrificial feast.

### III.—David rebukes the Pride of Michal.

(Omitted in Chronicles.)

20 Then David <sup>1</sup>returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, <sup>2</sup>How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who <sup>3</sup>uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the <sup>4</sup>handmaids of his servants, as one of the <sup>5</sup>vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! 21 And David said unto Michal, It was <sup>6</sup>before the <sup>7</sup>LORD which chose me <sup>8</sup>before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I <sup>9</sup>play before the LORD. 22 And I will yet be more <sup>10</sup>vile than thus,

<sup>1</sup> He had passed his palace on the way to the tent in which the Ark was placed. He now returned to bless his household.

<sup>2</sup> Spoken in sarcasm.

Michal regarded David's act as the triumph of the despicable priesthood at the cost of royalty.

<sup>3</sup> David had divested himself of his royal robe.

<sup>4</sup> A contemptuous reference to David's wives who were not of royal blood.

<sup>5</sup> Empty, worthless.

<sup>6</sup> And so an act of homage and reverence.

<sup>7</sup> To whom he owed his elevation to the throne. Reverence to God, who had done such great things for him, could not humiliate him.

<sup>8</sup> The allusion to the rejection of Saul would be a blow to Michal's pride.

<sup>9</sup> Sing and dance.

<sup>10</sup> Saul had been rejected on account of his pride. He had put himself before Jehovah.

and will be <sup>11</sup>base in mine own sight: and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be <sup>12</sup>had in honour. <sup>23</sup> Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no <sup>13</sup>child unto the day of her death.

<sup>11</sup> David will not think anything too mean for him if it is done for the glory of God.

<sup>12</sup> If he cannot have honour from the daughter of Saul, he will be content with being honoured by those whom Michal terms maid-servants.

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," expresses David's thoughts.

<sup>13</sup> The greatest punishment to an Eastern woman.

### David desires to build a House for the Lord.

(See 1 Chron. xvii. 1-2.)

7. And it came to pass, when the king <sup>1</sup>sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about <sup>2</sup>from all his enemies; <sup>2</sup> That the king said unto <sup>3</sup>Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an <sup>4</sup>house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within <sup>5</sup>curtains. <sup>3</sup> And Nathan <sup>6</sup>said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.

<sup>1</sup> Was settled, i.e. his palace was completed.

<sup>2</sup> From the opposition of the house of Saul, and from the Philistines.

The time cannot be the conclusion of David's wars. We must assign a date earlier than the Ammonite war, which is connected with David's great sin (see p. x.).

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. cxiii. Called the prophet to distinguish him from Nathan, David's son.

<sup>4</sup> The palace built by Hiram (v. 11).

<sup>5</sup> The tent prepared by David for the Ark (vi. 17).

<sup>6</sup> Giving his own private judgment, and not speaking by the word of the Lord.

### God, through Nathan, forbids David to build Him a House.

(See 1 Chron. xvii. 3-10.)

<sup>4</sup> And it came to pass <sup>1</sup>that night, that the word of the LORD <sup>2</sup>came unto Nathan, saying, <sup>5</sup> <sup>3</sup>Go and tell <sup>4</sup>my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, <sup>5</sup>Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? <sup>6</sup> Whereas I have <sup>6</sup>not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but <sup>7</sup>have walked in a <sup>8</sup>tent and in a <sup>9</sup>tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> In all the places wherein I have walked

<sup>1</sup> The same night, i.e. the night succeeding the day on which the king had unfolded his purpose to Nathan.

<sup>2</sup> In a vision (ver. 17).

<sup>3</sup> God approves of the motive, but delays the execution.

<sup>4</sup> A title of honour applied to Moses, Joshua and David (see p. 117).

<sup>5</sup> A question implying a negative answer.

<sup>6</sup> Whilst Israel was not settled, God had accompanied them in their wanderings.

<sup>7</sup> The Tabernacle, a moveable building, was a fit house for God during this period. The tent is the proper abode for a traveller.

<sup>8</sup> The outward covering of skins.

<sup>9</sup> The framework of timber.

with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the <sup>10</sup>tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, <sup>11</sup>Why build ye not me an house of cedar? <sup>8</sup> Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from <sup>12</sup>the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be <sup>13</sup>ruler over my people, over Israel: <sup>9</sup> And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all <sup>14</sup>thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. <sup>10</sup> Moreover I <sup>15</sup>will appoint a place for my people Israel, and <sup>16</sup>will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the <sup>17</sup>children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, <sup>11</sup> And as since the time that I commanded <sup>18</sup>judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he <sup>19</sup>will make thee an house.

<sup>10</sup> Judges (1 Chron. xvii. 6)

<sup>11</sup> Not one of the Judges had been commissioned to build a Temple. The time had not yet come.

<sup>12</sup> Rather "from the pasture."

<sup>13</sup> Prince.

<sup>14</sup> Saul and his house.

<sup>15</sup> Israel will soon become a settled and united nation, permanently established in the land. Then will be the time to build a permanent abode for Jehovah.

<sup>16</sup> In contrast to the wanderings in the wilderness.

<sup>17</sup> = Wicked men. The time of trial commencing in Egypt, continued through the Judges, is now over.

<sup>18</sup> The great Judges that succeeded Joshua.

<sup>19</sup> Will establish David's family on the throne. David's house must first be established in the kingdom. A permanent dynasty will be followed by a fixed Temple.

#### Why David was not allowed to build a house for Jehovah.

1. Israel, wandering in the wilderness, required a moveable tabernacle. Jehovah walked with them.
2. Israel, under the Judges, did not obtain complete control over the land. They were, in a sense, unsettled, so the dwelling of Jehovah was also unsettled, i.e. not a permanent building.
3. David is destined to establish the kingdom and found a dynasty. When this is done (and it was not complete till the days of Solomon), the time for the erection of a permanent Temple will have come.
4. David personally is not the right man to undertake the building of the Temple.
  - (a) God must build a house for David (i.e. establish his dynasty) before David can build a house for God.
  - (b) The Temple must be the work of a man of peace, not a man of war. "Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood" (1 Chron. xxviii. 3).
  - (c) The Temple must be built by Solomon, of whom we may note:—
    - (1) He was a man of peace.  
Solomon = peaceable. He was the type of the "Prince of Peace."
    - (2) His reign was peaceful
    - (3) The Temple was to be the abode of peace.

### God's Covenant with David.

(See 1 Chron. xvii. 11-15.)

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up <sup>1</sup>thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 <sup>2</sup>He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be <sup>3</sup>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: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as <sup>4</sup>I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be <sup>5</sup>established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. 17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

<sup>5</sup> Made sure, i.e. in Jesus Christ, the son of David.

#### Fulfilment of the Covenant.

1. In the establishment of David's dynasty in the person of Solomon.
2. The nation of Israel is called Jehovah's son (Ex. iv. 22). "*Israel is my son, even my firstborn.*"
3. The long existence, nearly 450 years, of the dynasty.
4. The idolatry of the nation was punished by the invasions of Syria, Assyria, Egypt and Babylon.

### David's Prayer and Thanksgiving.

18 Then went king David in, and <sup>1</sup>sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? 19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. <sup>2</sup>And is this the manner of man,

<sup>1</sup> Solomon.  
Three points in the Covenant.

1. The kingdom is to last for ever (three times repeated).
2. The king and Jehovah are to be as Son and Father.
3. The kingdom is to be permanently associated with the house of David (ver. 16).

<sup>2</sup> Solomon, who built the Temple.

<sup>3</sup> Note the intimate relationship between God and the king, prophetic of the eternal relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son (see Heb. i. 5).

The Father will protect and love the Son. The son must obey and reverence the father. He will be chastised if he sin.

<sup>4</sup> Saul, for his sins, forfeited the kingdom. David's successors will be punished for their sins, but his house will not be rejected like the house of Saul.

<sup>1</sup> Many commentators render "*larried,*" "*remained.*" Sitting is not an attitude of prayer. But the original means "*sat.*" Possibly he sat for meditation and rose for prayer. Compare Jacob's prayer (Gen. xxxii. 10).

<sup>2</sup> This is best explained by the parallel passage in Chronicles. Thou "*hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree*" (1 Chron. xvii. 17).

O Lord God? 20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. 21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou <sup>3</sup>done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. 22 Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their Gods? 24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God. 25 And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. 26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. 27 For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. 28 And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: 29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it

<sup>8</sup> Wrought all this greatness.

#### ANALYSIS.

1. Confession of Unworthiness.
2. Thanksgiving.
  - (a) For past mercies.
  - (b) For the great future promised him.
3. The main theme.
 

The greatness of God, who had done these great things.

  - (a) For David, in raising him from a low estate to be the king over God's people.
  - (b) For Israel, in the deliverance out of Egypt (handed down by tradition), and in their establishment as a people.
4. Prayer.
 

Following closely the promise made through Nathan, David prays that—

  - (a) His kingdom may be established.
  - (b) His house may be blessed.

may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

### SUMMARY OF DAVID'S WARS.

#### Conquest of the Philistines and Moabites.

(See 1 Chron. xviii. 1-2.)

8. And <sup>1</sup>after this it came to pass, that David <sup>2</sup>smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took <sup>3</sup>*Metheg-ammah* out of the hand of the Philistines. 2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, <sup>4</sup>casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to <sup>5</sup>put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's <sup>6</sup>servants, and brought <sup>7</sup>gifts.

*a* see R. V. and comment p. 100.

<sup>1</sup> Tributaries.

<sup>2</sup> Presents, *i.e.* paid tribute.

<sup>1</sup> Thus David's desire to build a house for Jehovah preceded this war.

<sup>2</sup> On David's wars, see p. xxvii. ff. They were defensive rather than aggressive.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii. *The bride of the metropolis*, probably Gath, which was then the capital of Philistia: "took Gath and her towns" (1 Chron. xviii. 1).

<sup>4</sup> Making them lie on the ground. Then he divided them by a measuring line into three parts. He put two-thirds to death, and allowed one-third to live.

<sup>5</sup> On this severity, see Intro. p. lxxx.

#### Conquest of Zobah and Damascus.

(See 1 Chron. xviii. 3-8.)

3 David <sup>1</sup>smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went <sup>2</sup>to recover his border at the river Euphrates. 4 And David took from him <sup>3</sup>a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David <sup>4</sup>houghed all the chariot horses, but <sup>5</sup>reserved of them for an hundred chariots. 5 And when the <sup>6</sup>Syrians of <sup>7</sup>Damascus came to succour <sup>8</sup>Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. 6 Then David

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. lvii.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. ci.

<sup>1</sup> This is evidently an incident in the great Ammonite war (x. 15-19), and occurred after the first defeat of the combined Syrian and Ammonite forces (x. 14).

<sup>2</sup> To recruit his forces, *i.e.* to seek the aid of the Syrians beyond the Euphrates.

<sup>3</sup> 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen (1 Chron. xviii. 4), which appears to be the true record.

<sup>4</sup> Hamstrung—cut the back sinews of their hind legs and rendered them useless.

<sup>5</sup> To grace his triumph and for state functions, not for war.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. lxxxiv.

<sup>9</sup>put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became <sup>10</sup>servants to David, and <sup>11</sup>brought gifts. And the LORD <sup>12</sup>preserved David whithersoever he went. 7 And David took the shields <sup>13</sup>of gold that were on <sup>14</sup>the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 And from <sup>15</sup>Betah, and from <sup>16</sup>Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took <sup>17</sup>exceeding much brass.

<sup>9</sup> Established military posts to secure his hold on the country. Some take it to mean officers who collected the tribute.

<sup>10</sup> Tributaries.

<sup>11</sup> Paid tribute.

<sup>12</sup> Or, "gave victory," and so R.V. translates.

<sup>13</sup> Plated with gold. Out of these Solomon made golden shields (1 Kings x. 16-17).

These shields were carried away by Shishak, king of Egypt (1 Kings xiv. 25-26).

<sup>14</sup> Probably his body guard.

<sup>15</sup> *Tibhath* in Chron. (Intro. p. lv.).

<sup>16</sup> *Chun* in Chron. (Intro. p. lv.).

<sup>17</sup> *Therewith Solomon made the brasen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass* for the temple (1 Chron. xviii. 8).

Toi king of Hamath sends an Embassy to congratulate David.

(See 1 Chron. xviii. 9-10.)

9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, 10 Then <sup>1</sup>Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and <sup>2</sup>to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer <sup>3</sup>had wars with Toi. And Joram brought with him <sup>4</sup>vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: 11 Which also king David <sup>5</sup>did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of <sup>6</sup>all nations which he subdued; 12 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.

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. cxvii.

<sup>2</sup> To congratulate him on his victory (1 Chron. xviii. 10).

<sup>3</sup> *Lit.* "a man of wars with Toi," *i.e.* was his constant enemy. His defeat by David would be gratifying to Toi.

<sup>4</sup> Presents to secure the friendship of the rising nation of Israel.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to what had already been dedicated (*ver.* 7, 11, and 12).

<sup>6</sup> *i.e.* the spoil taken in all the wars waged by David.

### The Conquest of Edom.

(See I Chron. xviii. 11-12.)

13 And David<sup>1</sup> gat him a name<sup>2</sup> when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, being<sup>3</sup> eighteen thousand men. 14 And he put<sup>4</sup> garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's<sup>5</sup> servants. And the LORD<sup>6</sup> preserved David whithersoever he went.

<sup>6</sup> Or "gave victory" (see ver. 6).

- <sup>1</sup> Won fame and renown. Or, erected a monument to commemorate the victory.  
<sup>2</sup> On the occasion of this war and Joab's severity (see Intro. p. xxx).  
<sup>3</sup> It was the Edomites, not the Syrians, who were defeated (I Chron. xviii. 12). Abishai commanded David's forces.  
<sup>4</sup> Military posts.  
<sup>5</sup> Tributaries.

### The Administration of David.

(See I Chron. xviii. 13-17.)

15 And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed<sup>1</sup> judgment and<sup>2</sup> justice unto all his people. 16 And<sup>3</sup> Joab the son of Zeruiah was<sup>4</sup> over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was<sup>5</sup> recorder; 17 And<sup>6</sup> Zadok the son of Ahitub, and<sup>7</sup> Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was<sup>8</sup> the scribe; 18 And<sup>9</sup> Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both<sup>10</sup> the<sup>11</sup> Cherethites and the<sup>12</sup> Pelethites; and David's sons were<sup>13</sup> chief rulers.

<sup>a</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 100.

- For notes on David's administration, see Intro. p. xlv. ff.  
<sup>1</sup> i.e. in civil cases.  
<sup>2</sup> i.e. in criminal cases.  
<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. civ.  
<sup>4</sup> Commander-in-chief.  
<sup>5</sup> Chancellor and remembrancer (see p. 116).  
<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. cxviii. On the double office (see p. lxxxix).  
<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. xc. Read "Abiathar, son of Ahimelech."  
<sup>8</sup> Secretary of state.  
<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. xcix.  
<sup>10</sup> The bodyguard.  
<sup>11</sup> See p. iii.  
<sup>12</sup> See p. iii.  
<sup>13</sup> The king's confidential advisers or ministers, "chief about the king" (I Chron. xviii. 17).

### David shews Kindness to Mephibosheth.

(Omitted in Chronicles.)

9. And David said, <sup>1</sup>Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness<sup>2</sup> for Jonathan's sake? 2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was<sup>3</sup> Ziba.

- <sup>1</sup> Now that his own kingdom is established, David seeks out the heirs of Saul. The time is about the middle of David's reign, before his sin.  
<sup>2</sup> Desiring to fulfil the oath made to Jonathan (I Sam.

xx. 14, 17, and 42). "Thou shalt not cut off thy kindness to my house for ever."  
<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. cxix. A very likely person to give David information respecting the house of Saul.

And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. 3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet. 4 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. 5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. 6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! 7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew 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. 8 And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? 9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. 10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table.

21 Personally he would be a guest at David's table.

4 David assures Ziba that he does not seek the death of the remaining members of Saul's house.

5 Indicative of the everlasting kindness that David desired to show to the house of Saul, and for God's sake.

6 From the fall which he had when five years old, as his nurse was carrying him in hurried flight, when news came of the disastrous battle on Gilboa (iv. 4).

7 Intro. p. cix. He was one of the three great chiefs of Mahanaim, who received David in his flight from Jerusalem (xvii. 27-29).

8 Intro. p. lxxviii. On the east of Jordan, near Mahanaim. Here Mephibosheth remained in safety.

9 Intro. p. cix. *Merib-baal* (1 Chron. viii. 34).

10 "Did obeisance," the usual signs of homage to the king.

11 A natural fear. He would think that David, like all oriental despots, would put to death all the descendants of his predecessor, to remove any claimant for the throne. Mephibosheth would not remember the friendship between Jonathan and David.

12 Saul's private property, which had passed into David's hands, when he became king.

13 Grandfather = an ancestor generally.

14 A seat at the royal table was a mark of honour.

15 Did reverence (see *ver.* 6).

16 An expression of humility and unworthiness (see p. 111).

17 Josephus says "freedman."

18 The family estate of Saul at Gibeath, and all other lands which Saul may have acquired when king.

19 It would appear that the land was already under the charge of Ziba. Now he would bring the produce to Mephibosheth, and not to David.

20 Mephibosheth would require the revenues of the estate to support his household.

Now Ziba had <sup>22</sup>fifteen sons and twenty servants. 11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, <sup>23</sup>as one of the king's sons. 12 And Mephibosheth had a <sup>24</sup>young son, whose name was <sup>25</sup>Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba <sup>26</sup>were servants unto Mephibosheth. 13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and <sup>27</sup>was lame on both his feet.

<sup>22</sup> So Ziba was a man of substance.

<sup>28</sup> David placed Mephibosheth on an equality with his own sons.

<sup>24</sup> A little child. A note of time. The transaction must have occurred some twenty years after the death of Saul.

<sup>25</sup> *Micah* (1 Chron. viii. 34), where we learn that Mephibosheth subsequently had a large family.

<sup>26</sup> Ziba would act as steward.

<sup>27</sup> The historian emphasizes the lameness of Mephibosheth. His misfortune affected his condition and future conduct (see xvi. 1-4; xix. 24-30).

## WAR WITH THE AMMONITES AND THE SYRIANS.

(See 1 Chron. xix.)

### The Ammonites insult the Ambassadors of David.

(See 1 Chron. xix. 1-6.)

10. And it <sup>1</sup>came to pass after this, that the <sup>2</sup>king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. 2 Then said David, I will shew kindness unto <sup>3</sup>Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed <sup>4</sup>kindness unto me. And David <sup>5</sup>sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's <sup>6</sup>servants came into the land of the children of Ammon. 3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, <sup>7</sup>Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, <sup>8</sup>to search <sup>9</sup>the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? 4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and <sup>10</sup>shaved off the

<sup>1</sup> The great war of David's reign; the culmination of his power; marked by his great sin, and subsequent calamities.

<sup>2</sup> His name was Nabash, *ver. 2*. See Intro. p. cxii.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. ci.

<sup>4</sup> This kindness is not specifically stated. Nabash had most probably assisted David in some way during the time of his exile.

<sup>5</sup> An embassy of condolence on the death of his father.

<sup>6</sup> Ambassadors.

<sup>7</sup> They are evidently suspicious of David's growing power, and regard the embassy as a blind. They may have had the recent severity to Moab in their minds.

<sup>8</sup> Admitted into the city, they could gain the knowledge of how it was to be attacked.

<sup>9</sup> *Rabbah*, which was practically the only fortified city of Ammon, and so its capture meant the fall of the nation.

<sup>10</sup> The greatest insult that can be offered to an Oriental (see p. 108).

one half of their beards, and <sup>11</sup>cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. <sup>5</sup>When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at <sup>12</sup>Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.

<sup>11</sup> Cut off their long flowing robes at the middle, leaving the lower part of the body exposed. Another gross insult.

The Ammonites were bent upon provoking war. We may note how all David's wars were forced upon him by the neighbouring nations. His wars were not aggressive.

<sup>12</sup> The first town after crossing the Jordan, and lying directly in the route to Jerusalem. David desires to save them from the mortification of appearing at Jerusalem in such a humiliating condition.

### Defeat of the Ammonites and Syrians.

(See 1 Chron. xix. 6-15.)

<sup>6</sup> And when the children of Ammon saw that <sup>a</sup>they <sup>1</sup>stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and <sup>2</sup>hired the Syrians of <sup>3</sup>Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of <sup>4</sup>Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of <sup>5</sup>king Maacah a thousand men, <sup>6</sup>and <sup>b</sup>of *Ish-tob* twelve thousand men. <sup>7</sup> And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of <sup>7</sup>the mighty men. <sup>8</sup> And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the <sup>8</sup>gate: and the <sup>9</sup>Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, <sup>c</sup>and *Ish-tob*, and Maacah, were by themselves <sup>10</sup>in the field. <sup>9</sup> When Joab <sup>11</sup>saw that <sup>c</sup>the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he <sup>12</sup>chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: <sup>10</sup> And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai

<sup>1</sup> Lit. "that they had made themselves to stink" = had made themselves odious.

<sup>2</sup> For 1,000 talents of silver (1 Chron. xix. 6).

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lvi.

<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. lxxiv.

<sup>5</sup> The king of Maacah (Intro. p. lxxviii).

<sup>6</sup> The men of *Tob, Ish* = man. The land of Jephthah's refuge (Judges xi. 3).

<sup>7</sup> See p. 114. Read "all the host, and the mighty men."

<sup>8</sup> Of Rabbah, where they could retreat in case of reverse.

<sup>9</sup> They came up suddenly from Medeba on the rear of Joab's army.

<sup>10</sup> "Before Medeba" (1 Chron. xix. 7) (Intro. p. lxxviii).

Here was a plain suitable for the action of their chariots.

<sup>11</sup> The Ammonites were drawn up in front of the city. The Syrians with their chariots occupied the plain. Joab was thus in danger of attack in his rear should he advance against either foe.

<sup>a</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 101.

<sup>b</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 101.

<sup>c</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup> Joab instantly takes the right measures. He places Abishai to keep the Ammonites in check, whilst he himself advances with picked troops against the Syrians. If he can overcome these he can deal with the Ammonites later on. The choice was wise. The Ammonites if attacked could retire to the city, so it was essential to disperse the Syrians first. Joab threw his best troops upon the Syrians.

his brother, <sup>13</sup>that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. 11 And he said, <sup>14</sup>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. 12 Be of good courage, and <sup>16</sup>let us play the men for our people, and for the <sup>16</sup>cities of our God: and <sup>17</sup>the LORD do that which seemeth him good. 13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. 14 And when the children of Ammon <sup>18</sup>saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab <sup>19</sup>returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

beat off all relieving forces first; hence the campaign against Syria (ver. 15-19).

### The Second and Great Campaign against the Syrians. Their Complete Subjugation.

(See 1 Chron. xix. 16-19.)

15 And when the Syrians saw that they were <sup>1</sup>smitten before Israel, they <sup>2</sup>gathered themselves together. 16 And Hadarezer sent, <sup>3</sup>and brought out the Syrians that were beyond <sup>4</sup>the river: and they came to <sup>5</sup>Helam; and <sup>6</sup>Shobach the captain of the <sup>7</sup>host of Hadarezer went before them. 17 And when it was told David, <sup>8</sup>he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. 18 And the Syrians fled before Israel; and

been posted in the south to hold the Ammonites in check, and prevent them giving

- <sup>13</sup> And drew them up in array.  
<sup>14</sup> The skilful dispositions of Joab enable either force to reinforce the other, whilst his enemies were divided into two divisions incapable of supporting each other. If Abishai can hold Ammon in check, Joab can deal with Syria.  
<sup>15</sup> "Let us behave ourselves valiantly" (1 Chron. xix. 13).  
<sup>16</sup> Perhaps a reference to Medeba, a city of Reuben, which must have fallen to the Syrians had Joab been defeated.  
<sup>17</sup> An expression of Joab's faith that he was fighting the "Lord's battles."  
<sup>18</sup> Corroborative that Abishai's force merely observed the Ammonites, and held them in check from falling upon the rear of Joab's men.  
<sup>19</sup> Not attempting the siege for the present. Rabbah was far too strongly fortified to be taken in a hurried siege. It was necessary to

- 1 "Put to the worse" (1 Chron. xix. 16).  
 2 The dispersed forces reassemble for another campaign.  
 3 He collects a vast army from the states tributary to him.  
 4 *i.e.* the Euphrates.  
 5 Intro. p. lxvi.  
 6 Intro. p. cxvi.  
 7 Hadarezer had gathered the whole Syrian confederacy in a death struggle for supremacy with Israel.  
 8 David advances in person. He comprehends the serious nature of the war. Syria must be overcome ere he can give serious attention to the siege of Rabbah. Joab may have

David slew the men of <sup>9</sup>seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and <sup>10</sup>smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there. <sup>19</sup> And when <sup>11</sup>all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they <sup>12</sup>were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians <sup>13</sup>feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

<sup>9</sup> 7,000 according to 1 Chron. xix. 18. 700 is probably the correct number.

<sup>10</sup> The defeat was crushing.

<sup>11</sup> Those who were formerly tributary to Hadarezer became tributary to David.

<sup>12</sup> "Were put to the worse" (1 Chron. xix. 19).

<sup>13</sup> So all danger of another attack from the north was removed by this successful campaign.

### The Siege of Rabbah.

(See 1 Chron. xx. 1.)

11. And it came to pass, <sup>a</sup>after the <sup>1</sup>year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they <sup>2</sup>destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David <sup>3</sup>tarried still at Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> In the spring, when war-like operations would be resumed.

<sup>2</sup> Laid waste the country (see Chron. xx. 1). Joab sat down before the city whilst his troops ravaged the country.

<sup>3</sup> The war was not now of such importance as to require his presence with the army.

### David's Sin with Bath-sheba.

(Omitted in Chronicles, see p. 125.)

2 And it came to pass in an <sup>1</sup>evening-tide, that David <sup>2</sup>arose from off his bed, and walked upon <sup>3</sup>the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. <sup>3</sup> And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this <sup>4</sup>Bath-sheba, the daughter of <sup>5</sup>Eliam, the wife of <sup>6</sup>Uriah the Hittite? <sup>4</sup> And David sent messengers, and took her; and <sup>7</sup>she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for <sup>8</sup>she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. <sup>5</sup> And the woman conceived, and sent and <sup>9</sup>told David, and said, I am with child.

<sup>1</sup> Which begins at 3 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> After taking his siesta at noon.

<sup>3</sup> The flat roof makes a pleasant promenade in the cool of the day (see p. 114)

<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. xcix.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. c. Probably the son of Ahithophel.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. cxvii. One of David's thirty mighty men.

<sup>7</sup> Bath-sheba by her consent is as guilty as David.

<sup>8</sup> Scrupulous in keeping the ceremonial law, though consenting to an act of immorality.

<sup>9</sup> Warning the king to take measures to conceal her sin. According to the Mosaic law the punishment for such a sin was death for both offenders (Lev. xx. 10).

## David sends for Uriah.

6 And David sent to Joab, saying, <sup>1</sup>Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David <sup>2</sup>demanded of him <sup>3</sup>how Joab did, and how the people <sup>4</sup>did, and how the war prospered. 8 And David said to Uriah, Go <sup>5</sup>down to thy house, and <sup>6</sup>wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a <sup>7</sup>mess of meat from the king. 9 But Uriah <sup>8</sup>slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. 10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? 11 And Uriah said unto David, <sup>9</sup>The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in <sup>10</sup>tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; <sup>11</sup>shall I then go into mine 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. 12 And David said to Uriah, <sup>12</sup>Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. 13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he <sup>13</sup>made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but <sup>14</sup>went not down to his house.

