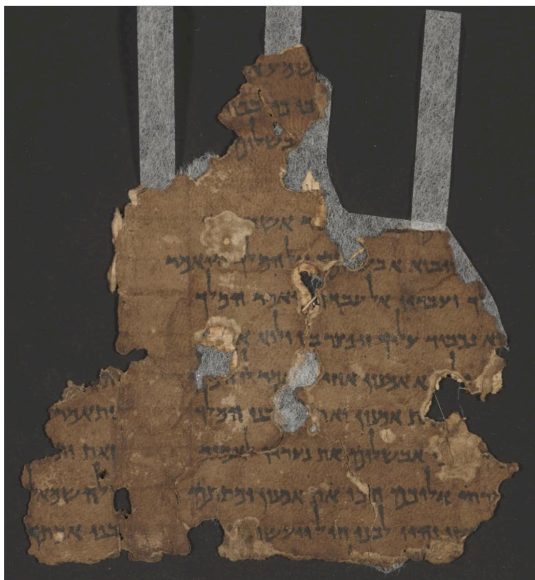


2 SAMUEL

The King David Show

AUTHOR	The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition in the Talmud says Samuel began the book, and Gad the seer and Nathan the prophet finished it. 1 Chronicles 29:29 names the records of Samuel, Nathan and Gad.
EVENTS TOOK PLACE	The forty years David was king, from Saul's death to near the end of David's life.
DATE	About 1010 to 970 BC. David ruled Judah from Hebron for seven and a half years, then all Israel from Jerusalem for thirty three years, 5:5.
WRITTEN TO	Israel, to show how God made David king, the forever promise God gave him, and what David's sin cost his family.
KEY VERSE	2 Samuel 7:16. Your house and kingdom will endure forever before Me, and your throne will be established forever.



ONE OF THE OLDEST COPIES OF 2 SAMUEL

This piece of leather comes from 4QSam a, a scroll of 1 and 2 Samuel found in Cave 4 at Qumran, near the Dead Sea. It was copied about 50 to 25 BC. Its right column holds 2 Samuel 13:24 to 29, where Absalom invites the king's sons to his sheepshearing and tells his servants to strike Amnon. The names Absalom and Amnon can still be read. The white strips are thin modern paper that holds the piece together.

THE OLDEST COPIES. 4QSam c and 4QSam a are the oldest copies of 2 Samuel known so far. 4QSam c is a smaller scroll copied about 100 to 75 BC, even older than 4QSam a, and it holds parts of chapters 14 and 15. 4QSam a often matches the old Greek Bible instead of the standard Hebrew text, and 4QSam c sometimes does too.

Photo Shai Halevi, Israel Antiquities Authority, Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library.

Historical Setting

2 Samuel starts in Hebron, in the hills of Judah, where David is crowned by his own tribe. Then David takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites and makes it his capital, the City of David. From there he fights the Philistines on the coast, Moab and Ammon across the Jordan, the Arameans in the north and Edom in the south.

What Was Going Wrong

CIVIL WAR. Saul's house and David's house fought for years 2:12 to 3:1.

MURDERS. Joab murdered Abner and Amasa, and two captains murdered Ish bosheth 3:27, 4:5 to 7, 20:10.

THE WRONG WAY. The ark rode on a cart instead of being carried as God's law said, and Uzzah died 6:3 to 7.

THE KING'S SIN. David took Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah killed 11:4, 11:15 to 17.

RAPE IN THE PALACE. Amnon raped his half sister Tamar, and David did nothing 13:14, 13:21.

A SON'S REVOLT. Absalom killed Amnon, stole Israel's hearts and took his father's throne 13:28 to 29, 15:6 to 12.

BROKEN OATHS. Saul broke Israel's oath to the Gibeonites, and the land suffered a famine 21:1 to 2.

A PROUD COUNT. David counted his fighting men, and a plague followed 24:1 to 15.

The Idiot Proof Summary

2 Samuel is the story of King David, the good, the bad and the very sad. Saul is dead, and David is crowned, first by Judah, then by all twelve tribes. He takes Jerusalem, and God promises him a house and a throne that will last forever. Then, at the top of his success, David takes another man's wife and has the husband killed. The prophet Nathan tells him, You are that man. David repents, and God forgives him, but the sword never leaves his house. His son Absalom even steals the throne, and David weeps when he dies. The book ends with David's song of praise, his last words and an altar on a threshing floor where the temple will one day stand.

2 Samuel at a Glance

CH 1 to 4	KING OF JUDAH David rules in Hebron while Saul's house fades.
CH 5 to 10	KING OF ALL ISRAEL Jerusalem, the ark and God's forever promise.
CH 11 to 12	DAVID'S SIN Bathsheba, Uriah and Nathan's story.
CH 13 to 18	TROUBLE AT HOME Amnon, Tamar and Absalom's revolt.
CH 19 to 20	BACK TO JERUSALEM The king returns to a divided kingdom.
CH 21 to 24	THE LAST WORDS Giants, songs, mighty men and a threshing floor.

Where Jesus Shows Up

2 SAMUEL 7:12 TO 16 God promised David a son whose throne would last forever. The angel told Mary that Jesus would get the throne of His father David, Luke 1:32 to 33.

2 SAMUEL 7:14 I will be his Father, and he will be My son. Hebrews 1:5 uses these words for Jesus, God's Son.

2 SAMUEL 22:50 Paul quotes this in Romans 15:9 to show the Gentiles would praise God through Christ.

GOD'S NAMES IN 2 SAMUEL

Yahweh, again and again, and Yahweh of Hosts, 6:2. In his prayer in chapter 7, David calls Him Lord Yahweh seven times. He calls Him my Rock, 22:2, and the Rock of Israel, 23:3. See Why We Say Yahweh in the Old Testament Introduction.

What to Watch for in 2 Samuel

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES	7:12-14, 7:16, 22:50, 23:1
MESSIANIC FORESHADOW	23:3-4
PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE	5:1-3, 8:14, 12:10-14, 12:18, 16:21-22
THE HEART	6:16, 7:3, 7:21, 7:27, 15:6, 15:13, 24:10
ARCHAEOLOGY	2:13
MIRACLES	5:23-25, 6:6-7, 22:8-16, 24:15-17
DEMONIC	5:21, 21:15-22
NOTABLE	6:1-5, 6:8-11, 7:18, 9:7, 12:7, 12:23, 18:33 and 2 more
GOD SPEAKING	Words in red are God speaking. Only the words He actually said are red.
BLOODLINE OF CHRIST	Names underlined in red are in the family line of Jesus.

Cool Stuff Most People Miss

1, 2, 3 AND 4 KINGS

1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings used to be called 1, 2, 3 and 4 Kings, because they tell one long story. That makes this book the Second Book of the Kings. The old Greek Bible named it 2 Kingdoms, and Latin Bibles named it 2 Kings. The King James still calls it The Second Book of Samuel, otherwise called The Second Book of the Kings. In old Hebrew Bibles, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book.

HOUSE OF DAVID IN STONE

An enemy king's stone from about 130 years after David names the House of David. See the Tel Dan Stele page.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

David gave Jonathan's lame son a place at the king's table for life, 9:7 to 13.

How Did It Turn Out?

David ended as king of a united Israel, with a broken family. Next comes 1 Kings, where Solomon builds the temple on David's threshing floor.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

1

CHAPTER 1 IN 30 SECONDS

A young Amalekite runs into David's camp with Saul's crown and a story: I killed Saul for you. He expects a reward. He gets the opposite. Then David writes a song for Saul and Jonathan, How the mighty have fallen, and teaches it to Judah.

SAUL'S DEATH REPORTED TO DAVID // 1 SAMUEL 31:1-6; 1 CHRONICLES 10:1-6

¹After the death of Saul, David returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites and stayed in Ziklag two days. ²On the third day a man with torn clothes and dust on his head arrived from Saul's camp. When he came to David, he fell to the ground to pay him homage.

³"Where have you come from?" David asked.

"I have escaped from the Israelite camp," he replied.

⁴"What was the outcome?" David asked. "Please tell me."

"The troops fled from the battle," he replied. "Many of them fell and died. And Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead."

⁵Then David asked the young man who had brought him the report, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

⁶"I happened to be on Mount Gilboa," he replied, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots and the cavalry closing in on him. ⁷When he turned around and saw me, he called out to me, and I answered, 'Here I am!'

⁸'Who are you?' he asked.

So I told him, 'I am an Amalekite.'

⁹Then he begged me, 'Stand over me and kill me, for agony has seized me, but my life still lingers.'

¹⁰So I stood over him and killed him, because I knew that after he had fallen he could not survive. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

¹¹Then David took hold of his own clothes and tore them, and all the men who were with him did the same. ¹²They mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the people of Yahweh and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

¹³And David inquired of the young man who had brought him the report, "Where are you from?"

"I am the son of a foreigner," he answered. "I am an Amalekite."

¹⁴So David asked him, "Why were you not afraid to lift your hand to destroy Yahweh's anointed?" ¹⁵Then David summoned one of the young men and said, "Go, execute him!" So the young man struck him down, and he died. ¹⁶For David had said to the Amalekite, "Your blood be on your own head because your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I killed Yahweh's anointed.'"

DAVID'S SONG FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN

¹⁷Then David took up this lament for Saul and his son Jonathan, ¹⁸and he ordered that the sons of Judah be taught the Song of the Bow. It is written in the Book of Jashar:

¹⁹"Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights.

How the mighty have fallen!

²⁰Tell it not in Gath;
proclaim it not in the streets of
Ashkelon,

lest the daughters of the Philistines re-
joice,
and the daughters of the uncircumcised
exult.

²¹O mountains of Gilboa,
may you have no dew or rain,
no fields yielding offerings of grain.

For there the shield of the mighty was de-
filed,

■ **2SA 1:10 [NOTE]** WHO KILLED SAUL? 1 Samuel 31:4 says Saul fell on his own sword. This Amalekite says he finished Saul off. Most think he lied to win a reward from David.

■ **2SA 1:18 [NOTE]** THE BOOK OF JASHAR, the Book of the Upright, was an old book of songs and poems. It is also quoted in Joshua 10:13. It has been lost.

■ **2SA 1:1 [NOTE]** SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS. 1 and 2 Samuel were once one book. 2 Samuel picks up the day after Saul died, 1 Samuel 31.

ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

the shield of Saul, no longer anointed with oil.

²² From the blood of the slain,
from the fat of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not retreat,
and the sword of Saul did not return empty.

²³ Saul and Jonathan, beloved and delightful in life,
were not divided in death.
They were swifter than eagles;
they were stronger than lions.

²⁴ O daughters of Israel,
weep for Saul,
who clothed you in scarlet and luxury,
who decked your garments with ornaments of gold.

²⁵ How the mighty have fallen in the thick of battle!
Jonathan lies slain on your heights.

²⁶ I grieve for you, Jonathan, my brother.
You were delightful to me;
your love to me was extraordinary,
surpassing the love of women.

²⁷ How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war have perished!"

2

CHAPTER 2 IN 30 SECONDS

Judah crowns David king in Hebron, but Abner, Saul's general, makes Saul's son Ish bosheth king of everyone else. The two sides meet at the pool of Gibeon for a contest that turns into a battle. Abner kills Joab's fast little brother Asahel, and that starts a long feud.

DAVID ANOINTED KING OF JUDAH

¹ Some time later, David inquired of Yahweh, "Should I go up to one of the towns of Judah?"

"Go up," Yahweh answered.

Then David asked, "Where should I go?"

"To Hebron," replied Yahweh.

² So David went there with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. ³ David also took the men who were with him, each with his

household, and they settled in the towns near Hebron.

⁴ Then the men of Judah came to Hebron, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, "It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul."

⁵ So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead to tell them, "Yahweh bless you, because you showed this kindness to Saul your lord when you buried him. ⁶ Now may Yahweh show you loving devotion and faithfulness, and I will also show you the same favor because you have done this. ⁷ Now then, be strong and courageous, for though Saul your lord is dead, the house of Judah has anointed me as their king."

ISH-BOSHETH MADE KING OF ISRAEL

⁸ Meanwhile, Abner son of Ner, the commander of Saul's army, took Saul's son Ish-bosheth, moved him to Mahanaim, ⁹ and made him king over Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin—over all Israel.

¹⁰ Saul's son Ish-bosheth was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for two years.

The house of Judah, however, followed David. ¹¹ And the length of time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

THE BATTLE OF GIBEON

¹² One day Abner son of Ner and the servants of Ish-bosheth son of Saul marched out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. ¹³ So Joab son of Zeruiah and the servants of David marched out and met them by the pool of Gibeon. And the two groups took up positions on opposite sides of the pool.

■ 2SA 1:26 [NOTE] SURPASSING THE LOVE OF WOMEN. David means Jonathan's loyal, covenant love, 1 Samuel 18:3 and 20:17. See the Big Question pages David and Jonathan in 1 Samuel, p.-.

■ 2SA 2:13 [ARCHAEOLOGY] The Pool of Gibeon → FIELD NOTES p.6

■ 2SA 2:13 [FIELD NOTES] The pool at Gibeon has been found, a huge round shaft cut into the rock with steps going down. See The Pool of Gibeon Field Notes page.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES • ARCHAEOLOGY • CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE POOL OF GIBEON

2 SAMUEL 2:12 TO 17 • JEREMIAH 41:12 • JOSHUA 9:3 • 2 SAMUEL 21:1 TO 9



Visitors stand at the rim of the great rock cut pool at el Jib, ancient Gibeon. Photo Ronnie Kenigsberg, PikiWiki Israel, CC BY 2.5.

WHAT IT IS

A giant round hole cut straight down into solid rock, about 37 feet across and 35 feet deep. A staircase winds down its side. At the bottom it turns into a tunnel and keeps going down to a water room about 80 feet below the ground. There are 79 steps in all.

HOW OLD IT IS

James Pritchard, who dug it, thought it was cut in the early Iron Age, around or before the time of David. Other scholars think it is later, from the 900s to the 700s BC. The date is still debated.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At el Jib, a village about six miles north of Jerusalem. Pritchard dug there from 1956 to 1962. Thousands of tons of rock had been chipped out by hand to make the pool.

HOW WE KNOW IT IS GIBEON

Inside the pool's fill, the diggers found jar handles with the name Gibeon written on them in old Hebrew letters. So we know for sure this is Gibeon. They also found dozens of rock cut wine cellars. Gibeon made wine.

THE POOL IN THE BIBLE

Joab's men and Abner's men sat on opposite sides of the pool of Gibeon, 2:13. Jeremiah 41:12 also names the great pool in Gibeon.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Nobody can be sure this is the exact pool of 2:13. If Pritchard's date is right, it was there in David's day. If the later

date is right, the Bible's pool was another one nearby.

¹⁴ Then Abner said to Joab, "Let us have the young men get up and compete before us."

"Let them get up," Joab replied.

¹⁵ So they got up and were counted off—twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth son of Saul, and twelve for David. ¹⁶ Then each man grabbed his opponent by the head and thrust his sword into his opponent's side, and they all fell together. So this place, which is in Gibeon, is called Helkath-hazzurim.

¹⁷ The battle that day was intense, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by the servants of David.

¹⁸ The three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Now Asahel was fleet of foot like a wild gazelle, ¹⁹ and he chased Abner, not turning to the right or to the left in his pursuit. ²⁰ And Abner glanced back and said, "Is that you, Asahel?"

"It is," Asahel replied.

²¹ So Abner told him, "Turn to your right or to your left, seize one of the young men, and take his equipment for yourself."

But Asahel would not stop chasing him.

²² Once again, Abner warned Asahel, "Stop chasing me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How could I show my face to your brother Joab?"

²³ But Asahel refused to turn away. So Abner thrust the butt of his spear into his stomach, and it came out his back, and he fell dead on the spot. And every man paused when he came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died. ²⁴ But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. By sunset, they had gone as far as the hill of Ammah opposite Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon.

²⁵ The Benjamites rallied to Abner, formed a single unit, and took their stand atop a hill. ²⁶ Then Abner called out to Joab: "Must the sword devour forever? Do you

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

not realize that this will only end in bitterness? How long before you tell the troops to stop pursuing their brothers?"

²⁷ "As surely as God lives," Joab replied, "if you had not spoken up, the troops would have continued pursuing their brothers until morning."

²⁸ So Joab blew the ram's horn, and all the troops stopped; they no longer pursued Israel or continued to fight. ²⁹ And all that night Abner and his men marched through the Arabah. They crossed the Jordan, marched all morning, and arrived at Mahanaim.

³⁰ When Joab returned from pursuing Abner, he gathered all the troops.

In addition to Asahel, nineteen of David's servants were missing, ³¹ but they had struck down 360 Benjamites who were with Abner. ³² And they took Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb in Bethlehem. Then Joab and his men marched all night and reached Hebron at daybreak.