1 Bringing him back to Jerusalem to cover the sin of the king.

2 Asked, *i.e.* made inquiry in an ordinary manner.

3 Pretending that this was the reason why he had been sent for.

4 Fared, *i.e.* asked after the welfare of the army.

5 The house of Uriah would be in a lower part of the city.

6 Customary on the return from a journey, or from work.

7 *Lit.* "a present," a choice dish as a mark of honour.

8 Probably in the guard-room of the palace. It is suggested somewhat unnecessarily by some commentators that he may have had some suspicion of his wife's conduct.

9 Evidently the Ark had been taken with the army to the siege of Rabbah. Probably for inquiring of the Lord, as well as to encourage the soldiers.

10 *Lit.* huts or booths for the shelter of the troops engaged in the siege.

11 Uriah refuses to enjoy the luxuries of home whilst his companions are undergoing the hardships of the campaign. The noble conduct of Uriah is in strong contrast with the self-indulgence of the monarch.

12 The self-denial of Uriah baulks the scheme of David, so he still detains the soldier.

13 Hoping that in this state he would forget his resolution.

14 Thus baulking David in his infamous scheme.

## The Death of Uriah.

14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote <sup>1</sup>a letter to Joab, and sent it <sup>2</sup>by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, <sup>3</sup>Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and <sup>4</sup>retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. 16 And it came to pass, when Joab <sup>5</sup>observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto <sup>6</sup>a place where he knew that valiant men were. 17 And the men of the city <sup>7</sup>went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell <sup>8</sup>some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

a see R. V. and comment, p. 101.

- 1 A fatal letter, which gave Joab a lasting hold on the king.
- 2 Who thus carried his own death-warrant, as it were.
- 3 Frustrated in his design by the self-denial of Uriah, the king now plots the death of the brave soldier, in order to cover his own sin.
- 4 David intended the death of Uriah only. Joab does not carry out the order fully, probably the design would not have been sufficiently concealed.
- 5 Watched, blockaded.
- 6 A post opposite to a part of the city where the garrison was distinguished for bravery.
- 7 Sallied forth, with the object of drawing a portion of the besieging force within range of the archers on the walls.

8 Thus David has the death of many brave men on his conscience.

## Joab sends the News of Uriah's Death to David.

18 Then Joab <sup>1</sup>sent and <sup>2</sup>told David all the things concerning the war; 19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling <sup>3</sup>the matters of the war unto the king, 20 And if so be that the king's <sup>4</sup>wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye <sup>5</sup>so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who smote <sup>6</sup>Abimelech the son of <sup>7</sup>Jerubbesheth? did not <sup>8</sup>a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in <sup>9</sup>Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then <sup>10</sup>say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. 22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for. 23 And the messenger

- 1 Probably frequent messages passed to and fro between Joab and the king.
- 2 Joab would send the news as soon as possible.
- 3 A report of what was going on.
- 4 David would be naturally incensed with Joab for his mistake in generalship.
- 5 i.e. without being under shelter.
- 6 See Judges ix. 53. Intro. p. lxxi.
- 7 Jerubbaal or Gideon.
- 8 An incident evidently familiar to David and Joab. The fate of Abimelech served as a warning against approaching the walls of a city during a siege.
- 9 Intro. p. lxxi.
- 10 The messenger was to convey this piece of intelligence to mitigate David's anger. Of course the messenger was ignorant of the secret of Uriah's death.

said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and <sup>11</sup>came out unto us into the field, and we <sup>12</sup>were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. **24** And the <sup>13</sup>shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and <sup>14</sup>thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. **25** Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing <sup>15</sup>displease thee, for the sword devoureth <sup>16</sup>one as well as another: <sup>17</sup>make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and <sup>18</sup>encourage thou him.

- <sup>11</sup> Made a sally, and then retreated with the object of drawing Joab's men under the walls.  
<sup>12</sup> Followed them up to the walls of the city.  
<sup>13</sup> Archers lining the walls, and men hurling stones.  
<sup>14</sup> The messenger anticipates what Joab expected the king to say, and gives David the tidings of the death of Uriah.  
<sup>15</sup> Depress.  
<sup>16</sup> Regarding the death of Uriah as a mere accident in the war.  
<sup>17</sup> Press on the siege more vigorously.  
<sup>18</sup> Put courage into him. David expresses his confidence in the ultimate capture of Rabbah.

### David marries Bathsheba.

**26** And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she <sup>1</sup>mourned for her husband. **27** And when the mourning was past, David <sup>2</sup>sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done <sup>3</sup>displeased the LORD.

- <sup>1</sup> Probably for seven days, though no fixed time is assigned for a widow's mourning.  
<sup>2</sup> For obvious reasons David would marry Bathsheba as soon as possible.  
<sup>3</sup> This notice of divine displeasure prepares the way for the following chapter.

### The Parable of Nathan.

**12.** And the LORD <sup>1</sup>sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, <sup>2</sup>There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. <sup>2</sup> The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: <sup>3</sup> 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;

- <sup>1</sup> About a year had elapsed. David had not repented.  
<sup>2</sup> The parable is a true description of what might have actually happened, and as the king listened he may well have thought that Nathan was appealing to him on an actual case. The point of the parable is the meanness and selfishness of the rich man's conduct. The generous heart of David at once burns with indignation, and he pronounces sentence, only to suspect that the parable has

and that he has condemned himself. He does not suspect that the parable has reference to his sin.

it did eat of <sup>8</sup>his own <sup>a</sup>meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 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. 5 And David's anger was <sup>4</sup>greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing <sup>5b</sup>shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb <sup>6</sup>fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he <sup>7</sup>had no pity.

<sup>a</sup> see R. V. and comment, p. 102.

<sup>b</sup> see R. V. and comment, p. 102.

<sup>8</sup> Of his own morsel, actually sharing the poor man's meal.

#### APPLICATION.

1. The rich man with many flocks and herds = *David with many wives.*
2. The poor man = *Uriah.*
3. The ewe lamb = *Bath-sheba.*

<sup>4</sup> Indignant at the shameful act of meanness.

<sup>5</sup> *Lit:* "is a son of death," worthy of death.

<sup>6</sup> The compensation prescribed by the law (Ex. xxiii. 1). So Zacchæus would restore fourfold (St. Luke xix. 8).

<sup>7</sup> The essence of the sin. David was equally callous in his treatment of Uriah.

**Instances of Prophets obtaining a decision from the king by pretending to consult him on a case which had not really taken place.**

1. *The parable of the ewe lamb.* Told by Nathan to David to obtain a decision from the king on his sin with Bath-sheba (2 Sam. xii. 1-6).
2. *The parable of the woman of Tekoah.* Told to get a decision from David, which compelled the king to recall Absalom from banishment (2 Sam. xiv. 4-7).
3. *The parable of the prisoner who made his escape.* Told to Ahab by the prophet to bring home to the king his great mistake in showing leniency to Benhadad, king of Syria (1 Kings xx. 35-41).

**Other Parables in the Old Testament.**

1. Jotham's parable of the trees seeking a king (Judges ix. 7-15).
2. The parable of the thistle and the cedar, told by Jehoash, king of Israel, to Amaziah, king of Judah (2 Kings xiv. 9).
3. The parable of the vineyard, in which Isaiah represents the care of Jehovah for his people (Isaiah v. 1, 2).

### Nathan pronounces Sentence. The Confession of David.

7 And Nathan said to David, <sup>1</sup>Thou art the man. <sup>2</sup>Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy

<sup>1</sup> Notice the bold faithfulness of the prophet.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan recounts God's favours to David. They are—

1. The promise of the kingdom.

2. Deliverance from the persecution of Saul.
3. The property of Saul became his.
4. The wives of Saul became his.
5. The actual rule over united Israel and Judah.

master's <sup>3</sup>house, and <sup>4</sup>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 moreover have given unto thee such and such things. <sup>9</sup>Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? <sup>5</sup>thou hast killed 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. <sup>10</sup>Now therefore <sup>6</sup>the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and has taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. <sup>11</sup>Thus saith the LORD, 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 neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives <sup>7</sup>in the sight of this sun. <sup>12</sup>For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. <sup>13</sup>And David said unto Nathan, <sup>8</sup>I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, <sup>9</sup>The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. <sup>14</sup>Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given <sup>10</sup>great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, <sup>11</sup>the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

<sup>3</sup> The household and property of Saul.

<sup>4</sup> There is no record of David having done so. Only two persons, Abinoam and Rizpah, are named as Saul's wives. Nathan is, of course, referring to the usual Eastern custom of a new king appropriating the harem of his predecessor.

<sup>5</sup> Nathan lays bare the actual sin, viz.

Adultery with Bath-sheba: 7th commandment. Murder of Uriah. 6th commandment.

Though Uriah met his death at the hand of the Ammonites, David was virtually his murderer, equally as if he had had Uriah put to death.

<sup>6</sup> Fulfilled as follows—

1. The murder of Amnon by Absalom (xiii. 28, 29).

2. The rebellion and death of Absalom (xv.-xix.).

3. The attempt of Adonijah to gain the throne. His execution by Solomon (1 Kings ii. 25).

All these calamities follow naturally from David's sin, for

1. Amnon in his sin was but following his father's example.

2. The murder of Amnon estranged David and Absalom, and was the first cause of the latter's rebellion.

3. Adonijah was the rival of Solomon, the son of Bath-sheba.

<sup>1</sup> See the act of Absalom on the advice of Ahithophel (xvi. 21-22).

<sup>2</sup> David makes no excuse. He confesses his sin.

<sup>3</sup> The lesson of David's sin.

1. True, sincere penitence gains forgiveness of the sin.

2. Forgiveness by God does not remove the temporal consequences of the sin.

<sup>10</sup> Could a man guilty of such acts really be the chosen of God? This might well be whispered by the people. David's sin has been a stumbling-block to many, who note his grievous faults, and cannot accept such a sinner as being "the man after God's own heart" (see pp. xxi.-xxii.).

<sup>11</sup> An additional punishment. Necessary, because the child of sin cannot be permitted to ascend the throne. The people would see that David's sin was not passed over without punishment.

Instances of prophets pronouncing sentence on monarchs for a specific act of sin—

1. Samuel denounces the disobedience of Saul (1 Sam. xv. 23).
2. Nathan pronounces sentence on David for his sin (2 Sam. xii. 7-12).
3. The "man of God" from Judah denounced the calf worship of Jeroboam, at Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 1-9).
4. The prophet pronounced sentence on Ahab for his leniency to Benhadad (1 Kings xi. 42).
5. Elijah pronounced sentence on Ahab for the murder of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 21-24).
6. Elijah announced to Ahaziah that he would not recover from his accident because he had sent to Ekron to consult Baal-zebub (2 Kings i. 16).
7. John the Baptist condemned Herod Antipas for his marriage with Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip (St. Mark vi. 17-18).

### The Death of Bath-sheba's Child.

15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD <sup>1</sup>struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. 16 David therefore <sup>2</sup>besought God for the child; and David fasted, and <sup>3</sup>went in, and lay all night upon the <sup>4</sup>earth. 17 And the <sup>5</sup>elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18 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 would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then <sup>6</sup>vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? 19 But when David saw that his servants <sup>7</sup>whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20 Then David arose from the earth, and <sup>8</sup>washed, and <sup>9</sup>anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and <sup>10</sup>worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

<sup>1</sup> With a fatal sickness.

<sup>2</sup> God's punishments are conditional. They may be remitted to the penitent, so David humbles himself and entreats the Lord.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* into his own private chamber.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* the floor of his chamber, not upon the couch.

<sup>5</sup> His oldest and most confidential servants.

<sup>6</sup> Do injury to himself in excess of grief.

<sup>7</sup> Their whispering conversation, no one daring to speak out, caused David to surmise that the child was dead.

<sup>8</sup> Laying aside the signs of mourning.

<sup>9</sup> A common practice in Eastern countries.

<sup>10</sup> He worships Jehovah before partaking of food.

21 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. 22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, <sup>12</sup>Who can tell <sup>13</sup>whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23 But now he is dead, <sup>14</sup>wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

<sup>11</sup> The servants mistake the action of David. He had been mourning for his own sins particularly. The servants regard him as being distressed for the child only.

<sup>12</sup> *Lit.* "who knoweth."

<sup>13</sup> David's prayer for the child was based on two grounds.

1. Affection for the child.
2. If the child lived, he would regard the act as a proof that God had fully pardoned him.

<sup>14</sup> Now he shows pious submission to the will of God.

### The Birth of Solomon.

24 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 <sup>1</sup>Solomon: and the LORD loved him. 25 And <sup>2</sup>he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name <sup>3</sup>Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

From 1 Chron. iii. 5, we gather that Bath-sheba bore David four other sons, and that Solomon was the youngest of the four (Intro. p. xcix.). So his birth must have occurred some time later. David had to wait for God's time.

<sup>1</sup> Solomon = *peaceable*.

1. David is now at peace with God.
2. Victory over Ammon left the land in peace.

3. The reign of Solomon should be peaceable.

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah.

<sup>3</sup> The darling or beloved of Jah (see p. civ.). The name was given because God loved him. The visit of Nathan and the naming of the child denoted that Solomon was accepted by Jehovah as David's successor. The name Jedidiah never came into general use.

### The Capture of Rabbah.

(See 1 Chron. xx. 1-3.)

26 And Joab fought against <sup>1</sup>Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took <sup>2</sup>the royal city. 27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken <sup>3</sup>the city of waters. 28 Now therefore <sup>4</sup>gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against <sup>5</sup>the city, and take it; <sup>6</sup>lest I take the city, and it be called <sup>7</sup>after my name. 29 And David

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. lxxix.

<sup>2</sup> The city of waters, *ver.* 27—the capital.

<sup>3</sup> The lower city on the river. Joab had thus seized the water supply, so the fall of the citadel was only a matter of time.

<sup>4</sup> Make a general muster.

<sup>5</sup> The citadel.

<sup>6</sup> *Lit.* "Lest it be I who take the city."

<sup>7</sup> After me as the conqueror

gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. 30 And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a <sup>10</sup>talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. 31 And he <sup>11</sup>brought forth the people that were therein, and <sup>12</sup>put them under saws, and under <sup>13</sup>harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them <sup>14</sup>pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people <sup>15</sup>returned unto Jerusalem.

<sup>8</sup> Made a general muster, and so made the occasion a great triumph. From *ver.* 28, it is clear that more forces were not needed for the capture of the city.

<sup>9</sup> The word *Malcham*, rendered "king," is a form of Moloch, the god of Ammon. So the crown may have that of the idol Moloch.

<sup>10</sup> Over 100 lbs. in weight, far too heavy to be worn. It was placed on David's head for a brief space as a symbol of triumph, and was assigned to the king as his part of the spoil.

<sup>11</sup> In these cruelties David was acting in the spirit of the times.

<sup>12</sup> *i.e.* he sawed them in pieces, "cut them with saws" (1 Chron. xx. 3).

<sup>13</sup> The thrashing machines, heavy logs with sharp spikes (see p. 118).

<sup>14</sup> The Ammonites sacrificed children to Moloch. This was termed "passing through the fire to Moloch." David may have punished the idolaters of Rabbah by causing them to pass through the same fire.

<sup>15</sup> And so ended the last and fiercest of David's wars.

### The Sin of Amnon.

(Omitted from *Chronicles*.)

13. And it came to pass after this, that <sup>1</sup>Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 And <sup>2</sup>Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was <sup>3</sup>a virgin; and Amnon thought <sup>4</sup>it hard for him to do anything to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name was <sup>5</sup>Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very <sup>6</sup>subtil man. 4 And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, <sup>7</sup>lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. 5 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and <sup>8</sup>make

<sup>1</sup>Absalom and Tamar were the children of David by Maachah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur, and so were of royal blood. They were famed for their beauty.

<sup>2</sup> Son of Ahinoam, and David's eldest son (see p. xcvi.).

<sup>3</sup> So dwelling in a part of the palace to which Amnon could not have access.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* was difficult for him to get to see her.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. cviii.

<sup>6</sup> Wise, sagacious, used in both a good and bad sense. What the Boers would term "slim."

<sup>7</sup> Thin, pining away.

<sup>8</sup> *Lit.* "Feign thyself sick."

thyself sick : and when thy father<sup>10</sup> cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, <sup>11</sup>let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and <sup>12</sup>eat it at her hand. 6 So Amnon lay down, and <sup>13</sup>made himself sick : and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of <sup>14</sup>cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand. 7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat. 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's <sup>15</sup>house ; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made <sup>16</sup>cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. 9 And she took <sup>17</sup>a pan, and poured them out before him ; but <sup>18</sup>he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. 10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which <sup>19</sup>she had made, and brought them <sup>20</sup>into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. 12 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. 13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go ? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, <sup>21</sup>speak unto the king ; for he will not withhold me from thee.

<sup>10</sup> Which in his affection for his children he was sure to do.

<sup>11</sup> Amnon is to pretend that he cannot fancy any food unless he sees it cooked in his presence.

<sup>12</sup> A whim of an invalid which might readily be granted.

<sup>13</sup> Feigned himself sick.

<sup>14</sup> The word occurs nowhere else. Evidently a dainty dish likely to tempt the fanciful appetite of an invalid.

<sup>15</sup> The king's sons each had their own separate residence.

<sup>16</sup> In the outer room (see *ver.* 10), but in sight of Amnon, who could watch the process through the open door.

<sup>17</sup> The saucepan in which the cakes had been boiled.

<sup>18</sup> The cakes had evidently been taken by a servant from the outer room where Tamar had cooked them into the inner room where Amnon lay.

<sup>19</sup> In the outer room, but in sight of Amnon.

<sup>20</sup> Into the inner room.

<sup>21</sup> A marriage between half-brothers and sisters was forbidden by the law (*Lev.* xviii. 9), but probably the enactment was not strictly observed.

14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. 16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. 17 Then he <sup>22</sup>called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her. 18 And she had <sup>23</sup>a garment of divers colours 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. 19 And Tamar put <sup>24</sup>ashes on her head, and <sup>26</sup>rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and <sup>25</sup>laid her hand on her head, and went on <sup>26</sup>crying. 20 And Absalom <sup>27</sup>her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother: regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house. 21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was <sup>28</sup>very wroth. 22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon <sup>29</sup>neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

<sup>22</sup> The brutality of Amnon is worse than his immorality.

<sup>23</sup> "A tunic with sleeves." The same word describes Joseph's "coat of many colours" (Gen. xxxvii. 3-23). It would appear to be a tunic with long sleeves and reaching to the feet.

<sup>24</sup> Signs of grief (see p. 114).

<sup>25</sup> Also signs of grief.

<sup>26</sup> Shrieking, uttering loud lamentations.

<sup>27</sup> The duty of avenging the outrage on Tamar would devolve on Absalom. Absalom already meditated vengeance. To complain to David he knew would be fruitless. His plan was to avoid an open scandal, and to lull Amnon into security, leading him to imagine that Absalom had decided to let the matter pass.

<sup>28</sup> Very angry but did nothing. Perhaps the remembrance of his own sin restrained him, but David's excessive indulgence to his children was a weak side in his character: compare his indulgence of Adonijah (1 Kings i. 6).

<sup>29</sup> Designedly keeping silence to lull Amnon into false security.

## Absalom's Plan of Revenge.

23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had <sup>1</sup>sheepshearers in <sup>2</sup>Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom <sup>3</sup>invited all the king's sons. 24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; <sup>4</sup>let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant. 25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we <sup>5</sup>be chargeable unto thee. And he <sup>6</sup>pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. 26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let <sup>7</sup>my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, <sup>8</sup>Why should he go with thee? 27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and <sup>9</sup>all the king's sons go with him.

<sup>1</sup> A feast at sheep-shearing was the usual custom, equivalent to our 'harvest homes.' So Nabal gave a feast at sheep-shearing (1 Sam. xxv. 36).

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. liv.

<sup>3</sup> Gave them the invitation before he invited his father.

<sup>4</sup> A roundabout way of ensuring the presence of Amnon at the feast. He could hardly expect David to accept the invitation.

<sup>5</sup> Be a heavy charge on you, i.e. put you to a great and unnecessary expense.

<sup>6</sup> He pressed his father to go in order to hide his real purpose.

<sup>7</sup> i.e. as the representative of the king.

<sup>8</sup> David had evidently some suspicion.

<sup>9</sup> As all were going David may have deemed that Absalom dare not attempt violence.

## The Assassination of Amnon.

28 Now Absalom <sup>1</sup>had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's <sup>2</sup>heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then <sup>3</sup>kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant. 29 And the servants of Absalom <sup>4</sup>did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon <sup>5</sup>his mule, and fled.

<sup>1</sup> Deliberately arranging for the assassination of Amnon.

<sup>2</sup> When the festivities were at their height.

<sup>3</sup> Not only avenging his sister's shame, but leaving himself first in succession to the throne as far as right of birth gave him the claim.

<sup>4</sup> The blow was sudden, swift and sure. Though the princes would each be accompanied by a considerable retinue, there was no attempt to save Amnon.

<sup>5</sup> The animal used for riding by royal persons. Solomon rode on the king's own mule, when he was anointed successor to David by Zadok (1 Kings i. 33-38).

## The News brought to David.

30 And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that <sup>1</sup>tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain <sup>2</sup>all

<sup>1</sup> The tidings.

<sup>2</sup> As usual in such cases, the first report is an exaggeration.

the king's sons, and there is not one of them left. 31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent. 32 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain 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. 33 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. 34 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. 35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is. 36 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.

<sup>3</sup> Rent his clothes.  
<sup>4</sup> In the prostration of grief.

<sup>5</sup> This sagacious person at once grasps what has happened, and hastens to relieve the mind of the king.

<sup>6</sup> Absalom's silence had not altogether deceived Jonadab, but he cannot have divined his exact intention, otherwise he certainly would have warned his friend Amnon against accepting the invitation.

<sup>7</sup> See *vsr.* 38-39. He took to flight at once.

<sup>8</sup> The watchman at the city gate.

<sup>9</sup> From the west.

### The Flight of Absalom.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. 38 So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 39 And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

<sup>1</sup> His grandfather (Intro. p. cxvi.).

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. lxi.

<sup>3</sup> All the time, *i.e.* of his absence.

So "his son" must refer to Absalom, not Amnon.

<sup>4</sup> Two renderings are given of this verse:—

1. That David desired to be reconciled to Absalom.

2. That his desire to punish him ceased.

Either rendering gives the sense of what occurred, *viz.* that lapse of time caused the king's wrath to be appeased.

### Joab plans to bring about the Recall of Absalom.

14. Now Joab the son of Zeruah perceived that the king's heart <sup>1</sup>was toward Absalom. <sup>2</sup>And <sup>2</sup>Joab sent to <sup>3</sup>Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and <sup>4</sup>said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead: <sup>3</sup>And <sup>6</sup>come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab <sup>6</sup>put the words in her mouth. <sup>4</sup>And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, <sup>7</sup>Help, O king. <sup>5</sup>And the king said unto her, <sup>8</sup>What aileth thee? And <sup>9</sup>she answered, I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead. <sup>6</sup>And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two <sup>10</sup>strove together <sup>11</sup>in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one <sup>12</sup>smote the other, and slew him. <sup>7</sup>And <sup>13</sup>behold, <sup>14</sup>the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we <sup>15</sup>may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy <sup>16</sup>the heir also: and so they shall quench my <sup>17</sup>coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth. <sup>8</sup>And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and <sup>18</sup>I will give charge concerning thee. <sup>9</sup>And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the <sup>19</sup>iniquity be on me, and on my father's house: and the king and his throne be guiltless.

<sup>1</sup> This phrase may be rendered in two different senses (as xiii. 39).

1. *Toward* = friendly  
i.e. David longed for Absalom's return.

2. *Toward* = hostile, i.e. David had not forgiven his son.

<sup>2</sup> So Joab devises a stratagem to obtain the recall of Absalom.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lxxi.

<sup>4</sup> Joab puts the story into the woman's mouth.

<sup>5</sup> Go in. The king acted as judge, and was accessible to his people, high and low.

<sup>6</sup> Dictated to her the story she was to tell.

<sup>7</sup> Save.

<sup>8</sup> What is the cause of your grief?

<sup>9</sup> The woman now tells her tale.

<sup>10</sup> Had a quarrel and fought.

<sup>11</sup> In the open country.

<sup>12</sup> So the act was not premeditated.

<sup>13</sup> The whole family call for vengeance.

<sup>14</sup> From this we may assume that all the king's sons and their friends called for vengeance on Absalom.

<sup>15</sup> The next of kin was responsible for avenging the death of one of his family.

<sup>16</sup> Absalom was the heir. This gives point to the implied animosity of the other sons of the king (ver. 7).

<sup>17</sup> The surviving son is compared to the last live coal in the fire. If put out the fire is extinguished, but if it is left alight the fire can be rekindled.

<sup>18</sup> An intimation that her prayer was granted.

<sup>19</sup> Neglect to punish bloodshed was accounted a sin. So if there was any guilt in sparing her son, the woman calls it upon herself.

10 And the king said, Whosoever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, let the king <sup>20</sup>remember the LORD thy God, that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, <sup>21</sup>As the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 Then the woman said, <sup>22</sup>Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on. 13 And the woman said, <sup>23</sup>Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against <sup>24</sup>the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is <sup>25</sup>faulty, in that the king doth not <sup>26</sup>fetch home again <sup>27</sup>his banished. 14 For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be <sup>28</sup>gathered up again; <sup>29</sup>*neither doth God respect any person*: yet doth he <sup>30</sup>devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him. 15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because <sup>31</sup>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 <sup>32</sup>the request of his handmaid. 16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God. 17 Then thine handmaid said, <sup>33</sup>The word of my lord the king shall now be <sup>34</sup>comfortable: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to

<sup>20</sup> This is equivalent to asking the king to confirm his promise by an oath.

<sup>21</sup> The king takes the required oath. The woman can now develop her argument.

<sup>22</sup> Having obtained a definite decision, the woman proceeds to apply it to the case of Absalom.

<sup>23</sup> The application: Let the king deal with his son as he has promised to deal with mine.

Thought = devised.

<sup>24</sup> The nation—injured by being deprived of Absalom, the heir to the throne.

<sup>25</sup> Guilty.

<sup>26</sup> With the exception that Absalom had deliberately slain Amnon, the parallel is exact.

<sup>27</sup> His banished son Absalom. <sup>28</sup> Once dead, Absalom cannot be recalled to life.

<sup>29</sup> Translate: "And God does not take away life, but deviseth means."

<sup>30</sup> God shews mercy and gives the sinner the opportunity to repent. He had mercifully forgiven David for his great sin.

<sup>31</sup> Ambiguous. It may mean—

1. *Her own family, i.e. she is afraid they will kill her son.*

2. *The people, who had forced her to come and speak to the king.*

<sup>32</sup> Throughout the woman is evidently fearful of speaking too plainly, so we may take this allusion to "the people" as a veiled hint that the whole nation desired the recall of Absalom.

<sup>33</sup> Let the word.

<sup>34</sup> *i.e.* assuring to me, giving me promise of security from harm

discern good and bad: therefore the  
<sup>85</sup>LORD thy God will be with thee.  
 18 Then the king <sup>36</sup>answered and said  
 unto the woman, Hide not from me, I  
 pray thee, the thing that I shall ask  
 thee. And the woman said, Let my  
 lord the king now speak. 19 And the  
 king said, Is not 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 <sup>37</sup>to  
 the right hand or to the left from ought  
 that my lord the king hath spoken: for  
 thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he  
 put all these words in the mouth of  
 thine handmaid: 20 <sup>38</sup>To fetch about  
*this form of speech* hath thy servant Joab  
 done this thing: and my lord is wise,  
 according to the <sup>39</sup>wisdom of an angel of  
 God, to know all things that are in the  
 earth.

b See R. V. and comment, p. 102.

**The Parable, and how the woman worked the story:**

She is a widow woman with two sons.

These sons quarrel when they meet, and the one slays the other.

The whole family demand the death of the man-slayer, according to the law.

Their desire is to put the surviving son (the heir) to death, mainly to get the property.

The woman points out that this will leave her without hope of the continuance of her family.

**The application.** The two sons represent Amnon and Absalom.

Absalom had slain Amnon—but with premeditation.

Absalom is heir to the throne.

**The steps by which the Parable is brought home to the king.**

1. The king grants the woman's request in general terms.
2. The woman wants a more definite assurance, so suggests that there may be some guilt in leaving bloodshed unavenged—let that guilt be upon her and her family, not upon the king.
3. David repeats the promise in stronger terms, thus taking all blame to himself, and acknowledging that the woman's case is an instance where the general rule of avenging a death may be remitted.
4. The woman desires a pledge by an oath. "Remember the Lord thy God," ver. 11.
5. David gives her the desired oath.

**Now the woman can apply the Parable, and argues that David has condemned himself.**

1. He was acting "against the people of God," i.e. the nation, in keeping Absalom in banishment.
2. His own decision acknowledged that there were cases when the law of death for a death might well be relaxed.
3. We must all die, and when dead our life cannot be recalled. God does not act thus. He is merciful to a sinner, and devises means by which he may be led to repentance, and so be pardoned.

<sup>85</sup> She concludes with a benedictory prayer.

<sup>30</sup> The king penetrates the design of the woman, and puts the question to her point blank.

<sup>87</sup> You have guessed accurately = The king always hits the right point in everything that he says.

<sup>88</sup> To bring about a change in the king's attitude to Absalom.

<sup>89</sup> Another tribute to the king's sagacity.

**The conoluding argument.** What this may mean depends upon the interpretation of "people," ver. 15.

"People" may mean—

1. *Her own family.* If so, the woman concludes by reverting to her original petition.
2. *The nation.* If so, the woman represents that she is speaking in the name of the whole people, who are desirous of seeing Absalom recalled.

The ambiguity is intentional, and leaves David free to act either way without betraying how far the argument had affected him.

### The Recall of Absalom.

21 And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, <sup>1</sup>I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again. 22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and <sup>2</sup>thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled <sup>3</sup>the request of his servant. 23 So Joab arose and <sup>4</sup>went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. 24 And the king said, Let him turn to <sup>5</sup>his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and <sup>6</sup>saw not the king's face.

to satisfy the rest of the family, greatly conduce to the subsequent rebellion of Absalom.

<sup>1</sup> David tells Joab that he has granted his request, conveyed through the medium of the woman of Tekoah.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed.

<sup>3</sup> We may well assume that Joab had previously suggested the recall of Absalom, but without effect.

<sup>4</sup> As the king's accredited messenger, conveying the formal sentence of recall.

<sup>5</sup> Absalom appears to have been confined to his house (see ver. 29-31).

David knew his own weakness. The sight of Absalom would cause him to relent entirely.

<sup>6</sup> Recalled, but not restored to favour, Absalom is irritated against the king rather than reconciled to him. These half measures, taken by David probably

### The Beauty of Absalom. His Family.

25 But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his <sup>1</sup>beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. 26 And when he <sup>2</sup>polled his head (for it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it :) he weighed the hair of his head at <sup>3</sup>two hundred shekels after the king's weight. 27 And unto Absalom there were born <sup>4</sup>three sons, and one daughter, whose name was <sup>5</sup>Tamar: she was a woman of a <sup>6</sup>fair countenance.

<sup>1</sup> Grace of form and feature.

<sup>2</sup> Cut his hair.

<sup>3</sup> 6 lbs. The estimate is much too high, even if the royal shekel be only half the value of an ordinary shekel. There is evidently an error in the text.

<sup>4</sup> Unnamed. None of them grew up (xviii. 18), so Absalom erected a pillar to preserve his name.

<sup>5</sup> She was the mother of the famous Maachab, wife of Rehoboam.

<sup>6</sup> She inherited the family beauty.

## David receives Absalom back into Favour.

28 So Absalom dwelt <sup>1</sup>two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face. 29 Therefore Absalom <sup>2</sup>sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he <sup>3</sup>would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come. 30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is <sup>4</sup>near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it <sup>5</sup>on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. 31 Then Joab arose, and <sup>6</sup>came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire? 32 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? <sup>7</sup>it had been good for me to have been there still: <sup>8</sup>now therefore let me see the king's face; and <sup>9</sup>if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me. 33 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 <sup>10</sup>kissed Absalom.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently confined to his house, and not allowed to leave the city.

<sup>2</sup> Absalom feels that if he can see his father and speak to him he can win entire forgiveness.

<sup>3</sup> Joab may have thought that he had done enough for Absalom. Further interference may be offensive to the king.

<sup>4</sup> *Zit*, "at my hand," i.e. alongside mine.

<sup>5</sup> For two reasons.  
1. In anger at Joab's refusal.

2. To compel Joab to come to him.

<sup>6</sup> This act compelled Joab to go to Absalom.

<sup>7</sup> It were better.

<sup>8</sup> A half pardon was worse than no pardon at all.

Let the king decide one of two things, i.e.

1. If I am guilty of bloodshed let me be put to death.

2. If Amnon was deservedly put to death, then let me receive full pardon.

<sup>9</sup> However we may condemn Absalom, we must admit the force of his argument. The sin of Amnon had no excuse, and yet David did not punish him.

<sup>10</sup> A token of reconciliation.

## Absalom wins the Favour of the People.

15. And it <sup>1</sup>came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him <sup>2</sup>chariots and horses, and <sup>3</sup>fifty men to run before him. 2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside <sup>4</sup>the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had <sup>5</sup>a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto

<sup>1</sup> Events are now fast working out the prediction of Nathan (xii. 10-11).

<sup>2</sup> A Chariot. A royal chariot, a state coach. So Adonijah (1 Kings 1. 5).

<sup>3</sup> See p. 116. Assuming royal state, thus clearly claiming succession to the throne.

<sup>4</sup> The road leading to the gate, thus meeting the people as they went to get justice from the king.

<sup>5</sup> A law suit.

*a* see R.V. and comment, p. 102

*b* see R.V. and comment, p. 106

him, and said, Of what city art thou! And he said, Thy servant is of <sup>6</sup>one of the tribes of Israel. 3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but <sup>7</sup>there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. 4 Absalom said moreover, <sup>8</sup>Oh that I were made judge in the land, that <sup>9</sup>every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! 5 And it was so, that <sup>10</sup>when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put <sup>11</sup>forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. 6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom <sup>12</sup>stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

<sup>6</sup> Carefully confining his attention to persons of the northern tribes.

<sup>7</sup> Stress of business might well cause the king to overlook certain cases, and he had evidently not appointed a deputy. Later he appointed 6,000 Levites to act as local judges (1 Chron. xxiii. 4).

<sup>8</sup> Absalom blames the system, and protests that if he were king he would alter it.

<sup>9</sup> Insinuating that the king was too much occupied in attending to those of his own tribe, and so neglected the northern tribes.

<sup>10</sup> This gracious familiarity and condescension were put on to win the favour of the people.

<sup>11</sup> Took hold of him by the hand.

<sup>12</sup> Transferred the affection of the people from his father to himself.

**Note.**—The weak conduct of David in his treatment of Absalom was mainly answerable for the conspiracy.

Absalom, both by his long delayed vengeance on Amnon and by the secrecy with which he had carried out his schemes, had given strong indication of his dangerous character.

David recalled him without giving him a full pardon, then after two years of exclusion from favour restored him to his former position.

Throughout Absalom never exhibited any sign of regret for his violence to Amnon. Such a dangerous man should have been rendered harmless either by keeping him in exile or by a complete reconciliation immediately on his return from Geshur.

Instead, David deeply offended his son by excluding him from court for two years. Absalom brooded over his wrongs and meditated vengeance.

Readmitted to favour, Absalom publicly assumed the royal state due to the heir to the throne, ingratiated himself with the people, and then, finding himself popular, broke out into open rebellion, after a period of four years spent in secretly preparing for revolt.

**Dryden** in his poem of "*Absalom and Ahithophel*," depicts the political intrigues of the Court of Charles II.

Absalom=*The Duke of Monmouth*, the favourite son of Charles II.

Ahithophel=*The Earl of Shaftesbury*, who instigated Monmouth in his treasonable design.

### The Conspiracy of Absalom.

7 And it came to pass after <sup>1</sup>forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in <sup>2</sup>Hebron. 8 For thy servant vowed a

<sup>1</sup> Obviously an error. **Four** years.

<sup>2</sup> Well chosen. It was  
1. The first capital of David.  
2. Absalom's birthplace.  
3. A place of great sanctity.

4. At a convenient distance from Jerusalem.

Not too near, so he could make all arrangements secretly.

Not too far, so he could swoop down on Jerusalem, before effective measures for resistance could be organized.

vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. 9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. 10 But Absalom sent <sup>8</sup>spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear <sup>4</sup>the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom <sup>5</sup>reigneth in Hebron. 11 And with Absalom went two hundred <sup>6</sup>men out of Jerusalem, that were <sup>7</sup>called; and they went <sup>8</sup>in their simplicity, and they knew not anything. 12 And Absalom sent for <sup>9</sup>Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from <sup>10</sup>Giloh, while he <sup>11</sup>offered <sup>12</sup>sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people <sup>13</sup>increased continually with Absalom.

Note that Judah must have been discontented.

<sup>8</sup> Secret messengers, sent round to those whom he knew to be favourably disposed to him.

<sup>4</sup> The signal for the rising. It would be sounded simultaneously at various places throughout the country.

<sup>5</sup> Is King.

<sup>6</sup> Evidently prominent persons.

<sup>7</sup> Invited.

<sup>8</sup> In ignorance of the plot. Absalom hoped to win them over, and probably succeeded. But if they refused to join him they were in his power and could not assist David.

<sup>9</sup> Intro. p. xcvi. Probably the grandfather of Bathsheba (see p. c.). This will explain his readiness to espouse the cause of Absalom. He would avenge the insult to his family.

<sup>10</sup> Intro. p. lxiv. Where Ahithophel lived in retirement.

<sup>11</sup> Very artful. The sacrifices and the sacrificial feasts lasted some days.

<sup>12</sup> The sacrifices, i.e. those which were the pretended object of his visit to Hebron.

<sup>13</sup> Absalom gained adherents daily, and bound them to him by solemn oaths at the feasts.

For similar vows see—

1. Jacob's vow at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 20-22).

2. The vow of Israel if God should give them victory over the Canaanites (Num. xxi. 2).

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Absalom played the same trick upon his father as the latter had played upon Saul.

### David abandons Jerusalem.

13 And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. 14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, <sup>1</sup>Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape

<sup>1</sup> David's courage failed him. In the rebellion of Absalom he saw the fulfilment of the prophecy of Nathan and feared the worst.

But he took what eventually proved to be the right course. Time was on his side.

He had not sufficient force to defend Jerusalem, and he did not know how far he could depend upon the loyalty of the citizens.

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α see R.V. and comment, p. 103.

"It was apparently early in the morning of the day after he had received the news of the rebellion that the king left the city of Jerusalem. There is no single day in the Jewish history of which so elaborate an account remains as that which describes this memorable flight. There is none, we may add, that combines so many of David's characteristics—his patience—his high-spirited religion, his generosity, his calculation. We miss only his daring courage. Was it crushed, for the moment, by the weight of parental grief or of bitter remorse?" (STANLEY).

### Faithful Ittai

19 Then said the king to <sup>1</sup>Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? <sup>2</sup>return to thy place, and abide with <sup>3</sup>the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. 20 Whereas thou camest <sup>4</sup>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 <sup>5</sup>thy brethren; mercy and truth be with thee. 21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, <sup>6</sup>surely in what place my lord the king shall be,

<sup>2</sup> Choose.

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<sup>4</sup> Made a halt at Bethmerak (= the far house), probably the last house of the suburbs of the city. Here he gathered his forces and arranged the order of march.

<sup>5</sup> Officers of state and attendants.

<sup>6</sup> Crossed the Kidron.

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whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be. 22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed <sup>7</sup>over, and all his men, and <sup>8</sup>all the little ones that were with him. 23 And <sup>9</sup>all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the <sup>10</sup>brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, <sup>11</sup>toward the way of the wilderness.

<sup>7</sup> The brook Kidron.

<sup>8</sup> The family of Ittal.

<sup>9</sup> The people who watched the retirement.

<sup>10</sup> Intro. p. lxxvii. It flowed through the valley of Jehoshaphat, a deep ravine on the east of the city separating the hill of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

<sup>11</sup> Making for the Jordan.

### David sends the Ark back to Jerusalem.

24 And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they <sup>1</sup>set down the ark of God; <sup>2</sup>Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. 25 And the king said unto <sup>3</sup>Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: <sup>4</sup>if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: 26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, <sup>5</sup>here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. 27 The king said also unto <sup>6</sup>Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, <sup>7</sup>Ahimaaz thy son, and <sup>8</sup>Jonathan the son of Abiathar. 28 See, I will tarry <sup>9</sup>in the <sup>9</sup>plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. 29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they <sup>10</sup>tarried there.

<sup>1</sup> Before crossing the Kidron.

<sup>2</sup> Abiathar appears to have ascended Olivet, and then to have returned.

<sup>3</sup> Zadok remained with the Ark. In verses 25 and 27 David addresses Zadok only.

<sup>4</sup> The faith of David is very marked. If it is God's will to punish him, then it would not be right to take the Ark. If, on the contrary, he be restored to the kingdom again, he will go back to the Ark at Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> David recognizes that the present disaster is intended by God as a punishment for his great sin. He bows in submission to the Divine will.

<sup>6</sup> Who had not ascended Olivet with Abiathar.

<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. xcvi.

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. cviii.

<sup>9</sup> The plain of the Jordan near Jericho, suitable for a halt, and whence he could easily cross the Jordan.

<sup>10</sup> Abode, remained.

Hushai sent back to Jerusalem to defeat the Counsel of Ahithophel.

30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his <sup>1</sup>head covered and he went <sup>2</sup>barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. 31 And one told David, saying, <sup>3</sup>Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. 32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of <sup>4</sup>the mount where <sup>5</sup>he worshipped God, behold <sup>6</sup>Hushai the <sup>7</sup>Archite came to meet him with his <sup>8</sup>coat rent, and earth upon his head: 33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a <sup>9</sup>burden unto me: 34 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 <sup>10</sup>hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me <sup>11</sup>defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. 35 And hast thou not there <sup>12</sup>with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the <sup>13</sup>king's house, thou shalt <sup>14</sup>tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. 36 Behold, they have there with them <sup>15</sup>their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son: and by them ye shall send on to me every thing that ye can hear. 37 So Hushai David's <sup>16</sup>friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

a see R. V and comment, p. 108.

<sup>1</sup> A sign of grief—symbolical of separation from the rest of the world.

<sup>2</sup> A mark of humiliation.

<sup>3</sup> If Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bath-sheba (see p. c.), David well understood that the conspiracy would be pushed home against him.

<sup>4</sup> Where men worship. There was probably a high place on Olivet.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. ci.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. ci.

<sup>7</sup> Signs of mourning for some great calamity.

<sup>8</sup> No warrior, and perhaps of great age, Hushai would be an incumbrance, rather than of assistance to the king.

On the morality of Hushai's conduct see p. cii.

<sup>9</sup> In time past.

<sup>10</sup> The specific purpose of his return. Hushai could thus render David great service. How he succeeded is recorded in xvii. 1-14.

<sup>11</sup> Companions with him in apparently abandoning David and his cause.

<sup>12</sup> Being in the palace and a member of Absalom's council Hushai would learn the plans of the rebel chiefs.

<sup>13</sup> To whom he could go without exciting suspicion.

<sup>14</sup> Zadok and Abiathar would then send on the intelligence to David by their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan, active young men. Ahimaaz particularly was noted as a swift runner (xviii. 19-32).

<sup>15</sup> The king's confidential adviser; not a friend like Jonathan.

## Ziba meets David with a Present.

16 And when David was a little past the top of the <sup>1</sup>hill, behold, <sup>2</sup>Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, <sup>3</sup>with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of <sup>4</sup>summer fruits, and a <sup>5</sup>bottle of wine. <sup>2</sup> And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be <sup>6</sup>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 be faint in <sup>7</sup>the wilderness may drink. <sup>3</sup> And the king said, And where <sup>8</sup>is thy master's <sup>9</sup>son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: <sup>10</sup>for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my <sup>11</sup>father. <sup>4</sup> Then <sup>12</sup>said the king to Ziba, <sup>13</sup>Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

## Shimei curses David.

<sup>5</sup> And when king David came to <sup>1</sup>Bahurim, behold thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was <sup>2</sup>Shimei, the son of Gera: he <sup>3</sup>came forth, and cursed still as he came. <sup>6</sup> And he <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>7</sup> And thus said Shimei when he cursed, <sup>6</sup>Come out, come out, thou <sup>6</sup>bloody man, and thou <sup>7</sup>man of Belial: <sup>8</sup> The LORD hath returned

<sup>1</sup> Ascent (see xv. 32).

<sup>2</sup> Coming from the estate of Mephibosheth.

<sup>3</sup> Ziba anticipates that David will successfully overcome the revolt, and so schemes for his own advantage.

<sup>4</sup> Dried figs or dates.

<sup>5</sup> Wineskin.

<sup>6</sup> With usual Oriental politeness Ziba presents the gift as if for the king's servants.

<sup>7</sup> The road taken led through the wild country separating the Jordan valley from Judæa.

<sup>8</sup> Thy master = Saul.

<sup>9</sup> Son = Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson.

<sup>10</sup> Ziba represents Mephibosheth as looking to obtain the kingdom for himself through this quarrel between David and Absalom.

<sup>11</sup> Saul.

<sup>12</sup> A hasty judgment pronounced without due inquiry.

<sup>13</sup> Exactly what Ziba schemed for.

Ziba's story bears its own refutation. The cripple Mephibosheth could not really hope to gain any advantage through the quarrel between David and his son.

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. liv. The residence of Shimei (1 Kings ii. 8). It seems to have been on the opposite side of the ravine, but within a stone's throw.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. cxv.

<sup>3</sup> *i. e.* out of his house at Bahurim.

<sup>4</sup> Stoning to death was the punishment for adultery.

<sup>5</sup> Get out of the land, abdicate the kingdom.

<sup>6</sup> Man of bloodshed.

<sup>7</sup> Worthless fellow (see p. 108).

upon thee all the blood of the <sup>8</sup>house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a <sup>9</sup>bloody man. <sup>9</sup> Then said <sup>10</sup>Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this <sup>11</sup>dead dog curse my lord the king? let <sup>12</sup>me go over, I pray thee, and <sup>13</sup>take off his head. <sup>10</sup> And the king said, <sup>14</sup>What have I to do with you, ye sons of <sup>15</sup>Zeruiah; so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? <sup>11</sup> And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold my son, <sup>16</sup> which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may <sup>17</sup>this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. <sup>12</sup> It may be that the LORD will look on <sup>18</sup>mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day. <sup>13</sup> And as David and his men went by the way Shimei went along on the hill's <sup>19</sup>side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. <sup>14</sup> And the king, and all the people that were with him, came <sup>20</sup>weary, and refreshed themselves <sup>21</sup>there.

<sup>8</sup> Saul, Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchishua slain on Gilboa by the Philistines, with whom David was then dwelling.

Abner murdered by Joab. Ish-bosheth murdered. The seven sons of Saul hanged to propitiate the Gibeonites (xxi. 1-11).

<sup>9</sup> A man of bloodshed.

<sup>10</sup> He was evidently of a fiery, impetuous disposition.

<sup>11</sup> A term of reproach.

<sup>12</sup> Cross over the ravine separating them from Shimei.

<sup>13</sup> Cut off his head.

<sup>14</sup> What is there in common between us?

<sup>15</sup> It may be that Joab backed up Abishai.

<sup>16</sup> Who had no cause for revolt. Was he not the heir?

<sup>17</sup> Who has some excuse for ill-feeling, for David had ascended the throne formerly occupied by Saul of the tribe of Benjamin.

<sup>18</sup> The wrong done to me, i.e. in the false charge of ver. 8. David was not responsible for the death of any of Saul's family.

<sup>19</sup> *Lit.* "rib," descriptive of a ridge parallel to the road and overhanging it. Shimei followed the march of David's train.

<sup>20</sup> *Heb.* "Ayeplhim." It may mean the name of a place, some resting place where David halted for refreshment.

<sup>21</sup> i.e. at the halting-place.

### Absalom enters Jerusalem. The Counsel of Ahithophel.

<sup>15</sup> And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel <sup>1</sup>came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. <sup>16</sup> And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, <sup>2</sup>God

<sup>1</sup> Absalom entered Jerusalem not long after David had quitted the city. Hushai came in on one side as Absalom entered on the other (see xv. 37.)

<sup>2</sup> Hailing Absalom as king.

save the king, God save the king.  
 17 And Absalom said to Hushai, is this thy kindness to <sup>3</sup>thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?  
 18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom <sup>4</sup>the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. 19 And <sup>5</sup>again, whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? <sup>6</sup>as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence. 20 Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, <sup>7</sup>Give counsel among you what we shall do. 21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's <sup>8</sup>concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. 22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom <sup>9</sup>went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. 23 And the <sup>10</sup>counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had <sup>11</sup>enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

<sup>8</sup> David.

<sup>4</sup> If the Lord had chosen Absalom as Hushai craftily suggests is the case, Hushai has Divine approval in transferring his allegiance from David to Absalom. This specious argument impresses Absalom, who believes that Hushai has come over to his cause conscientiously.

<sup>5</sup> A further reason.

<sup>6</sup> A kind of oath of fidelity.

<sup>7</sup> Absalom holds a formal council.

<sup>8</sup> The ten left to keep the palace (xv. 16).

The taking possession of the harem was a deliberate act of claiming the sovereignty. By this advice Ahithophel contrived—

1. That Absalom deliberately insulted David.

2. That the nation saw that reconciliation between father and son could not take place.

3. That all warriors would be compelled to decide for either father or son.

4. That the outrage on his own family was avenged.

<sup>9</sup> Fulfilling the prediction of Nathan (xii. 11-12).

<sup>10</sup> This verse describes the great reputation of Ahithophel for sagacity and wisdom.

<sup>11</sup> *i. e.* by means of Urim and Thummim.

### Hushai defeats the Counsel of Ahithophel.

17 Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, <sup>1</sup>Let me now choose out <sup>2</sup>twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: 2 And I will come upon him while he is <sup>3</sup>weary and <sup>4</sup>weak handed, and will

<sup>1</sup> The right advice. Prompt measures were necessary to secure the person of David. Delay was on David's side entirely.

<sup>2</sup> A sufficient force to overcome the resistance of the small band that accompanied David. Ahithophel would take picked men with him.

<sup>1</sup> With the exertion of the day.

<sup>4</sup> Accompanied by a small band.

make him <sup>5</sup>afraid: and all the <sup>6</sup>people that are with him shall flee; and I will <sup>7</sup>smite the king only: 3 And I will <sup>8</sup>bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seeketh is as if all returned: so all the people <sup>9</sup>shall be in peace. 4 And the saying <sup>10</sup>pleased Absalom well, and all the <sup>11</sup>elders of Israel. 5 Then said Absalom, <sup>12</sup>Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith. 6 And when Hushai was <sup>13</sup>come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his saying? if not; speak thou. 7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good <sup>14</sup>at this time. 8 For, said <sup>15</sup>Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, <sup>16</sup>that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a <sup>17</sup>man of war, and will not lodge with the people. 9 Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place: and it will come to pass when some of them be <sup>18</sup>overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom. 10 And <sup>19</sup>he also that is valiant whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knowest that thy father is a mighty man, and they which be with him are

<sup>5</sup> Throw the men of David into a panic by the sudden night attack.

<sup>6</sup> His followers will be dispersed.

<sup>7</sup> The death of David meant success for Absalom in his scheme.

<sup>8</sup> *i.e.* win them to accept Absalom as king.

<sup>9</sup> And thus bring about the revolution without any great bloodshed.

<sup>10</sup> Seemed to be good advice.

<sup>11</sup> This counsel of Ahithophel was given at the council (xvi. 20).

<sup>12</sup> The self-willed prince does not leave well alone. At such an important crisis he seems to have desired another opinion.

<sup>13</sup> So he was not present at the council.

<sup>14</sup> Read "This time Ahithophel's counsel is not good." Hushai does not find fault with the advice previously given by Ahithophel (xvi. 20-23), but disapproves of the advice given now, *i.e.* at this time.

<sup>15</sup> Hushai accomplishes his difficult task most cleverly. He had to

(1) Combat advice which he knew to be the best advice possible.

(2) Argue against a man famous for his sagacity: and this whilst his own fidelity might have been questioned, whereas Ahithophel was devoted to the interests of Absalom.

<sup>16</sup> He points out all the risks, *viz.*

(1) David's men are experienced soldiers.

(2) They will fight fiercely in defence of their master, like a bear in defence of her young.

(3) Even if defeated David will be safe, or he will be securely hidden in some secret place known only to a few.

(4) Thus, even if he be successful, Absalom will not secure David's person.

(5) If a reverse is experienced, the conspiracy will fail, for men will then fall away from Absalom.

<sup>16</sup> Ahithophel's fine plan sounds well, but it is too risky.

<sup>17</sup> An experienced warrior, and well versed in this kind of war.

<sup>18</sup> Killed.

<sup>19</sup> Even he that is valiant.

valiant men. 11 Therefore <sup>20</sup>I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from <sup>21</sup>Dan even to Beersheba, as the <sup>22</sup>sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in <sup>23</sup>thine own person. 12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the <sup>24</sup>dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one. 13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring <sup>25</sup>ropes to that city, and we will draw it into <sup>26</sup>the river, until there be not one small stone found there. 14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel <sup>27</sup>said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. <sup>28</sup>For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel to the intent that the LORD might bring <sup>29</sup>evil upon Absalom.

<sup>29</sup> His delay proved his ruin.

### Hushai communicates with David by Jonathan and Ahimaaz.

15 Then said Hushai unto <sup>1</sup>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. 16 Now therefore send quickly and tell David, saying, <sup>2</sup>Lodge not this night <sup>3</sup>in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be <sup>4</sup>swallowed up and all the people that are with him. 17 Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by <sup>5</sup>Engogel; for they might not be seen to

<sup>20</sup> Hushai propounds his own plan. He advises Absalom

(1) To gather all Israel together — thus assuming that the people are with Absalom, not with David.

(2) To advance with this irresistible force, and make victory certain.

(3) To lead the army in person.

<sup>21</sup> Intro. p. lv.

<sup>22</sup> Common expression for a vast multitude.

<sup>23</sup> He cleverly flatters the self-willed, vain prince, and thus obtains his end.

<sup>24</sup> Insensibly, but covering everything.

<sup>25</sup> With books attached.

These were thrown to catch the walls of the besieged town.

<sup>26</sup> Into the ravine.

<sup>27</sup> Led away by his own vanity Absalom decides to follow the advice of Hushai.