3

CHAPTER 3 IN 30 SECONDS

The war drags on, and David's side keeps getting stronger. Abner fights with Ish bosheth and switches to David. David welcomes him and sends him off in peace. Joab, still angry about Asahel, pulls Abner aside at the gate and kills him. David mourns out loud so everyone knows he had nothing to do with it.

THE HOUSE OF DAVID STRENGTHENED // 1

CHRONICLES 3:1-9

¹ Now the war between the house of Saul and the house of David was protracted. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

² And sons were born to David in Hebron: His firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam of Jezreel;

³ his second was Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; his third was Absalom, the son of Maacah daughter of King Talmi of Geshur;

⁴ his fourth was Adonijah, the son of Haggith;

his fifth was Shephatiah, the son of Abital;

⁵ and his sixth was Ithream, by David's wife Eglah.

These sons were born to David in Hebron.

ABNER JOINS DAVID

⁶ During the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner had continued to strengthen his position in the house of Saul. ⁷ Now Saul had a concubine named Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. So Ish-bosheth questioned Abner, "Why did you sleep with my father's concubine?"

⁸ Abner was furious over Ish-bosheth's accusation. "Am I the head of a dog that belongs to Judah?" he asked. "All this time I have been loyal to the house of your father Saul, to his brothers, and to his friends. I have not delivered you into the hand of David, but now you accuse me of wrongdoing with this woman! ⁹ May God punish Abner, and ever so severely, if I do not do for David what Yahweh has sworn to him: ¹⁰ to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to establish the throne of David over Israel and Judah, from Dan to Beersheba."

¹¹ And for fear of Abner, Ish-bosheth did not dare to say another word to him.

¹² Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to say to David, "To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and surely my hand will be with you to bring all Israel over to you."

¹³ "Good," replied David, "I will make a covenant with you. But there is one thing I require of you: Do not appear before me unless you bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see me."

¹⁴ Then David sent messengers to say to Ish-bosheth son of Saul, "Give me back my wife, Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred Philistine foreskins."

¹⁵ So Ish-bosheth sent and took Michal from her husband Paltiel son of Laish. ¹⁶ Her husband followed her, weeping all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Go back." So he returned home.

¹⁷ Now Abner conferred with the elders of Israel and said, "In the past you sought

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

David as your king. ¹⁸ Now take action, because Yahweh has said to David, "Through My servant David I will save My people Israel from the hands of the Philistines and of all their enemies."

¹⁹ Abner also spoke to the Benjamites. Then he went to Hebron to tell David all that seemed good to Israel and to the whole house of Benjamin. ²⁰ When Abner and twenty of his men came to David at Hebron, David held a feast for them.

²¹ Then Abner said to David, "Let me go at once, and I will gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may rule over all that your heart desires."

So David dismissed Abner, and he went in peace.

JOAB MURDERS ABNER

²² Just then David's soldiers and Joab returned from a raid, bringing with them a great plunder. But Abner was not with David in Hebron, because David had sent him on his way in peace. ²³ When Joab and all his troops arrived, he was informed, "Abner son of Ner came to see the king, who sent him on his way in peace."

²⁴ So Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Look, Abner came to you. Why did you dismiss him? Now he is getting away! ²⁵ Surely you realize that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you and to track your movements and all that you are doing."

²⁶ As soon as Joab had left David, he sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the well of Sirah. But David was unaware of it.

²⁷ When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab pulled him aside into the gateway, as if to speak to him privately, and there Joab stabbed him in the stomach. So Abner died on account of the blood of Joab's brother Asahel.

²⁸ Afterward, David heard about this and said, "I and my kingdom are forever guiltless before Yahweh concerning the blood of Abner son of Ner. ²⁹ May it whirl over

the head of Joab and over the entire house of his father, and may the house of Joab never be without one having a discharge or skin disease, or one who leans on a staff or falls by the sword or lacks food."

³⁰ (Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.)

DAVID MOURNS FOR ABNER

³¹ Then David ordered Joab and all the people with him, "Tear your clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." And King David himself walked behind the funeral bier.

³² When they buried Abner in Hebron, the king wept aloud at Abner's tomb, and all the people wept. ³³ And the king sang this lament for Abner:

"Should Abner die
the death of a fool?

³⁴ Your hands were not bound,
your feet were not fettered.
As a man falls before the wicked,
so also you fell."

And all the people wept over him even more.

³⁵ Then all the people came and urged David to eat something while it was still day, but David took an oath, saying, "May God punish me, and ever so severely, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun sets!"

³⁶ All the people took note and were pleased. In fact, everything the king did pleased them. ³⁷ So on that day all the troops and all Israel were convinced that the king had no part in the murder of Abner son of Ner.

³⁸ Then the king said to his servants, "Do you not realize that a great prince has fallen today in Israel? ³⁹ And I am weak this day, though anointed as king, and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too fierce for me. May Yahweh repay the evil-doer according to his evil!"

■ 2SA 3:39 [NOTE] THE SONS OF ZERUIAH are Joab, Abishai and Asahel, David's nephews, 1 Chronicles 2:16. They were tough, loyal and hard to control.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

4

CHAPTER 4 IN 30 SECONDS

Two of Ish bosheth's own captains sneak into his house during his nap and kill him. They bring his head to David, expecting a reward. Bad idea. David has them executed. We also meet Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, who was dropped by his nurse at age five and is lame in both feet.

THE MURDER OF ISH-BOSHETH

¹Now when Ish-bosheth son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel was dismayed. ²Saul's son had two men who were leaders of raiding parties. One was named Baanah and the other Rechab; they were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite of the tribe of Benjamin—Beeroth is considered part of Benjamin, ³because the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have lived there as foreigners to this day.

⁴And Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she was hurrying to escape, he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

⁵Now Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out and arrived at the house of Ish-bosheth in the heat of the day, while the king was taking his midday nap. ⁶They entered the interior of the house as if to get some wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped away.

⁷They had entered the house while Ish-bosheth was lying on his bed, and having stabbed and killed him, they beheaded him, took his head, and traveled all night by way of the Arabah. ⁸They brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-bosheth son of Saul, your enemy who sought your life. Today Yahweh has

granted vengeance to my lord the king against Saul and his offspring."

THE EXECUTION OF RECHAB AND BAANAH

⁹But David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as Yahweh lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, ¹⁰when someone told me, 'Look, Saul is dead,' and thought he was a bearer of good news, I seized him and put him to death at Ziklag. That was his reward for his news! ¹¹How much more, when wicked men kill a righteous man in his own house and on his own bed, shall I not now require his blood from your hands and remove you from the earth!"

¹²So David commanded his young men, and they killed Rechab and Baanah. They cut off their hands and feet and hung their bodies by the pool in Hebron, but they took the head of Ish-bosheth and buried it in Abner's tomb in Hebron.

5

CHAPTER 5 IN 30 SECONDS

All twelve tribes finally make David king. He takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites, who bragged that even the blind and the lame could keep him out. David moves in, calls it the City of David, and beats the Philistines twice. The second time, God says, Wait for the marching in the treetops.

DAVID ANOINTED KING OF ALL ISRAEL // 1

CHRONICLES 11:1-3

¹Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Here we are, your own flesh and blood. ²Even in times past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them back. And to you Yahweh said, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be ruler over them.'"

³So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, where King David made with them a covenant before Yahweh. And they anointed him king over Israel.

■ 2SA 5:1 [FULFILLS] Judah's brothers would bow to him and he would rule over his enemies ← GEN 49:8 p.-

■ 2SA 5:3 [FULFILLS] Abraham would be the father of many nations and kings would come from him ← GEN 17:4-6 p.-

■ 2SA 5:3 [FULFILLS] Samuel told Saul his kingdom would be torn from him and given to a better neighbor ← 1SA 15:28 p.-

■ 2SA 4:4 [NOTE] MEPHIBOSHETH is called Merib baal in 1 Chronicles 8:34. Bosheth means shame. Many think later writers swapped baal, an idol's name, for shame. Ish bosheth was also called Eshbaal, 1 Chronicles 8:33.

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

⁴David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. ⁵In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

DAVID CONQUERS JERUSALEM // 1 CHRONICLES 11:4-9

⁶Now the king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites who inhabited the land. The Jebusites said to David: "You will never get in here. Even the blind and lame can repel you." For they thought, "David cannot get in here."

⁷Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion (that is, the City of David).

⁸On that day he said, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites must use the water shaft to reach the lame and blind who are despised by David." That is why it is said, "The blind and the lame will never enter the palace."

⁹So David took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built it up all the way around, from the supporting terraces inward. ¹⁰And David became greater and greater, for Yahweh God of Hosts was with him.

¹¹Now Hiram king of Tyre sent envoys to David, along with cedar logs, carpenters, and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.

DAVID'S FAMILY GROWS // 1 CHRONICLES 14:1-7

¹²And David realized that Yahweh had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

¹³After he had arrived from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters

were born to him. ¹⁴These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

TWO VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES // 1 CHRONICLES 14:8-17

¹⁷When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they all went in search of him; but David learned of this and went down to the stronghold.

¹⁸Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹So David inquired of Yahweh, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?"

"Go up," replied Yahweh, "for I will surely deliver the Philistines into your hand."

²⁰So David went to Baal-perazim, where he defeated the Philistines and said, "Like a bursting flood, Yahweh has burst out against my enemies before me." So he called that place Baal-perazim. ²¹There the Philistines abandoned their idols, and David and his men carried them away.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE CITY OF DAVID

2 SAMUEL 5:6 TO 12 · 1 KINGS 9:15 · 1 CHRONICLES 11:4 TO 8



The Stepped Stone Structure on the east slope of the City of David, seen from above. The smooth walls at the top and the metal at the bottom are modern. Photo Ian Scott, CC BY SA 2.0.

■ **2SA 5:4 [NOTE]** THIRTY YEARS OLD. David became king at thirty and reigned forty years. Jesus began His work at about thirty, Luke 3:23.

■ **2SA 5:7 [NOTE]** ZION first appears in the Bible here. It was the Jebusite fortress on the hill south of the later temple. Later the name stood for all of Jerusalem and for God's people.

■ **2SA 5:8 [FIELD NOTES]** WATER SHAFT. The Hebrew word tsinnor shows up only here and in Psalm 42:7. See the Warren's Shaft Field Notes page.

■ **2SA 5:9 [FIELD NOTES]** SUPPORTING TERRACES is the Hebrew Millo, which means filling. Some think the huge stepped stone wall in the City of David is the Millo. See the City of David Field Notes page.

■ **2SA 5:14 [NOTE]** NATHAN, David's son, is not Nathan the prophet. Jesus' family line in Luke 3:31 runs through this Nathan. Matthew 1:6 runs through Solomon.

■ **2SA 5:21 [DEMONIC]** The Philistines abandon their idols and David carries them off

WHAT IT IS

A huge wall of stone steps running down the east side of the hill south of the Temple Mount, the oldest part of Jerusalem. It is about 60 feet tall, one of the biggest buildings from Israel's Iron Age. At its top, Eilat Mazar dug the walls of a large stone building she called the Large Stone Structure.

HOW OLD IT IS

Debated. Many date the stepped wall to about 1100 to 900 BC, around David's time. Others date parts of it later, to the 800s BC or after. Mazar dated the building on top to the 900s BC.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Parts were dug by R. A. S. Macalister in the 1920s, Kathleen Kenyon in the 1960s and Yigal Shiloh from 1978 to 1985. Mazar dug the building on top from 2005.

THE MILLO

In 5:9 David built from the supporting terraces inward. The Hebrew is the Millo, which means filling. Many think the Millo was a huge filled support like this stepped wall.

DAVID'S PALACE?

Mazar thought the Large Stone Structure was the palace Hiram's workers built for David, 5:11. Others say its walls come from different times, or it was a Jebusite fortress, or something later.

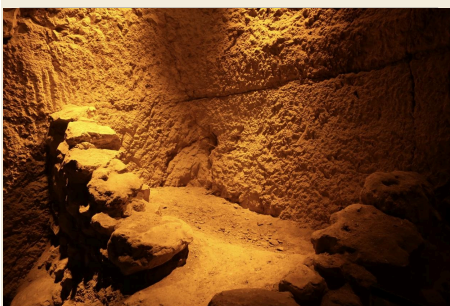
WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No writing found there names David. It shows that a large, strong building stood in the City of David at about the time the Bible gives for David, if the early dates are right.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

WARREN'S SHAFT

2 SAMUEL 5:6 TO 8 · 1 CHRONICLES 11:4 TO 6 · 2 CHRONICLES 32:30



A rock cut passage inside the Warren's Shaft system in the City of David, lit by modern lamps. Photo Davidbena, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A sloping tunnel and a deep shaft, about 43 feet straight down, inside the hill of the City of David. The tunnel leads from inside the old city wall toward the Gihon Spring, Jerusalem's main spring.

HOW OLD IT IS

The tunnel was cut long before Hezekiah's famous tunnel of about 700 BC. Its first date is debated. Newer digs found a huge stone tower guarding the spring. Its diggers dated it to about 1800 BC, but carbon tests in 2017 suggest about 800 BC. The date is still debated.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Charles Warren, a British army engineer, found it in 1867. Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron dug the area again from 1995.

THE OLD IDEA

For over a hundred years, many thought Joab climbed up this shaft to get inside the Jebusite city, 5:8 and 1 Chronicles 11:6. The Hebrew word in 5:8 is tsinnor, often read as water shaft.

THE NEW FINDINGS

Reich and Shukron found the shaft is a natural crack in the rock. In David's day its top was likely not even reachable, because the tunnel floor was lowered later. People most likely drew water from a rock cut pool near the spring instead.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The word tsinnor is rare, and some think

MIRACLES | NOTABLE | GOD SPEAKING | BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

it means a channel, a throat or even a hook. Many still think Joab's men came in through the city's water system, but likely not up this shaft.

²² Once again the Philistines came up and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ²³ So David inquired of Yahweh, who answered, "Do not march straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees." ²⁴ As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move quickly, because this will mean that Yahweh has gone out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines."

²⁵ So David did as Yahweh had commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.

6

CHAPTER 6 IN 30 SECONDS

David brings the ark to Jerusalem on a brand new cart. The oxen stumble, Uzzah grabs the ark, and God strikes him dead. Three months later David tries again, the right way, and dances before Yahweh with all his might. His wife Michal watches from a window and is not impressed.

DAVID FETCHES THE ARK // 1 CHRONICLES 13:1-7

¹ David again assembled the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand in all. ² And he and all his troops set out for Baale of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name—the name of Yahweh of Hosts, who is enthroned between the cherubim that are on it.

³ They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart, ⁴ bringing with it the ark of God. And Ahio was walking in front of the ark.

■ 2SA 5:23 [MIRACLE] Sound of marching in the balsam trees signals David to attack

■ 2SA 6:1 [NOTABLE] The ark was being transported wrongly (on a cart, not carried by Kohathites); Uzzah's death shows even good intentions cannot violate God's holiness protocols

■ 2SA 6:3 [NOTE] A NEW CART. The Philistines moved the ark this way, 1 Samuel 6:7. God's law said Levites must carry it on their shoulders, Numbers 7:9.

UZZAH TOUCHES THE ARK // 1 CHRONICLES 13:8-14

⁵ David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before Yahweh with all kinds of wood instruments, harps, stringed instruments, tambourines, sistrums, and cymbals.

⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen had stumbled. ⁷ And the anger of Yahweh burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down on the spot for his irreverence, and he died there beside the ark of God.

⁸ Then David became angry because Yahweh had burst forth against Uzzah. So he named that place Perez-uzzah, as it is called to this day.

⁹ That day David feared Yahweh and asked, "How can the ark of Yahweh ever come to me?" ¹⁰ So he was unwilling to move the ark of Yahweh to the City of David instead, he took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. ¹¹ Thus the ark of Yahweh remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months, and Yahweh blessed him and all his household.

THE ARK BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM // 1 CHRONICLES 15:1-28

¹² Now it was reported to King David, "Yahweh has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God."

So David went and had the ark of God brought up from the house of Obed-edom into the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those carrying the ark of Yahweh had advanced six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf.

¹⁴ And David, wearing a linen ephod, danced with all his might before Yahweh, ¹⁵ while he and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of Yahweh with shouting and the sounding of the ram's horn.

■ 2SA 6:6 [MIRACLE] God strikes Uzzah dead for touching the ark

■ 2SA 6:7 [NOTE] WHY UZZAH? See the Big Question pages Uzzah and the Ark.

THE HEART BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

UZZAH AND THE ARK

What Happened

2 SAMUEL 6:1 TO 11 · 1 CHRONICLES 13:1 TO 14 · 15:1 TO 15 · NUMBERS 4:15 · 7:9

THE BIG PARADE

David gathered 30,000 men to bring the ark of God up to Jerusalem. They set it on a new cart, and there was music, harps and tambourines, 6:3 to 5. It looked like worship.

THE MOMENT

At the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled. Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark. God struck him down, and he died right beside it, 6:6 to 7.