<sup>28</sup> Hushai has succeeded in gaining time, the one essential point required by David. Absalom's vanity was charmed with the idea of marching in person at the head of a vast host.

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the pre-arranged plan (xv. 35, 36).

<sup>2</sup> For Absalom may yet change his mind, so Hushai counsels David to cross the Jordan without delay.

<sup>3</sup> At the fords of the wilderness (see note xv. 28).

<sup>4</sup> A strong intimation of the danger which David ran of being overwhelmed by Absalom's forces whilst himself cut off from retreat with the Jordan in his rear.

<sup>5</sup> A fountain just outside the city. They dare not enter the city for fear of being noticed.

come into the city: and a <sup>6</sup>wench <sup>a</sup>went and told them; and they went and told king David. 18 Nevertheless a lad saw <sup>7</sup>them and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in <sup>8</sup>Bahurim, which had a <sup>9</sup>well in his court; whither they went down. 19 And the woman took and spread <sup>10</sup>a covering over the well's mouth, and spread <sup>11</sup>ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known. 20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, <sup>12</sup>They be gone over the <sup>13</sup>brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them they returned to Jerusalem. 21 And it came to pass, after <sup>14</sup>they were departed, that <sup>15</sup>they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over <sup>16</sup>the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you. 22 Then David <sup>17</sup>arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by <sup>18</sup>the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone <sup>19</sup>over Jordan.

<sup>a</sup> see R. V. and comment, p. 103.

<sup>16</sup> *i. e.* of the morning of the day after leaving Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> And now the river was between himself and Absalom.

### Ahithophel commits Suicide.

23 And when Ahithophel <sup>1</sup>saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose and gat him home to his house, to his city, and <sup>2</sup>put his household in order, and <sup>3</sup>hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

Compare with the death of Judas, who hanged himself (St. Matt. xxvii. 5).

<sup>6</sup> Maid-servant (probably a servant of the high priest), who could go to the fountain without exciting suspicion as to her real purpose.

<sup>7</sup> Went = used to go.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan and Ahimaaz <sup>i. e.</sup> conversation with the maid.

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. lfv.

<sup>9</sup> A cistern. Empty and dry at the time

<sup>10</sup> The covering—either of the cistern, or the curtain of the doorway of the house.

<sup>11</sup> Wheat or barley beaten or ground and then spread out to dry. This hid the mouth of the well. The woman remained in the court as if pursuing her ordinary avocation.

<sup>12</sup> A cunning reply. A denial that they had been there might have led to a search. She points in a wrong direction to put them off the search.

<sup>13</sup> The word translated "brook" is peculiar. It may be the name of a particular stream.

The spies sent by Joshua escaped through a similar deceit by Rahab (Josh. ii. 4).

So Michal gained time for David (1 Sam. xix. 12-17).

<sup>14</sup> The messengers of Absalom.

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan and Ahimaaz.

<sup>16</sup> *i. e.* the river Jordan.

<sup>17</sup> David at once grasps the peril which faced him, and orders the instant crossing of the Jordan.

<sup>1</sup> (1) Incensed that his counsel was not followed.

(2) Convinced that the rebellion was now doomed to failure.

<sup>2</sup> Arranged his affairs, made his will, etc.

<sup>3</sup> So he prefers to commit suicide rather than fall into David's hands, and suffer the punishment of a traitor.

## Absalom advances over Jordan.

24 Then David came to <sup>1</sup>Mahanaim. And Absalom <sup>2</sup>passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. 25 And Absalom made <sup>3</sup>Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was <sup>4</sup>Ithra an Israelite, that went in to <sup>5</sup>Abigail the daughter of <sup>6</sup>Nahash, <sup>7</sup>sister to Zeruah, Joab's mother. 26 So Israel and Absalom <sup>8</sup>pitched in the <sup>9</sup>land of Gilead.

- <sup>1</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii. The strength of the place had made it the headquarters of Ish-bosheth previously.  
<sup>2</sup> Clearly some time after David had arrived at Mahanaim.  
<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. xxvii. Deprived of the aid of Joab, whom he probably hoped would join him in the conspiracy, Absalom appointed Amasa to be commander-in-chief.  
<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. civ.  
<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. cxii.  
<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. cxiii.  
<sup>7</sup> So Amasa was David's nephew.  
<sup>8</sup> Encamped.

<sup>9</sup> Here used as an expression for the land East of Jordan.

## David hospitably received at Mahanaim.

27 And it came to pass, when David was come to <sup>1</sup>Mahanaim, that <sup>2</sup>Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and <sup>3</sup>Machir the son of <sup>4</sup>Ammiel of <sup>5</sup>Lo-debar, and <sup>6</sup>Barzillai the Gileadite of <sup>7</sup>Rogelim. 28 Brought <sup>8</sup>beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse. 29 And honey, <sup>9</sup>and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, <sup>9</sup>The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

- <sup>1</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii.  
<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. cxvi.  
<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. cix.  
<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. xxvii.  
<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii.  
<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. xxviii.  
<sup>7</sup> Intro. p. lxx.  
 The kindness of David to Mephibosheth is now returned to him.  
<sup>8</sup> Bedding, cooking utensils, and provisions, i.e. all that the band of fugitives required.  
<sup>9</sup> The journey through a wild district would leave the band weary, hungry, and thirsty.

## The Battle in the Wood of Ephraim.

18 And David <sup>1</sup>numbered the <sup>2</sup>people that were with him, and set <sup>3</sup>captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. 2 And David sent forth a <sup>4</sup>third part of the people <sup>5</sup>under the

- <sup>1</sup> Mustered and reviewed his troops before sending them out to battle.  
<sup>2</sup> David must now have been some time at Mahanaim and have been joined by a considerable number who had rallied to his cause.

<sup>6</sup> The usual military arrangement.

<sup>4</sup> It was a custom and practice to divide the army into three divisions (see note, p. 65)

<sup>5</sup> = To place under his command.

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 <sup>6</sup>Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, <sup>7</sup>I will surely go forth with you myself also. 3 But the people answered, <sup>8</sup>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 now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou <sup>9</sup>succour us out of the city. 4 And the king said unto them, <sup>10</sup>What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people <sup>11</sup>came out by hundreds and by thousands. 5 And the king <sup>12</sup>commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, <sup>13</sup>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. 6 So the people went out into the field against <sup>14</sup>Israel: and the battle was in the <sup>15</sup>wood of Ephraim; 7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men. 8 For the battle was there <sup>16</sup>scattered over the face of all the country: and the <sup>17</sup>wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

<sup>6</sup> In return for his devoted allegiance (xv. 19-23).

<sup>7</sup> David would lead his army in person, and take the chief command.

<sup>8</sup> Good advice, for as long as David lived, Absalom's cause could not be said to be entirely successful, even if he defeated the forces of David on this occasion.

<sup>9</sup> Send reinforcements if needed, and cover the retreat in case of a reverse.

<sup>10</sup> David falls in with the wishes of his men, perhaps pleased not to advance in person against Absalom.

<sup>11</sup> The army filed out through the gate, passing before David.

<sup>12</sup> A command given publicly to the three generals, and heard by the whole army (see *ver.* 12).

<sup>13</sup> = Take him prisoner, but do not kill him. Note how David and the whole army seem to be confident of the issue of the day.

<sup>14</sup> The revolt was mainly supported by the house of Saul and the northern tribes.

<sup>15</sup> Forest of Ephraim, on the east of Jordan, probably taking the name as being the scene of the defeat of the Ephraimites by Jephthah (Judges xiii. 4).

<sup>16</sup> The nature of the ground prevented a concentration of the superior numbers of Absalom's army.

<sup>17</sup> The wood appears to have been full of pits, precipices, ravines and marshes.

<sup>18</sup> Absalom's body is thrown into a pit (*ver.* 17).

Instances of an army divided into three divisions—

1. Gideon divided his little band into three companies when he attacked the Midianites (Judges vii. 16).
2. Abimelech divided his men into three companies when he attacked Shechem (Judges ix. 43).
3. Saul divided his army into three divisions when he attacked the Ammonites in his relief of Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam. xi. 11).
4. The spoilers went out from the camp of the Philistines in three companies (1 Sam. xiii. 17).
5. Jehoiada arranged the Levite guard in three bands when he proclaimed Joash king (2 Kings xi. 5-6).

## The Death of Absalom.

The Royal Mule (see 1 Kings i. 33-38).

9 And Absalom <sup>a</sup>met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his <sup>2</sup>head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him <sup>3</sup>went away. 10 And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom <sup>4</sup>hanging in an oak. 11 And Joab said unto the <sup>5</sup>man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a <sup>6</sup>girdle. 12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine 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. 13 <sup>7</sup>Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life; for there is <sup>8</sup>no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself <sup>9</sup>wouldest have set thyself against me. 14 Then said Joab, <sup>10</sup>I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three <sup>11</sup>darts in his hands, and thrust them through <sup>12</sup>the heart of Absalom, while he was <sup>13</sup>yet alive in the midst of the oak. 15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour <sup>14</sup>compassed about and smote Absalom,

a see R. V. and comment, p. 104.

<sup>1</sup> Happened to meet, *i.e.* whilst fleeing from the field of battle he suddenly came upon a troop of the enemy, so he plunged into the midst of the forest to secure his escape. David's men, following the king's instructions, did not attack him.

**Oak** = The great Terebinth.

<sup>2</sup> Not hanging by the hair, but with his head caught in the forked branches of the tree.

<sup>3</sup> Went on, *i.e.* unchecked. Absalom would naturally raise his hands to extricate himself, and thus let the reins fall. The mule would thus move from under him in its swift flight.

<sup>4</sup> **Hanging** = suspended.

<sup>5</sup> Probably one of the band who met Absalom (*ver.* 9), and who may have followed his track in the wood.

<sup>6</sup> A costly article of dress, and often given as a present. Jonathan gave David his own girdle as a mark of friendship (1 Sam. xviii. 4).

<sup>7</sup> On this verse see R. V. and comment, p. 104.

<sup>8</sup> The man was well aware of the king's sagacity. Compare the woman of Tekoah (xiv. 17).

<sup>9</sup> Wouldst have joined the king in condemning me. The man is thoroughly aware of Joab's unscrupulous character.

<sup>10</sup> Lose time arguing with you. Joab hastens to despatch Absalom ere he could disentangle himself. He means to end the war by one blow.

<sup>11</sup> Three pointed staffs, the first weapons that came to his hand.

<sup>12</sup> Into the body. The weapons used did not kill him outright.

<sup>13</sup> Joab murdered Absalom in distinct defiance of David's orders.

<sup>14</sup> The young men surrounded the tree whilst Joab crept under the branches, and then they went in and finished his work.

and <sup>16</sup>slew him. 16 And Joab blew the <sup>16</sup>trumpet and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. 17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and <sup>17</sup>laid a very great <sup>18</sup>heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent. 18 Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself <sup>19</sup>a pillar, which is <sup>20</sup>in the king's dale: for he said, I have <sup>21</sup>no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, <sup>22</sup>Absalom's place.

<sup>15</sup> Thus Joab put an end to the rebellion, and avenged himself for the burning of his fields by Absalom (xiv. 30).

<sup>16</sup> The signal of recall from the pursuit. With Absalom dead, further pursuit would have been needless slaughter.

<sup>17</sup> Raised over him.

<sup>19</sup> A mark of shame, not of honour; compare—

(1) The heap of stones over Achan (Josh. vii. 26).

(2) The heap raised over the king of Ai (Josh. viii. 29).

(3) The heap of stones at the cave of Makkedah (Josh. x. 27).

<sup>19</sup> A monument. Contrast this monument of pride with the monument of shame in the wood of Ephraim (*ver.* 17).

<sup>20</sup> Valley of Jehoshaphat.

<sup>21</sup> His three sons were dead.

<sup>22</sup> Absalom's monument. See R.V. and comment, p. 104.

### Ahimaaz and the Cushite carry the News to David.

19 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies. 20 And Joab said unto him, <sup>1</sup>Thou shalt not bear 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. 21 Then said Joab to <sup>2</sup>Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab and ran. 22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But <sup>3</sup>howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast <sup>4</sup>no tidings ready? 23 But <sup>5</sup>howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then

<sup>1</sup> Joab acts kindly. He would not have Ahimaaz lose favour with David by being the bearer of the ill news of the death of Absalom.

<sup>2</sup> The Cushite, an Ethiopian, probably a slave in Joab's service. The displeasure of the king would not affect him.

<sup>3</sup> Come what may.

<sup>4</sup> For Cushi bears all there is to tell. Ahimaaz had, however, formed the intention of bearing good tidings, but kept his plan to himself.

<sup>5</sup> Come what may, I will run.

<sup>a</sup> see R.V. and comment, p. 104.

Ahimaaz ran by the way of the <sup>6</sup>plain, and overran Cush. 24 And David sat <sup>7</sup>between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the <sup>8</sup>roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. 25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be <sup>9</sup>alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. 26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the <sup>10</sup>porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. 27 And the watchman said, <sup>11</sup>Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a <sup>12</sup>good man, and cometh with good tidings. 28 And Ahimaaz <sup>13</sup>called, and said unto the king, <sup>14</sup>All is well. And he <sup>15</sup>fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. 29 And the king said, <sup>16</sup>Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, <sup>17</sup>When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. 30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still. 31 And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the Lord <sup>18</sup>hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. 32 And the king said unto Cushi, <sup>19</sup>Is the young man Absalom safe?

<sup>6</sup> Plain (see p. 1.). The plain of the Jordan—the Arabah. Ahimaaz took a longer but easier route. Cush may have struck a straight line across the hills. Ahimaaz would be out of Cushi's sight, and so the latter would not think he had a rival in the race.

<sup>7</sup> The space between the outer and the inner gates (see p. 113).

<sup>8</sup> Tower above the gate. He was watching for news from the field of battle.

<sup>9</sup> A solitary runner would be the bearer of good tidings. If there had been a defeat there would have been several fugitives. Another instance of David's shrewdness and sagacity.

<sup>10</sup> The keeper of the gate. The watchman calls to the porter, the porter conveys the information to the king.

<sup>11</sup> So the watchman at Jezreel recognized the furious driving of Jehu (2 Kings ix. 20).

<sup>12</sup> The selection of Ahimaaz as messenger causes David to anticipate good news.

<sup>13</sup> Shouted out as he drew within hearing.

<sup>14</sup> Lit. Peace, *i. e.* we have won the day.

<sup>15</sup> Doing homage to the king.

<sup>16</sup> The king's heart is bound up in Absalom.

<sup>17</sup> An equivocal answer. He is afraid to tell the whole truth. So he skilfully evades the question. He speaks as if he had left the field before the fate of Absalom was known.

<sup>18</sup> Hath procured thee justice.

<sup>19</sup> Asking the same question as before.

And Cushi answered, <sup>20</sup>The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

<sup>20</sup> A roundabout way of conveying the news that Absalom was dead. The king understands what he means.

### David mourns for Absalom.

33 And the king was <sup>1</sup>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 God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

<sup>1</sup> David was thoroughly overcome.

1. Because of the death of Absalom.
2. Because he had died in the act of rebellion.
3. Because he saw that his death was part of God's judgment upon himself for his own sin.

David's affection for his son blinds him to the fact that he had deservedly met the fate due to his rebellion, and he also fails to see that the death of his son was the best thing that could have happened for himself.

### David's continued Mourning. Joab's Reproof.

19. And it was told <sup>1</sup>Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. <sup>2</sup> And the <sup>2</sup>victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. <sup>3</sup> And the people gat them <sup>3</sup>by stealth <sup>4</sup>that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. <sup>4</sup> But the king <sup>5</sup>covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son! <sup>5</sup> And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou <sup>6</sup>hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the <sup>7</sup>lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; <sup>6</sup> In that thou lovest <sup>8</sup>thine enemies, and hatest <sup>9</sup>thy friends. For thou hast

<sup>1</sup> Joab's expostulation with David is quite justifiable, but the rough, rude manner of the rebuke was not forgotten by the king. This day, connected with Absalom's death, remained in David's memory till his death.

<sup>2</sup> Salvation or deliverance.

<sup>3</sup> Not entering like a victorious army, but stealing in as if they had been defeated.

<sup>4</sup> The day of the battle; so the fight took place not far from Mahanaim.

<sup>5</sup> One of the attitudes of grief (xv. 30).

<sup>6</sup> Caused them to feel ashamed. David was treating them as if they had done him an injury, and not gained the victory for him over Absalom. Instead of celebrating their triumph, the soldiers went about as if they were ashamed of what they had done.

<sup>7</sup> Had Absalom won the day, he would probably have followed the usual Oriental custom of putting to death all who might have later become rival claimants of the throne.

<sup>8</sup> Them that hate thee.

<sup>9</sup> Them that love thee.

declared this day, that thou <sup>10</sup>regardest neither <sup>11</sup>princes nor <sup>12</sup>servants : for this day I perceive, that <sup>13</sup>if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. 7 Now therefore arise, <sup>14</sup>go forth, and speak <sup>15</sup>comfortably unto thy servants : for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, <sup>16</sup>there will not tarry one with thee this night : and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that <sup>17</sup>befell thee from thy youth until now. 8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit <sup>18</sup>in the gate. And all <sup>19</sup>the people came before the king : <sup>20</sup>for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

<sup>18</sup> David's men.

<sup>20</sup> The partizans of Absalom.

### Preliminaries to the Return of David to Jerusalem.

9 And all the people were <sup>1</sup>at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king <sup>2</sup>saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines ; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom. 10 And Absalom, whom <sup>3</sup>we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why <sup>4</sup>speak ye not a word of bringing the king back ? 11 And king David sent to <sup>5</sup>Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, <sup>6</sup>Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house ? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, <sup>a</sup>even to his house. 12 Ye are my brethren, ye are <sup>7</sup>my bones and my flesh : wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the

a See B.V. and comment, p. 105.

<sup>10</sup> Hast no concern for those who have risked their lives in thy cause.

<sup>11</sup> The captains and generals.

<sup>12</sup> The common soldiers.

<sup>13</sup> David was showing more concern over the death of the rebel Absalom than for the well-being of his tried and trusty friends.

<sup>14</sup> i.e. out of the house to the presence of the people.

<sup>15</sup> Encouragingly, thankfully.

<sup>16</sup> Joab threatens the king with his own defection and the defection of his men.

<sup>17</sup> For Joab to desert David would truly be the greatest blow of his reign. Nothing is more marked in the history of David than the loyalty of Joab, and his great services to his uncle.

<sup>18</sup> The usual place where the king gives audience to his people.

<sup>1</sup> Uncertain what steps to take, and quarrelling among themselves.

<sup>2</sup> The past services of David are now called to mind. The people begin to be conscious of their gross ingratitude to David in espousing the cause of Absalom.

<sup>3</sup> From this we gather that Absalom had been formally consecrated king.

<sup>4</sup> There was an increasing movement amongst the northern tribes to bring about the return of the king.

<sup>5</sup> Who were warmly devoted to his cause.

<sup>6</sup> Why did Judah hang back ?

1. Because they had specially been ungrateful to David ; the rebellion had originated in Judah.

2. Because Jerusalem was still held by Amasa, Absalom's chief general.

<sup>7</sup> Closely connected, as being my tribe.

king? 13 And say ye to Amasa, <sup>8</sup>Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? <sup>9</sup>God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me <sup>10</sup>continually in the <sup>11</sup>room of <sup>12</sup>Joab. 14 And he <sup>13</sup>bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants. 15 So the king returned, and <sup>14</sup>came to Jordan. And Judah <sup>15</sup>came to <sup>16</sup>Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to <sup>17</sup>conduct the king over Jordan.

to himself, and won over the unanimous support of the tribe.

<sup>14</sup> David came from Mahanaim on the East.

<sup>15</sup> Judah came from Jerusalem on the West.

<sup>16</sup> Intro. (p. lxiii).

<sup>17</sup> To form an escort to accompany the king in the crossing.

<sup>8</sup> A member of my family (see Intro. p. xvii.).

<sup>9</sup> A solemn oath promising to Amasa the high position of Commander-in-chief. Amasa still held Jerusalem and might have offered serious resistance; so David wins him over by promise of pardon and promotion.

<sup>10</sup> Offering him a permanent post.

<sup>11</sup> In the place of; instead of.

<sup>12</sup> Removed as a punishment for the murder of Absalom.

<sup>13</sup> Thus David inclined the heart of the men of Judah

### David's Return. Pardon of Shimei.

16 And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, <sup>1</sup>hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. 17 And there were a <sup>2</sup>thousand men of Benjamin with him, and <sup>3</sup>Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they <sup>4</sup>went over Jordan <sup>5</sup>before the king. 18 And there <sup>6</sup>went over <sup>7</sup>a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera <sup>8</sup>fell down before the king, as he was <sup>9</sup>come over Jordan; 19 And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember <sup>10</sup>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. 20 For thy servant doth

<sup>1</sup> He would be early to make his peace with the king.

<sup>2</sup> An indication of the influence of Shimei with the tribe of Benjamin. He was the head of the Saul faction.

<sup>3</sup> Conscious of his falsehood with respect to Mephibosheth, he desires to be one of the first to welcome David back again.

<sup>4</sup> Crossed from west to east, meeting David on the far side of Jordan.

<sup>5</sup> Went to and fro.

<sup>6</sup> Sent from the west bank to the east, for the purpose of conveying the king's household over the river.

<sup>7</sup> Doing homage to the king.

<sup>8</sup> As he was about to cross, Shimei crossed over to meet the king, who was preparing to cross the river.

<sup>9</sup> Alluding to his conduct in cursing David and throwing stones at him, when the king left Jerusalem (xvi. 5-14). He confesses that he has done wrong, and poses as being penitent. But his penitence is not real; he comes to

α See R.V. and comment, p. 105.

David only because the latter had won in the struggle, and to save his own life.

know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come <sup>10</sup>the first this day of all the <sup>11</sup>house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king. <sup>21</sup> But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, <sup>12</sup> Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed? <sup>22</sup> And David said, <sup>13</sup> What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be <sup>14</sup> adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death <sup>16</sup> this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel? <sup>23</sup> Therefore the king said unto Shimei, <sup>16</sup> Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him.

Solomon, however, was enjoined to put him to death (1 Kings ii. 8-9) (see p. cxv.).

Note.—We may remark on the special incidents of David's return. This period is marked almost as specifically as the day of his flight. These incidents are:—

1. The haste with which Shimei hurries to make his peace with the king.
2. The early advent of Ziba, no doubt in fear lest the real story about Mephibosheth should come to the king's ears.
3. Abishai's eagerness to put Shimei to death.
4. The meeting with Mephibosheth.
5. The parting with Barzillai.
6. The dispute between Israel and Judah.

### The Meeting of David and Mephibosheth.

<sup>24</sup> And Mephibosheth the son of Saul <sup>1</sup> came down to meet the king, and had neither <sup>2</sup> dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came <sup>3</sup> again in peace. <sup>25</sup> And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, <sup>4</sup> Wherefore wentest not thou <sup>5</sup> with me, Mephibosheth? <sup>26</sup> And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant <sup>6</sup> deceived me; for thy servant said, I will saddle <sup>7</sup> me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go <sup>8</sup> to the king; because thy servant is <sup>9</sup> lame. <sup>27</sup> And <sup>10</sup> he hath slandered thy servant unto

<sup>20</sup> Wishing to impress the king with his zeal.

<sup>11</sup> An expression for the ten northern tribes, of which Ephraim was the head.

<sup>13</sup> The impetuous Abishai would have Shimei put to death. He clearly saw that Shimei's repentance was only lip deep.

<sup>13</sup> What is there common to me and you?

<sup>14</sup> Opponents, *i.e.* advocates of measures contrary to my interests.

<sup>15</sup> This is a day of rejoicing, and not to be marred by the death of any one.

<sup>16</sup> Politic of David, that his return should not be marked by bloodshed.

Shimei's life was thus safe during David's reign.

<sup>1</sup> Either from the heights of Jerusalem, or from Gibeah down to the Jordan valley.

<sup>2</sup> All these are signs of deep mourning, and should have convinced David of the loyalty of Mephibosheth.

<sup>3</sup> Home.

<sup>4</sup> A natural question.

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.* in my flight from Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup> Tricked me.

<sup>7</sup> So the two asses (xvi. 1, 4) were intended for Mephibosheth to use in his flight with David.

<sup>8</sup> With the king.

<sup>9</sup> Thus helpless and dependent upon his servants.

<sup>10</sup> Ziba.

my lord the king; but my lord the king is <sup>11</sup>as an angel of God; do therefore <sup>12</sup>what is good in thine eyes. 28 For <sup>13</sup>all of my father's house were but <sup>14</sup>dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou <sup>15</sup>set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. <sup>16</sup>What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? 29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, <sup>17</sup>Thou and Ziba divide the land. 30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take <sup>18</sup>all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.

<sup>18</sup> The whole. David's act of partial justice does not satisfy Mephibosheth, but he covers his chagrin by expressing himself as being indifferent to what happened, now that David is restored to the throne. He cares more for David's welfare than for his own property.

- <sup>11</sup> *i.e.* he sees all just as it really is, *i.e.* his judgment is always correct.  
<sup>12</sup> What seems right in thy judgment.  
<sup>13</sup> The whole of my father's family.  
<sup>14</sup> Men of death, *i.e.* might have been put to death. Another allusion to the Oriental custom of putting to death the family of a deposed king.  
<sup>15</sup> Raised me to a position of honour at court.  
<sup>16</sup> Therefore I have no cause of complaint against the king.  
<sup>17</sup> One of David's half decisions. If Mephibosheth's tale were true David ought to have restored all the land to him, and to have punished Ziba. David may have desired to conciliate Ziba.

### Barzillai's Parting with David.

31 And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from <sup>1</sup>Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king <sup>2</sup>of sustenance while he <sup>3</sup>lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very <sup>4</sup>great man. 33 And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will <sup>5</sup>feed thee with me in Jerusalem. 34 And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? 35 I am this day <sup>6</sup>fourscore years old: and <sup>7</sup>can I discern between good and evil? 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

<sup>1</sup> Intro. p. lxx.

- <sup>2</sup> With sustenance, *i.e.* had provisioned his forces.  
<sup>3</sup> Abode, was residing permanently.  
<sup>4</sup> Both by wealth and distinction.  
<sup>5</sup> Honour thee by a seat at the royal table, in return for thy kindness to me at Mahanaim.  
<sup>6</sup> He was too old to make this change in his life.  
<sup>7</sup> An enumeration of the infirmities of age.
  1. Loss of reasoning power.
  2. Loss of appetite.
  3. Indifference to pleasure.
  4. A burden to those who have to wait upon them.

yet a burden unto my lord the king? 36 Thy servant <sup>a</sup>will go a little way over Jordan with the king; and why should the king recompense it me with <sup>b</sup>such a reward? 37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die <sup>c</sup>in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant <sup>d</sup>Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. 38 And the king answered, <sup>e</sup>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. 39 And <sup>f</sup>all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned <sup>g</sup>unto his own place. 40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham <sup>h</sup>went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also <sup>i</sup>half the people of Israel.

*a* see R.V. and comment, p. 105.

### Quarrel between Israel and Judah about the Return of the King.

41 And, behold, <sup>1</sup>all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, <sup>2</sup>Why have our brethren the men of Judah <sup>3</sup>stolen thee away, and have brought the king, and his household, and <sup>4</sup>all David's men with him, over Jordan? 42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is <sup>5</sup>near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? <sup>6</sup>have we eaten at all of the king's cost? or hath he given us any gift? 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said,

<sup>8</sup> Either (1) For a short time, not for a long stay.