DAVID'S REACTION

David was angry, and then afraid. How can the ark of Yahweh ever come to me? 6:8 to 9. He left it at the house of Obed edom, and God blessed that house for three months.

WHAT THE LAW SAID

The ark was to be carried on the shoulders of Levites from the family of Kohath, Numbers 7:9, using poles, Exodus 25:14. Even they must not touch the holy things, or they would die, Numbers 4:15. A cart was how the Philistines moved it, 1 Samuel 6:7.

THE SECOND TRY

This time the Levites carried it on their shoulders with the poles, 1 Chronicles 15:15, and they offered sacrifices after six steps, 6:13. David later said, Yahweh our God broke out against us because we did not seek Him in the way He ordered, 1 Chronicles 15:13.

THE QUESTION

Uzzah was trying to help. Why did God strike him?

Every View

LEVITICUS 10:1 TO 3 · 1 SAMUEL 6:19 · HEBREWS 12:28 TO 29 · ACTS 5:1 TO 11

VIEW 1: GOD'S HOLINESS IS REAL

Many say the point is that God is holy, and His holiness is not a decoration. The ark was the throne of the God enthroned between the cherubim, 6:2. The rules were not small, and the leaders had ignored them. Like Nadab and Abihu, Leviticus 10, a careless start got a hard warning.

VIEW 2: UZZAH SHOULD HAVE KNOWN

The ark had been in Uzzah's family's house for many years, at least twenty, 1 Samuel 7:1 to 2. Some think he had grown too used to it, and treated it like furniture. The text says God struck him for his irreverence, 6:7.

VIEW 3: THE WHOLE PLAN WAS WRONG

Others put the blame on David and the leaders. They copied the Philistines' cart instead of asking how God said to do it. Uzzah paid for a plan that was wrong from the start, and David learned from it, 1 Chronicles 15:13.

THE HARD PART

It still feels unfair to many readers. Some answer that God's mercy is the surprise, not His judgment: sinful people live near a holy God every day only because He makes a way. Christians point to Jesus, who made a way to come near, Hebrews 10:19 to 22.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Good intentions are not enough when God has said how to come to Him. David did not give up. He tried again, God's way, and danced before Yahweh with all his might, 6:14.

MICHAL'S CONTEMPT FOR DAVID // 1 CHRONICLES 15:29-16:3

¹⁶ As the ark of Yahweh was entering the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked down from a window and saw King David leaping and dancing before Yahweh, and she despised him in her heart.

■ **2SA 6:16 [HEART]** Michal watched David dance before Yahweh, and she despised him in her heart. The joy was outside, the contempt was inside.

■ **2SA 6:16 [NOTE]** MICHAL was Saul's daughter and David's first wife. See the Big Question pages Michal and David.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹⁷ So they brought the ark of Yahweh and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yahweh.

¹⁸ When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of Hosts. ¹⁹ Then he distributed to every man and woman among the multitude of Israel a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake. And all the people departed, each to his own home.

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his own household, Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet him. "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today!" she said. "He has uncovered himself today in the sight of the maidservants of his subjects, like a vulgar person would do."

²¹ But David said to Michal, "I was dancing before Yahweh, who chose me over your father and all his house when He appointed me ruler over Yahweh's people Israel. I will celebrate before Yahweh, ²² and I will humiliate and humble myself even more than this. Yet I will be honored by the maidservants of whom you have spoken."

²³ And Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

MICHAL AND DAVID

Her Story

1 SAMUEL 18:20 TO 28 · 19:11 TO 17 · 25:44 · 2 SAMUEL 3:13 TO 16 · 6:16 TO 23

SHE LOVED DAVID

Michal is the only woman in the Bible's stories who is said to love a man, 1 Samuel 18:20. Saul gave her to David, hoping the price would get David killed. It didn't.

SHE SAVED HIS LIFE

When Saul sent men to kill David, Michal let him down through a window and put a household idol in his bed, 1 Samuel 19:11 to 17.

SHE WAS GIVEN AWAY

While David was on the run, Saul gave

her to another man, Paltiel, 1 Samuel 25:44. David had married Abigail and Ahinoam by then.

SHE WAS TAKEN BACK

When David was about to become king of all Israel, he demanded Michal back. Her husband Paltiel followed her, weeping, until Abner sent him home, 3:13 to 16. The Bible never says how Michal felt.

THE WINDOW AGAIN

When the ark came in, Michal looked out a window and saw David leaping and dancing before Yahweh, and she despised him in her heart, 6:16. She met him with sarcasm: the king uncovered himself like a vulgar person, 6:20.

DAVID'S ANSWER

It was before Yahweh, who chose me over your father, 6:21. I will be even more humble than this. Then the chapter ends: Michal had no children to the day of her death, 6:23.

THE QUESTION

Who was right, and why did she have no children?

Every View

2 SAMUEL 6:14 · 6:20 TO 23 · 21:8 · PROVERBS 16:18 · MATTHEW 23:12

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE DANCE?

David wore a linen ephod, a short priestly garment, 6:14. Michal said he uncovered himself in front of servant girls. Some think he was barely covered. Others think she meant he set aside his royal robes and acted like a common man.

VIEW 1: SHE DESPISED WORSHIP

The traditional view. Michal cared more about royal dignity than about God. David humbled himself before Yahweh, and she looked down on it. Pride looks down, and the Bible says God brings the proud low.

VIEW 2: A WOUNDED WOMAN

Many readers also feel for her. She was traded between men, separated from Paltiel and brought back to a husband with other wives. Some think her bitterness came from years of being used by Saul and by David.

WHY NO CHILDREN?

Some say God closed her womb as a

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES THE HEART OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

judgment. Others say David never slept with her again. Others say the verse simply tells us Saul's line would not come to the throne through her. The text does not say which.

ABOUT 21:8

Most Hebrew copies of 21:8 say Michal had five sons. This Bible follows the copies that say Merab, her sister, who married Adriel, so 6:23 stands.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Worship that looks silly to people can be precious to God. And the Bible tells Michal's story honestly, with her love, her losses and her contempt.

7

CHAPTER 7 IN 30 SECONDS

David says, I live in a cedar house, and God's ark lives in a tent. Let me build Him a house. That night God tells Nathan: No, I will build you a house. Your son will build My temple, and your throne will last forever. David sits before Yahweh and says, Who am I?

GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID // 1 CHRONICLES 17:1-15

¹After the king had settled into his palace and Yahweh had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

³And Nathan replied to the king, "Go and do all that is in your heart, for Yahweh is with you."

⁴But that night the word of Yahweh came to Nathan, saying, ⁵"Go and tell My servant David that this is what Yahweh says: Are you the one to build for Me a house to dwell in? ⁶For I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt until this day, but I have moved about with a tent as My dwelling. ⁷In all My journeys with all the Israelites, have I ever asked any of the leaders I appointed to shepherd My people Israel, 'Why haven't you built Me a house of cedar?'

■ **2SA 7:3 [HEART]** Nathan told David to do all that was in his heart. It was a good heart, but God had a different plan.

⁸Now then, you are to tell My servant David that this is what Yahweh of Hosts says: I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be the ruler over My people Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make for you a name like that of the greatest in the land.

¹⁰And I will provide a place for My people Israel and will plant them so that they may dwell in a place of their own and be disturbed no more. No longer will the sons of wickedness oppress them as they did at the beginning ¹¹and have done since the day I appointed judges over My people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

Yahweh declares to you that He Himself will establish a house for you. ¹²*And when your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.* ¹³*He will build a house for My Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.* ¹⁴*I will be his Father, and he will be My son. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.*

¹⁵But My loving devotion will never be removed from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶*Your house and kingdom will endure forever*

■ **2SA 7:12 [PROPHECY]** Messiah would be of David's lineage → MT 1:1; 2TI 2:8 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → LK 1:32-33 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → JN 7:42 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → ACTS 2:30 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → ACTS 13:23 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → ROM 1:3 p.-

■ **2SA 7:12 [NOTE]** A HOUSE FOREVER. God promised David a son, a throne and a kingdom that would never end. See the Big Question pages God's Promise to David.

■ **2SA 7:13 [PROPHECY]** His kingdom would be everlasting → 2PE 1:11 p.-

■ **2SA 7:14 [PROPHECY]** He would be called the Son of God → HEB 1:5; LK 1:32 p.-

■ **2SA 7:14 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → 2CO 6:18 p.-

■ **2SA 7:14 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → HEB 1:5b p.-

■ **2SA 7:14 [NOTE]** WHEN HE DOES WRONG. This part fits Solomon. Hebrews 1:5 uses the first half, I will be his Father, for Jesus, the Son who never sinned.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE TEL DAN STELE

2 SAMUEL 7:16 · 2 KINGS 8:28 TO 29 · 9:14 TO 28 · 1 KINGS 15:20



The Tel Dan Stele in the Israel Museum. The white letters near the middle of the right side spell the House of David. Photo Oren Rozen, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Pieces of a black stone monument with writing in Aramaic, the language of Israel's neighbors in Damascus. A king of Aram, most likely Hazael, set it up to brag about beating Israel and Judah.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 840 BC, around 130 years after David died.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Tel Dan in the far north of Israel. Gila Cook, a surveyor on Avraham Biran's dig, spotted the biggest piece in a later wall in July 1993. Two more pieces were found in 1994. It is in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

WHAT IT SAYS

The king says he killed the king of Israel, son of [Ahab], and the king of the House of David, [Ahazi]ah son of [Jehoram]. The words in brackets are broken off and filled in by scholars. The letters BYTDWD mean House of David.

WHY IT MATTERS

It is the first clear mention of David ever found outside the Bible. It shows that about 130 years after his death, even

Israel's enemies called Judah's royal family the House of David, just as God promised DAVID a house in 7:16.

THE BIG DEBATE

A few scholars first argued BYTDWD meant a place or a god, because the words are written without the dot this stone uses to split words. Most scholars now read it as House of David. The Bible says Jehu killed Joram and Ahaziah, 2 Kings 9. Hazael may have taken credit, or Jehu may have worked for him. Some also see House of David on the Mesha Stele, but that is less sure.

BROKEN ON PURPOSE

The stone was smashed long ago, and its pieces were reused as building stones. Many think the men of Israel broke it when they took Dan back from Aram.

HOW THE PIECES FIT

The biggest piece has thirteen broken lines. The two smaller pieces fit each other, and most scholars place them to the left of the big piece, but a few think they belong somewhere else on the stone.

NOTABLE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

before Me, and your throne will be established forever."

¹⁷ So Nathan relayed to David all the words of this entire revelation.

THE BIG QUESTION**GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID**

What God Promised

2 SAMUEL 7:1 TO 17 · 1 CHRONICLES 17:1 TO 15 · PSALM 89:3 TO 4 · PSALM 132:11 TO 12

DAVID'S IDEA

David lived in a cedar palace while the ark of God sat in a tent. So he wanted to build God a house, a temple. Nathan the prophet said, Go for it, 7:3.

GOD'S ANSWER

That night God told Nathan: You will not build Me a house. I will build you a house, 7:11. A house here means a family line of kings, a dynasty.

FIVE PROMISES

1. A great name, 7:9. 2. A safe place for Israel, 7:10. 3. A son from David's own body who would build God's house, 7:12 to 13. 4. God would be his Father, and he would be God's son, 7:14. 5. David's house, kingdom and throne would last forever, 7:16.

A COVENANT

The chapter never uses the word covenant, but the Bible calls it one later. David calls it an everlasting covenant in 23:5, and Psalm 89:3 says, I have made a covenant with My chosen one, I have sworn to David My servant.

WHEN HE DOES WRONG

God said He would discipline this son when he did wrong, but He would never take His loving devotion away, as He did from Saul, 7:14 to 15. The promise did not depend on the sons being good.

DAVID'S PRAYER

David went in, sat before Yahweh and said, Who am I? 7:18. He did not ask for more. He thanked God and asked Him to do what He said.

THE QUESTION

Who is the son in this promise? Solomon, Jesus, or both?

Every View

LUKE 1:32 TO 33 · ACTS 2:29 TO 36 · ACTS 13:22 TO 23 · HEBREWS 1:5 · ISAIAH 9:6 TO 7 · JEREMIAH 33:17

VIEW 1: SOLOMON FIRST, THEN JESUS

Most Christians through history read it this way. Solomon built the temple and sinned, so the part about wrongdoing fits him. But no son of David lasted forever until Jesus, the Son of David who rose from the dead and rules forever. The promise was fulfilled in part by Solomon and fully by Jesus.

VIEW 2: ABOUT JESUS FROM THE START

Some say the forever part was always about the Messiah. The New Testament quotes it for Jesus, Hebrews 1:5, and the angel told Mary, The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, Luke 1:32.

VIEW 3: A ROYAL PROMISE FOR ISRAEL

Many Jewish readers see it as God's promise to the kings of Judah and a future Messiah from David's line who has not yet come. Many critical scholars see it as a promise that supported David's dynasty, later read as about a coming king.

THE GAP

Judah's last king was taken to Babylon in 586 BC, and no son of David sat on a throne for centuries. Psalm 89:38 to 51 cries out, You have renounced the covenant. The prophets kept the hope alive: a shoot from the stump of Jesse, Isaiah 11:1, and a righteous Branch for David, Jeremiah 23:5.

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT USES IT

Matthew 1:1 calls Jesus the son of David. Peter says David knew God swore to seat one of his descendants on his throne, and he saw the resurrection ahead of time, Acts 2:30 to 31. Paul says Jesus was a descendant of David, Romans 1:3.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

This chapter is one of the biggest in the Old Testament. It is where the hope of a Messiah, an anointed King from David's family, takes its shape.

DAVID'S PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING // 1 CHRONICLES 17:16-27

- 2SA 7:16 [PROPHECY] David's house and throne established forever → LK 3:31; REV 22:16 p.-
- 2SA 7:16 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Aramaic inscription that names the House of David → FIELD NOTES p.16

¹⁸ Then King David went in, sat before Yahweh, and said, "Who am I, O Lord Yah-

THE HEART GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

weh, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And as if this was a small thing in Your eyes, O Lord Yahweh, You have also spoken about the future of the house of Your servant. Is this Your custom with man, O Lord Yahweh? ²⁰ What more can David say to You? For You know Your servant, O Lord Yahweh. ²¹ For the sake of Your word and according to Your own heart, You have accomplished this great thing and revealed it to Your servant.

²² How great You are, O Lord Yahweh! For there is none like You, and there is no God but You, according to everything we have heard with our own ears. ²³ And who is like Your people Israel—the one nation on earth whom God went out to redeem as a people for Himself and to make a name for Himself? You performed great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before Your people, whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt. ²⁴ For You have established Your people Israel as Your very own forever, and You, O Yahweh, have become their God.

²⁵ And now, O Yahweh God, confirm forever the word You have spoken concerning Your servant and his house. Do as You have promised, ²⁶ so that Your name will be magnified forever when it is said, 'Yahweh of Hosts is God over Israel.' And the house of Your servant David will be established before You. ²⁷ For You, O Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant when You said, 'I will build a house for you.' Therefore Your servant has found his heart to offer this prayer to You.

²⁸ And now, O Lord Yahweh, You are God! Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant.

²⁹ Now therefore, may it please You to

bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You. For You, O Lord Yahweh, have spoken, and with Your blessing the house of Your servant will be blessed forever."

8

CHAPTER 8 IN 30 SECONDS

David wins everywhere: the Philistines, Moab, Zobah, the Arameans and Edom. Kings send him gifts, and he gives the gold and silver to Yahweh. The chapter ends with a list of David's officials, like the staff page of a new kingdom.

DAVID'S TRIUMPHS // 1 CHRONICLES 18:1-13; PSALM 60:1-12

¹ Some time later, David defeated the Philistines, subdued them, and took Metheg-ammah from the hand of the Philistines.

² David also defeated the Moabites, made them lie down on the ground, and measured them off with a cord. He measured off with two lengths those to be put to death, and with one length those to be spared. So the Moabites became subject to David and brought him tribute.

³ David also defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, who had marched out to restore his dominion along the Euphrates River. ⁴ David captured from him a thousand chariots, seven thousand charioteers, and twenty thousand foot soldiers, and he hamstrung all the horses except a hundred he kept for the chariots.

⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David struck down twenty-two thousand of their men. ⁶ Then he placed garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became subject to David and brought him tribute. So Yahweh made David victorious wherever he went.

⁷ And David took the gold shields that belonged to the officers of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ And from

■ 2SA 7:18 [NOTABLE] God just promised David a house forever, and David does not brag. He sits before Yahweh and asks, Who am I? Real thanks starts with being amazed at grace.

■ 2SA 7:21 [HEART] God made His promise to David because of His own word and His own heart, not because David earned it.

■ 2SA 7:27 [HEART] David found his heart to pray this prayer. God's promise gave him the courage to ask.

■ 2SA 8:4 [TEXT] HOW MANY? The standard Hebrew text of Samuel says 1,700 horsemen. This Bible follows a Dead Sea Scroll, the Greek and 1 Chronicles 18:4: a thousand chariots and seven thousand charioteers. See the Big Question pages Samuel and Chronicles.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE NOTABLE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Betah and Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took a large amount of bronze.

⁹ When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰ he sent his son Joram to greet King David and bless him for fighting and defeating Hadadezer, who had been at war with Toi. Joram brought with him articles of silver and gold and bronze, ¹¹ and King David dedicated these to Yahweh, along with the silver and gold he had dedicated from all the nations he had subdued— ¹² from Edom and Moab, from the Ammonites and Philistines and Amalekites, and from the spoil of Zobah. Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

¹³ And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁴ He placed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites were subject to David. So Yahweh made David victorious wherever he went.

DAVID'S OFFICERS // 1 CHRONICLES 18:14-17

¹⁵ Thus David reigned over all Israel and administered justice and righteousness for all his people:

¹⁶ Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder;

¹⁷ Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests;

Seraiah was the scribe;

¹⁸ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and Pelethites; and David's sons were priestly leaders.

9

CHAPTER 9 IN 30 SECONDS

David asks, Is anyone left from Saul's family I can be kind to, for Jonathan's sake? They find Mephibosheth, Jonathan's lame son, who shows up scared to death. David gives him back Saul's land and a permanent seat at the king's table.

DAVID AND MEPHIBOSHETH

¹ Then David asked, "Is there anyone left from the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for the sake of Jonathan?"

² And there was a servant of the house of Saul named Ziba. They summoned him to David, and the king inquired, "Are you Ziba?"

"I am your servant," he replied.

³ So the king asked, "Is there anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I can show the kindness of God?"

Ziba answered, "There is still Jonathan's son, who is lame in both feet."

⁴ "Where is he?" replied the king.

And Ziba said, "Indeed, he is in Lo-debar at the house of Machir son of Ammiel."

⁵ So King David had him brought from the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar. ⁶ And when Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he fell facedown in reverence.

Then David said, "Mephibosheth!"

"I am your servant," he replied.

⁷ "Do not be afraid," said David, "for surely I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

⁸ Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog like me?"

⁹ Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said to him, "I have given to your master's grandson all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. ¹⁰ You and your sons and servants are to work the ground

■ **2SA 8:13 [NOTE] EDOMITES.** Most Hebrew copies say Arameans here. A few Hebrew copies, the Greek and 1 Chronicles 18:12 say Edomites, and this Bible follows them. In Hebrew the two words differ by one letter.

■ **2SA 8:14 [FULFILLS]** Two nations from Rebekah's womb ← GEN 25:23 p.~

■ **2SA 8:14 [FULFILLS]** Edom would become Israel's possession ← NUM 24:18 p.~

■ **2SA 8:18 [NOTE] PRIESTLY LEADERS.** The Hebrew word is kohanim, priests. 1 Chronicles 18:17 says David's sons were chief officials beside the king. Some think they were royal advisers. Others think they really served as priests in some way. The text does not say.

■ **2SA 9:7 [NOTABLE]** Mephibosheth was lame, afraid and from the family of David's old enemy. David brought him to eat at the king's table like one of his sons. Many see a picture of grace: we are brought to the King's table, not because of our feet, but because of a promise.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

for him and bring in the harvest, so that your master's grandson may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, is always to eat at my table."

Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. ¹¹ And Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do all that my lord the king has commanded."

So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's own sons. ¹² And Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica, and all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³ So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king's table, and he was lame in both feet.

10

CHAPTER 10 IN 30 SECONDS

The new Ammonite king thinks David's sympathy messengers are spies. He shaves off half their beards, cuts their robes off at the hips and sends them home. David tells them to stay in Jericho until their beards grow back. Then war, and the Ammonites and their hired Arameans lose.

DAVID'S MESSENGERS DISGRACED // 1 CHRONICLES 19:1-9

¹ Some time later, the king of the Ammonites died and was succeeded by his son Hanun. ² And David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me."

So David sent some of his servants to console Hanun concerning his father. But when they arrived in the land of the Ammonites, ³ the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, "Just because David has sent you comforters, do you really believe he is showing respect for your father? Has not David instead sent his servants to explore the city, spy it out, and overthrow it?"

⁴ So Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half of each man's beard, cut off their garments at the hips, and sent them away.

⁵ When this was reported to David, he sent messengers to meet the men, since they had been thoroughly humiliated. The king

told them, "Stay in Jericho until your beards have grown back, and then return."

⁶ When the Ammonites realized that they had become a stench to David, they hired twenty thousand Aramean foot soldiers from Beth-rehob and Zoba, as well as a thousand men from the king of Maacah and twelve thousand men from Tob.

⁷ On hearing this, David sent Joab and the entire army of mighty men. ⁸ The Ammonites marched out and arrayed themselves for battle at the entrance of the city gate, while the Arameans of Zoba and Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country.

DAVID DEFEATS AMMON AND ARAM // 1 CHRONICLES 19:10-19

⁹ When Joab saw the battle lines before him and behind him, he selected some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them against the Arameans. ¹⁰ And he placed the rest of the troops under the command of his brother Abishai, who arrayed them against the Ammonites.

¹¹ "If the Arameans are too strong for me," said Joab, "then you will come to my rescue. And if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come to your rescue." ¹² Be strong and let us fight bravely for our people and for the cities of our God. May Yahweh do what is good in His sight."

¹³ So Joab and his troops advanced to fight the Arameans, who fled before him.

¹⁴ When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, they too fled before Abishai, and they entered the city. So Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they regrouped.

¹⁶ Hadadezer sent messengers to bring more Arameans from beyond the Euphrates, and they came to Helam with Shobach the commander of Hadadezer's army leading them.

¹⁷ When this was reported to David, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan, and went to Helam. Then the Arameans

■ 2SA 10:4 [NOTE] HALF A BEARD. In that world, a man's beard was his honor. Shaving half of it was a public insult to David himself.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

arrayed themselves against David and fought against him. ¹⁸But the Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers. He also struck down Shobach the commander of their army, who died there.

¹⁹When all the kings who were subject to Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. So the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites anymore.

11

CHAPTER 11 IN 30 SECONDS

In the spring, when kings go to war, David stays home. From his roof he sees Bathsheba bathing, sends for her, and she becomes pregnant. Her husband Uriah is one of David's best soldiers. David tries to cover it up, then has Uriah sent to the front line to die. It works. God sees it.

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

¹In the spring, at the time when kings march out to war, David sent out Joab and his servants with the whole army of Israel. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah, but David remained in Jerusalem.

²One evening David got up from his bed and strolled around on the roof of the palace. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing—a very beautiful woman.

³So David sent and inquired about the woman, and he was told, “This is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”

⁴Then David sent messengers to get her, and when she came to him, he slept with her. (Now she had just purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned

home. ⁵And the woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, “I am pregnant.”

⁶At this, David sent orders to Joab: “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” So Joab sent him to David.

⁷When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the troops were doing and how the war was going. ⁸Then he said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.”

So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king followed him. ⁹But Uriah slept at the door of the palace with all his master's servants; he did not go down to his house.

¹⁰And David was told, “Uriah did not go home.”

“Haven't you just arrived from a journey?” David asked Uriah. “Why didn't you go home?”

¹¹Uriah answered, “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my master Joab and his soldiers are camped in the open field. How can I go to my house to eat and drink and sleep with my wife? As surely as you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing!”

¹²“Stay here one more day,” David said to Uriah, “and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next.

¹³Then David invited Uriah to eat and drink with him, and he got Uriah drunk. And in the evening Uriah went out to lie down on his cot with his master's servants, but he did not go home.

DAVID ARRANGES URIAH'S DEATH

¹⁴The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. ¹⁵In the letter he wrote: “Put Uriah at the front of the fiercest battle; then withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and killed.”

¹⁶So as Joab besieged the city, he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew the strongest enemy soldiers were. ¹⁷And when the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of David's servants fell, and Uriah the Hittite also died.

■ **2SA 10:18 [TEXT]** 700 OR 7,000? This verse says 700 charioteers. 1 Chronicles 19:18 says 7,000. See the Big Question pages Samuel and Chronicles.

■ **2SA 11:1 [NOTE]** WHEN KINGS MARCH OUT TO WAR. Spring, after the winter rains. David should have been with his army. See the Big Question pages David and Bathsheba.

■ **2SA 11:3 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → MT 1:6 p.~

■ **2SA 11:3 [NOTE]** URIAH THE HITTITE was one of David's Thirty, his elite soldiers, 23:39. Bathsheba's father, Eliam, was one too, 23:34. Matthew 1:6 names her only as the wife of Uriah.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹⁸ Joab sent to David a full account of the battle ¹⁹ and instructed the messenger, "When you have finished giving the king a full account of the battle, ²⁰ if the king's anger flares, he may ask you, 'Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Did you not realize they would shoot from atop the wall?' ²¹ Who struck Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman who dropped an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?"

If he asks you this, then you are to say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well.'

²² So the messenger set out and reported to David all that Joab had sent him to say.

²³ The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. ²⁴ Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed. And your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead as well."

²⁵ Then David told the messenger, "Say this to Joab: 'Do not let this matter upset you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city and demolish it.' Encourage him with these words."

DAVID MARRIES BATHSHEBA

²⁶ When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. ²⁷ And when the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of Yahweh.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

What Happened

2 SAMUEL 11:1 TO 27 · 12:1 TO 25 · PSALM 51 · MATTHEW 1:6

HE STAYED HOME

In the spring, when kings went to war, David sent Joab and stayed in Jerusalem, 11:1. One evening he walked on his roof and saw a beautiful woman bathing, 11:2.

HE ASKED, AND HE SENT

David asked who she was. He was told: Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, 11:3. He sent messengers to get her, and he slept with her. She became pregnant, 11:4 to 5.

THE COVER UP

David called Uriah home and told him to go to his house, hoping he would sleep with his wife. Uriah would not, because his fellow soldiers were camping in the field, 11:11. The next night David got him drunk, and he still would not go home, 11:13. So David sent a letter by Uriah's own hand telling Joab to put him on the front line and pull back, 11:14 to 15.

THE MURDER

Uriah died, and other soldiers died with him, 11:17. After her mourning, David married Bathsheba. But the thing David had done was evil in the sight of Yahweh, 11:27.

THE STORY

God sent Nathan with a story about a rich man who stole a poor man's one little lamb. David said that man deserves to die. Nathan said, You are that man, 12:7. David said, I have sinned against Yahweh, 12:13.

THE QUESTION

Was Bathsheba a willing partner, or a victim of a powerful king?

■ 2SA 11:27 [NOTE] EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF YAHWEH. The narrator says almost nothing about God in this chapter until this last line. It says enough.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Every View

2 SAMUEL 12:1 TO 14 · 12:24 · 1 KINGS 1:11 TO 31 · PSALM 51 · MATTHEW 1:6

VIEW 1: A SIN OF POWER

Many today read it this way. David was the king. He sent men, and she came. A woman could hardly say no to the king's messengers. Nathan's story blames only the rich man, and the lamb did nothing wrong, 12:1 to 4. God's words in 12:9 blame David alone.

VIEW 2: BOTH SINNED

The older common view. Some say she should not have bathed where she could be seen, or she could have refused. Others answer that she was washing as the law required, 11:4, likely in her own courtyard, and the king was the one on the roof.

WHAT THE TEXT STRESSES

The verbs are David's: he saw, he sent, he took, he slept. God's judgment falls on David: the sword will never depart from your house, 12:10. The story never blames Bathsheba.

REPENTANCE

David did not excuse himself. Psalm 51 is his prayer: Against You, You only, have I sinned. Create in me a clean heart, O God. God forgave him, 12:13, but the baby died, and the trouble in his family followed.

GRACE

Bathsheba became the mother of Solomon, the next king, 12:24. She is named in Jesus' family line as the wife of Uriah, Matthew 1:6. God brought His promise through broken people.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Even the man after God's own heart fell hard. Sin hides, grows and hurts many people, and God sees it all. Real repentance is met with real forgiveness.

NATHAN REBUKES DAVID // PSALM 51:1-19

¹ Then Yahweh sent Nathan to David, and when he arrived, he said, "There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. ² The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle, ³ but the poor man had nothing except one small ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food and drank from his cup; it slept in his arms and was like a daughter to him.

⁴ Now a traveler came to the rich man, who refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for his guest."

⁵ David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan: "As surely as Yahweh lives, the man who did this deserves to die! ⁶ Because he has done this thing and has shown no pity, he must pay for the lamb four times over."

⁷ Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.'

⁸ I gave your master's house to you and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah, and if that was not enough, I would have given you even more.

⁹ Why then have you despised the command of Yahweh by doing evil in His sight? You put Uriah the Hittite to the sword and took his wife as your own. You have slain him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own."

■ **2SA 12:7 [NOTABLE]** Four words that broke a king. Nathan told a story, let David judge it, then turned the story around. Sin we condemn in others is often sin we hide in ourselves.

■ **2SA 12:10 [PROPHECY]** Nathan told David the sword would never depart from his house; his child by Bathsheba would die; his wives would be publicly violated → 2SA 12:18 (child dies); 2SA 16:21-22 (Absalom takes David's concubines on the roof); ongoing strife in David's family p.~

■ **2SA 12:10 [DEMONIC]** Sword shall never depart from David's house due to Bathsheba sin

12

CHAPTER 12 IN 30 SECONDS

Nathan tells David a story about a rich man who stole a poor man's only lamb. David is furious: that man deserves to die! Nathan says, You are that man. David says, I have sinned. God forgives him, but the baby dies, and the sword will never leave his house. Then Solomon is born.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE | **NOTABLE** | GOD SPEAKING | BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

11 This is what Yahweh says: **"I will raise up adversity against you from your own house. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to another, and he will lie with them in broad daylight."** **12** You have acted in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel!"

DAVID'S LOSS AND REPENTANCE

13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh."
"Yahweh has taken away your sin," Nathan replied. "You will not die. **14** Nevertheless, because by this deed you have shown utter contempt for the word of Yahweh, the son born to you will surely die."

15 After Nathan had gone home, Yahweh struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. **16** David pleaded with God for the boy. He fasted and went into his house and spent the night lying in sackcloth on the ground. **17** The elders of his household stood beside him to help him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat anything with them.

18 On the seventh day the child died. But David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Look, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not listen to us. So how can we tell him the child is dead? He may even harm himself."

19 When David saw that his servants were whispering to one another, he perceived that the child was dead. So he asked his servants, "Is the child dead?"

"He is dead," they replied.

20 Then David got up from the ground, washed and anointed himself, changed his clothes, and went into the house of Yahweh and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they set food before him, and he ate.

21 "What is this you have done?" his servants asked. "While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but when he died, you got up and ate."

22 David answered, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows? Yahweh may be gracious to me and let him live.' **23** But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

SOLOMON'S BIRTH

24 Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. So she gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon.

Now Yahweh loved the child **25** and sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah because Yahweh loved him.

THE CAPTURE OF RABBAH // 1 CHRONICLES 20:1-3

26 Meanwhile, Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal fortress. **27** Then Joab sent messengers to David to say, "I have fought against Rabbah and have captured the water supply of the city. **28** Now, therefore, assemble the rest of the troops, lay siege to the city, and capture it. Otherwise I will capture the city, and it will be named after me."

29 So David assembled all the troops and went to Rabbah; and he fought against it and captured it. **30** Then he took the crown from the head of their king. It weighed 75 pounds of gold and was set with precious stones, and it was placed on David's head. And David took a great amount of plunder from the city.

31 David brought out the people who were there and put them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes, and he made them

■ **2SA 12:13 [NOTE] I HAVE SINNED.** David's prayer after this is Psalm 51, Create in me a clean heart, O God. Its heading says so.

■ **2SA 12:18 [FULFILLS]** Nathan told David the sword would never depart from his house; his child by Bathsheba would die; his wives would be publicly violated ← 2SA 12:10-14 p.-

■ **2SA 12:23 [NOTABLE]** David's baby son died, and David got up, washed and worshiped. Many have taken comfort from these words: a parent who loses a little child can hope to see that child again.

■ **2SA 12:23 [NOTE] I WILL GO TO HIM.** Many find comfort here for parents who lose a little child.

■ **2SA 12:24 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → MT 1:6 p.-

■ **2SA 12:25 [NOTE] JEDIDIAH** means loved by Yahweh. It was God's own name for Solomon.

■ **2SA 12:30 [NOTE] THEIR KING.** The Hebrew is *malkam*. The Greek and many scholars read it as *Milcom*, the god of the Ammonites, 1 Kings 11:5. Then the heavy crown came off an idol's statue. See the Rabbah Field Notes page.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

RABBAH OF THE AMMONITES

2 SAMUEL 11:1 · 12:26 TO 31 · DEUTERONOMY 3:11 · 1 KINGS 11:5



An Ammonite stone statue wearing a tall crown, from the area of Amman, now in the Jordan Museum. Photo Makeandtooss, CC0.