Or (2) A short distance across the river.

<sup>9</sup> As being received as an honoured courtier.

<sup>10</sup> The usual attachment of old people to the home of their fathers.

<sup>11</sup> The son of Barzillai. Intro. p. xcvi.

<sup>12</sup> The king pledges himself to provide for Chimham. David appears to have given him land near his own city, Bethlehem. "The habitation of Chimham, which is by Bethlehem" (Jer. xli. 17).

David specially commended the sons of Barzillai to the care of Solomon (1 Kings ii. 7).

<sup>13</sup> *i.e.* those with David, who had been partners in his flight.

<sup>14</sup> *i.e.* back to Mahanaim.

<sup>15</sup> Evidently taking up his residence at Jerusalem with the king.

<sup>16</sup> Only a portion of the northern tribes joined in the welcome to the king. The representatives of all the tribes arrived later (see *ver.* 41).

<sup>1</sup> The representatives of the other tribes.

<sup>2</sup> They were angry at being anticipated by Judah.

<sup>3</sup> Brought thee back secretly without consulting us.

<sup>4</sup> Those who had accompanied him in his flight from Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> As belonging to our tribe.

<sup>6</sup> Have we been the objects of his special favour? Probably hinting at the contrast between David's impartiality, and Saul's favouring of his own tribe Benjamin.

We have <sup>7</sup>ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: <sup>8</sup>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 <sup>9</sup>fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> As being ten tribes they claim ten shares in the king, and argue that their numbers outweigh the nearer relationship of Judah to the king.

<sup>8</sup> They have some grounds for their indignation. Their action in promoting the king's return had been spontaneous. Judah had not moved till overtures

had been made by David to them. Yes, Judah is chosen by the king to be his special escort.

<sup>9</sup> More bitter, more violent.

**Note.**—David makes a foolish mistake in playing off Judah against Israel. We have many signs of the rivalry between Judah and Israel in the Second Book of Samuel (see p. xliii.). By his conduct on this occasion David does much to undo his work of uniting the tribes, and paves the way for the subsequent division of the kingdom in the reign of Rehoboam.

### Sheba heads a Rebellion.

20. And there happened to be <sup>1</sup>there a <sup>2</sup>man of Belial, whose name was <sup>3</sup>Sheba, <sup>4</sup>the son of Bichri, <sup>5</sup>a Benjamite; and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no <sup>6</sup>part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: <sup>7</sup>every man to his tents, O Israel. <sup>2</sup> So every man of Israel <sup>8</sup>went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri; but the men of Judah <sup>9</sup>clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. at Gilgal, noting the dissension.

<sup>2</sup> A worthless fellow (see p. 108).

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. cxv.

<sup>4</sup> A Bichrite.

<sup>5</sup> So of the tribe of Saut. He takes advantage of the dispute between Judah and Israel to raise the standard of revolt.

<sup>6</sup> Portion, share. An allusion to the claim of Judah in David as their tribesman (xix. 42).

<sup>7</sup> Generally means the signal to disperse and go home. Here it is a call to rebellion. The revolt against

Rehoboam was started with the same rallying cry (1 Kings xii. 16).

<sup>8</sup> From the valley of the Jordan at Gilgal to the highland district of Ephraim.

<sup>9</sup> The controversy with Israel had made the men of Judah devoted to David.

### David's Return to Jerusalem.

3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king <sup>1</sup>took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in <sup>2</sup>ward, and <sup>3</sup>fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were <sup>4</sup>shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.

<sup>1</sup> See xv. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Had them securely guarded in seclusion.

<sup>3</sup> Provided for their maintenance.

<sup>4</sup> The action of Absalom (xvi. 22) compelled this. They could not be part of the harem of the king, nor could they be allowed to have their liberty.

## Pursuit after Sheba: Murder of Amasa by Joab.

4 Then said the king to <sup>1</sup>Amasa, <sup>2</sup>Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present. 5 So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah; but he <sup>3</sup>tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him. 6 And David said to <sup>4</sup>Abishai, Now shall 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 fenced cities, and <sup>5</sup>escape us. 7 And there went out after him <sup>6</sup>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. 8 When they were at the <sup>7</sup>great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa <sup>8</sup>went before them. And <sup>9</sup>Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a <sup>10</sup>sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as <sup>11</sup>he went forth it fell out. 9 And Joab said to Amasa, <sup>12</sup>Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa <sup>13</sup>by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. 10 But Amasa <sup>14</sup>took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith <sup>15</sup>in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. <sup>16</sup>So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri. 11 And one of Joab's <sup>17</sup>men stood by him, and said, He that favoureth Joab, and <sup>18</sup>he that is

<sup>α</sup> See R.V. and comment, p. 105.

resigns the command at once to his brother. The soldiers gladly acquiesce in the return of their old and tried leader to the command.

<sup>17</sup> One of his armour bearers probably, left behind to urge on the newly joined force.

<sup>18</sup> Insinuating that Amasa was a traitor, whilst Joab was the true man on David's side.

<sup>1</sup> Who was now commander-in-chief.

<sup>2</sup> A command to make a levy of the tribe of Judah.

<sup>3</sup> Reasons may be—

1. That Amasa was not acceptable to the army, which represented the deposition of Joab.

2. The restoration of David was not received loyally.

3. Amasa may have been unwilling to attack those whom he had so recently led against David.

<sup>4</sup> David passes over Joab, who, however, appears to have accompanied the army. The wary old leader was only waiting his opportunity. He has no hesitation in assassinating Amasa at their first meeting.

<sup>5</sup> The picked set of troops habitually under Joab's command, forming the nucleus of the host.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. lxxii.

<sup>7</sup> *Lit.* "came before them," met them as he was returning to Jerusalem with his men.

<sup>8</sup> See R.V. and comment, p. 106.

<sup>9</sup> His military cloak.

<sup>10</sup> In the girdle was stuck a dagger or sword.

<sup>11</sup> Joab stooped and picked up the sword in his left hand. And thus, *i.e.* carrying his sword, he met Amasa. This was done with design.

<sup>12</sup> Is it well with thee?

<sup>13</sup> They would take each other by the beard, and thus Joab held the defenceless Amasa whilst with his left hand he drove his sword home.

<sup>14</sup> He did not suspect Joab's deadly purpose.

<sup>15</sup> In the abdomen.

<sup>16</sup> But Joab. He does not lose a moment. Abishai

for David, let him go after Joab. 12 And Amasa <sup>19</sup>wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that <sup>20</sup>all the people stood still, he <sup>21</sup>removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still. 13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

<sup>19</sup> The soldiers stood aghast at the dreadful sight. In like manner the soldiers halted over the dead body of Asahel (ii. 23).

<sup>20</sup> The levy raised by Amasa.

<sup>21</sup> The prompt removal of the body had its effect. The levy passed on, following their old captain.

### The Siege of Abel Beth-Maachah.

14 And he went <sup>1</sup>through all the tribes of Israel unto <sup>2</sup>Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the <sup>3</sup>Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. 15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they <sup>4</sup>cast up a bank against the city, and it stood <sup>5</sup>in the <sup>6</sup>trench: and all the people that were with Joab <sup>7</sup>battered the wall, to throw it down. 16 Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, <sup>8</sup>Come near hither, that I may speak with thee. 17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, <sup>9</sup>Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, <sup>10</sup>I do hear. 18 Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, <sup>11</sup>They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so <sup>12</sup>they ended the matter. 19 <sup>13</sup>I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and <sup>14</sup>a mother in Israel: why wilt thou

<sup>1</sup> Pressing northward, and driving Sheba before him. A quick suppression of the rebellion meant Joab's own re-instatement in the command of the army.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. li.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. lxxvi.

<sup>4</sup> The usual method of an ancient siege. They erected a sloping mound opposite the part of the wall to be attacked.

<sup>5</sup> This included the lower outer wall and the space between it and the city wall proper.

<sup>6</sup> When the mound was pushed thus far forward the besiegers battered the wall with rams, themselves protected by the missiles discharged from the mound.

<sup>7</sup> Calling to Joab to come to the top of the mound and speak to her as she stood on the city wall.

<sup>8</sup> Attend to.

<sup>9</sup> I am listening.

<sup>10</sup> The people of the city had a reputation for wisdom. The woman hints that she can give Joab some good advice if he is willing to listen.

<sup>11</sup> They brought a thing to pass, i.e. they followed the advice given and succeeded in obtaining what they wanted.

<sup>12</sup> She speaks for the whole city, which she declares to be peaceable and loyal.

a See R.V. and comment, p. 106.

<sup>13</sup> A metropolis with cities dependent upon it.

<sup>14</sup>swallow up the <sup>15</sup>inheritance of the Lord? <sup>20</sup>And Joab answered and said, <sup>16</sup>Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. <sup>21</sup>The matter is not so; but a man of <sup>b</sup>mount <sup>17</sup>Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath <sup>18</sup>lifted up his hand against the king, even against <sup>19</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And <sup>20</sup>they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew <sup>21</sup>a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man <sup>22</sup>to his tent. <sup>23</sup>And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

<sup>b</sup> See R.V. and comment, p. 106.

- <sup>14</sup> Utterly destroy.  
<sup>15</sup> The people of Israel, of whom the citizens of Abel were a part.  
<sup>16</sup> A strong asseveration that no harm was intended to the city. Joab wants Sheba only.  
<sup>17</sup> Here used to include the middle portion of the central highland. It would include Manasse, Ephraim and Benjamin.  
<sup>18</sup> Raised a rebellion.  
<sup>19</sup> Joab specifies David—the recent rebellion of Absalom would otherwise make the reference doubtful.

<sup>20</sup> They have no hesitation in sacrificing Sheba in order to save the city.

<sup>21</sup> The signal for retiring.

<sup>22</sup> To his home.

<sup>23</sup> To report to the king. David leaves him alone, and submits to his re-institution as commander-in-chief.

### The Officers of David.

<sup>23</sup> Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites: <sup>24</sup> And <sup>1</sup>Adoram was over the <sup>2</sup>tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder: <sup>25</sup> And <sup>3</sup>Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests: <sup>26</sup> And <sup>4</sup>Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler about David.

There is another list in Chap. viii. 15-18.

David rearranges the public officials after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion.

Chief differences are noted below.

<sup>1</sup> A new officer superintending the levy. Intro. p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Sheva has succeeded Seraiah.

The sons of David are not mentioned. Absalom's revolt had probably

caused David to remove them from prominent positions.  
<sup>4</sup> A new name. He occupied the post of confidential counsellor.

### CHAPTERS XXI.—XXIV.

These chapters form a kind of appendix to David's reign, and can be divided into six distinct sections, viz. :—

**First Section.** The Three Years' Famine as a punishment for the sin of Saul in killing the Gibeonites (see p. xxxvi.) (xxi. 1-14).

**Second Section.** Certain Feats of Valour against the Philistines (xxi. 15-22).

**Third Section.** David's Psalms of Thanksgiving (xxii.).

**Fourth Section.** The Last Words of David (xxiii. 1-7).

**Fifth Section.** The List of David's Mighty Men (xxiii. 8-39). The Gibeonites (see p. 114).

**Sixth Section.** The Census (xxiv.).

### The Three Years' Famine as a Visitation for Saul's Cruelty to the Gibeonites (omitted in Chronicles).

21. Then there was a <sup>1</sup>famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David <sup>2</sup>*enquired of the Lord*. And the LORD answered, <sup>3</sup>It is for <sup>4</sup>Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the <sup>5</sup>Gibeonites. 2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (<sup>6</sup>now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had <sup>7</sup>sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his <sup>8</sup>zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) 3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, <sup>9</sup>What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make <sup>10</sup>the atonement, that ye may bless <sup>11</sup>the inheritance of the LORD? 4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, <sup>12</sup>We will have no <sup>13</sup>silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill <sup>14</sup>any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you. 5 And they answered the king, <sup>15</sup>The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be

<sup>a</sup> See R.V. and comment, p. 106.

The time is not fixed (see p. xi).

<sup>1</sup> The result of want of rainfall. A famine almost invariably accompanied a lack of the winter rains.

<sup>2</sup> Sought the face of the Lord. An unusual phrase, considered by commentators to be an indication that this chapter is taken from an unusual source.

<sup>3</sup> The reply of Jehovah justifies the subsequent proceedings.

<sup>4</sup> On whom rested the guilt of shedding innocent blood.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. lxxviii.

<sup>6</sup> The story of the league of the Israelites with the Gibeonites is found in Joshua ix.

The Gibeonites were Hittites. The title Amorites is often used to denote any of the ancient inhabitants occupying the hill country.

<sup>7</sup> Saul's sin consisted in the violation of the solemn covenant entered into with the Gibeonites in the Lord's name.

<sup>8</sup> In one of his fits of religious mania.

<sup>9</sup> If David satisfied the Gibeonites he would make a sufficient atonement.

<sup>10</sup> Necessary atonement for an act of bloodshed.

<sup>11</sup> The people of Israel.

<sup>12</sup> On this verse see R.V. and comment, p. 106.

<sup>13</sup> Money compensation for a life was common in heathen nations, but expressly forbidden by the Mosaic Law (Num. xxxv. 31).

<sup>14</sup> Though Saul's act involved the whole nation in his guilt, the Gibeonites ask for vengeance on the family of Saul.

<sup>15</sup> The Gibeonites require that the family of the murderer should atone for the murder.

destroyed from remaining in any of the <sup>16</sup>coasts of Israel. 6 Let <sup>17</sup>seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will <sup>18</sup>hang them up <sup>19</sup>unto the LORD in <sup>20</sup>Gibeah of Saul, <sup>21</sup>whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them. 7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the <sup>22</sup>LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 8 But the king took the two sons of <sup>23</sup>Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of <sup>24</sup>Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the <sup>25</sup>Meholathite: 9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the <sup>26</sup>beginning of barley harvest. 10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took <sup>27</sup>sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, <sup>28</sup>from the beginning of harvest until <sup>29</sup>water *dropped* upon them out of heaven, and <sup>30</sup>suffered neither the <sup>31</sup>birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. 11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

b See R.V. and comment, p. 107.

c See H.V. and comment, p. 107.

animals, was regarded as the greatest ignominy that could befall the dead.

### David buries Saul and his Sons in the Family Sepulchre.

12 And David <sup>1</sup>went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead,

<sup>16</sup> Borders or frontiers.

<sup>17</sup> The perfect number.

<sup>18</sup> Fasten them to the stake, impale them after death.

<sup>19</sup> Publicly.

<sup>20</sup> Intro. p. lxi. The city of Saul was appropriately chosen as the place of atonement.

<sup>21</sup> As God's allotted, his sin in putting the Gibeonites to death was an aggravation of his sin.

<sup>22</sup> See 1 Sam. xviii. 3; xx. 8, 42.

<sup>23</sup> Intro. p. cxiv. (See chap. iii. 7.)

<sup>24</sup> A mistake for Merab (Intro. p. cxi.).

<sup>25</sup> Of Abel-meholah (Intro. p. li.).

We may dismiss the idea that David seized the opportunity to get rid of the house of Saul, for—

1. The claim of the Gibeonites was strictly in accordance with the law.

2. David spared Mephibosheth.

3. He selected the sons of Rizpah, a concubine, *i.e.* an inferior wife, of Saul, compromised by the act of Abner (iii. 7), and the sons of Merab.

<sup>26</sup> About the middle of April.

<sup>27</sup> Either making a rough tent for her shelter, or spreading it out as a couch.

<sup>28</sup> From April till October. She kept watch for six months.

<sup>29</sup> The heavy rains of October. The return of rain was a sign that the atonement was accepted. The Gibeonites would require that the bodies should be exposed till rain came.

<sup>30</sup> Guarding the bodies from vultures and jackals.

<sup>31</sup> Leaving corpses without burial, to be consumed by birds of prey and wild

animals.

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* in person. David was deeply moved by the devotion of Rizpah.

which had stolen them from the street of <sup>2</sup>Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa: 13 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. 14 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in <sup>3</sup>Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. <sup>4</sup>And after that God was intreated for the land.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. lvi. The bodies were hung on the wall (1 Sam. xxxi. 10). Street = Market place, which would be, not in the middle of the town, but an open place against or in the front of the gate. So the two accounts agree.

<sup>6</sup> The native place of Saul. Intro. p. lxxiii.

<sup>4</sup> The rainfall was a sign that the prayers of the nation were heard, and the propitiation accepted.

### A List of David's Heroes.

(See 1 Chron. xx. 4-8.)

15 Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David <sup>1</sup>went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David <sup>2</sup>waxed faint. 16 And Ishbi-benob, which <sup>3</sup>was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed <sup>4</sup>three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a <sup>5</sup>new sword, thought to have slain David. 17 But <sup>6</sup>Abishai the son of Zeruah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, <sup>7</sup>Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the <sup>8</sup>light of Israel. 18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines <sup>9</sup>at Gob: then <sup>10</sup>Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant. 19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the

A detached narrative. The incidents must have occurred in the early part of David's reign. They are recorded in Chronicles immediately after the capture of Rabbah.

<sup>1</sup> From the high land of Judah to the plain of Philistia—the Shephelah (Intro. p. xlix.).

<sup>2</sup> His strength failed from weariness through long exertion.

<sup>3</sup> i. e. one of the giant race. Intro. p. cii.

<sup>4</sup> About 8 lbs. in weight.

<sup>5</sup> Or it may be "new armour," or some "new strange weapon."

<sup>6</sup> Apparently the constant attendant of David (see 1 Sam. xxvi. 6, and Intro. p. 10.).

<sup>7</sup> This peril caused the captains to determine that David must not hazard his life in personal combat.

<sup>8</sup> Lamp = David—his death would be, as it were, to put an end to the prosperity of the nation.

<sup>9</sup> At the same place as before. Intro. p. lxiv.

<sup>10</sup> See Intro. p. cxvi.

Chronicles (xx. 4) adds that the Philistines "were subdued."

Philistines, where <sup>11</sup>Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was <sup>12</sup>like a <sup>13</sup>weaver's beam. 20 And there was yet a battle in 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. 21 And when he <sup>14</sup>defied Israel, <sup>15</sup>Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him. 22 These four were <sup>16</sup>born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the <sup>17</sup>hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

<sup>11</sup> Intro. p. c.

<sup>12</sup> The same words are used in describing the spear of Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 7).

<sup>13</sup> The roller of the loom. A short thick staff, requiring a gigantic hand to grasp it properly.

<sup>14</sup> Issued a challenge as Goliath had done (1 Sam. xvii. 8-11).

<sup>15</sup> See p. 127.

<sup>16</sup> Were of the race of the Giants, not necessarily the sons of Goliath.

<sup>17</sup> Who had engaged personally with Ishbi-benob.

### Preliminary Note to Chapter XXII.

This Song of Thanksgiving is the same as Psalm xviii., without any material difference.

The chief variations will be found printed in italics in the side notes to the text.

**Time of Composition.** The Hymn must have been composed in the early part of David's reign, for

1. It commemorates his deliverance from Saul, and his victories over the heathen nations.
2. There is an allusion (v. 51) to the establishment of his throne for ever—a promise made to him by Nathan, when he visited the King to convey the intimation of Jehovah that though David could not be permitted to build the Temple, his *"throne should be established for ever"* (vii. 16).
3. There is no reference to his great sin.

*We conclude* (1) that it must have been written after Nathan's visit (vii).

(2) that it must have been written before David's sin with Bath-sheba, for it would have been impossible for him to have indulged in such joyous expressions of thanksgiving, and in such bold declarations of his own integrity, after his grievous sin. Not only was David's reign affected by this sinful act, but his own conscience must have continually reminded him of his grievous fault and its consequences.

## David's Psalm of Thanksgiving.

22. And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his <sup>1</sup>enemies, and out of the hand of <sup>2</sup>Saul: 2 And he said

The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my <sup>3</sup>deliverer;

3 The God of my <sup>4</sup>rock; in him will I <sup>5</sup>trust.

He is my <sup>6</sup>shield, and the <sup>7</sup>horn of my <sup>8</sup>salvation, my high tower and my refuge.

<sup>9</sup>My saviour; thou savest me from violence.

4 I <sup>10</sup>will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised:

So shall I be saved from mine enemies.

5 When the <sup>11</sup>waves of death compassed me,

The floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

6 The <sup>12</sup>sorrows of <sup>13</sup>hell compassed me about;

The snares of death <sup>14</sup>prevented me;

7 In my distress I called upon the LORD,

And cried to my God;

And he did hear my voice <sup>15</sup>out of his temple,

And my cry did enter into his ears.

8 Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of <sup>16</sup>heaven moved and shook

Because he was wroth.

9 There went up a <sup>17</sup>smoke out of his nostrils,

And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it.

I. The Introduction or Title (*ver. 1*).

<sup>1</sup> Philistines, Moabites, etc.

<sup>2</sup> His bitterest and most persistent enemy, mentioned last for the sake of emphasis.

II. The Invocation of Jehovah (*ver. 2-4*).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xviii. adds, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength."

<sup>4</sup> Giving stability.

<sup>5</sup> Take refuge.

<sup>6</sup> Affording protection (see Gen. xv. 1).

<sup>7</sup> Symbolical of strength.

<sup>8</sup> Bringing deliverance.

<sup>9</sup> Ps. xviii. 2, omits: "my Saviour, thou savest me from violence."

<sup>10</sup> Better, "I called and was saved."

III. The Perils of David (*ver. 5-7*).

<sup>11</sup> The metaphor is of a drowning man.

<sup>12</sup> Cords. The metaphor is now of a hunted animal.

<sup>13</sup> Hades or Sheol, the abode of departed spirits.

<sup>14</sup> Anticipated, *i. e.* caught me before I was aware of them.

<sup>15</sup> Out of Heaven, not out of the Temple or Tabernacle on earth

IV. The Theophany or Manifestation of Jehovah. His visible appearance for the Discomfiture of David's enemies (*ver. 8-14*).

<sup>16</sup> *The hills* (Ps. xviii. 7).

Compare the description of the manifestation of Jehovah at Sinai (Ex. xix. 16-18).

<sup>17</sup> The sign of pent-up fire.

- 10 He <sup>16</sup>bowed the heavens also, and came down,  
And darkness was under his feet.
- 11 And <sup>19</sup>he rode upon a cherub, and did fly;  
And he <sup>20</sup>was seen upon the wings of the wind.
- 12 And he made darkness pavilions round about him,  
<sup>21</sup>Dark waters, and <sup>22</sup>thick clouds of the skies.
- 13 <sup>23</sup>Through the brightness before him Were <sup>24</sup>coals of fire kindled.
- 14 The LORD thundered from <sup>25</sup>heaven,  
And the most High uttered his <sup>26</sup>voice.
- 15 And he sent out arrows, and scattered <sup>27</sup>them;  
Lightning, and <sup>28</sup>discomfited them.
- 16 And the <sup>29</sup>channels of the sea appeared,  
The foundations of the world were <sup>30</sup>discovered  
At the rebuking of the LORD,  
At the blast of the breath of his nostrils.
- 17 He sent from above, he took me;  
He drew me <sup>31</sup>out of many waters:
- 18 He delivered me from my strong <sup>32</sup>enemy,  
And from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.
- 19 They <sup>33</sup>prevented me in the day of my calamity,  
But the LORD was my <sup>34</sup>stay.
- 20 He brought me <sup>35</sup>forth also into a <sup>36</sup>large place,  
He delivered me, because he delighted in me.

18 The dark storm cloud lowers as Jehovah descends in his wrath upon the earth.

19 The picture is—

1. Jehovah enthroned on the Cherubim (ver. 11).

2. A dark storm cloud beneath him (ver. 10).

3. Dark clouds surround him, forming a pavilion or tent, concealing him from sight (ver. 12).

4. Fire flashes from the clouds, symbolical of fiery vengeance (ver. 13).

20 "Did fly" (Ps. xviii. 10).

21 Gathering of waters.

22 Clouds of clouds, *i.e.* the thickest of clouds.

23 Better "out of the brightness."

24 "Hailstones and coals of fire" (Ps. xviii. 13).

V. The Discomfiture of David's enemies (ver. 14-16).

25 Ps. xviii. 13, adds "hailstones and coals of fire."

26 Thunder is represented as the voice of God.

27 David's enemies.

28 Utterly routed and overthrew them.

29 The bed.

30 Uncovered = laid bare. A reference to the passage of the Red Sea.

VI. The Deliverance of David (ver. 17-20).

31 Rescue from drowning, following the metaphor of ver. 5.

32 Probably Saul is intended.

33 "Anticipated" *i.e.* attacked me when unprepared.

34 My support (*e.g.* the stays that support a ship's masts), when an exile through the persecution of Saul.

35 Released him from snares and cords, following the metaphor of ver. 6.

36 A broad space, where he could move freely.

- 21 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness :  
According to the <sup>37</sup>cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.
- 22 For I have <sup>38</sup>kept the ways of the LORD,  
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
- 23 For all his judgments <sup>39</sup>were before me,  
And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.
- 24 I was also <sup>40</sup>upright before him,  
And have kept myself from mine iniquity.
- 25 Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me <sup>41</sup>according to my righteousness;  
According to my cleanness in his sight.
- 26 <sup>42</sup>With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful,  
And with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.
- 27 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure ;  
And with the froward thou wilt shew thyself <sup>43</sup>unsavoury.
- 28 And the afflicted people thou wilt save,  
<sup>44</sup>But thine eyes are upon the haughty,  
that thou mayest bring them down.
- 29 For thou <sup>45</sup>art my lamp, O LORD :  
And the LORD will lighten my darkness.
- 30 For by thee I have <sup>46</sup>run through a troop :  
By my God have I <sup>47</sup>leaped over a wall.

VII. David's integrity the cause of his deliverance (*ver.* 21-25).

<sup>37</sup> The purity of my actions.

<sup>38</sup> David proceeds to justify his claim to righteousness asserted in *ver.* 21.

<sup>39</sup> As a standard before my eyes; the ideal for which I aim.

<sup>40</sup> Perfect, see *ver.* 31-33.

<sup>41</sup> As one reads this declaration of innocence, one is convinced that the Psalm was composed before David's great sin.

VIII. The law governing God's dealings with men (*ver.* 26-28).

<sup>42</sup> An assertion of an essential truth, *viz.* that the conduct of God towards men is regulated according to the conduct of men towards God, *viz.*—He shows himself

(1) To the merciful as merciful.

(2) To the pious as pious.

(3) To the pure as pure.

(4) To the perverse as perverse.

<sup>43</sup> "Froward" (Ps. xviii. 26).

<sup>44</sup> "But wilt bring down high looks" (Ps. xviii. 27).

IX. God's faithfulness confirmed by the experiences of David (*ver.* 29-46).

(1) In his escapes (*ver.* 29-35).

<sup>45</sup> "Wilt light my candle" (Ps. xviii. 28).

<sup>46</sup> Better "run after." Perhaps an allusion to his successful pursuit of the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx.).

<sup>47</sup> Perhaps a reference to the capture of Jerusalem.