WHAT IT IS

Rabbah, also called Rabbath Ammon, was the capital of the Ammonites. It is Amman, the capital of Jordan today. Its old high hill, the Amman Citadel, still has ruins from many centuries.

HOW OLD IT IS

People lived on the Citadel hill long before David. The Ammonite stone statues found in and around Amman, like the one shown here, come from about the 800s to 600s BC, after David's time.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

The statues were found in Amman during the 1900s. A stone with Ammonite writing, the Amman Citadel Inscription, was found on the hill in 1961 and likely names the god Milcom.

THE HEAVY CROWN

The crown David took weighed about 75 pounds, 12:30. That is too heavy to wear for long. The Hebrew says their king, malkam. The Greek and many scholars read it as Milcom, the Ammonite god. Then the crown sat on an idol's statue, and David wore it only for a moment.

URIAH'S LAST BATTLE

Uriah the Hittite died at the wall of Rabbah, 11:16 to 17. Joab took the water supply of the city, 12:27, and then David came and took the rest.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The statue shown is not the crown of 12:30 or a statue of Milcom. It shows how the Ammonites pictured kings or gods with tall crowns.

work at the brick kilns. He did the same to all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all his troops returned to Jerusalem.

13

CHAPTER 13 IN 30 SECONDS

David's son Amnon falls for his half sister Tamar, tricks her into his room and rapes her. Then he throws her out. David is angry but does nothing. Her brother Absalom waits two years, throws a party and has Amnon killed. Absalom runs away to his grandfather in Geshur.

AMNON AND TAMAR

¹After some time, David's son Amnon fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of David's son Absalom. ²Amnon was sick

with frustration over his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed implausible for him to do anything to her.

³Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah. Jonadab was a very shrewd man, ⁴and he asked Amnon, "Why are you, the son of the king, so depressed morning after morning? Won't you tell me?"

Amnon replied, "I am in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

⁵Jonadab told him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend you are ill. When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare it in my sight so I may watch her and eat it from her hand.'"

■ 2SA 12:31 [NOTE] SAWS AND PICKS. Some old Bibles, like the King James, read this as torture. Most Bibles today read it as forced labor, as this Bible does.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

⁶ So Amnon lay down and feigned illness. When the king came to see him, Amnon said, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand."

⁷ Then David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Please go to the house of Amnon your brother and prepare a meal for him."

⁸ So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked them. ⁹ Then she brought the pan and set it down before him, but he refused to eat. "Send everyone away!" said Amnon. And everyone went out.

¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, so that I may eat it from your hand."

Tamar took the cakes she had made and went to her brother Amnon's bedroom. ¹¹ And when she had brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said, "Come lie with me, my sister!"

¹² "No, my brother!" she cried. "Do not violate me, for such a thing should never be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! ¹³ Where could I ever take my shame? And you would be like one of the fools in Israel! Please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you."

¹⁴ But Amnon refused to listen to her, and being stronger, he violated her and lay with her.

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated Tamar with such intensity that his hatred was greater than the love he previously had. "Get up!" he said to her. "Be gone!"

¹⁶ "No," she replied, "sending me away is worse than this great wrong you have already done to me!"

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ Instead, he called to his attendant and said, "Throw this woman out and bolt the door behind her!"

¹⁸ So Amnon's attendant threw her out and bolted the door behind her. Now Tamar was wearing a robe of many colors, because this is what the king's virgin daughters wore. ¹⁹ And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her robe. And putting her hand on her head, she went away crying aloud.

²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has your brother Amnon been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister. He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart."

So Tamar lived as a desolate woman in the house of her brother Absalom.

²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad, because he hated Amnon for violating his sister Tamar.

ABSALOM'S REVENGE ON AMNON

²³ Two years later, when Absalom's sheepshearers were at Baal-hazor near Ephraim, he invited all the sons of the king. ²⁴ And he went to the king and said, "Your servant has just hired shearers. Will the king and his servants please come with me?"

²⁵ "No, my son," the king replied, "we should not all go, or we would be a burden to you." Although Absalom urged him, he was not willing to go, but gave him his blessing.

²⁶ "If not," said Absalom, "please let my brother Amnon go with us."

"Why should he go with you?" the king asked.

²⁷ But Absalom urged him, so the king sent Amnon and the rest of his sons.

²⁸ Now Absalom had ordered his young men, "Watch Amnon until his heart is merry with wine, and when I order you to strike Amnon down, you are to kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant!"

²⁹ So Absalom's young men did to Amnon just as Absalom had ordered. Then all the other sons of the king got up, and each one fled on his mule.

■ 2SA 13:12 [NOTE] Tamar said no. This was rape, and the Bible calls it a disgrace. David's silence, 13:21, opened the door to Absalom's revenge. See the Big Question pages Absalom's Revolt.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

³⁰ While they were on the way, a report reached David: "Absalom has struck down all the sons of the king; not one of them is left!"

³¹ Then the king stood up, tore his clothes, and lay down on the ground. And all his servants stood by with their clothes torn.

³² But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, spoke up: "My lord must not think they have killed all the sons of the king, for only Amnon is dead. In fact, Absalom has planned this since the day Amnon violated his sister Tamar. ³³ So now, my lord the king, do not take to heart the report that all the sons of the king are dead. Only Amnon is dead."

ABSALOM FLEES TO GESHUR

³⁴ Meanwhile, Absalom had fled. When the young man standing watch looked up, he saw many people coming down the road west of him, along the side of the hill. And the watchman went and reported to the king, "I see men coming from the direction of Horonaim, along the side of the hill."

³⁵ So Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the sons of the king have arrived! It is just as your servant said."

³⁶ And as he finished speaking, the sons of the king came in, wailing loudly. Then the king and all his servants also wept very bitterly.

³⁷ Now Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But David mourned for his son every day.

³⁸ After Absalom had fled and gone to Geshur, he stayed there three years. ³⁹ And King David longed to go to Absalom, for he had been consoled over Amnon's death.

14

CHAPTER 14 IN 30 SECONDS

Joab sees David missing Absalom, so he sends a wise woman from Tekoa with a made up story to change the king's mind. It works. Absalom comes home, but David won't see him for two years. Absalom gets Joab's attention by setting his barley field on fire. Father and son finally kiss.

ABSALOM'S RETURN TO JERUSALEM

¹ Now Joab son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart longed for Absalom. ² So Joab sent to Tekoa to bring a wise woman from there. He told her, "Please pretend to be a mourner; put on clothes for mourning and do not anoint yourself with oil. Act like a woman who has mourned for the dead a long time. ³ Then go to the king and speak these words to him." And Joab put the words in her mouth.

⁴ When the woman from Tekoa went to the king, she fell facedown in homage and said, "Help me, O king!"

⁵ "What troubles you?" the king asked her. "Indeed," she said, "I am a widow, for my husband is dead. ⁶ And your maidservant had two sons who were fighting in the field with no one to separate them, and one struck the other and killed him. ⁷ Now the whole clan has risen up against your maidservant and said, 'Hand over the one who struck down his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of the brother whom he killed. Then we will cut off the heir as well!' So they would extinguish my one remaining ember by not preserving my husband's name or posterity on the earth."

⁸ "Go home," the king said to the woman, "and I will give orders on your behalf."

⁹ But the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "My lord the king, may any blame be on me and on my father's house, and may the king and his throne be guiltless."

¹⁰ "If anyone speaks to you," said the king, "bring him to me, and he will not trouble you again!"

¹¹ "Please," she replied, "may the king invoke Yahweh your God to prevent the avenger of blood from increasing the devastation, so that my son may not be destroyed!"

"As surely as Yahweh lives," he vowed, "not a hair of your son's head will fall to the ground."

¹² Then the woman said, "Please, may your servant speak a word to my lord the king?"

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

"Speak," he replied.

¹³ The woman asked, "Why have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, since he has not brought back his own banished son? ¹⁴ For we will surely die and be like water poured out on the ground, which cannot be recovered. Yet God does not take away a life, but He devises ways that the banished one may not be cast out from Him.

¹⁵ Now therefore, I have come to present this matter to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. Your servant thought, 'I will speak to the king. Perhaps he will grant the request of his maidservant.' ¹⁶ For the king will hear and deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man who would cut off both me and my son from God's inheritance.'

¹⁷ And now your servant says, 'May the word of my lord the king bring me rest, for my lord the king is able to discern good and evil, just like the angel of God. May Yahweh your God be with you.'

¹⁸ Then the king said to the woman, "I am going to ask you something; do not conceal it from me!"

"Let my lord the king speak," she replied.

¹⁹ So the king asked, "Is the hand of Joab behind all this?"

The woman answered, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything that my lord the king says. Yes, your servant Joab is the one who gave me orders; he told your maidservant exactly what to say. ²⁰ Joab your servant has done this to bring about this change of affairs, but my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that happens in the land."

²¹ Then the king said to Joab, "I hereby grant this request. Go, bring back the young man Absalom."

²² Joab fell facedown in homage and blessed the king. "Today," said Joab, "your servant knows that he has found fa-

vor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his request."

²³ So Joab got up, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. ²⁴ But the king added, "He may return to his house, but he must not see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but he did not see the face of the king.

²⁵ Now there was not a man in all Israel as handsome and highly praised as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the top of his head, he did not have a single flaw. ²⁶ And when he cut the hair of his head—he shaved it every year because his hair got so heavy—he would weigh it out to be five pounds, according to the royal standard.

²⁷ Three sons were born to Absalom, and a daughter named Tamar, who was a beautiful woman.

ABSALOM RECONCILED TO DAVID

²⁸ Now Absalom lived in Jerusalem two years without seeing the face of the king.

²⁹ Then he sent for Joab to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So Absalom sent a second time, but Joab still would not come.

³⁰ Then Absalom said to his servants, "Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire!"

And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

³¹ Then Joab came to Absalom's house and demanded, "Why did your servants set my field on fire?"

³² "Look," said Absalom, "I sent for you and said, 'Come here. I want to send you to the king to ask: Why have I come back from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there.' So now, let me see the king's face, and if there is iniquity in me, let him kill me."

³³ So Joab went and told the king, and David summoned Absalom, who came to him and bowed facedown before him. Then the king kissed Absalom.

■ **2SA 14:26 [NOTE]** FIVE POUNDS OF HAIR a year. Many think his long hair is how he got stuck in a tree in 18:9.

THE HEART BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

15

CHAPTER 15 IN 30 SECONDS

Absalom sits at the city gate, shakes hands, kisses people and tells them, 'If I were judge, you would get justice. He steals the hearts of Israel. Then he declares himself king in Hebron. David runs from Jerusalem barefoot, weeping, up the Mount of Olives.'

ABSALOM'S CONSPIRACY

¹Some time later, Absalom provided for himself a chariot with horses and fifty men to run ahead of him. ²He would get up early and stand beside the road leading to the city gate.

Whenever anyone had a grievance to bring before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out and ask, "What city are you from?" And if he replied, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel," ³ Absalom would say, "Look, your claims are good and right, but the king has no deputy to hear you."

⁴And he would add, "If only someone would appoint me judge in the land, then everyone with a grievance or dispute could come to me, and I would give him justice."

⁵Also, when anyone approached to bow down to him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him, and kiss him. ⁶**Ab-salom did this to all the Israelites who came to the king for justice. In this way he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.**

⁷After four years had passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron to fulfill a vow I have made to Yahweh. ⁸For your servant made a vow while dwelling in Geshur of Aram, saying: 'If indeed Yahweh brings me back to Jerusalem, I will worship Yahweh in Hebron.'"

⁹"Go in peace," said the king. So Absalom got up and went to Hebron.

■ **2SA 15:6 [HEART]** Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel with handshakes, kisses and promises.

■ **2SA 15:6 [NOTE]** HE STOLE THE HEARTS. See the Big Question pages Absalom's Revolt.

■ **2SA 15:7 [TEXT]** FOUR OR FORTY? The standard Hebrew text says forty years. Some Greek copies, the Syriac and Josephus say four, and this Bible follows them. Forty does not fit Absalom's age.

¹⁰Then Absalom sent spies throughout the tribes of Israel with this message: "When you hear the sound of the horn, you are to say, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!'"

¹¹Two hundred men from Jerusalem accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and they went along innocently, for they knew nothing about the matter. ¹²While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from his hometown of Giloh.

So the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept increasing.

DAVID FLEES JERUSALEM // PSALM 3:1-8

¹³**Then a messenger came to David and reported, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."**

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

ABSALOM'S REVOLT

How It Happened

2 SAMUEL 12:10 TO 12 · 13:1 TO 39 · 14:1 TO 33 · 15:1 TO 12

THE SWORD

After David's sin, God said through Nathan: the sword will never depart from your house, and I will raise up trouble against you from your own house, 12:10 to 11. Then it began.

AMNON AND TAMAR

David's oldest son, Amnon, raped his half sister Tamar, 13:14. David was furious, but he did nothing, 13:21. Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman, 13:20.

ABSALOM'S REVENGE

Absalom waited two years. Then he had Amnon killed at a sheep shearing party and ran to Geshur for three years, 13:28 to 38.

HALFWAY HOME

Joab used a wise woman from Tekoa to get Absalom brought back. But David would not see his son for two more years, 14:24 to 28. Absalom set Joab's field on fire to get a meeting, and David finally kissed him, 14:30 to 33.

STEALING HEARTS

For four years, Absalom rose early,

■ **2SA 15:13 [HEART]** The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom. The stolen hearts followed the thief.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

stood by the city gate, shook hands, kissed people and said, If only I were judge. He stole the hearts of the men of Israel, 15:6. Then he had himself crowned in Hebron, 15:10.

THE QUESTION

How much of this was David's fault, and why did he still weep for Absalom?

Every View

2 SAMUEL 16:21 TO 22 · 18:5 · 18:9 TO 15 · 18:33 · 1 KINGS 1:5 TO 6

VIEW 1: GOD'S JUDGMENT

Many see the revolt as the sword Nathan promised, step by step. Even Absalom sleeping with David's concubines on the palace roof, 16:22, was exactly what God said would happen in broad daylight, 12:11 to 12.

VIEW 2: A FATHER WHO DID NOT ACT

Others stress David's choices. He did not punish Amnon. He let Absalom stay away, then would not see him. Later, 1 Kings 1:6 says of another son, his father had never once corrected him. Silence at home left room for anger to grow.

VIEW 3: ABSALOM'S OWN PRIDE

Absalom was handsome, popular and proud. He even built a monument to himself, 18:18. Some think he would have reached for the throne no matter what David did.

ALL THREE AT ONCE

Many readers say the text holds all three together. God's judgment came through real choices by David, Amnon, Absalom, Joab and Ahithophel, and each one was responsible.

O ABSALOM, MY SON

David told his generals, Be gentle with the young man Absalom, 18:5. Joab killed him anyway. David wept, If only I had died instead of you, 18:33. Many Christians see a picture of God the Father, who loves rebel children, and of Jesus, who did die in our place.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Sin in a family does not stay small. And a father's love can outlast a son's rebellion.

we will not escape from Absalom! We must leave quickly, or he will soon overtake us, heap disaster on us, and put the city to the sword."

¹⁵ The king's servants replied, "Whatever our lord the king decides, we are your servants."

¹⁶ Then the king set out, and his entire household followed him. But he left behind ten concubines to take care of the palace.

¹⁷ So the king set out with all the people following him. He stopped at the last house, ¹⁸ and all his servants marched past him—all the Cherethites and Pelethites, and six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath.

¹⁹ Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you also go with us? Go back and stay with the new king, since you are both a foreigner and an exile from your homeland. ²⁰ In fact, you arrived only yesterday; should I make you wander around with us today while I do not know where I am going? Go back and take your brothers with you. May Yahweh show you loving devotion and faithfulness."

²¹ But Ittai answered the king, "As surely as Yahweh lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether it means life or death, there will your servant be!"

²² "March on then," said David to Ittai. So Ittai the Gittite marched past with all his men and all the little ones who were with him.

²³ Everyone in the countryside was weeping loudly as all the people passed by. And as the king crossed the Kidron Valley, all the people also passed toward the way of the wilderness.

²⁴ Zadok was also there, and all the Levites with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had passed out of the city.

¹⁴ And David said to all the servants with him in Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, or

²⁵ Then the king said to Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

eyes of Yahweh, He will bring me back and let me see both it and His dwelling place again. ²⁶ But if He should say, 'I do not delight in you,' then here I am; let Him do to me whatever seems good to Him."

²⁷ The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace—you with your son Ahimaaz, and Abiathar with his son Jonathan. ²⁸ See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."

²⁹ So Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and stayed there.

DAVID WEEPS AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES //
PSALM 63:1–11

³⁰ But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went up. His head was covered, and he was walking barefoot. And all the people with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went.

³¹ Now someone told David: "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom."

So David pleaded, "O Yahweh, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!"

³² When David came to the summit, where he used to worship God, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him with his robe torn and dust on his head.