- 31 As for God, his way is perfect :  
The word of the LORD is <sup>48</sup>tried:  
He is a buckler to all them that  
trust in him.
- 32 For who is God, save the LORD?  
And who is a rock, save our God?
- 33 <sup>49</sup>God is my <sup>50</sup>strength and power:  
And he maketh my way perfect.
- 34 He maketh my feet like <sup>51</sup>hinds' feet,  
And setteth me upon my <sup>52</sup>high  
places.
- 35 He teacheth my hands to war;  
So that a bow of steel <sup>53</sup>is broken by  
mine arms.
- 36 Thou hast also given me the <sup>54</sup>shield  
of thy salvation.  
<sup>55</sup>And thy <sup>56</sup>gentleness hath made me  
great.
- 37 Thou <sup>57</sup>hast enlarged my steps under  
me;  
So that my feet <sup>58</sup>did not slip.
- 38 I have pursued mine enemies, and  
destroyed them;  
And turned not again until I had  
consumed them
- 39 And I have consumed them, and  
<sup>59</sup>wounded them, that they could not  
arise:  
Yea, they are fallen under my feet.
- 40 For <sup>60</sup>thou hast girded me with  
strength to battle:  
Them that rose up against me hast  
thou subdued under me.
- 41 Thou <sup>61</sup>hast also given me the necks  
of mine enemies,  
That I might destroy them that hate  
me.
- 42 They <sup>62</sup>looked, but there was none to  
save;  
Even unto the LORD, but he an-  
swered them not.

<sup>48</sup> Refined, purged from all  
impurity, like pure gold,  
pure silver, etc.

<sup>49</sup> "It is God that girdeth me  
with strength" (Ps. xviii.  
32).

<sup>50</sup> My strong fortress.

<sup>51</sup> A type of the agility re-  
quired in the mountain  
warfare of Palestine.

<sup>52</sup> = the high land of Judæa,  
abounding in mountain  
fastnesses.

<sup>53</sup> A sign of great strength.

(2) In his victories (ver.  
36-43).

<sup>54</sup> The protection of the  
saving grace of Jehovah.

<sup>55</sup> Ps. xviii. 35 adds, "and thy  
right hand hath holden me  
up."

<sup>56</sup> Better "Thy hearing," i.e.  
in answer to my prayers.

<sup>57</sup> Thou makest my steps  
broad, i.e. providedst me  
with a broad space for  
free motion, removing all  
obstacles out of the way.

<sup>58</sup> Thus he had been able to  
take firm and safe steps.

<sup>60</sup> Ps. xviii. 38 omits  
"consumed them."

Note the accumulation of  
phrases expressing the  
utter destruction of his  
foes.

<sup>60</sup> David attributes his vic-  
tories to the aid of  
Jehovah.

<sup>61</sup> Better "hast made them  
turn their backs to me" =  
hast put them to flight  
before me.

<sup>62</sup> "Cried," Ps. xviii. 47.

- 43 Then did I beat them as small as  
the dust of the earth,  
I did stamp them as the mire of the  
street, and <sup>63</sup>did spread them  
abroad.
- 44 Thou also hast delivered me from  
the <sup>64</sup>strivings of my people,  
Thou hast <sup>65</sup>kept me to be <sup>66</sup>head of  
the heathen;  
A people which I know not shall  
serve me.
- 45 Strangers shall <sup>67</sup>submit themselves  
unto me,  
As soon as they hear, they shall be  
obedient unto me.
- 46 Strangers shall <sup>68</sup>fade away,  
And <sup>69</sup>they shall be afraid out of their  
close places.
- 47 The LORD <sup>70</sup>liveth; and blessed be  
my rock;  
And exalted be the God of the rock  
of my salvation.
- 48 It is God that <sup>71</sup>avengeth me,  
And that bringeth down the people  
under me,
- 49 And that bringeth me forth from  
mine enemies:  
Thou also hast lifted me up on high  
above them that rose up against  
me:  
Thou hast delivered me from the  
<sup>72</sup>violent man.
- 50 Therefore I will give thanks unto  
thee, O LORD, <sup>73</sup>among the heathen,  
And I will sing praises unto thy  
name.
- 51 <sup>74</sup>He is the tower of salvation for his  
king,  
And sheweth mercy to his anointed,  
Unto David, <sup>75</sup>and to his seed for  
evermore.

<sup>63</sup> Ps. xviii. 42 omits "and did spread them abroad."

(3) In his successful government (*ver.* 44-46).

<sup>64</sup> An allusion to his work in consolidating the unity of the nation. To obtain this he had to contend with the dissensions which so seriously militated against united action.

<sup>65</sup> Ps. xviii. 43, "thou hast made me," is not quite so strong an expression.

<sup>66</sup> An allusion to his victories over the neighbouring heathen nations.

<sup>67</sup> Compare the embassy of Toi king of Hamath, when he heard of David's victory over the Syrians and Ammonites (*viii.* 9).

<sup>68</sup> Like plants shrivelled up by great heat.

<sup>69</sup> Better, "They shall come with trembling out of their strongholds."

**X. Concluding outburst of Thanksgiving (*ver.* 47-51).**  
<sup>70</sup> *i. e.* is the living God.

<sup>71</sup> Note:

(1) The death of Nabal.

(2) The death of Saul.

(3) The deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth.

All these were enemies of David, and were removed out of his vengeance.

<sup>72</sup> Saul,—an allusion to his persistent violent persecution of David.

<sup>73</sup> The deliverance vouchsafed to David is so great that the praise thereof could not be limited to Israel. St. Paul quotes this verse (50) as a proof that the salvation of God was intended for the Gentiles also (*Rom.* xv. 9).

<sup>74</sup> "Great deliverance giveth he to his king" (*Ps.* xviii. 50).

<sup>75</sup> Evidently referring to the promise given through Nathan (*vii.* 12-16).

### The Last Words of David.

23 Now these be the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse said,  
And the man <sup>1</sup>who was raised up on high,

The anointed of God of Jacob,  
And <sup>2</sup>the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

2 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me,  
And his word was <sup>3</sup>in my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said,  
The Rock of Israel spake to me,  
He that ruleth over men must be just,  
Ruling in the fear of God.

4 And <sup>4</sup>he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,  
Even a morning without clouds; as <sup>5</sup>the tender grass springing out of the earth,  
By clear shining after rain.

5 Although <sup>6</sup>my house be not so with God;  
Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant,  
Ordered in all things, and sure:  
For this is all my salvation, and all my desire,  
Although he make it not to grow.

6 But <sup>7</sup>the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away,  
Because they cannot be taken with hands:

7 But the man that shall touch them must be <sup>8</sup>fenced with iron and the staff of a spear;  
And they shall be utterly <sup>9</sup>burned with fire in the same place.

David's last formal and inspired utterance. It is based on Nathan's prophecy (vii. 12-17).

I. Descriptive of David, and his claim to inspiration (ver. 1-2).

<sup>1</sup> From tending sheep to be king over Israel.

<sup>2</sup> *Lit.* "He that is pleasant in Israel's psalms."

<sup>3</sup> Upon.

II. Descriptive of the ideal reign of the king of righteousness (ver. 3-4).

<sup>4</sup> The appearance of the ideal king will be like the sunshine of a cloudless morning.

<sup>5</sup> The prosperity of his reign is likened to the effect of sunshine after rain. The land is for the greater part of the year "brown, hard-baked." After rain it becomes "a deep, solid growth of clovers and grasses" (TRISTRAM).

III. A claim to the fulfilment of Nathan's prophecy in his own house (ver. 5).

<sup>6</sup> The kingdom of David is a type of the kingdom of the Messiah, in whose rule the prophecy will find complete fulfilment.

IV. The reign of righteousness contrasted with the rule of wickedness (ver. 6-7).

<sup>7</sup> Worthless fellows (see p. 108). David contrasts the destruction of these persons with the stability of God's kingdom (ver. 5). David may be thinking of such men as Shimei, Sheba and Joab.

<sup>8</sup> The metaphor of the handling of thorns is continued. The hands must be protected, and the thorns uprooted by an iron instrument with a long handle.

<sup>9</sup> The fate of thorns and worthless weeds. Omit "in the same place."

## The Heroes of David and their Great Deeds.

(See 1 Chron. xi. 11-41.)

### The First Three.

8 These be the names of the mighty men whom David had; <sup>1</sup>The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, <sup>2</sup>chief among the captains; <sup>3</sup>the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against <sup>4</sup>eight hundred, whom he slew at one time. 9 And after him was <sup>5</sup>Eleazar the son of Dodo the 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 <sup>6</sup>were gone away: 10 He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people <sup>7</sup>returned after him only to spoil. 11 And after him was <sup>8</sup>Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground <sup>9</sup>full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. 12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.

over the feat of Eleazar (*ver.* 10), and to ascribe to him the feat of Shammah in *ver.* 11.  
<sup>9</sup> "Barley" in Chronicles. The Philistines had made a raid to ravage the crops of the Israelites.

### Three Heroes fetch Water from the Well at Beth-lehem.

13 And <sup>1</sup>three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of <sup>2</sup>Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines <sup>3</sup>pitched in

<sup>2</sup> Intro. p. lii. The stronghold of *ver.* 14, where David had taken up his position to meet the invaders.

<sup>3</sup> This event must therefore be assigned to one or other of the two invasions in the early part of David's reign (*v.* 17 and 22).

For particulars of David's military organization (see Intro. p. xlvii).

From 1 Chron. xi. 10, where the list follows on David's capture of Jerusalem, we see that we must assign this list to an early period of David's reign.

<sup>1</sup> Jashobeam the Hachmonite (1 Chron. xi. 11).

<sup>2</sup> The word signifies "royal aide-de-camp."

<sup>3</sup> A corruption in the text. Chronicles reads, "he lifted up his spear" (xi. 11); see also *ver.* 18 below.

<sup>4</sup> "300" (Chron. xi. 11).

<sup>5</sup> "He was with David at Pas-dammin" (1 Chron. xi. 13). Pas-dammin is probably the same as Ephes-dammin = "the boundary of blood," and so named as the scene of many skirmishes with the Philistines.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. "went up," *i.e.* had gone up to battle. Verse 10 is omitted in Chronicles.

<sup>7</sup> Not that the Israelites had been routed and then came back, but that they followed close after Eleazar spoiling the fallen foe.

<sup>8</sup> Intro. p. cxv. Omitted in Chronicles. The result of the omissions is to pass

<sup>1</sup> Probably Abishai, Benaiah, and an unnamed hero. Abishai and Benaiah may have owed their promotion to this feat.

the valley of Rephaim. 14 And David was then in <sup>4</sup>an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was <sup>5</sup>then in Beth-lehem. 15 And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me a drink of the water of the well of <sup>6</sup>Beth-lehem, which is by the gate! 16 And the three mighty men <sup>7</sup>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: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but <sup>8</sup>poured it out unto the LORD. 17 And he said, Be it far from me O LORD, that I should do this: is not <sup>9</sup>this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

<sup>4</sup> The stronghold, *i.e.* of Adullam.

<sup>5</sup> The Philistines had worked round his rear and had established a military post in front of Bethlehem.

<sup>6</sup> Intro. p. lv.

<sup>7</sup> The three heroes pass through the Philistine host in the valley of Rephaim, and bring David the water. A daring feat, and one marking the devotion to himself that David inspired in his followers.

<sup>8</sup> As a drink offering or libation to Jehovah.

<sup>9</sup> As being gained at the risk of their lives.

### The Mighty Deeds of Abishai and Benaiah.

18 And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruah, was <sup>1</sup>chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three. 19 Was he not most honourable <sup>2</sup>of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the <sup>3</sup>first three. 20 And <sup>4</sup>Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two <sup>5</sup>lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a <sup>6</sup>pit in the time of snow: 21 And he slew an Egyptian, a <sup>7</sup>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. 22 These things did Benaiah the son of

<sup>1</sup> Chief of the three (Intro. p. xc: and page 91).

<sup>2</sup> The three, *i.e.* the second triad.

<sup>3</sup> Which consisted of Jashobeam, Eleazar and Shammah.

<sup>4</sup> Intro. p. xcix. Commander of the body-guard.

<sup>5</sup> Lit. "Lion of God," an expression for some notable warrior. This incident may have occurred in the war with Moab.

<sup>6</sup> The lion had taken up his abode in a cistern or tank in the neighbourhood of some village to the terror of the inhabitants.

<sup>7</sup> "A man of great stature five cubits high" (1 Chron. xi. 23).

Jehoiada, and had the name among <sup>8</sup>three mighty men. 23 He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the <sup>9</sup>first three. And David <sup>10</sup>set him over his guard.

<sup>8</sup> The second triad.

<sup>9</sup> The first triad, see *ver.* 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Lit.* "private audience," *i.e.* made him a member of his privy council, a position distinct from that of captain of the body-guard.

### The Thirty Heroes.

24 <sup>1</sup>Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem, 25 Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite, 26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, 27 Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, 28 Zalmon the Ahobite, Maharai the Netophathite, 29 Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, 30 Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, 31 Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, 32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, 33 Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, <sup>2</sup>Eliam the son of <sup>3</sup>Ahithophel the Gilonite, 35 Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, 36 Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37 Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, <sup>4</sup>armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruah, 38 Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, 39 <sup>5</sup>Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.

<sup>1</sup> Killed by Abner early in David's reign (ii. 23). The mention of his name in the list indicates that it was compiled early in the reign. It may also account for the fact that there are thirty-one names. Elikah, *ver.* 25, does not appear in Chronicles. It is suggested that he took the place vacated by the death of Asahel. We have probably an account of how David's band of 600 men was divided and officered.

#### The Band, 600.

Thirty companies of 20 each, commanded severally by one of the Thirty heroes.

Three divisions of 200 each, commanded severally by one of the Three, Jashobeam, Eleazar and Shammah.

We have now to account for Abishai, Benaiah and Joab.

1. **Abishai** was at the head of the whole band, *i.e.* the general in command of the 600.

2. **Benaiah** was captain over David's body-guard.

3. **Joab**, as captain of the host, occupied a position distinct from the mighty men, and yet was their general in a campaign.

Thus a separate position

is assigned to each of these heroes. Abishai might naturally be placed in command, and his not attaining to the first three may be taken to mean that his exploits did not rank as high as theirs.

<sup>2</sup> Generally supposed to be the father of Bath-sheba.

<sup>3</sup> The celebrated counsellor of David, and the great supporter of Absalom in his rebellion.

<sup>4</sup> Joab had ten armour-bearers (see xviii. 15).

<sup>5</sup> The husband of Bath-sheba.

## The Numbering of the People.

(See 1 Chron. xxi. 1-17.)

24 And <sup>1</sup>again the anger of the LORD was kindled against <sup>2</sup>Israel, and <sup>3</sup>he moved David against them to say, Go, <sup>4</sup>number <sup>5</sup>Israel and Judah. 2 For the king <sup>6</sup>said to Joab the captain of the host which was with him, Go now <sup>7</sup>through all the tribes of Israel, from <sup>8</sup>Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the <sup>9</sup>number of the people. 3 And <sup>10</sup>Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and <sup>11</sup>that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing? 4 Notwithstanding the king's word <sup>12</sup>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. 5 And they passed over Jordan, and <sup>13</sup>pitched in <sup>14</sup>Aroer, on the <sup>15</sup>right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of <sup>16</sup>Gad, and towards <sup>17</sup>Jazer: 6 Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of <sup>18</sup>Tahtim-hodshi; and they came to <sup>19</sup>Dan-jaan, and about to <sup>20</sup>Zidon, 7 And came to the strong hold of <sup>21</sup>Tyre, and to all the cities of the <sup>22</sup>Hivites, and of the <sup>23</sup>Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, even to <sup>24</sup>Beer-sheba. 8 So

<sup>1</sup> As in the drought, thus connecting the narrative with xxi. 14. The narrative ends (xxiv. 25) with exactly the same words as xxi. 14: "So the Lord was intreated."

<sup>2</sup> Partners in David's sin.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicles has "Satan" = adversary. May we not assume that some unfriendly adviser of David purposely counselled him to take the foolish step.

<sup>4</sup> Take a census of.

<sup>5</sup> See p. xlv.

<sup>6</sup> David gives way to the temptation.

<sup>7</sup> To and fro through all the tribes.

<sup>8</sup> *i.e.* throughout the land (Intro. p. lvii.).

<sup>9</sup> Sum, *i.e.* the sum total (see *ver.* 9).

<sup>10</sup> The shrewd Joab saw that the act was *politically* a mistake. It would irritate the people. We cannot suppose that he was influenced by religious motives.

<sup>11</sup> Maysuch increase happen in the king's reign.

<sup>12</sup> The self-willed king has his own way.

<sup>13</sup> *i.e.* their tents, descriptive of a temporary stay.

<sup>14</sup> Intro. p. liii.

<sup>15</sup> The south side.

<sup>16</sup> Intro. p. lxiv. Read "that lieth in the midst of the river, toward Gad," thus giving the direction of the route.

<sup>17</sup> Intro. p. lxvii.

<sup>18</sup> Intro. p. lxx. No such district is mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>19</sup> Intro. p. lviii. Probably the Dan or Laish at the extreme north of the land.

<sup>20</sup> Intro. p. lxxiii.

<sup>21</sup> Intro. p. lxxii.

<sup>22</sup> Intro. p. lxxix.

<sup>23</sup> Intro. p. lxxvi.

<sup>24</sup> Palesune.

<sup>24</sup> Intro. p. v.

The native races had never been entirely rooted out from the north of

when they had gone <sup>26</sup>through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. 9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel <sup>26</sup>eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were <sup>27</sup>five hundred thousand men.

<sup>26</sup> 1,100,000 (1 Chron. xxi. 5).

<sup>27</sup> 470,000 (1 Chron. xxxi. 5) (see p. xi.).

Neither Levites nor those under twenty years old were numbered.

In this chapter we have

1. *The sin, i.e. the numbering of the people.*
2. *The punishment, i.e. the pestilence.*
3. *The removal of the guilt, i.e. by sacrifice.*

On the sin of David, see Intro. p. xxxi.

### David is given his Choice of Punishments.

10 And David's <sup>1</sup>heart smote him after he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. 11 <sup>2</sup>For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet <sup>3</sup>Gad, David's seer, saying, 12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. 13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall <sup>4</sup>seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now <sup>5</sup>advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me. 14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a <sup>6</sup>great <sup>7</sup>strait: <sup>8</sup>let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man.

<sup>25</sup> To and fro through all the land.

We may note the route.

1. South from Jerusalem round the Dead Sea to Aroer.
2. Then northwards on the East of Jordan through Gilead.
3. Then crossing through Naphtali to Dan, and westwards to Tyre.
4. Then south through the land of Canaan proper.

<sup>1</sup> His conscience immediately accused him.

<sup>2</sup> And when David rose up in the morning, probably the morning after Joab's return.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. p. c. The companion in his exile (1 Sam. xxii. 5), and a writer of the chronicles of his reign (1 Chron. xxix. 29). He may have recorded this incident.

<sup>4</sup> Three years (1 Chron. xxi. 12), thus making the punishments symmetrical in their number.

Famine, sword, pestilence, and noisome beasts are the "four sore judgments" mentioned in Ezek. (xiv. 13-21).

<sup>5</sup> Reflect, decide after consideration.

<sup>6</sup> In a difficult position, as one hemmed on all sides in a narrow place.

<sup>7</sup> Strait = narrow—significant that either way he might turn there was no road of escape.

<sup>8</sup> David returns to his old spirit of dependence upon God and chooses the punishment directly dependent upon God, and one from which his royal position would not necessarily free him.

## The Pestilence.

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the <sup>1</sup>time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba <sup>2</sup>seventy thousand men. 16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD <sup>3</sup>repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the <sup>4</sup>threshingplace of <sup>5</sup>Araunah the <sup>6</sup>Jebusite. 17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, <sup>7</sup>Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these <sup>8</sup>sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

<sup>1</sup> i. e. the three days of, *ver.* 13.

<sup>2</sup> The greatest visitation recorded as having fallen upon Israel.

<sup>3</sup> The repentance of David is followed by the change of purpose on the part of Jehovah (see note xxii. 25-27).

<sup>4</sup> The threshingfloor was on Mount Moriah. On threshingfloors see p. 118.

<sup>5</sup> Intro. p. xcvi. Ornan (1 Chron. xxi. 15).

<sup>6</sup> One of the original inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup> It is I that have sinned.

<sup>8</sup> David describes the people as passive sufferers of the consequences of the sin of their king. But verse 1 clearly states that the people were imbued with some spirit of pride, as David was.

Particulars of the action of the angel (see 1 Chron. xxi. 14-27).

1. "He stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite" (xxi. 15).
2. "David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between heaven and earth, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem" (16).
3. "The angel of the Lord commanded God to say to David, that David should go up, etc." (18).
4. "And Ornan turned back and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves" (20).
5. "And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again in the sheath thereof" (27).
6. David could not go up to the tabernacle at Gibeon "to enquire of God; for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel" (30).

## David sacrifices at the Threshingfloor of Araunah.

## The Plague is Stayed.

18 And Gad <sup>1</sup>came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite. 19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. 20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah <sup>2</sup>went out, and bowed

<sup>1</sup> By the command of the angel (1 Chron. xxi. 18). He was sent in answer to David's prayer.

<sup>2</sup> From the threshingfloor.

himself before the king on his face upon the ground. 21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people. 22 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be <sup>3</sup>oxen for burnt sacrifice, and <sup>4</sup>threshing instruments and other <sup>5</sup>instruments of the oxen for wood. 23 All these things did Araunah, <sup>6</sup>as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee. 24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay: <sup>7</sup>but I will surely buy it of thee at <sup>8</sup>a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for <sup>9</sup>fifty shekels of silver. 25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was <sup>10</sup>intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

<sup>3</sup> Just treading out the corn.

<sup>4</sup> The threshing sledges (see p. 118).

<sup>5</sup> The yokes of the oxen.

<sup>6</sup> See note p. xcvi. on Araunah.

<sup>7</sup> David refuses to offer to God that which cost him nothing.

<sup>8</sup> At its just value, "for the full price" (1 Chron. xxi. 24).

<sup>9</sup> About £5. This would be for the oxen and threshing instruments. 600 shekels is mentioned (1 Chron. xxi. 25).

The 600 shekels would be the payment for the threshingfloor, which was subsequently the site of the Temple.

<sup>10</sup> Accepted David's prayer and removed the plague.

From Chronicles we learn—

1. That the Lord answered David "by fire upon the altar of burnt offering" (1 Chron. xxi. 26).
2. That "the tabernacle of the Lord which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon. But David could not go before it to enquire of God; for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord" (xxi. 29-30).



THE TRIBES.

COMMENTS  
ON THE  
REVISED VERSION.

"The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places." (i. 19.)

The beauty of Israel.

R.V. Thy glory, O Israel.

The margin in R.V. gives "*gazelle*." If so, the reference is distinctly to Jonathan. But the original signifies "*glory*" or "*ornament*," and consequently refers to Saul and Jonathan, who were the chief glory, pride and ornament of the nation.

"For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away." (i. 21.)

Is vilely cast away.

R.V. (margin) Was defiled.

The original can hardly bear the sense of "*cast away*," but appears to indicate "*polluted*" or "*defiled*," viz. with the blood of the heroes whom the shield failed to defend.

"Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul." (iii. 6.)

For.

R.V. In.

If we follow the R.V. we get an intelligible motive for Abner's conduct. He was not acting "for," *i.e.* in the interests of the family of Saul, but using the influence of Saul's family to strengthen his own position.

He set up Ish-bosheth, a puppet king, probably to save himself from submitting to David; and that he might rule in Ish-bosheth's name. Later he may have conceived the idea of winning the throne for himself. His appropriation of Rizpah is a sign that he was aiming at the throne.

His attempt appears to have failed, and he gradually became convinced that David must eventually become king over the whole land, and then he determined to desert Ish-bosheth for David, and secure for himself some post of honour.

It is absurd to imagine that he married Rizpah with the object of incensing Ish-bosheth, and thus affording a pretext for his desertion to David. There was no necessity for this act of subterfuge.

"Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father," etc. ? (iii. 8.)

R.V. **Am I a dog's head that belongeth to Judah? This day do I show kindness unto the house of Saul thy father, etc.**

The A.V. would mean: Am I one whose help is worthless, who support your house against David?

The R.V. would imply that Ish-bosheth had taunted Abner with being at heart a partisan of Judah, and had applied to him the vile epithet of "dog's head." Abner retorts, "*Am I (as you say) a dog's head on the side of Judah? This day I am the chief prop of your throne, and this day thou chargest me with a fault,*" etc.

This is intelligible, and is probably what actually passed between Abner and Ish-bosheth.

"Behold the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop." (iii. 22.)

**From pursuing a troop.**

R.V. **From a foray.**

Lit. "*from a troop.*" Joab had been absent from Hebron on a raiding expedition. The R.V. makes this clear.

These expeditions were necessary, in order to pay the soldiers by means of the spoil they brought back with them.

"Who lay on a bed at noon." (iv. 5.)

R.V. **As he took his rest at noon.**

The R.V. makes it clear that Ish-bosheth was murdered whilst taking his mid-day *siesta*, according to the usual custom in hot countries.

"Who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings." (iv. 10.)

R.V. **Which was the reward I gave him for his tidings.**

The words "*thought that I would*" are not in the original.

The literal translation is, "*which was the reward I gave him.*" The R.V. rightly follows the literal rendering. The Amalekite expected a reward, and he got it, but not what he expected. He was rewarded by being put to death.

"Whosoever getteth up to the gutter and smiteth the Jebusites." (v. 8.)

R.V. **Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, let him get up to the watercourse.**

Watercourse is a better word than "gutter." It was either a channel cut by the water running down the face of the cliff, or a

subterranean passage supplying the defenders with water. (It is suggested that Araunah disclosed to Joab the existence of this passage.)

The rendering of the R.V. would make David point out to his men the only way of getting into the citadel.

**"The blind and lame shall not come into the house."** (v. 8.)

R.V. **There are the blind and the lame; he cannot come into the house.**

The A.V. means "no intercourse should be had with the Jebusites," and the proverb would apply to all objectionable persons.

The R.V. carries us back to the time when the proverb originated = the blind and lame are sufficient to defend the place. Thus the proverb would be applied to any impregnable fortress.

**"And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them."** (v. 21.)

**Burned them.**

R.V. **Took them away.**

The original has "*took them away*," and the R.V. gives the literal translation, David took them away in triumph as part of the spoil. Afterwards he burnt them (1 Chron. xiv. 12), in accordance with the manner prescribed in the Law (Deut. vii. 5-25).

**"Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them."** (v. 23.)

**Fetch a compass.**

R.V. **Make a circuit.**

To fetch a compass is an archaic expression for "making a circuit." The phrase was formerly common.

The R.V. replaces by the modern equivalent phrase.

**"When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees."** (v. 24.)

**The sound of a going.**

R.V. **The sound of marching.**

The original signifies a march, and is often used of the march of the hosts of Jehovah (see Judges v. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 7). It is well to emphasize the fact that the sound heralded the march of the heavenly hosts leading David and his men to victory. So the change made in the R.V. is a very important one.

**"The house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah."** (vi. 3, 4.)

**In Gibeah.**

R.V. **In the hill.**

The A.V. is entirely wrong. Abinadab resided at Kirjath-jearim, his house being situated on a hill near the city (1 Sam. vii. 1).

The original *Ha-Gibeah* signifies a hill, or high place, particularly a high place for sacrifice. As a proper name it means Gibeah of Saul. Most probably the hill where Abinadab lived was the "high place" of Kirjath-jearim, and thus we have a satisfactory reason for the choice of Kirjath-jearim as the abode of the ark.

"For the oxen shook it."

(vi. 6.)

Shook it.

R. V. **Stumbled.** (The same rendering as 1 Chron. xiii. 9.)

It is clear that the ark was in danger of falling out of the cart, for Uzzah put out his hand to save it.

The original means "to let go, or let be, hence to slip or stumble" (KEIL). Did the oxen slip or stumble, or was the ark slipping out of the cart? Two suggestions are given:—

1. That the road was rough and difficult, causing the oxen to stumble.
2. That the oxen suddenly turned aside to eat what grain there might be on the threshing floor (S.C.). The sudden swerve nearly overturned the cart.