³³ David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. ³⁴ But you can thwart the counsel of Ahithophel for me if you return to the city and say to Absalom: 'I will be your servant, my king; in the past I was your father's servant, but now I will be your servant.'"

³⁵ Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be there with you? Report to them everything you hear from the king's palace. ³⁶ Indeed, their two sons, Ahimaaz son of Zadok and Jonathan son of Abiathar, are there with them. Send them to me with everything you hear."

³⁷ So David's friend Hushai arrived in Jerusalem just as Absalom was entering the city.

■ **2SA 15:30 [NOTE]** THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. About a thousand years later, Jesus wept over Jerusalem and was betrayed on the same hill, Luke 19:41 and 22:39.

16

CHAPTER 16 IN 30 SECONDS

On the road, Ziba brings David food and accuses his master Mephibosheth. Shimei from Saul's family throws rocks and curses David the whole way, and David lets him. In Jerusalem, Absalom takes Ahithophel's advice and sleeps with David's concubines on the roof, just as Nathan said.

DAVID AND ZIBA

¹ When David had gone a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth was there to meet him. He had a pair of saddled donkeys loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred clusters of raisins, a hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine.

² "Why do you have these?" asked the king.

Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, the bread and summer fruit are for the young men to eat, and the wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the wilderness."

³ "Where is your master's grandson?" asked the king.

And Ziba answered, "Indeed, he is staying in Jerusalem, for he has said, 'Today, the house of Israel will restore to me the kingdom of my grandfather.'"

⁴ So the king said to Ziba, "All that belongs to Mephibosheth is now yours!"

"I humbly bow before you," said Ziba.

"May I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king!"

SHIMEI CURSES DAVID

⁵ As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the family of the house of Saul was just coming out. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and as he approached, he kept yelling out curses. ⁶ He threw stones at David and at all the servants of the king, though the troops and all the mighty men were on David's right and left.

⁷ And as he yelled curses, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you worthless man of bloodshed! ⁸ Yahweh has paid you back for all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned, and Yah-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

weh has delivered the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, you have come to ruin because you are a man of bloodshed!"

⁹ Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head!"

¹⁰ But the king replied, "What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah? If he curses me because Yahweh told him, 'Curse David,' who can ask, 'Why did you do this?'"

¹¹ Then David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Behold, my own son, my own flesh and blood, seeks my life. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone and let him curse me, for Yahweh has told him so. ¹² Perhaps Yahweh will see my affliction and repay me with good for the cursing I receive today."

¹³ So David and his men proceeded along the road as Shimei went along the ridge of the hill opposite him. As Shimei went, he yelled curses, threw stones, and flung dust at David. ¹⁴ Finally, the king and all the people with him arrived, exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

THE COUNSEL OF AHITHOPHEL AND HUSHAI

¹⁵ Then Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him. ¹⁶ And David's friend Hushai the Archite went to Absalom and said to him, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

¹⁷ "Is this the loyalty you show your friend?" Absalom replied. "Why did you not go with your friend?"

¹⁸ "Not at all," Hushai answered. "For the one chosen by Yahweh, by this people, and by all the men of Israel—his I will be, and with him I will remain. ¹⁹ Furthermore, whom should I serve if not his son? As I served in your father's presence, so also I will serve in yours."

²⁰ Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give me counsel. What should we do?"

²¹ Ahithophel replied, "Sleep with your father's concubines, whom he has left to take care of the palace. When all Israel

hears that you have become a stench to your father, then the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened."

²² So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he slept with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

²³ Now in those days the advice of Ahithophel was like the consultation of the word of God. Such was the regard that both David and Absalom had for Ahithophel's advice.

17

CHAPTER 17 IN 30 SECONDS

Ahithophel says, Give me 12,000 men and I'll catch David tonight. Hushai, David's secret friend, says, Wait and gather all Israel. Absalom picks Hushai's plan, because God was making Ahithophel's good advice fail. Two young messengers hide in a well to warn David. Ahithophel goes home and hangs himself.

HUSHAI COUNTERS AHITHOPHEL'S ADVICE

¹ Furthermore, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David. ² I will attack him while he is weak and weary; I will throw him into a panic, and all the people with him will flee; I will strike down only the king ³ and bring all the people back to you as a bride returning to her husband. You seek the life of only one man; then all the people will be at peace."

⁴ This proposal seemed good to Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

⁵ Then Absalom said, "Summon Hushai the Archite as well, and let us hear what he too has to say."

⁶ So Hushai came to Absalom, who told him, "Ahithophel has spoken this proposal. Should we carry it out? If not, what do you say?"

⁷ Hushai replied, "This time the advice of Ahithophel is not sound."

⁸ He continued, "You know your father and his men. They are mighty men, and as

■ **2SA 16:21 [FULFILLS]** Nathan told David the sword would never depart from his house; his child by Bathsheba would die; his wives would be publicly violated ← 2SA 12:10-14 p. ~

■ **2SA 16:22 [NOTE]** ON THE ROOF, the same roof where David first saw Bathsheba, 11:2. Nathan said this would happen in broad daylight, 12:11 to 12.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Moreover, your father is a man of war who will not spend the night with the troops.⁹ Surely by now he is hiding in a cave or some other location. If some of your troops fall first, whoever hears of it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.'¹⁰ Then even the most valiant soldier with the heart of a lion will melt with fear, because all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man who has valiant men with him.

¹¹ Instead, I advise that all Israel from Dan to Beersheba—a multitude like the sand on the seashore—be gathered to you, and that you yourself lead them into battle.¹² Then we will attack David wherever we find him, and we will descend on him like dew on the ground. And of all the men with him, not even one will remain.

¹³ If he retreats to a city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it down to the valley until not even a pebble can be found there."

¹⁴ Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than that of Ahithophel." For Yahweh had purposed to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

HUSHAI'S WARNING SAVES DAVID // PSALM 55:1-23

¹⁵ So Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, "This is what Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what I have advised.¹⁶ Now send quickly and tell David, 'Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness, but be sure to cross over. Otherwise the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up.'"

¹⁷ Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En-rogel, where a servant girl would come and pass along information to them. They in turn would go and inform King David, for they dared not be seen entering the city.¹⁸ But a young man did see them and told Absalom. So the two left quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard,

and they climbed down into it.¹⁹ Then the man's wife took a covering, spread it over the mouth of the well, and scattered grain over it so nobody would know a thing.

²⁰ When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

"They have crossed over the brook," she replied. The men searched but did not find them, so they returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ After the men had gone, Ahimaaz and Jonathan climbed up out of the well and went to inform King David, saying, "Get up and cross over the river at once, for Ahithophel has given this advice against you."

²² So David and all the people with him got up and crossed the Jordan. By daybreak, there was no one left who had not crossed the Jordan.

²³ When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his affairs in order and hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

²⁴ Then David went to Mahanaim, and Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel.²⁵ Absalom had appointed Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, the Ishmaelite who had married Abigail, the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah the mother of Joab.²⁶ So the Israelites and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.

²⁷ When David came to Mahanaim, he was met by Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim.²⁸ They brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, as well as wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils,²⁹ honey, curds, sheep, and cheese from the herd for David and his people to eat. For they said, "The people have be-

■ 2SA 17:23 [NOTE] AHITHOPHEL may have been Bathsheba's grandfather. His son was named Eliam, 23:34, and so was her father, 11:3. Many think it is the same man. He hanged himself, like Judas, who also betrayed his king.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

come hungry, exhausted, and thirsty in the wilderness."

18

CHAPTER 18 IN 30 SECONDS

David's army fights Absalom's in the forest of Ephraim. David tells his generals, Be gentle with Absalom. Absalom's head gets caught in an oak tree while his mule keeps going. Joab kills him anyway. When David hears, he cries, O my son Absalom, if only I had died instead of you.

ABSALOM KILLED

¹Then David reviewed his troops and appointed over them commanders of thousands and of hundreds. ²He sent out the troops, a third under Joab, a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the troops, "I will surely march out with you as well."

³But the people pleaded, "You must not go out! For if we have to flee, they will not care about us. Even if half of us die, they will not care. But you are worth ten thousand of us. It is better now if you support us from the city."

⁴"I will do whatever seems best to you," the king replied. So he stood beside the gate, while all the troops marched out by hundreds and by thousands.

⁵Now the king had commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, "Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake." And all the people heard the king's orders to each of the commanders regarding Absalom.

⁶So David's army marched into the field to engage Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷There the people of Israel were defeated by David's servants, and the slaughter was great that day—twenty thousand men. ⁸The battle spread over the whole countryside, and that day the forest devoured more people than the sword.

⁹Now Absalom was riding on his mule when he met the servants of David, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's head was caught fast in the tree. The mule under him kept going, so that he was sus-

pended in midair. ¹⁰When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!"

¹¹"You just saw him!" Joab exclaimed.

"Why did you not strike him to the ground right there? I would have given you four ounces of silver and a warrior's belt!"

¹²The man replied, "Even if 25 pounds of silver were weighed out into my hands, I would not raise my hand against the son of the king. For we heard the king command you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.' ¹³If I had jeopardized my own life—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have abandoned me."

¹⁴But Joab declared, "I am not going to wait like this with you!" And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the oak tree. ¹⁵And ten young men who carried Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, struck him, and killed him.

¹⁶Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and the troops broke off their pursuit of Israel because Joab had restrained them. ¹⁷They took Absalom, cast him into a large pit in the forest, and piled a huge mound of stones over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled, each to his home.

¹⁸During his lifetime, Absalom had set up for himself a pillar in the King's Valley, for he had said, "I have no son to preserve the memory of my name." So he gave the pillar his name, and to this day it is called Absalom's Monument.

DAVID MOURNS FOR ABSALOM

¹⁹Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Please let me run and tell the king the good news that Yahweh has avenged him of his enemies."

²⁰But Joab replied, "You are not the man to take good news today. You may do it

■ **2SA 18:9 [NOTE] CAUGHT BY THE HEAD.** The text does not say hair, but many think his famous hair, 14:26, got caught.

■ **2SA 18:18 [NOTE] ABSALOM'S MONUMENT.** The tall stone tomb in the Kidron Valley now called Absalom's Pillar was built about a thousand years later. It is not this one.

NOTABLE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

another day, but you must not do so today, because the king's son is dead."

²¹ So Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed to Joab and took off running.

²² Ahimaaz son of Zadok, however, persisted and said to Joab, "No matter what, please let me also run behind the Cushite!"

"My son," Joab replied, "why do you want to run, since you will not receive a reward?"

²³ "No matter what, I want to run!" he replied.

"Then run!" Joab told him.

So Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran the Cushite.

²⁴ Now David was sitting between the two gates when the watchman went up to the roof of the gateway by the wall, looked out, and saw a man running alone. ²⁵ So he called out and told the king.

"If he is alone," the king replied, "he bears good news."

As the first runner drew near, ²⁶ the watchman saw another man running, and he called out to the gatekeeper, "Look! Another man is running alone!"

"This one also brings good news," said the king.

²⁷ The watchman said, "The first man appears to me to be running like Ahimaaz son of Zadok."

"This is a good man," said the king. "He comes with good news."

²⁸ Then Ahimaaz called out to the king, "All is well!" And he bowed facedown before the king.

He continued, "Blessed be Yahweh your God! He has delivered up the men who raised their hands against my lord the king."

²⁹ The king asked, "Is the young man Absalom all right?"

And Ahimaaz replied, "When Joab sent the king's servant and your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I do not know what it was."

³⁰ "Move aside," said the king, "and stand here."

So he stepped aside.

³¹ Just then the Cushite came and said, "May my lord the king hear the good news: Today Yahweh has avenged you of all who rose up against you!"

³² The king asked the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom all right?"

And the Cushite replied, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you to harm you be like that young man."

³³ The king was shaken and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he walked, he cried out, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

19

CHAPTER 19 IN 30 SECONDS

The army sneaks back like it lost, because the king is weeping. Joab tells David to get up or lose everyone. David returns to Jerusalem, forgives Shimei, hears Mephibosheth's side, and thanks old Barzillai. Then Judah and Israel argue about who loves the king more.

JOAB REPROVES DAVID

¹ Then it was reported to Joab, "The king is weeping and mourning over Absalom."

² And that day's victory was turned into mourning for all the people, because on that day they were told, "The king is grieving over his son."

³ So they returned to the city quietly that day, as people steal away in humiliation after fleeing a battle. ⁴ But the king covered his face and cried out at the top of his voice, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

⁵ Then Joab went into the house and said to the king, "Today you have disgraced all your servants who have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters, of your wives, and of your concubines. ⁶

2SA 18:33 [NOTABLE] One of the saddest cries in the Bible. Absalom tried to kill his father and take his throne, and David still wished he had died in his place. A father's love does not quit.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

You love those who hate you and hate those who love you! For you have made it clear today that the commanders and soldiers mean nothing to you. I know today that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead, it would have pleased you!

⁷ Now therefore get up! Go out and speak comfort to your servants, for I swear by Yahweh that if you do not go out, not a man will remain with you tonight. This will be worse for you than all the adversity that has befallen you from your youth until now!"

DAVID RESTORED AS KING

⁸ So the king got up and sat in the gate, and all the people were told: "Behold, the king is sitting in the gate." So they all came before the king.

Meanwhile, the Israelites had fled, each man to his home. ⁹ And all the people throughout the tribes of Israel were arguing, "The king rescued us from the hand of our enemies and delivered us from the hand of the Philistines, but now he has fled the land because of Absalom. ¹⁰ But Absalom, the man we anointed over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about restoring the king?"

¹¹ Then King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to restore the king to his palace, since the talk of all Israel has reached the king at his quarters? ¹² You are my brothers, my own flesh and blood. So why should you be the last to restore the king?'

¹³ And say to Amasa, 'Aren't you my flesh and blood? May God punish me, and ever so severely, if from now on you are not the commander of my army in place of Joab!'"

¹⁴ So he swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah as though they were one man, and they sent word to the king: "Return, you and all your servants."

¹⁵ So the king returned, and when he arrived at the Jordan, the men of Judah came to Gilgal to meet him and escort him across the Jordan.

SHIMEI PARDONED

¹⁶ Then Shimei son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David, ¹⁷ along with a thousand men of Benjamin, as well as Ziba the steward of the house of Saul and his fifteen sons and twenty servants.

They rushed down to the Jordan before the king ¹⁸ and crossed at the ford to carry over the king's household and to do what was good in his sight.

When Shimei son of Gera crossed the Jordan, he fell down before the king ¹⁹ and said, "My lord, do not hold me guilty, and do not remember your servant's wrongdoing on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. May the king not take it to heart. ²⁰ For your servant knows that I have sinned, so here I am today as the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king."

²¹ But Abishai son of Zeruiah said, "Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed Yahweh's anointed?"

²² And David replied, "Sons of Zeruiah, what have I to do with you, that you should be my adversaries today? Should any man be put to death in Israel today? Am I not indeed aware that today I am king over Israel?"

²³ So the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king swore an oath to him.

MEPHIBOSHETH EXCUSED

²⁴ Then Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, went down to meet the king. He had not cared for his feet or trimmed his mustache or washed his clothes from the day the king had left until the day he returned safely. ²⁵ And he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, who asked him, "Mephibosheth, why did you not go with me?"

²⁶ "My lord the king," he replied, "because I am lame, I said, 'I will have my donkey saddled so that I may ride on it and go with the king.' But my servant Ziba deceived me, ²⁷ and he has slandered your servant to my lord the king.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Yet my lord the king is like the angel of God, so do what is good in your eyes. ²⁸ For all the house of my grandfather deserves death from my lord the king, yet you have set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right, then, do I have to keep appealing to the king?"

²⁹ The king replied, "Why say any more? I hereby declare that you and Ziba are to divide the land."

³⁰ And Mephibosheth said to the king, "Instead, since my lord the king has safely come to his own house, let Ziba take it all!"

DAVID'S KINDNESS TO BARZILLAI

³¹ Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim to cross the Jordan with the king and send him on his way from there. ³² Barzillai was quite old, eighty years of age, and since he was a very wealthy man, he had provided for the king while he stayed in Mahanaim.

³³ The king said to Barzillai, "Cross over with me, and I will provide for you at my side in Jerusalem."

³⁴ But Barzillai replied, "How many years of my life remain, that I should go up to Jerusalem with the king? ³⁵ I am now eighty years old. Can I discern what is good and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or drinks? Can I still hear the voice of singing men and women? Why should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king?"

³⁶ Your servant will go with the king only a short distance past the Jordan; why should the king repay me with such a reward? ³⁷ Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the tomb of my father and mother. But here is your servant Chimham. Let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what is good in your sight."

³⁸ The king replied, "Chimham will cross over with me, and I will do for him what is good in your sight, and I will do for you whatever you desire of me."

³⁹ So all the people crossed the Jordan, and then the king crossed over. The king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and Barzillai returned home.

⁴⁰ Then the king crossed over to Gilgal, and Chimham crossed over with him. All the troops of Judah and half the troops of Israel escorted the king.