The R. V. follows the former suggestion. The Speaker's Commentary supports the latter

"And David took **Metheg-ammah** out of the hand of the Philistines," (viii. 1.)

**Metheg-ammah.**

R. V. **The bridle of the mother-city.**

*Metheg* = bridle, *ammah* = metropolis. *Metheg-ammah* is not the name of the place. "*Took Gath and her towns*" is the rendering in 1 Chron. xviii. 1. Gath was the capital of Philistia, so the literal translation exactly describes what took place, viz. that David captured the chief city of the Philistines.

"And David's sons were chief rulers."

(viii. 18.)

**Chief rulers.**

R. V. **Priests.**

The original is usually translated "*priests*." The root means *to minister* or *manage affairs*, or *to serve*.

Applied to ecclesiastical matters, "*priest*" is the proper rendering for one who *serves* or *ministers* at the altar.

Applied to civil administration, *minister* as the confidential adviser of the king is the best rendering.

The same word is translated "*chief about the king*" (1 Chron. xviii. 17), and "*principal officer*" (1 Kings iv. 5), with the addition of "*the king's friend*."

*"And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David."* (x. 6)

**They stank.**

**R.V. They were become odious to.**

The language is figurative, indicating that they had become odious to David, *i.e.* had committed a deed which could not be forgiven. The original also conveys the idea that they had made themselves odious, and thus had brought the war upon themselves.

*"And of Ish-tob twelve thousand men."* (x. 6, also 8.)

**Of Ish-tob.**

**R.V. The men of Tob.**

*Ish* = man, and is not part of the proper name. *Tob* is the name of the district whence they came, and is the same district where Jephthah had taken refuge when banished by his brethren (Judges xi. 5).

*When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind."* (x. 9.)

**The front of the battle was against him.**

**R.V. The battle was set against him.**

*Front* = face of the opposite army. Joab was faced in rear and front by the two bodies of Syrians and Ammonites. There appears to be no reason for the change in the R.V. save for conformity with 1 Chron. xix. 10.

*"And it came to pass after the year was expired."* (xi. 1.)

**After the year was expired.**

**R.V. At the return of the year.**

The following spring is the time intended. During winter the campaign would cease, and the soldiers would retire into winter quarters. At the commencement of spring the campaign would be renewed.

*"The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents."* (xi. 11.)

**Tents.**

**R.V. Booths.**

The original signifies the rough shelters made of branches of trees, forming huts for the army besieging Rabbah.

*"And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city."* (xi. 16.)

**Observed.**

**R.V. Kept watch upon.**

The A.V. "observe" is used in the old sense of "keep watch upon." The modern sense would make it appear that Joab was reconnoitring the city. Joab blockaded Rabbah, and placed Uriah at a post upon which the besieged made frequent sallies.

"It did eat of his own meat." (xli. 3.)

Meat.

**R.V. Morsel.**

The R.V. brings out a touching trait in the story. The pet lamb actually shared with the poor man in his own meal.

"The man that hath done this thing shall surely die." (xii. 5.)

Shall surely die.

**R.V. Is worthy of death.**

*Lit.* "is a son of death." The usual Hebrew phrase for describing one who has committed an act deserving the death penalty.

Neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him. (xiv. 14.)

**R.V. Neither doth God take away life, but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from him.**

The R.V. gives a rendering which is a true picture of God's dealings with sinners. The sentence of death may be pronounced, but there is always an opportunity given to the sinner (*he that is banished*) for repentance, so that he may not be utterly cast out (*be an outcast*).

We get too a forcible appeal to David's own experience. For his sin with Bath-sheba Nathan pronounced the sentence, "Thou shalt surely die." David's penitence obtained a remission of this part of the Divine sentence against him.

"To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant<sup>s</sup> Joab done this thing" (xiv. 20.)

To fetch about this form of speech.

**R.V. To change the face of the matter.**

Joab had prompted the woman with the object of getting David to alter his determination to keep Absalom in banishment. The R.V. makes this clear.

"And Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him." (xv. 1.)

Chariots.

**R.V. A Chariot.**

We might think that Absalom was enrolling a strong bodyguard in preparation for the rebellion. Such was not the case. He assumed royal state, riding in a state-chariot, accompanied by the usual escort of horsemen and running footmen. As heir to the throne he had some justification for his action. Adonijah did the same thing, with the same intention (1 Kings i. 5).

"When any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment" (xv. 2.)

**A controversy.**

**R.V. A suit.**

A law suit is what is meant. The original is the same word translated "suit" in verse 4.

"Tarried in a place that was far off." (xv. 17.)

**R.V. Tarried in Beth-merak.**

**Beth-merak**=*The Far House*, and was evidently some well-known building. It may have been—

1. The last house in the suburbs of Jerusalem.
2. A fort guarding the Jericho road at the point where it crossed the Kidron.

From verse 23 it is clear that the spot was between the city and the Kidron, for David and his men had not yet passed over the brook.

"See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness." (xv. 28.)

**In the plain.**

**R.V. At the fords.**

The R.V. makes David's actual position clear. He and his followers had taken the Jericho road, passing over Olivet into the Jordan valley. At Jericho the plain would afford a suitable camping ground for the night, and at the same time its proximity to the fords of Jordan would enable him to cross the river at the first sign of pursuit.

When David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God. (xv. 32.)

**R.V. When David was come to the top of the ascent where God was worshipped.**

The original clearly indicates that on the summit of Olivet there was a *Bemah*, or high place, where people were accustomed to worship. This practice of worshipping at high places was general, and was not disapproved of until Solomon built the Temple.

The A.V. might be taken to imply that David worshipped here on his retreat, but that was not so. He passed by a place where people were in the habit of worshipping God.

"And a wench went and told them." (xvii. 17.)

**Wench. R.V. Maid-servant.**

**Went. R.V. Used to go.**

From the R.V. we clearly see that a clever scheme had been devised for communicating with David.

Jonathan and Ahimaz remained in hiding near the well at Enrogel,

outside the city. They could not venture into the city for fear of detection. Their well-known partizanship for David would make them objects of suspicion.

Hushai communicated with the priests. This he could do under the pretence of religious or ceremonial requirements.

The priests sent a maidservant, who could go to the well as if on her ordinary duties of fetching water.

But even with all these precautions, the two sons of the priests were seen, and narrowly escaped capture.

"*And Absalom met the servants of David.*" (xviii. 9.)

Met.

**R.V. Chanced to Meet.**

The original denotes a chance meeting. Absalom's army was scattered, and he himself was seeking safety in flight. Suddenly he came upon a party of David's men, and naturally turned aside into the thick of the wood to evade the pursuers.

"*Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life; for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.*" (xviii. 13.)

**R.V. Otherwise if I had dealt falsely against his life, (and there is no matter hid from the king), then thou thyself wouldest have stood aloof."**

The R.V. follows the Septuagint, and is, perhaps, more intelligible than the A.V. But either version gives a clear rendering of the man's meaning, viz. that the king would certainly discover the slayer of Absalom, and that Joab, though secretly pleased at the death of the prince, would not do anything to shield the murderer from the vengeance of David.

This passage gives a clear indication.

1. Of David's sagacity and penetration.
2. Of the unscrupulous character of Joab, which appears to have been well known.

"*And it is called to this day Absalom's place.*" (xviii. 18.)

Absalom's place.

**R.V. Absalom's monument.**

*Lit.* "Absalom's hand" = a memorial pillar, erected by Absalom

"*Then said Joab to Cush.*" (xviii. 21, etc.)

To Cush.

**R.V. To the Cushite.**

It is doubtful whether the original is *Cushi*, a proper name, or the "*Cushite*," i.e. a descendant of Cush. The form of the name

favours the latter view, and most commentators regard it as expressing the idea of the man being an Ethiopian slave in the service of Joab.

"*The speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house.*" (xix. 11.)

Even to his house.

R.V. **To bring him to his house.**

The R.V. makes it clear that David had learnt of the disposition of Israel to bring him back to Jerusalem.

"**And they went over Jordan before the king.**" (xix. 7.)

R.V. "**And they went through Jordan in the presence of the king.**"

From the R.V. it is clear that Ziba and his servants crossed the Jordan from west to east to welcome David on his return.

"*Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king.*" (xix. 36.)

Will go a little way over Jordan.

R.V. **Would but just go over Jordan.**

Kiel interprets that Barzillai would go over with David "for a short time," *i.e.* that he could not remain long with him. The R.V. states that the aged Gileadite went only a short distance on the other side of the river. It is probable that Barzillai went with David to Jerusalem, and after a short stay there returned to Mahanaim.

"*Lest he get him fenced cities and escape us.*" (xx. 6.)

Escape us.

R.V. **Escape out of our sight.**

Several explanations are given of this difficult passage.

1. *Escape us*—as in A.V., which follows the Vulgate.
2. *Deliver himself from our eye, i.e.* escape out of our sight—as in R.V., which follows the Hebrew.
3. *Pluck out our eye, i.e.* do us great mischief (so many translate the original).
4. *Overshadow our eye, i.e.* cause us anxiety, or hide where we cannot find him—as in the Septuagint.

The only point that is clear is that David fears lest Sheba should seize upon some fortified city which he could hold and defend for some considerable time, and make it a centre of disaffection. Unlike Absalom, David does not delay, he would strike swiftly, ere the rebellion came to a head. Hence his uneasiness at the delay of Amasa, and the commission given to Abishai to pursue with the force at his disposal in Jerusalem.

**"And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle, etc."** (xx. 8.)

**R.V. "And Joab was girded with his apparel of war that he had put on, and thereon was a girdle, etc."**

From the R.V. we can clearly see what happened. Joab's equipment is described for the purpose of explaining how he managed to stab Amasa without exciting suspicion. Round his military cloak he wore a girdle, in which was stuck a sword or dagger. As he met Abner this weapon happened (of course by design, but seemingly by accident) to fall to the ground. Joab picked it up in his left hand. The apparent accident did not rouse the suspicions of Amasa. The two chiefs approached and saluted, each taking the other's beard in his right hand. Then Joab drove the dagger in his left hand deep into the belly of the unsuspecting Amasa, who was powerless either to defend himself or to spring back and thus avoid the blow.

**"They cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench."** (xx. 15.)

**In the trench.**

**R.V. Against the rampart.**

The R.V. lets us know that the mound had been pushed across the trench or moat, and was now against the city wall. It was not till the mound had been pushed thus far that the battering of the walls would begin.

**Mount Ephraim.**

(xx. 21, and passim.)

**R.V. The hill country of Ephraim.**

By "Mount Ephraim," we must understand not a single mountain, but the hilly and fertile region of the high land of Central Palestine, extending from the plain of Jezreel in the north to Benjamin in the south.

**"And David inquired of the Lord."**

(xxi. 1.)

**R.V. And David sought the face of the Lord.**

The phrase is unusual, and does not describe the usual method of inquiring through the Urim and Thummim. The R.V. rightly translates by a different phrase in order to mark the difference. This is the only passage in the Books of Samuel where the phrase occurs, perhaps indicating that the compiler consulted a different authority. We may note that Chapter xxi. commences what is a kind of appendix to the reign of David.

**"We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel."** (xxi. 4.)

**R.V. 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.**

Notice how clearly the R.V. brings out the two ideas connected with the avenging of bloodshed—

1. That no money compensation was allowed by the Mosaic law (see Num. xxxv. 31).
2. That the Gibeonites did not desire vengeance against the nation of Israel, but against the house of Saul, *i.e.* against the family of the man who had committed the deed.

"*The coasts of Israel.*" (xxi. 5. and passim.)

Coasts.

R.V. **Borders.**

Coast, which is now applied to the seaside only, formerly meant "a border." The R.V. has rightly replaced the word by its modern equivalent.

"*Until water dropped upon them out of heaven.*" (xxi. 10.)

Dropped.

R.V. **Was poured.**

The R.V. shows that the rain was heavy. The heavy rain would be a manifest proof that the atonement was accepted.

## WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED.

The Editor would acknowledge his obligation to the  
"Bible Word Book."

**Advise** = to consider, reflect. Gad bids David "*advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me*" (xxiv. 13).

**Barbarities.** We have two \*instances of barbarous conduct in David's wars.

1. On the Moabites. "*With two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive*" (viii. 2). He thus put two-thirds of them to death.
2. On the Ammonites. He "*put them under saws and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln.*"

As these are the only instances recorded in David's wars, there must have been special reasons for the severity in each case.

(1) *Moabites.* Reasons generally given are:—

- (a) That the King of Moab had ill-treated and probably murdered Jesse and his family, who had been entrusted by David to the care of the King of Moab (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4).

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\* The relentless severity with which Joab crushed the Edomites (1 Kings xi. 15-16), is not recorded in 2 Samuel.

- (b) That David (see Psalm lx.) had been temporarily defeated by the Syrians, and that the Edomites and Moabites had tried to intercept his retreat.
- (2) *The Ammonites.* The insult offered to his ambassadors may have led David to be more than usually severe on the Ammonites, but it is not sufficient to explain the barbarous tortures inflicted upon them.

The Ammonites were savage, cruel foes, and had probably dealt ferociously with Hebrew captives. In 1 Sam. xi. 2 it is recorded that Nahash demanded to put out the right eye of every inhabitant of Jabesh-gilead as the condition of surrender. So David was carrying out the law of retaliation. So in the conquest of the land the Israelites cut off the thumbs and great toes of Adonibezek, king of Jerusalem (Judges i. 6, 7).

The causing them "to pass through the brick-kiln" may have been a punishment for their worship of Molech, to whom they sacrificed their children by fire.

NOTE.—We must judge David by the age in which he lived. The war usages of the times were notoriously barbarous. The ancient war-law was to give no quarter. David would probably be justified by the *public opinion of his own time* in his treatment of the Ammonites, but he is, of course, absolutely condemned in the light of the Gospel.

Instances may be quoted :—

1. Titus, generally regarded as just and humane, crucified his Jewish prisoners round the city of Jerusalem during the siege, until crosses could not be found for the bodies, nor places on which the crosses could stand.
2. The sack of Limoges by the Black Prince, the model of chivalry.
3. Sir Walter Raleigh advocated the extermination of the Spaniards at Smerwick.

We must know the spirit of the age and all the circumstances of the case ere we venture to pass judgment.

**Beard.** To the Eastern nations the beard is the symbol of manly dignity and strength, and the want of it is considered a sign of weakness and effeminacy. Hanun's object was to insult David's ambassadors, and to make them look ridiculous.

"Cutting off a person's beard is regarded by the Arabs as an indignity quite equal to flogging and branding among ourselves. Many would rather die than have their beards shaved off" (K.).

"In the year 1764 a pretender to the Persian throne, named Kerim Khan, sent ambassadors to Mir Mebenna, the Prince of Bendervigh, to demand tribute of him; he in return cut off the ambassadors' beards. Kerim Khan went the next year with a large army to avenge the insult" (K.).

Each of the twelve champions of Judah and Israel at the pool of Gibeon seized his opponent by the beard and smote him. Thus the whole twenty-four fell to the ground. Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand and stabbed him with the sword in his left hand.

On the eve of a battle Alexander the Great is said to have replied to his captains who asked him if he had any further commands: "None," said he, "but that the Macedonians shave their beards." Asked for his reason for this command, he added, "Know you not that in fight there is no better bold for the enemy than a beard?"

**Belial.** The word is given in the A.V. as if it were a proper name. The word, however, signifies worthlessness. Hence *daughter* or *son*, or *man* of Belial, signifies a worthless, good-for-nothing person.

**Birds of prey.** On the action of Rizpah in guarding the bodies of the executed sons of Saul, we may quote the following:—

"If an animal falls at night, it is not attacked till daylight, unless by the jackals and hyænas; but if it be slaughtered after sunrise, though the human eye may scan the firmament for a vulture in vain, within five minutes a speck will appear overhead, and, wheeling and circling in a rapid downward flight, a huge griffon will pounce on the carcass. In a few minutes a second and a third will dart down; another and another follows—griffons, Egyptian vultures, eagles, kites, buzzards, and ravens, till the air is darkened by the crowd. 'Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.'" (TRISTRAM'S "Natural History of the Bible," p. 169.)

**Blood-guiltiness.** Murder polluted the land, and no expiation could be made for the land but by the blood of him that shed it. See Numbers xxxv. 33, where the execution of the murderer is enjoined in order to remove the pollution of the land.

We have three instances of this law in II. Samuel:—

1. **The murder of Abner.** David asserts that he and his kingdom "*are guiltless before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner*" (iii. 28), meaning that he was innocent of Abner's death. Joab claimed to have the right to put Abner to death for the death of Asahel; so David invokes the sin of blood-guiltiness upon Joab, "*Let it rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house*" (iii. 29).
2. **The assassination of Ish-bosheth.** David requires the blood of the assassins in expiation of the murder they had committed.
3. **The execution of Saul's sons.** The famine is declared to be the consequence of Saul having slain the Gibeonites. His house is termed "*bloody*," *i.e.* blood-guilty, and "*atonement*" is made by handing over seven men of Saul's family to the Gibeonites.

**Blood-revenge.** The law was that when a man slew another the nearest relative had a right to exact vengeance—to put the murderer to death whenever he could find him.

Joab claimed the sanction of this law for his act in assassinating Abner. Was he justified in doing so?

Abner's anxiety to avoid slaying Asahel. "*How then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?*" (ii. 22) denotes his fear of the exaction of blood-revenge.

Abner's visit to Hebron was timed when Joab was absent upon an expedition.

Though Asahel had been slain by Abner in self-defence, this did not free him from the letter of the law regarding homicide. A man-slayer could obtain safety from the blood-avenger only by entering a city of refuge.

Thus, reading the law on homicide strictly, it would appear that Joab, however unreasonable his conduct might seem, could claim

custom to be on his side. Public opinion might be shocked, but it would not wholly condemn Joab.

*Summary.*—(1) The conduct of Joab was treacherous and unreasonable, and his alleged motive false, and merely a pretext for removing so dangerous a rival. But he was within the strict letter of the law.

(2) It was well for David to accept the alleged reason, for it was important that the deed should appear as an act of private revenge rather than of political jealousy. Had David inflicted punishment on Joab, he must have given a political complexion to the transaction.

(3) David could not afford to lose the powerful assistance of Joab and Abishai.

So the king gives (we may say), Joab the benefit of the doubt, but expresses his abhorrence of the transaction, and disavows any complicity in the act.

**Book of Jasher**, equivalent (as given in the margin) to "*the book of the upright.*"

There are two quotations from the Book of Jasher—

1. In Joshua with reference to the miracle of the sun standing still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon (Josh. x. 13).
2. In the elegy of David over Saul and Jonathan, where the "Song of the Bow," *i.e.* a song praising the skill of Saul and Jonathan as archers, is said to be "*written in the Book of Jasher*" (2 Sam. i. 18).

These passages indicate that the general character of the book was poetical, and taken in conjunction with the title, "The Book of the Upright," justifies the opinion of Ewald, who describes it as consisting of "historical songs, how an upright man in Israel, a Joshua or a Jonathan, should live, what glorious victories he could achieve, what glory he would gain."

"It was evidently compiled by degrees, any ode or song thought worthy of such honour being added to it when produced; so that the quotation of it here is no proof at all that the Book of Joshua was composed after the reference to the Book of Jasher in 2 Sam. i.; and as little is the quotation in 2 Sam. i. a proof that the Book of Jasher was not extant until, at any rate, the time of David"—(*Speaker's Commentary*).

**Bracelets, or Armlets.** A very ancient and still existing symbol of royalty among Eastern nations. They appear in the ancient monuments of Egypt, Persia and Assyria.

**Chafed** = heated or inflamed with anger, exasperated. "*They be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds*" (xvii. 8). The Hebrew signifies "bitter of soul."

**Chargeable** = burdensome. The original sense of "charge" was "a load or burden." David declines the invitation of Absalom to his sheep-shearing feast. "*Let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee,*" i.e. cause thee to go to too great expense in entertaining us.

**Cherethites and Pelethites.** The Cherethites were a tribe in the country of the Philistines (1 Sam. xxx. 14), and it is conjectured that the Pelethites were of the same nation. When David abandoned Jerusalem, on the rebellion of Absalom, he was accompanied by "*all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath*" (xv. 18). It is probable that David during his residence in the country of the Philistines attached to himself a band of soldiers from that country. Ittai, the Gittite, appears to have been at the head of the Gittites, and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the commander of the Cherethites and Pelethites. The soldiers raised from Philistia appear to have been the first bodyguard of David, and the name "Cherethites and Pelethites" probably remained descriptive of the royal bodyguard long after this corps had ceased to be recruited from Philistia.

Another interpretation is "executioners and couriers."

**Chief rulers** (see p. 100, viii. 18), note.

**Clear** = bright. "*By clear shining after rain*" (xxiii. 4).

**Close** = secret, concealed. "*They shall be afraid out of their close places*" (xxii. 46).

**Coast**, "*any of the coast of Israel*" = in all the borders. Coast = border, or region. The word is now applied to the seaside only.

**Compass** = circuit, circumference. "*Fetch a compass behind them*" (v. 23) = to make a circuit, to go round them.

**Discomfit.** To unfasten, then to break up a mass into the parts of which it is composed, and so to break up, disperse, thoroughly rout an army. "*He sent out arrows and scattered them, lightning and discomfited them*" (xxii. 15), expressive of the confused panic caused by the exertion of Divine power.

**Dogs.** The wild street dogs of the East are regarded as unclean animals, and useful only as scavengers in clearing away the refuse and offal. So the dogs ate Jezebel in the streets of Jezreel (2 Kings ix. 33-36).

The terms "dog," "dead dog," "dog's head," are expressions of reproach and contempt.

*Instances in II. Samuel are:—*

1. Abner to Ish-bosheth, "*Am I a dog's head?*" (iii. 8).
2. Mephibosheth, in humility, describes himself to David thus: "*What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?*" (ix. 8).

3. Abishai, when Shimel cursed David, exclaims: "*Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?*" (xvi. 9).

*Other instances.*

Goliath addressed David, "*Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves?*" (1 Sam. xvii. 43).

Hazael to Elisha, when Elisha prophesied that he would put Benhadad to death and ascend the throne of Syria, "*Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?*" (2 Kings viii. 13).

So in the Revelation, "*For without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers*" (Rev. xxii. 15).

**Elders**, or old men, were the representatives of the people.

They are first mentioned as acting in concert as a political body at the time of the Exodus. "*Moses came and called for the elders of the people*" (Ex. xix. 7). They retained their position under all the political changes which the Jews underwent, viz.—

- (a) Under Joshua. "*Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel*" (Josh. xxiv. 1).
- (b) Under the Judges. "*When the people were come into the camp the elders of Israel said,*" etc. (1 Sam. iv. 3).
- (c) Under the Kings. "*And the saying pleased Absalom well and all the elders of Israel*" (2 Sam. xvii. 4).
- (d) During the Captivity. "*The letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives*" (Jer. xxix. 1).
- (e) After the return. "*But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews that they could not cause them to cease*" (Ezra v. 5).

**Mention in II. Samuel.**

1. Abner consults the elders of Israel, *i.e.* the representatives of the northern tribes, on his intention to transfer the throne from Ish-boseth to David (iii. 17).
2. The elders of Israel anointed David king at Hebron over Israel (v. 3).
3. The elders sat in council with Absalom at Jerusalem (xvii. 4).
4. David instructed Zadok and Abiathar to negotiate with the elders of Judah for his return to Jerusalem (xix. 11).

**Enlarge.** To set at large or at liberty, to set free. "*Thou hast enlarged my steps under me*" = given me freedom of movement, and space to move in.

**Fetch about** = To bring about, contrive, in a circuitous manner. "*To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing*" (xiv. 20).

**Gate.** There appears to have been some spot set apart near the gate of a city where important matters were transacted, and where kings and magistrates sat and administered justice.

1. Absalom "*stood by the way of the gate*" (xv. 1), *i.e.* by the side of the road leading to the gate. He was thus enabled to discuss their cases with those who came to have audience with David. This was one of the steps by which Absalom won the hearts of Israel.
2. When, after the death of Absalom, David "*rose and sat in the gate*" (xix. 8), the people knew that the king was once more ready to give audience and to administer justice.

Over the gates were chambers. David went into "*the chamber over the gate*" (xviii. 33), to weep for Absalom.

There was an outer and inner gate. The space between these gates was known as "*in the midst of the gate.*" Joab assassinated Abner in the space between the outer and inner gate, where he had taken him aside for the sake of privacy, as if he had some secret communication for him (iii. 27).

**Generally** = universally or wholly. Hushai advises that "*all Israel be generally gathered*" together (xvii. 11), *i.e.* that there should be a gathering of the whole of Israel.

**Go out and come in.** A proverbial expression for the manner of leading one's life, especially in the active conduct of affairs.

In his declining years Moses speaks of himself as no longer able to "*go out and come in.*"

Joshua is chosen as Moses' successor as one "*which may go out before them and which may go in before them*" (Numb. xxvii. 17).

Of David it is said that "*he went out and came in before the people*" (1 Sam. xviii. 13).

Joab asserts to David that Abner had visited him at Hebron for the purpose of knowing "*thy going out and thy coming in,*" *i.e.* as a spy (2 Sam. iii. 25).

Solomon, before God at Gibeon, confesses his inability to govern the kingdom, "*I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or come in*" (1 Kings iii. 7), *i.e.* unskilled how to conduct the affairs of the kingdom in which he had succeeded his father David.

**Hold** = a stronghold. "*And David was then in a hold*" (xxiii. 14), *i.e.* in a fortress or stronghold.

**Hough** = to cut the ham-strings or back sinews of cattle so as to disable them. "*And David houghed all the chariot horses*" (viii. 4).

**House.** Eastern houses are built with flat roofs, used for various purposes  
*e.g.:*

*Prayer.* Peter at Joppa "*went up upon the housetop to pray*" (Acts x. 9).

*Proclamations.* "What ye hear in the ear that preach ye up upon the housetops" (St. Matt. x. 27).

*Promenades.* After supper David "walked upon the roof of the king's house" (2 Sam. xi. 2).

*For domestic purposes, e.g.* spreading flax, drying corn, etc.

*Sleeping Places,* as being cool during the summer season.

It is not uncommon for a house to be built on the wall of a city.

### Notices in II. Samuel.

David was walking upon the roof of his house when he saw Bath-sheba (xi. 2).

**Jeopardy** = danger, risk. "Is not this the blood of men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" (xxiii. 17).

**King's friend,** see p. 100.

**Mighty Men or Gibborim.** The "*Gibborim*," originally the company of 600 men who were the chief band of David's warriors during his time of exile in the later years of Saul's reign. On David's accession to the throne they became specially attached to the person of the king (see x. 7; xvi. 6; xx. 7). Their successors were a special body of picked warriors, forming the nucleus of the standing army. The modern equivalent is "household troops."

**Mound, at a siege,** see p. 77.

**Mourning.** Among the signs of mourning in the East are:—

#### 1. Fasting.

(a) David "fasted until even for Saul and for Jonathan" (i. 12).

(b) David did not "taste bread" till the sun went down in mourning for Abner (iii. 35).

(c) David "fasted" when the child of Bath-sheba was sick (xii. 16).

#### 2. Rending Garments.

(a) The Amalekite who brought the news of the death of Saul had "his clothes rent" (i. 2).

(b) David rent his clothes at the tidings of the death of Saul (i. 11).