CONTENTION OVER THE KING

⁴¹ Soon all the men of Israel came to the king and asked, "Why did our brothers, the men of Judah, take you away secretly and bring the king and his household across the Jordan, together with all of David's men?"

⁴² And all the men of Judah replied to the men of Israel, "We did this because the king is our relative. Why does this anger you? Have we ever eaten at the king's expense or received anything for ourselves?"

⁴³ "We have ten shares in the king," answered the men of Israel, "so we have more claim to David than you. Why then do you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of restoring our king?"

But the men of Judah spoke more fiercely than the men of Israel.

20

CHAPTER 20 IN 30 SECONDS

A troublemaker named Sheba blows a horn and says, We have no share in David! Israel follows him. Joab kills Amasa, the new general, with a fake friendly kiss, and chases Sheba to the town of Abel. A wise woman talks to Joab from the wall, and Sheba's head comes over it.

SHEBA'S REBELLION

¹ Now a worthless man named Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjamite, happened to be there, and he blew the ram's horn and shouted:

"We have no share in David,
no inheritance in Jesse's son.
Every man to his tent,
O Israel!"

² So all the men of Israel deserted David to follow Sheba son of Bichri. But the men of

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Judah stayed by their king all the way from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

³ When David returned to his palace in Jerusalem, he took the ten concubines he had left to take care of the palace, and he placed them in a house under guard. He provided for them, but he no longer slept with them. They were confined until the day of their death, living as widows.

⁴ Then the king said to Amasa, "Summon the men of Judah to come to me within three days, and be here yourself."

⁵ So Amasa went to summon Judah, but he took longer than the time allotted him.

⁶ And David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take your lord's servants and pursue him, or he will find fortified cities and elude us."

⁷ So Joab's men, along with the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the mighty men, marched out of Jerusalem in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri. ⁸ And while they were at the great stone in Gibeon, Amasa joined them.

Now Joab was dressed in military attire, with a dagger strapped to his belt. And as he stepped forward, he slipped the dagger from its sheath. ⁹ "Are you well, my brother?" Joab asked Amasa. And with his right hand Joab grabbed Amasa by the beard to kiss him.

¹⁰ Amasa was not on guard against the dagger in Joab's hand, and Joab stabbed him in the stomach and spilled out his intestines on the ground. And Joab did not need to strike him again, for Amasa was dead. Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba son of Bichri.

¹¹ One of Joab's young men stood near Amasa and said, "Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab!" ¹² But Amasa wallowed in his blood in the middle of the road, and when the man saw that all the troops were stopping there, he dragged the body off the road into a field and threw a garment over it. ¹³

As soon as Amasa's body was removed from the road, all the men went on with Joab to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.

¹⁴ Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel-beth-maacah and through the entire region of the Berites, who gathered together and followed him.

¹⁵ And Joab's troops came and besieged Sheba in Abel-beth-maacah and built a siege ramp against the outer rampart of the city.

As all the troops with Joab were battering the wall to topple it, ¹⁶ a wise woman called out from the city, "Listen! Listen! Please tell Joab to come here so that I may speak with him."

¹⁷ When he had come near to her, the woman asked, "Are you Joab?"

"I am," he replied.

"Listen to the words of your servant," she said.

"I am listening," he answered.

¹⁸ Then the woman said, "Long ago they used to say, 'Seek counsel at Abel,' and that is how disputes were settled. ¹⁹ I am among the peaceable and faithful in Israel, but you are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up Yahweh's inheritance?"

²⁰ "Far be it!" Joab declared. "Far be it from me to swallow up or destroy! ²¹ That is not the case. But a man named Sheba son of Bichri, from the hill country of Ephraim, has lifted up his hand against the king, against David. Deliver him alone, and I will depart from the city."

"Look," the woman replied, "his head will be thrown to you over the wall."

²² Then the woman went to all the people with her wise counsel, and they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri and threw it to Joab. So he blew the ram's horn and his men dispersed from the city, each to his own home. And Joab returned to the king in Jerusalem.

²³ Now Joab was over the whole army of Israel; Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and Pelethites; ²⁴ Adoram

■ 2SA 20:10 [NOTE] JOAB again. He killed Abner, 3:27, and now Amasa, both in a fake friendly moment. David tells Solomon to deal with him, 1 Kings 2:5 to 6.

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

was in charge of the forced labor; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder; ²⁵ Sheva was the scribe; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; ²⁶ and Ira the Jairite was David's priest.

21

CHAPTER 21 IN 30 SECONDS

A famine lasts three years. God says it is because Saul killed the Gibeonites. They ask for seven of Saul's sons and grandsons, and David hands them over. Rizpah, the mother of two of them, guards their bodies for months. Then David's men kill four Philistine giants, one with six fingers on each hand.

DAVID AVENGES THE GIBEONITES

¹ During the reign of David there was a famine for three successive years, and David sought the face of Yahweh.

And Yahweh said, "**It is because of the blood shed by Saul and his family, because he killed the Gibeonites.**"

² At this, David summoned the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not Israelites, but a remnant of the Amorites. The Israelites had taken an oath concerning them, but in his zeal for Israel and Judah, Saul had sought to kill them.)

³ So David asked the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? How can I make amends so that you may bless the inheritance of Yahweh?"

⁴ The Gibeonites said to him, "We need no silver or gold from Saul or his house, nor should you put to death anyone in Israel for us."

"Whatever you ask, I will do for you," he replied.

⁵ And they answered the king, "As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us to exterminate us from existing within any border of Israel, ⁶ let seven of his male descendants be delivered to us so that we may hang them before Yahweh at Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of Yahweh."

"I will give them to you," said the king.

⁷ Now the king spared Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the oath before Yahweh between David and Jonathan son of Saul. ⁸ But the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons whom Rizpah daughter of Aiah had borne to Saul, as well as the five sons whom Merab daughter of Saul had borne to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholahite. ⁹ And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill before Yahweh. So all seven of them fell together; they were put to death in the first days of the harvest, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

¹⁰ And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on a rock. From the beginning of the harvest until the rain from heaven poured down on the bodies, she did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

¹¹ When David was told what Saul's concubine Rizpah, daughter of Aiah, had done, ¹² he went and took the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from the men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan where the Philistines had hung the bodies after they had struck down Saul at Gilboa.

¹³ So David had the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan brought from there, and they also gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. ¹⁴ And they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in Zela in the land of Benjamin, in the tomb of Saul's father Kish.

After they had done everything the king had commanded, God answered their prayers for the land.

■ 2SA 21:1 [NOTE] THE GIBEONITES tricked Joshua into a peace treaty, Joshua 9, and Israel swore by Yahweh to spare them. Saul broke that oath. See the Big Question pages Saul's Sons and the Gibeonites.

■ 2SA 21:8 [TEXT] MERAB OR MICHAL? Most Hebrew copies say Michal. A few Hebrew copies and some Greek copies say Merab, and this Bible follows them. Merab was the one who married Adriel, 1 Samuel 18:19. Michal had no children, 6:23.

■ 2SA 21:9 [NOTE] NOT CHILD SACRIFICE. These were grown men put to death for the bloodshed of Saul's house, not children offered to a god.

DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

SAUL'S SONS AND THE GIBEONITES

What Happened

2 SAMUEL 21:1 TO 14 · JOSHUA 9:3 TO 27 · NUMBERS 35:33 · DEUTERONOMY 24:16

A THREE YEAR FAMINE

David asked Yahweh why. God said, It is because of the blood shed by Saul and his family, because he killed the Gibeonites, 21:1.

WHO WERE THE GIBEONITES?

Canaanites who tricked Joshua into a peace treaty hundreds of years earlier. Israel swore by Yahweh not to kill them, Joshua 9:15 to 20. Saul tried to wipe them out anyway, 21:2. The Bible does not tell that story anywhere else.

WHAT THEY ASKED

The Gibeonites did not want money. They asked for seven of Saul's male descendants to put to death before Yahweh at Gibeah, Saul's town, 21:4 to 6. David agreed, but he spared Mephibosheth because of his oath to Jonathan, 21:7.

RIZPAH

Two of the seven were sons of Rizpah, Saul's concubine. She spread sackcloth on a rock and guarded their bodies from birds and wild animals from the barley harvest until the rain came, 21:10.

THE END

David heard what Rizpah did. He gathered the bones of the seven, and he buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan in the family tomb of Kish. After that, God answered prayer for the land, 21:14.

THE QUESTION

Why did seven men die for what Saul did? Did God want this?

Every View

DEUTERONOMY 24:16 · EZEKIEL 18:20 · JOSHUA 9:19 TO 20 · NUMBERS 35:33 · PSALM 15:4

A BROKEN OATH

Everyone agrees the first problem was Saul breaking an oath made in God's name. The land was stained by blood that was never answered for, Numbers 35:33. God takes promises seriously, even promises made to people who tricked you, Joshua 9:19.

VIEW 1: JUSTICE THE GIBEONITES ASKED FOR Some say God named the cause, but the Gibeonites chose the price, and David agreed. The text does not say God asked for seven men. The famine ended only after the bones were buried, 21:14, not right after the deaths.

VIEW 2: SAUL'S HOUSE SHARED THE GUILT Others point to the words Saul and his house, or family, of blood, 21:1. They think some of these men took part in the killing, so they were not innocent.

VIEW 3: A HARD STORY TOLD HONESTLY Others say it is right to be troubled. Deuteronomy 24:16 says children must not be put to death for their fathers' sins. Some think David was wrong to agree, and the Bible reports it without praising it.

NOT CHILD SACRIFICE

These were grown men executed for blood guilt, not children offered to a god. God hated child sacrifice, Deuteronomy 12:31.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Rizpah is the hero of the chapter. A grieving mother's love moved the king to give Saul's family an honorable burial. After that, God answered prayer for the land, 21:14.

FOUR BATTLES AGAINST THE PHILISTINES // 1 CHRONICLES 20:4-8

¹⁵ Once again the Philistines waged war against Israel, and David and his servants went down and fought against the Philistines. But David became exhausted.

¹⁶ Then Ishbi-benob, a descendant of Rapha, whose bronze spear weighed 7½ pounds and who was bearing a new

2SA 21:15 [DEMONIC] Four giants of Gath, descendants of Rapha, killed by David's men: Ishbi-benob, Saph, Goliath's brother, and the six fingered man

MIRACLES DEMONIC NOTABLE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

sword, resolved to kill David.¹⁷ But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, struck the Philistine, and killed him.

Then David's men swore to him, "You must never again go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel may not be extinguished."

¹⁸ Some time later at Gob, there was another battle with the Philistines. At that time Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, a descendant of Rapha.

¹⁹ Once again there was a battle with the Philistines at Gob, and Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

²⁰ And there was also a battle at Gath, where there was a man of great stature with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—twenty-four in all. He too was descended from Rapha,²¹ and when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of David's brother Shimei killed him.

²² So these four descendants of Rapha in Gath fell at the hands of David and his servants.

22

CHAPTER 22 IN 30 SECONDS

David's song of thanks for the day God saved him from all his enemies and from Saul. Yahweh is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer. The earth shakes, God rides on the wings of the wind, and He reaches down and pulls David out of deep waters. The same song is Psalm 18.

DAVID'S SONG OF DELIVERANCE // PSALM 18:1–50

¹ And David sang this song to Yahweh on the day Yahweh had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. ² He said:

"Yahweh is my rock,
my fortress, and my deliverer.

■ **2SA 21:19 [TEXT] WHO KILLED GOLIATH?** The Hebrew says Elhanan killed Goliath the Gittite. This Bible adds the brother of, from 1 Chronicles 20:5, like the King James. See Who Killed Goliath? on the David and Goliath Big Question pages in 1 Samuel, p.~.

■ **2SA 22:1 [NOTE] THE SAME SONG** is Psalm 18, with small differences. Old Hebrew Bibles like the Aleppo Codex write this song in a brick pattern, with gaps that line up like a brick wall.

■ **2SA 22:2 [NOTABLE]** David's song after God saved him from all his enemies. The same song is Psalm 18. A

³ My God is my rock, in whom I take
refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation.
My stronghold, my refuge, and my Savior,
You save me from violence.

⁴ I will call upon Yahweh, who is worthy to be praised;
so shall I be saved from my enemies.

⁵ For the waves of death engulfed me;
the torrents of chaos overwhelmed me.

⁶ The cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

⁷ In my distress I called upon Yahweh;
I cried out to my God.

And from His temple He heard my voice,
and my cry for help reached His ears.

⁸ Then the earth shook and quaked;
the foundations of the heavens trembled;
they were shaken because He burned
with anger.

⁹ Smoke rose from His nostrils,
and consuming fire came from His
mouth;
glowing coals blazed forth.

¹⁰ He parted the heavens and came down
with dark clouds beneath His feet.

¹¹ He mounted a cherub and flew;
He soared on the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness a canopy around
Him,
a gathering of water and thick clouds.

¹³ From the brightness of His presence
coals of fire blazed forth.

¹⁴ Yahweh thundered from heaven;
the voice of the Most High resounded.

¹⁵ He shot His arrows and scattered the
foes;
He hurled lightning and routed them.

¹⁶ The channels of the sea appeared,
and the foundations of the world were
exposed

at the rebuke of Yahweh,
at the blast of the breath of His nostrils.

¹⁷ He reached down from on high and took
hold of me;

hunted man who hid in rocks and caves found his real
hiding place in God.

■ **2SA 22:8 [MIRACLE]** Cosmic disturbances at David's deliverance from Saul

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW

He drew me out of deep waters.
¹⁸ He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
 from foes too mighty for me.
¹⁹ They confronted me in my day of calamity,
 but Yahweh was my support.
²⁰ He brought me out into the open;
 He rescued me because He delighted in me.
²¹ Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness;
 He has repaid me according to the cleanness of my hands.
²² For I have kept the ways of Yahweh
 and have not wickedly departed from my God.
²³ For all His ordinances are before me;
 I have not disregarded His statutes.
²⁴ And I have been blameless before Him
 and kept myself from iniquity.
²⁵ So Yahweh has repaid me according to my righteousness,
 according to my cleanness in His sight.
²⁶ To the faithful You show Yourself faithful,
 to the blameless You show Yourself blameless;
²⁷ to the pure You show Yourself pure,
 but to the crooked You show Yourself shrewd.
²⁸ You save an afflicted people,
 but Your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down.
²⁹ For You, O Yahweh, are my lamp;
 Yahweh lights up my darkness.
³⁰ For in You I can charge an army;
 with my God I can scale a wall.
³¹ As for God, His way is perfect;
 the word of Yahweh is flawless.
 He is a shield to all
 who take refuge in Him.
³² For who is God besides Yahweh?
 And who is the Rock except our God?
³³ God is my strong fortress,
 and He makes my way clear.
³⁴ He makes my feet like those of a deer
 and stations me upon the heights.
³⁵ He trains my hands for battle;

my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
³⁶ You have given me Your shield of salvation,
 and Your gentleness exalts me.
³⁷ You broaden the path beneath me
 so that my ankles do not give way.
³⁸ I pursued my enemies and destroyed them;
 I did not turn back until they were consumed.
³⁹ I devoured and crushed them so they could not rise;
 they have fallen under my feet.
⁴⁰ You have armed me with strength for battle;
 You have subdued my foes beneath me.
⁴¹ You have made my enemies retreat before me;
 I destroyed those who hated me.
⁴² They looked, but there was no one to save them—
 to Yahweh, but He did not answer.
⁴³ I ground them as the dust of the earth;
 I crushed and trampled them like mud in the streets.
⁴⁴ You have delivered me from the strife of my people;
 You have preserved me as the head of nations;
 a people I had not known shall serve me.
⁴⁵ Foreigners cower before me;
 when they hear me, they obey me.
⁴⁶ Foreigners lose heart
 and come trembling from their strongholds.
⁴⁷ Yahweh lives, and blessed be my Rock!
 And may God, the Rock of my salvation,
 be exalted—
⁴⁸ the God who avenges me
 and brings down nations beneath me,
⁴⁹ who frees me from my enemies.
 You exalt me above my foes;
 You rescue me from violent men.
⁵⁰ *Therefore I will praise You, O Yahweh,
 among the nations;
 I will sing praises to Your name.*

■ 2SA 22:50 [PROPHECY] The king would praise God among the nations → ROM 15:9 p. 41

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES MESSIANIC FORESHADOW GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

⁵¹ Great salvation He brings to His king.
He shows loving devotion to His
anointed,
to David and his descendants forever."

23

CHAPTER 23 IN 30 SECONDS

David's last words: a king who rules with justice is like the sunrise after rain. Then a list of David's mighty men and their wild stories. One killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day. Three broke through the Philistine lines just to bring David a drink from the well at Bethlehem. The last name on the list is Uriah the Hittite.

DAVID'S LAST SONG

¹ These are the last words of David:

"The oracle of David son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man raised on high,
the one anointed by the God of Jacob,
and the sweet psalmist of Israel:

² The Spirit of Yahweh spoke through me;
His word was on my tongue.

³ The God of Israel spoke;
the Rock of Israel said to me,

'He who rules the people with justice,
who rules in the fear of God,

⁴ is like the light of the morning
at sunrise of a cloudless dawn,
the glistening after the rain
on the sprouting grass of the earth.'

⁵ Is not my house right with God?

For He has established with me
an everlasting covenant,
ordered and secured in every part.
Will He not bring about my full salvation
and my every desire?

⁶ But the worthless are all like thorns raked
aside,
for they can never be gathered by hand.

■ **2SA 22:50 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → ROM 15:9 p.~

■ **2SA 22:50 [NOTE]** AMONG THE NATIONS. Paul quotes this in Romans 15:9 to show God always planned to save the Gentiles too.

■ **2SA 23:1 [PROPHECY]** 'The last words of David' prophesying of the latter messianic days → ACTS 2:30-31 · MEDIUM p.~

■ **2SA 23:1 [NOTE]** THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID. Only the words the Rock of Israel spoke to David, 23:3 to 4, print red.

■ **2SA 23:3 [PROPHECY]** 'He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God' → HEB 1:8-9; JN 5:30 · MEDIUM p.~

■ **2SA 23:4 [PROPHECY]** Morning light at sunrise → LK 1:78; 2PE 1:19 · MEDIUM p.~

⁷ The man who touches them must be
armed with iron
or with the shaft of a spear.
The fire burns them to ashes
in the place where they lie."

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN // 1 CHRONICLES 11:10-47

⁸ These are the names of David's mighty men:

Josheb-basshebeth the Tahchemonite was chief of the Three. He wielded his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed at one time.

⁹ Next in command was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite. As one of the three mighty men, he went with David to taunt the Philistines who had gathered for battle at Pas-dammim. The men of Israel retreated, ¹⁰ but Eleazar stood his ground and struck the Philistines until his hand grew weary and stuck to his sword. Yahweh brought about a great victory that day. Then the troops returned to him, but only to plunder the dead.

¹¹ And after him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines had banded together near a field full of lentils, Israel's troops fled from them. ¹² But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field, defended it, and struck down the Philistines. So Yahweh brought about a great victory.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

SAMUEL AND CHRONICLES

Why the Numbers Differ

2 SAMUEL 8:4 · 10:18 · 23:8 · 24:9 · 24:13 · 24:24 · 1 CHRONICLES 11 TO 21

TWO BOOKS, ONE STORY

1 Chronicles 11 to 21 tells many of the same stories as 2 Samuel. It was written later, after the exile, and often copies Samuel word for word. That is why small differences stand out.

8:4

Samuel's standard Hebrew text says 1,700 horsemen. 1 Chronicles 18:4 says a thousand chariots and seven thousand

■ **2SA 23:8 [TEXT]** 800 OR 300? This verse says 800 men. 1 Chronicles 11:11 says 300. See the Big Question pages Samuel and Chronicles.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

charioteers. A Dead Sea Scroll of Samuel and the Greek match Chronicles, and this Bible follows them.

10:18

Samuel's standard Hebrew text says 700 charioteers and 40,000 horsemen. This Bible says foot soldiers, like 1 Chronicles 19:18, which says 7,000 charioteers.

23:8

Samuel says the chief of the Three killed 800 men. 1 Chronicles 11:11 says 300. Verse 18 says Abishai killed 300, so some think an eye slipped.

24:9

Samuel says 800,000 in Israel and 500,000 in Judah. 1 Chronicles 21:5 says 1,100,000 and 470,000, and adds that Joab did not count Levi and Benjamin, 21:6.

24:13 AND 24:24

The Hebrew of Samuel says seven years of famine, and Chronicles says three. This Bible follows the Greek, which says three. Samuel says David paid 1¼ pounds of silver for the floor and oxen. Chronicles says about 15 pounds of gold for the site.

THE QUESTION

Do these differences mean the Bible has mistakes?

Every View

JEREMIAH 36:27 TO 32 • PSALM 12:6 • 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 • DEUTERONOMY 4:2

VIEW 1: COPYING SLIPS

The most common answer among Bible believing scholars. Old Hebrew wrote numbers as words or as letters, and a hundred or a thousand could be misread by a tired copyist over many centuries. They say the first writings had no errors, and copies picked up small slips.

VIEW 2: DIFFERENT WAYS OF COUNTING

Some differences may be real, not mistakes. 24:9 may count only the trained army in one book and every man of age in the other. 24:24 may be the price of the floor and oxen in Samuel, and of the whole hilltop in Chronicles.

VIEW 3: THE WRITERS ROUNDED OR CHANGED

Many critical scholars think the writer of Chronicles used a copy of Samuel that

read differently, and sometimes rounded or raised numbers to make a point.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS HELP

4QSam a, a scroll of Samuel from about 50 to 25 BC, often matches Chronicles where today's Hebrew of Samuel is different. That suggests Chronicles copied a good old text of Samuel, and some differences came in later.

WHAT IS NOT AT STAKE

No teaching about God, salvation or Jesus depends on any of these numbers. The copies agree on almost every word.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

The Bible's copyists left these differences in instead of fixing them. That honesty is one reason scholars can study the text so carefully today.

¹³ At harvest time, three of the thirty chief men went down to David at the cave of Adullam, while a company of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim.

¹⁴ At that time David was in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was at Bethlehem. ¹⁵ David longed for water and said, "Oh, that someone would get me a drink of water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem!"

¹⁶ So the three mighty men broke through the Philistine camp, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem, and brought it back to David. But he refused to drink it; instead, he poured it out to Yahweh, ¹⁷ saying, "Far be it from me, O Yahweh, to do this! Is this not the blood of the men who risked their lives?" So he refused to drink it.

Such were the exploits of the three mighty men.

¹⁸ Now Abishai, the brother of Joab and son of Zeruiah, was chief of the Three, and he wielded his spear against three hundred men, killed them, and won a name along with the Three. ¹⁹ Was he not more honored than the Three? And he became their commander, even though he was not included among the Three.

■ **2SA 23:16 [NOTE]** He poured it out to Yahweh. David would not drink water his men had risked their lives for. He gave it to God as an offering.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

²⁰ And Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a man of valor from Kabzeel, a man of many exploits. He struck down two champions of Moab, and on a snowy day he went down into a pit and killed a lion. ²¹ He also struck down an Egyptian, a huge man. Although the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, Benaiah went against him with a club, snatched the spear from his hand, and killed the Egyptian with his own spear.

²² These were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, who won a name along with the three mighty men. ²³ He was most honored among the Thirty, but he did not become one of the Three. And David appointed him over his guard.

²⁴ Now these were members of the Thirty:

Asahel the brother of Joab,
Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem,

²⁵ Shammah the Harodite,

Elika the Harodite,

²⁶ Helez the Paltite,

Ira son of Ikesh the Tekoite,

²⁷ Abiezer the Anathothite,

Mebunnai the Hushathite,

²⁸ Zalmon the Ahohite,

Maharai the Netophathite,

²⁹ Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,
Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah of the Benjaminites,

³⁰ Benaiah the Pirathonite,

Hiddai from the brooks of Gaash,

³¹ Abi-albon the Arbathite,

Azmaveth the Barhumite,

³² Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

the sons of Jashen,

Jonathan ³³ son of Shammah the Hararite,

Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite,

³⁴ Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maacathite,

Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

³⁵ Hezro the Carmelite,

Paarai the Arbite,

³⁶ Igal son of Nathan of Zobah,

Bani the Gadite,

³⁷ Zelek the Ammonite,

Naharai the Beerothite, the armor-bearer
of Joab son of Zeruiah,

³⁸ Ira the Ithrite,

Gareb the Ithrite,

³⁹ and Uriah the Hittite.

There were thirty-seven in all.

24

CHAPTER 24 IN 30 SECONDS

David orders a census of his fighting men. Even Joab says, Why do this? Afterward David's heart strikes him. God gives him three choices, and David says, Let me fall into Yahweh's hands. A plague hits, and the angel stops at Araunah's threshing floor. David buys it and builds an altar. I will not give God something that costs me nothing.

DAVID'S MILITARY CENSUS // EXODUS 30:11-16; 1 CHRONICLES 21:1-6

¹ Again the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He stirred up David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."

² So the king said to Joab the commander of his army, who was with him, "Go now throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and register the troops, so that I may know their number."

³ But Joab replied to the king, "May Yahweh your God multiply the troops a hundred times over, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?"

⁴ Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army departed from the presence of the king to register the troops of Israel.

⁵ They crossed the Jordan and camped near Aroer, south of the town in the middle of the valley, and proceeded toward Gad and Jazer. ⁶ Then they went to Gilead and the land of Tahtim-hodshi, and on to Dan-jaan and around to Sidon. ⁷ They went toward the fortress of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites. Finally, they went on to the Negev of Judah, to Beersheba.

⁸ At the end of nine months and twenty days, having gone through the whole land, they returned to Jerusalem. ⁹ And

■ **2SA 23:39 [NOTE]** URIAH THE HITTITE is the last name on the list of David's mighty men. The writer does not let us forget him.

■ **2SA 24:1 [TEXT]** WHO STIRRED UP DAVID? This verse says Yahweh did. 1 Chronicles 21:1 says Satan did. See the Big Question pages Who Caused the Census?

THE HEART BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Joab reported to the king the total number of the troops. In Israel there were 800,000 men of valor who drew the sword, and in Judah there were 500,000.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

WHO CAUSED THE CENSUS?

Two Accounts

2 SAMUEL 24:1 TO 17 · 1 CHRONICLES 21:1 TO 17 · EXODUS 30:12

2 SAMUEL SAYS

Again the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He stirred up David against them, saying, Go and take a census of Israel and Judah, 24:1.

1 CHRONICLES SAYS

Then Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel, 1 Chronicles 21:1. The Hebrew word *satan* means adversary, and here it has no the in front of it.

WHAT DAVID DID

He sent Joab to count the fighting men. Joab pushed back: why does my lord want to do this? 24:3. It took almost ten months, 24:8.

WHY WAS IT WRONG?

The Bible does not say exactly. Many think David was trusting in the size of his army instead of in God. Some point to Exodus 30:12, where a count needed a ransom payment to avoid a plague. Afterward David's own heart struck him, and he said, I have sinned greatly, 24:10.

THREE CHOICES

God offered three years of famine, three months of running from enemies, or three days of plague. David said, Let us fall into the hand of Yahweh, for His mercies are great, 24:14.

THE QUESTION

Who stirred David up, God or Satan? How can both books be right?

Every View

JOB 1:6 TO 12 · 2:1 TO 7 · 1 KINGS 22:19 TO 23 · JAMES 1:13 · GENESIS 50:20

VIEW 1: GOD ALLOWED, SATAN DID

The most common Christian view. Like Job 1 and 2, God allowed Satan to test David. 2 Samuel names the One who is over everything, and Chronicles names the one who did it. James 1:13 says God tempts no one, so God allowed it, and Satan tempted.

VIEW 2: GOD USED IT FOR JUDGMENT

God was already angry with Israel, 24:1, likely for the revolts of Absalom and Sheba. He used David's pride to bring that judgment. Chronicles adds who stood behind the temptation. God can use even evil for His purposes, Genesis 50:20.

VIEW 3: AN ADVERSARY, NOT THE DEVIL

Some scholars note that *satan* without the *can* mean an adversary, maybe a human enemy or an accusing angel. They think Chronicles, written later, explains the story so God is not the one doing wrong.

VIEW 4: TWO WRITERS, TWO AIMS

Many critical scholars say the later writer of Chronicles changed the earlier story on purpose, as Jewish thinking about Satan grew. Others reply that both writers tell the truth from different sides, and both books are God's word.

THE GOOD ENDING

Both books end at the same threshing floor. The angel stopped there, David built an altar there, and the temple was built there, 1 Chronicles 22:1 and 2 Chronicles 3:1. God turned the place of judgment into the place of worship.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God is in charge, sin is real, and David took the blame himself: I, the shepherd, have sinned, but these sheep, what have they done? 24:17.

JUDGMENT FOR DAVID'S SIN // 1 CHRONICLES

21:7-13

10 After David had numbered the troops, David's heart struck him and he said to Yahweh, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, O Yahweh, I beg You to

■ 2SA 24:9 [TEXT] THE TOTALS. 1 Chronicles 21:5 gives 1,100,000 for Israel and 470,000 for Judah. See the Big Question pages Samuel and Chronicles.

MIRACLES NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

¹¹ When David got up in the morning, the word of Yahweh had come to Gad the prophet, David's seer: ¹² "Go and tell David that this is what Yahweh says: 'I am offering you three options. Choose one of them, and I will carry it out against you.'"

¹³ So Gad went and said to David, "Do you choose to endure three years of famine in your land, three months of fleeing the pursuit of your enemies, or three days of plague upon your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should reply to Him who sent me."

¹⁴ David answered Gad, "I am deeply distressed. Please, let us fall into the hand of Yahweh, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men."

A PLAGUE ON ISRAEL // 1 CHRONICLES 21:14-17

¹⁵ So Yahweh sent a plague upon Israel from that morning until the appointed time, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died.

¹⁶ But when the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, Yahweh relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand now!" At that time the angel of Yahweh was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷ When David saw the angel striking down the people, he said to Yahweh, "Surely I, the shepherd, have sinned and acted wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Please, let Your hand fall upon me and my father's house."

DAVID BUILDS AN ALTAR // 1 CHRONICLES 21:18-30

¹⁸ And that day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar to Yahweh on the threshing floor of Araunah

the Jebusite." ¹⁹ So David went up at the word of Gad, just as Yahweh had commanded.

²⁰ When Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants coming toward him, he went out and bowed facedown before the king. ²¹ "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" Araunah said.

"To buy your threshing floor," David replied, "that I may build an altar to Yahweh, so that the plague upon the people may be halted."

²² Araunah said to David, "May my lord the king take whatever seems good to him and offer it up. Here are the oxen for a burnt offering and the threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. ²³ O king, Araunah gives all these to the king." He also said to the king, "May Yahweh your God accept you."

²⁴ "No," replied the king, "I insist on paying a price, for I will not offer to Yahweh my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 1¼ pounds of silver. ²⁵ And there he built an altar to Yahweh and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then Yahweh answered the prayers on behalf of the land, and the plague upon Israel was halted.

■ **2SA 24:10 [HEART]** David's heart struck him after the census, the same words as when he cut Saul's robe, 1 Samuel 24:5.

■ **2SA 24:13 [TEXT]** THREE OR SEVEN? The standard Hebrew text says seven years of famine. The Greek and 1 Chronicles 12:12 say three, and this Bible follows them.

■ **2SA 24:15 [MIRACLE]** Angel of Yahweh stretched out hand to destroy Jerusalem; stopped at the threshing floor

■ **2SA 24:16 [NOTE]** ENOUGH! God speaks these words to the angel, so they print red. 1 Chronicles 21:16 says David saw the angel with a drawn sword over Jerusalem.

■ **2SA 24:18 [FIELD NOTES]** Solomon later built the temple on this threshing floor, 2 Chronicles 3:1. See the Araunah's Threshing Floor Field Notes page.

■ **2SA 24:24 [NOTABLE]** Araunah offered his land and his oxen for free. David said no. Giving God what costs us nothing is not really giving. The temple was later built on this very spot, 2 Chronicles 3:1.

■ **2SA 24:24 [NOTE]** 1 Chronicles 21:25 says about 15 pounds of gold for the site. Many think Samuel gives the price of the floor and oxen, and Chronicles the price of the whole hilltop.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

ARAUNAH'S THRESHING FLOOR

2 SAMUEL 24:16 TO 25 · 1 CHRONICLES 21:15 TO 22:1 · 2 CHRONICLES 3:1 · GENESIS 22:2



The Foundation Stone, the top of the rock under the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The building around it is from 691 AD, and the lamp and screens are modern. Photo Virtutepetens, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A threshing floor was a flat, open place on a windy hill where farmers beat grain loose and tossed it in the air so the wind blew the chaff away. Araunah the Jebusite had one on the hill north of the City of David.

HOW OLD IT IS

The rock itself is natural bedrock. The bare rock top shown here is the highest point of the Temple Mount and is often called the Foundation Stone.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

The angel stopped at Araunah's threshing floor, 24:16. David bought it and built an altar, 24:24 to 25. Solomon built the temple there, on Mount Moriah, 2 Chronicles 3:1, the same name as the land where Abraham offered Isaac, Genesis 22:2.

THE TRADITION

Jewish tradition says the Holy of Holies stood on the Foundation Stone, and many think the altar or the threshing floor was near it.

WHY NOBODY HAS DUG

Digging on the Temple Mount is not allowed, because it is holy to Jews and Muslims, so scholars still debate exactly where the temple and David's altar stood.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No sign marks David's altar. What is sure is that the temple stood on this hill, 2 Chronicles 3:1.