(c) David bade the people to rend their clothes in mourning for Abner (iii. 31).

(d) Tamar rent her clothes (xiii. 19).

(e) Hushai met David on Mount Olivet "with his coat rent" (xv. 32).

#### 3. Earth or Dust upon the Head.

(a) The Amalekite who brought the news of the death of Saul came with "earth upon his head" (i. 2).

(b) Tamar put ashes on her head (xiii. 19).

(c) Hushai met David on Mount Olivet with "earth upon his head" (xv. 32).

4. Wearing sackcloth.

(a) David bade the people to put on sackcloth in mourning for Abner (iii. 31).

5. Head covered.

David ascended Mount Olivet in his flight with "head covered" (xv. 30), a mark of great grief, desiring no communication with others.

6. Feet bare.

David ascended Mount Olivet in his flight "barefoot" (xv. 30), a sign of penitence and humiliation.

7. Intentional neglect of one's person.

1. David is said to have "washed, anointed himself, and to have changed his apparel" on hearing of the death of his child, *i.e.* he abandoned the signs of mourning (xii. 20).

2. Mephibosheth had neither "washed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes," whilst David was absent from Jerusalem (xix. 24).

**Mulberry Trees.** "When thou hearest the sound a going in the tops of the mulberry trees" (v. 24). "Mulberry trees" is the translation of the Heb. *bacāh*, a word found only in this passage and in 1 Chron. xiv. 14, 15. The Bacah tree is probably meant. It is like the balsam tree, and may derive its name from *bacāh* "to weep," from the manner in which the sap exudes when a leaf is torn off. It is suggested that the "Valley of Baca" = valley of weeping (Ps. lxxxiv. 6) was so called from these trees growing there.

**Musical Instruments.**

1. Harp. (Heb. *kinnôr*.) A stringed instrument, the national musical instrument of the Hebrews, the exact form of which is unknown, being variously described as resembling the modern harp, or a guitar, or in the form of the Greek letter delta.

2. Psaltery (Heb. *nebel*), a stringed instrument resembling the guitar.

3. Timbrel or Tabret = a tambourine.

4. Cornet (vi. 5). The word translated "cornet" probably means the "*sistra*" of the ancients, a kind of instrument with bells and rings, which made a tinkling sound on being shaken (1 Chron. xiii. 8 has "trumpets").

5. Cymbals. The ordinary cymbals, *viz.* two plates of metal played by being clashed together.

**Obeisance.** Originally simply "obedience," and then "homage." The Hebrew translated "obeisance" is literally "bowed or prostrated oneself." When the Amalekite came to David "he fell to the earth and did obeisance" (i. 2). (See also xiv. 4, xv. 5.)

**Overrun** = to outrun. Ahimaaz "overran Cush" (xviii. 23).

**Pelethites**, see Cherethites (p. 111).

**Play the man** = to behave manfully, courageously. "Let us play the men" (x. 12).

**Poll**, *Sub.*, a head. *Verb* = to cut the hair of the head. Absalom "polled his head," i.e. cut his hair every year.

**Room** = place or space. Amasa was made captain of the host "in the room of Joab" (xix. 13), i.e. he became captain instead of Joab.

**Recorder**, an officer of high rank. His duties appear to have been two-fold—

1. Annalist, i.e. as keeping a record of events.
2. Chancellor or president of the privy council.

Mentions of the recorder are—

1. Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the recorder in David's reign (viii. 16; xx. 24), and also in the early days of Solomon's reign (1 Kings iv. 3).
2. Joab, the son of Asaph, the recorder in the reign of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 18-37). He was one of the three officers deputed by Hezekiah to receive the message of the king of Assyria delivered through Rab-shakeh.

**Runners**. We find mention of several runners well known for their speed and ability to run long distances. Asahel was specially celebrated for his fleetness of foot (ii. 18). They were employed:

1. To carry tidings, e.g.—

- (a) A man of Benjamin ran to Shiloh, and brought to Eli the news of the defeat of Israel and the capture of the Ark (1 Sam. iv. 12).
- (b) Cush and Ahimaaz ran from the field of battle, and brought to David the tidings of the defeat and death of Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 19-31).

2. As running footmen before the chariots of great men, e.g.—

- (a) Samuel tells the Israelites that the king will take some of them "to run before his chariots" (1 Sam. viii. 11).
- (b) Absalom in aiming at royal state had "fifty men to run before him" (2 Sam. xv. 1).
- (c) Adonijah assumed quasi-royal state like Absalom, and had "fifty men to run before him" (1 Kings i. 5).
- (d) When Elijah ran before Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel, it was no doubt as a royal runner in front of the chariot to do honour to the king (1 Kings xviii. 46).

3. As guards and executioners—

- (a) Saul commanded "the footmen that stood about him" to slay Ahimelech and the priests (1 Sam. xxii. 17). The word

"footmen" in the original means "runners," and signifies those runners before the chariot, who also acted as guard to the king.

- (b) The "guard," mentioned as protecting Joash in the Temple (2 Kings xi. 4). Properly = runners. They put Athaliah to death at the command of Jehoiada (2 Kings xi. 15, 16).

**Seer.** Heb. *Roth* = Seer, or *Hozeh* = gazer; denotes one who sees visions, *i.e.* receives the will of God by dreams or visions. Both Samuel and Gad are described as "Seers."

From this time there is a change to Prophet, the *Nabi*, a word the root of which signifies "to boil or bubble over." Its actual meaning is "to pour forth exciting utterances."

The Biblical meaning of Prophet is one "who speaks under divine impulse," as the forth-teller, the expounder or interpreter of the word of God.

**Servant of God.** A title applied by Jehovah to a few only in the Old Testament.

It is a peculiar title of the Messiah. "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold*" (Is. xlii. 1).

It is specially applied to Moses. "*My servant Moses*" (Numb. xii. 7).

Also to Joshua, but only after his death. "*Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died*" (Josh. xxiv. 29). (See also Judges ii. 8.)

To David. "*Go tell my servant David*" (2 Sam. vii. 5).

"*I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him*" (Ps. lxxxix. 20).

**Spare.** "*He spared to take of his own flock*" (xii. 4) = he refrained from taking.

**The Lord of Hosts.** *Jehovah Sabaoth.* A title of Jehovah which occurs for the first time in the account of Elkanah's yearly visits to Shiloh (1 Sam. i. 3).

It is not found once in the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Job, the Books of Solomon, Ezekiel or Daniel.

It is found eleven times in the two Books of Samuel; it is used upwards of sixty times by Isaiah, about eighty times by Jeremiah, and by the minor prophets, especially Zechariah and Malachi, also in Kings and 1 Chronicles.

**Hosts** = armies, and is translated—

- (1) Earthly hosts.
- (2) Heavenly hosts, sometimes meaning the celestial bodies, sun, moon and stars, or celestial beings, *i.e.* angels.

It is significant that the title first appears in the book which is concerned mainly with the foundation of the monarchy.

It may imply therefore :

1. *To Israel.*

- (a) An assertion of the invisible universal sovereignty of Jehovah, a bulwark against the danger that the visible earthly monarchy should cause the Israelites to forget the invisible Jehovah, still their king, though they had in a sense rejected Him—nay, more than *their* king, the supreme ruler of the universe.
- (b) The monarchy could be firmly established only by victory over the enemies of Israel. The title was therefore a pledge to the covenant people that the Lord of Hosts would be with their armies. David went to meet Goliath in the name of "the Lord of Hosts" (1 Sam. xvii. 45).

2. *To heathen nations.* A refutation of the idea that the God of Israel was simply the national deity of that particular nation.

**The Tribute**, rather **The Levy** of labourers forced to work on public works. In David's time they would be employed in fortifying Jerusalem, building David's palace, etc.

Adoram or Adoniram was the officer who superintended this levy.

**Threshing.** The threshing floor was a level spot in the open, with the earth beaten down hard and flat.

The threshing was done in three ways :

1. By oxen, by simply treading out the grain.
2. By dragging a rude apparatus of logs over the threshing floor, by which the grain was crushed out and the straw broken.

It is this machine that is meant when Araunah speaks of the "*threshing instruments*" (xxiv. 22).

3. By the flail, used only for small seeds, or by poor persons.

**To be entreated** (see pp. 81 and 95).

**Wayfaring** = travelling. "*The wayfaring man*" (xii. 4) = a traveller.

**Wives of a king.** The wives would live in the harem in separate apartments. During the king's life the wife had very little political influence. After the king's death his wives would be taken over and cared for by his successor.

The mother of the succeeding king (known as the Queen or Queen-mother) then became a person of considerable influence and importance. In the time of David there are three notable examples of the position of the king's wives, viz. :

1. The marriage of Abner with Rizpah, the concubine of Saul, was considered by Ish-bosheth as being tantamount to a pretension to the throne.

2. The public appropriation by Absalom of the ten concubines left by David in Jerusalem would be regarded by the people as an act of the assumption of the throne.
3. The request of Adonijah for Abishag was rightly regarded by Solomon as the first step in an attempt to claim the throne.

### MEASURES.

**Cubit** (Jewish *ammah*). A measure of length, the distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger. It is very difficult to arrive at its exact dimensions as there is mention of several kinds of cubits. The greatest estimate is between nineteen and twenty inches, and the least rather less than a foot. For the purpose of calculation eighteen inches is the length agreed upon.

**Shekel**. A Jewish standard of value by weight. A shekel of silver was equivalent to about 2s. 6d. of our money; 3,000 shekels made a talent.

**Talent**. A standard of value by weight. A talent was equivalent to 3,000 shekels. A talent of silver = £375. A talent of gold = £6,750.

**Bottle**. Wine-skin. "Leathern bottles made of the skins of goats, oxen and buffaloes, turned inside out, clipped with the scissors, washed and rubbed over with warm mineral tar or naphtha. The openings are closed with a sort of wooden bung, except at the feet, where they are only tied up with a cord. The wine is drawn out at one of the feet merely by opening and closing the noose" (KIRRO).

This will explain how the bottles of the Gibeonites were "old," "rent," and "bound up" (Josh. ix. 4).

## PSALMS ILLUSTRATIVE OF II. SAMUEL.

### 1. Entry of the Ark into Jerusalem. Ps. xxiv.

*"Lift up your heads, O ye gates  
And be ye lift up ye everlasting doors;  
And the king of glory shall come in"* (xxiv. 7.)

### 2. Life at Hebron. (Ps. xxvii.) (Traditionally.)

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation"* (xxvii. 1.)

### 3. Bringing the Ark from Kirjath-jearim. Ps. cxxxii.

*"Lo we heard of it at Ephratah:  
We found it in the fields of the wood"* (cxxxii. 6.)

## 4. David's desire to build a Temple. Ps. cxxxii.

*"I will not give sleep to mine eyes,  
Or slumber to mine eyelids;  
Until I find out a place for the Lord,  
An habitation for the mighty God of Jacob"* (cxxxii. 4, 5.)

Ephratah = Judah: Kirjath-jearim = city of woods.

NOTE.—Ps. xxix. bears the title in the Septuagint of the "Going forth of the tabernacle." The "Ark" is probably meant.

The Psalm describes a thunder-storm. A tradition of the Jews connected the "going forth of the Ark with a terrible thunder-storm" (Stanley).

## 5. The carrying of the Ark. Ps. cxxxii. and lxxviii.

*"Arise O Lord into thy rest;  
Thou and the ark of thy strength"* (cxxxii. 8).  
*"Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered"* (lxxviii. 1).

## 6. The procession. Ps. cxxxii. and lxxviii.

## (a) The priests.

*"Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness;  
And let thy saints shout for joy"* (cxxxii. 9).

## (b) The minstrels.

*"The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after,  
Among them were the damsels playing with timbrels"* (lxxviii. 25, etc.).

## (c) The people.

*"There is little Benjamin with their ruler,  
The princes of Judah and their council,  
The princes of Zebulon and the princes of Naphtali"* (lxxviii. 27).

NOTE.—Benjamin = house and tribe of Saul. Judah = house of David and tribe of Judah. Zebulon, Naphtali = representatives of the northern tribes.

## 7. The restoration of the Ark. Psalm lxxviii. 18.

*"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive."*

On this Stanley remarks: "The long captivity of the Ark in Philistia—that sad exile which, till the still longer and sadder one which is to close this period of the history, was known by the name of 'the captivity'—was now brought to an end, 'captivity was captive led.'"

## 8. Wars, especially the Edomite War. Ps. cviii.; lx.

*"Moab is my wash-pot;  
Over Edom will I cast out my shoe;  
Over Philistia will I triumph.  
Who will bring me into the strong city?  
Who will lead me into Edom?"* (cviii. 9, 10) also (lx. 8, 9).

## 9. The unity of the kingdom. lx.; cviii.

*"Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;  
Ephraim also is the strength of mine head;  
Judah is my law-giver"* (lx. 7; cviii. 8).

- 10 **The Ammonite crown, and The burning alive of the Ammonites** (xxi.).

*"Thou sellest a crown of pure gold on his head"* (xxi. 3).

*"Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger.*

*The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath,*

*And the fire shall devour them"* (xxi. 9).

11. **Period of Prosperity.** Ps. xviii. ; 2 Sam. xxli.

Composed as the title indicates, *"in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul."*

We may, therefore, well assign this Psalm to the time when *"the Lord had given him rest round about him from all his enemies"* (vii. 1), but clearly it could not have been written before the message of Nathan recorded in vii.

12. **David's Sin and the period of disaster.** These may be classed in sections.

- (a) **His penitence.** Ps. li. and xxxii.

Ps. li. must have been composed soon after Nathan had been to him  
Main outlines are—

- (1) A prayer for forgiveness.

*"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,*

*And cleanse me from my sin"* (li. 2).

- (2) The prayer is based on his conviction of sin.

*"For I acknowledge my transgression ;*

*And my sin is ever before me"* (li. 3).

- (3) His sin against God is more heinous than wrong done to man.

*"Against thee only have I sinned,*

*And done this evil in thy sight"* (li. 4).

- (4) Outward reformation is not sufficient.

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God ;*

*And renew a right spirit within me"* (li. 10).

- (5) The sacrifices enjoined by the Law cannot expiate his sin.

*"For thou desirest not sacrifice ; else would I give it ;*

*Thou delightest not in burnt offering.*

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit ;*

*A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"*

(li. 16, 17).

Ps. xxxii. was written later when he had experienced the blessing of forgiveness.

- (a) The blessing of forgiveness.

*"Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven ; whose sin is covered,*

*Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity,*

*And in whose spirit there is no guile"* (xxxii. 1, 2).

- (6) His state of misery whilst his sin was unconfessed.

*"When I kept silence, my bones waxed old  
Through my roaring all the day long"* (xxxii. 3).

The verses 3, 4, are a vivid description of David's state of heart previous to the visit of Nathan, and of his sufferings that he endured as long as he was trying to conceal his sin

## 6. The Conspiracy. Ps. xli.; lv.

These Psalms evidently allude to some combination against David, and indicate that he was not altogether ignorant of the impending storm.

There may be two allusions to Ahithophel.

- (1) *"Yet mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of  
my bread  
Hath lifted up his heel against me"* (xli. 9).
- (2) *"For it was not an enemy that reproached me.*

*But it was thou, a man mine equal,  
My guide and my acquaintance"* (lv. 12, 13).

Ps. lxxix. and cix. are generally regarded as referring to the treachery of Ahithophel, and St. Peter quotes from Ps. cix. with reference to the fate of Judas.

*"Let his days be few;  
And let another take his office"* (cix. 8).

Further allusions to the conspiracy may be found in xxvi. and lxii, e.g.

*"They only consult to cast him down from his excellency"* (lxii. 4).

- (c) Exile from Jerusalem. Ps. iii., iv., lxiii., xxvii., xxviii.

- (1) Ps. iii. Title is "A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son."

A morning hymn, considered as being composed on the day after quitting Jerusalem.

*"I laid me down and slept;  
I awaked; for the Lord sustained me"* (iii. 5).

- (2) Ps. iv. An evening hymn on the evening of the same day

*"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep;  
For thou Lord only makest me to dwell in safety"* (iv. 8).

- (3) Ps. lxiii. Title is "A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah."

## THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL COMPARED WITH THE FIRST BOOK OF CHRONICLES.

In making this comparison we must bear in mind:—

1. *The time when these books were written respectively.*
2. *The object of the writer or compiler.*

**The Books of Samuel** were written (see p. viii.) not long after the reign of David, and with the object of giving an account of the foundation of the monarchy, selecting (as has been pointed out, pp. vi.-viii.) only those incidents that illustrate God's dealings with his chosen people. God in history in founding the monarchy is the theme of these books.

**The Books of Chronicles** were written after the Return from the Captivity. At this time it was of great importance to give correct information on two points:—

1. The genealogies of the different families in order to enable the land to be reoccupied according to its former occupation.
2. Temple services. The Temple had been rebuilt, so it was necessary to give an accurate account of the provision made for daily service during the time of the monarchy.

Moreover, the great calamity of the Captivity had been brought about by the national sin of idolatry. Consequently the writer is solicitous to indicate that national religion, and the true service of Jehovah were the only means to maintain national prosperity.

In addition, the Captivity had weakened the pride of the people in their national life. So the writer endeavours to reanimate the patriotism of his countrymen.

### I. Parallel Passages in II. Samuel and I. Chronicles are:—

|   | II. SAMUEL. | I. CHRONICLES |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| 1. <sup>1</sup> David anointed king over Israel at Hebron. Capture of Jerusalem | v. 1-10     | xi. 1-9       |
| 2. The Embassy of Hiram, king of Tyre   | v. 11, 12   | xiv. 1, 2     |
| 3. David's Family at Jerusalem  | v. 13-16    | xiv. 3-7      |
| 4. <sup>2</sup> The two Campaigns against the Philistines                       | v. 17-25    | xiv. 8-17     |
| 5. The removal of the Ark from Kirjath-jearim                                   | vi. 1-11    | xiii. 1-14    |

**NOTES.**—<sup>1</sup>Chronicles omits the boast of the Jebusites; tells us that Joab was the first to scale the walls, and that Joab "repaired the rest of the city."

<sup>2</sup>Chronicles adds: "And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the Lord brought the fear of him on all nations" (1 Chron. xiv. 17).

|   | II. SAMUEL.  | I. CHRONICLES  |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| 6. The entry of the Ark into Jerusalem                          | vi. 12-23    | xv. 25, xvi. 3 |
| 7. David's desire to build a house for the Lord                 | vii. 1-3     | xvii. 1, 2     |
| 8. The Promise of Perpetual Dominion                            | vii. 4-17    | xvii. 3-15     |
| 9. David's Prayer and Thanksgiving                              | vii. 18-29   | xvii. 16-27    |
| 10. Conquest of the Philistines and Moabites                    | viii. 1, 2   | xviii. 1, 2    |
| 11. Defeat of Hadadezer. Conquest of Zobah. Capture of Damascus | viii. 3-8    | xviii. 3-8     |
| 12. The Embassy of Toi, king of Hamath                          | viii. 9-12   | xviii. 9-11    |
| 13. Conquest of Edom  | viii. 13, 14 | xviii. 12, 13  |
| 14. List of State Officials                                     | viii. 15-18  | xviii. 14-17   |
| 15. War with the Ammonites                                      | x.           | xix.           |
| 16. The Siege of Rabbah   | xi. 1        | xx. 1          |
| 17. The Capture of Rabbah                                       | xii. 26-31   | xx. 2, 3       |
| 18. Deeds of Heroism in the Philistine Wars                     | xxi. 15-22   | xx. 4-8        |
| 19. The Exploits of the First Three Mighty Men                  | xxiii. 8-12  | xi. 10-14      |
| 20. Fetching Water from the Well of Bethlehem                   | xxiii. 13-17 | xi. 15-19      |
| 21. The Feats of Abishai and Benaiah                            | xxiii. 18-23 | xi. 20-25      |
| 22. The Thirty Mighty Men                                       | xxiii. 24-39 | xi. 26-47      |
| 23. The Census. The Pestilence, etc.                            | xxiv. 1-25   | xxi. 1-30      |

‡ From Chronicles we learn that David made the following arrangements:—

(a) He "consulted with the captains of the thousands and of hundreds, even with every leader," i.e. he held a consultation with the representatives of the people (xlii. 1-4).

(b) He then held an assembly of the whole nation (xlii. 5).

Thus the removal of the Ark was a national act, decided upon after due deliberation.

§ Chronicles states:—

(1) That the Ammonites hired the Syrians at the price of a thousand talent of silver.

(2) That the Syrian allies came from Mesopotamia, Maachah, and Zobah

(3) That they assembled at Medeba.

¶ Differences in the narratives are—

| SAMUEL.   | CHRONICLES.   |
|---|---|
| 1. "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them." | 1. "And Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel." |
| 2. Israel, "800,000"; Judah, "400,000."   | 2. Israel, "1,100,000"; Judah, "470,000." Benjamin and Levi not numbered. |
| 3. Araunah the Jebusite.  | 3. Ornan the Jebusite.  |
|   | 4. The angel had a drawn sword in his hand.                               |
|   | 5. David out on sackcloth.  |

II. SAMUEL.

- 8 David paid fifty shekels of silver (probably for oxen and threshing floor).

I. CHRONICLES.

6. Ornan and his sons hid themselves for fear of the angel.  
 7. Ornan was threshing wheat.  
 8. David paid 600 shekels of gold (probably for the site of the Temple, a later purchase).  
 9. The tabernacle was at Gibeon, but David did not go there to sacrifice for fear of the angel.  
 10. David chose the spot as the site of the Temple.

II. Events recorded in II. Samuel and omitted in I. Chronicles

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1. David's reception of the news of Saul's death.               | (i. 1-27.)       |
| 2. His reign at Hebron.   | (ii. 1-11.)      |
| 3. The war with the house of Saul.                              | (ii. 12-iv.)     |
| 4. David's kindness to Mephibosheth.                            | (ix.)            |
| 5. His sin with Bath-sheba, and its punishment.                 | (xi. 2-xii. 25.) |
| 6. The sin of Amnon.  | (xiii.)          |
| 7. The history of Absalom and his rebellion.                    | (xiv.-xix.)      |
| 8. Sheba's rebellion.   | (xx.)            |
| 9. The famine, and the hanging of Saul's sons by the Gibeonites | (xxi.)           |
| 10. David's thanksgiving.                                       | (xxii.)          |
| 11. The last words of David.                                    | (xxiii. 1-7.)    |

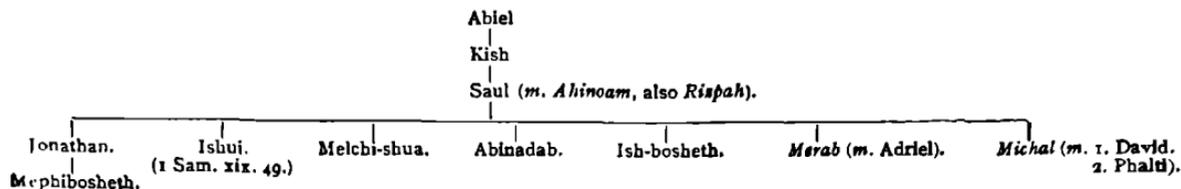
It will be seen that most of these circumstances are connected with David's private life.

III. Recorded in I. Chronicles and omitted in II. Samuel.

1. The list of the valiant men who joined David at Ziklag, following on the enumeration of David's mighty men. (1 Chron. xii.)
2. The details of the arrangements for bringing the Ark from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem. (1 Chron. xv.)
3. David's sacrifices, thanksgiving, and arrangements for the care of the Ark. (1 Chron. xvi.)
4. David's preparation for the building of the Temple. (xxii.)
5. Organization of the Priests and Levites. (xxiii.-xxvi.)
6. Military and civil organization. (xxvii.)

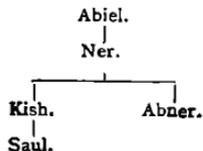
These points are mainly lists, arrangements, and organizations.

## FAMILY OF SAUL TO ILLUSTRATE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

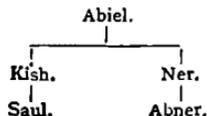


## PEDIGREE OF ABNER.

(according to 1 Chron. viii.)



(according to 1 Sam. ix.)



According to 1 Sam. ix. Abner is the cousin of Saul, but according to 1 Chron. viii. Abner is Saul's uncle.

"Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle" (1 Sam. xiv. 50). Saul's uncle may refer to Abner, or to Ner.

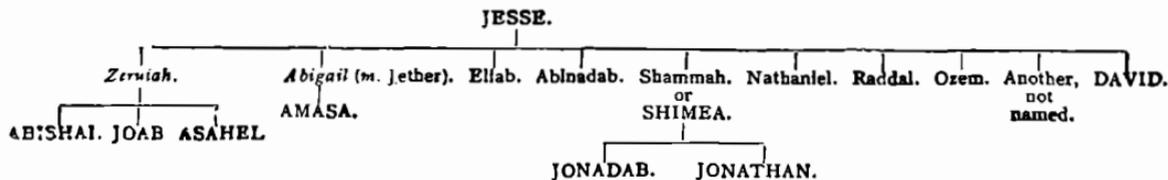
In Saul's pedigree (1 Sam. ix. 1) Ner is not mentioned as one of Saul's ancestors.

So, considering that Abner survived Saul, and was the mainstay of Ish-bosheth during the latter's short reign, it is difficult to conceive that Abner was Saul's uncle.

The argument is consequently strong in favour of considering Abner and Saul as first cousins.

## THE FAMILY OF JESSE.

The descent of Jesse from Judah is: Judah—Pharez—Hezron—Ram—Aminadab—Nabshon (*m. Rahab*)—Boaz (*m. Ruth*)—Obed—Jesse.



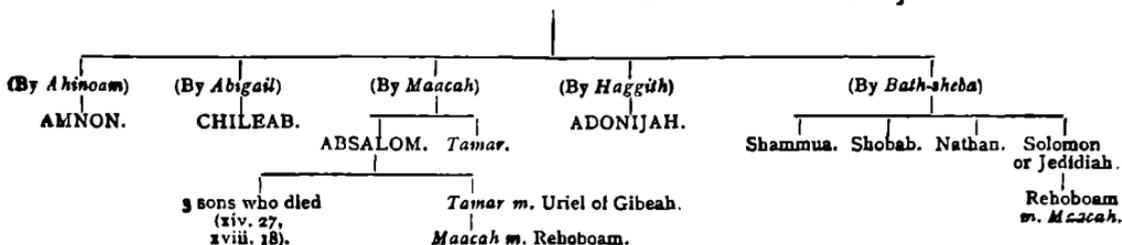
Names in capitals = men mentioned in II. Samuel.

Names in italics = women.

## THE FAMILY OF DAVID.

DAVID.

- [His wives. 1. *Michal*, married at the Court of Saul (1 Sam. xix. 11).  
 2. *Ahinoam* the Jezreelitess, *m.* during his wanderings (1 Sam. xxv. 43).  
 3. *Abigail* the Carmelitess, *m.* during his wanderings (1 Sam. xxv. 42).  
 4. *Maacah*, d. of Talmai king of Gesbur, *m.* at Hebron (2 Sam. iii. 2-5).  
 5. *Haggith*, *m.* at Hebron (2 Sam. iii. 2-5).  
 6. *Bath-sheba*, w. of Uriah the Hittite, *m.* at Jerusalem (2 Sam. xv. 13-16).]



For Joab, Abishai, etc., see Family of Jesse, p. 127.

For details of individuals see Biographical Notes under their respective names.  
 Names of men mentioned in II. Samuel in capitals. Names of women in italics.