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2 Shmuel

Introduction

Second Shmuel (commonly, but wrongly known as 'Samuel') is the continuation of *First Shmuel*—the two parts together are considered a single 'book' in the Jewish Bible—it's only split into two because it was too long to fit on a single scroll.
This the story of David's reign: firstly he ruled what became known as 'Yehudah' (Judah) in the south east (chapters 1–4), and eventually, the entire nation, including the much larger area of Yisrael (called 'Israel' in older translations) in the north east (Chapter 5–24). This document explains how David dealt with his enemies within the country, as well as battling with other nations in order to widen and strengthen his kingdom. David's faith and respect of God is demonstrated here, as well as his love for the people. However, despite that, he was also fierce and he was quite capable of disobeying God to get what he wanted. But God sees everything and seen his prophet Natan (Nathan) with a parable to show David his selfishness. David asked for forgiven for his sin and accepted the punishment that God gave him.
The times of peace and prosperity through the latter parts of David's rule were planted in the minds of the Hebrew people, and in the future when they faced difficulties, they would long for another king like David—a son (better 'a descendant') of David who would love God like him.

Main components of this account

The kingdom of David in Yehudah *1:1–4:12*
The kingdom of David over all Yisrael *5:1–24:25*
a. The early years *5:1–10:19*
b. David takes Uriyah's wife *11:1–12:25*
c. The battles and the difficulties *12:26–20:26*
d. The later years *21:1–24:25*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

David learns about Sha'ul's death · Full kingdom

1:1 After David returned from slaughtering the Amalekim, he stayed in Tsiklag for two days. (King Sha'ul (Saul) was dead by this time.) 2 Then on the third day, wow, a man came from Sha'ul's camp. He had torn clothes and dirt on his head, and when he got to David he fell onto his knees and bowed low. 3 "Where have you come from?" David asked him.

"I was in Yisrael's (Israel's) camp, but managed to escape." he replied. 4 "Why? What happened?" David demanded. "Tell me, please,"

"Our people fled from the battle," the man said. "Many fell and died. Even Sha'ul and his son Yonatan (Jonathan) died."

5 "How do you know that Sha'ul and Yonatan died?" David asked the young man who'd brought the news.

6 "I happened to be on Mt. Gilboa," the young man replied, "and listen, Sha'ul was leaning on his spear. Then wow, the chariots and the masters of the chariot horses overtook him,[1] 7 and he turned around and saw me. He called me and I answered, 'Here I am.' 8 'Who are you?' he asked. 'I'm an Amaleki,' I told him. 9 Then he said to me, 'Please, come over here and kill me, because although I'm still alive, the pain is unbearable.' 10 So I stood over him and killed him, because I knew that with those wounds, he wouldn't live. Then I took the crown off his head and the bracelet on his arm, and I brought them here to you, my master."

11 Then David pulled at his clothes with his hands and tore them, and all the men with him did the same, 12 and they mourned and wept and fasted until the evening for Sha'ul and for his son Yonatan, and for Yahweh's people, because many Israelis had been killed.

13 Then David asked the young man who'd brought the news, "Where are you from?"

"I'm a foreigner's son," he replied, "an Amaleki." 14 "How come you weren't afraid to kill Yahweh's anointed king with your own hands?" David asked him. 15 Then David called to one of his young men, "Come over here and execute him." So he struck him, and he died. 16 "Your blood's on your own head," David told the Amaleki, "because you admitted in your own words that you, yourself killed Yahweh's anointed one."

David's song of mourning · Full kingdom

17 Then David sang this funeral song for Sha'ul (Saul) and his son Yonatan (Jonathan) 18 and said that it should be taught to the people of Yehudah (Judah). It's called 'The bow' and indeed, it's written down in the Book of Yashar:[2]

19 "Yisrael's (Israel's) splendour was slain in the hills.
How the powerful warriors have died.
20 Don't tell them in Gat.
Don't let them take the news to Ashkelon's streets,
in case the Pelishti women celebrate,
and the daughters of the uncircumcised are elated.
21 You mountains in Gilboa,
may you have no dew or rain fall on you,
nor fields producing grain for offerings.
Because it was there that Sha'ul's shield was splattered with his blood,
and the leather won't be preserved with oil again.
22 From the blood of those slain—
from the fat of the warriors,
Yonatan's bow didn't retreat
and Sha'ul's sword didn't fail on its strikes.
23 Sha'ul (Saul) and Yonatan (Jonathan) were loved—
they pleased the people.
and even at their death they weren't separated.
They were swifter than eagles.
they were stronger than lions.
24 Weep for Sha'ul you daughters of Yisrael (Israel),
the one who dressed you in nice clothes with

1 **RV 1:6-10 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 31:1-6; 1Ch 10:1-6.

2 **RV 1:18 · Cross-ref.** Josh 10:13.

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jewellery,
and gave you all gold brooches to put on.
25 Those warriors have fallen in the middle of the battle.
Yonatan has been killed there on the hills.
26 I grieve for you my dear friend Yonatan (Jonathan).
You were so kind to me.
Your friendship meant more to me than the women who say they love me.
27 Yes, those powerful warriors have fallen,
and those weapons of war have been destroyed."

The kingdom of David · Full kingdom

2:1 After that was over, David inquired from Yahweh, "Should I go into one of Yehudah's (Judah's) cities?"
"Yes, go," Yahweh answered.
"Where should I go?" David asked again.
"To Hevron," he said.
2 So David took his two wives (Ahinoam the Yizre'eli and Avigayil the widow of Naval the Karmeli)[3] and went there. 3 He took his men who were with him, along with their families, and went to live in Hevron and the surrounding towns. 4 Then the Yehudah leaders came and anointed David as king over Yehudah.
They told him, "It was the men of Yavesh-Gilead who buried Sha'ul (Saul)."[4] 5 So David sent messengers to Yavesh-Gilead to tell them, "May Yahweh bless you all because you showed that kindness to your master Sha'ul to bury him respectfully. 6 Now may Yahweh treat you all with kindness and faithfulness, and I myself will also be good to you because you did that. 7 Meanwhile now that Sha'ul your master is dead, continue to be courageous and become brave warriors as Yehudah has anointed me as king over their tribe.

Disputes between Sha'ul and David's families · Full kingdom

8 However, Avner (Ner's son) who'd been Sha'ul's (Saul's) army commander had taken Sha'ul's son Ish-Boshet[5] across to Mahanayim 9 and declared him to be king over Gilead, and over the Ashurim and Yizre'el (Jezreel), and over Efrayim (Ephraim) and Benyamin, and over all of Yisrael (Israel). 10 Ish-Boshet was forty years old when he started to rule over the Israelis, and he ruled them for two years.
But the tribe of Yehudah (Judah) was loyal to David 11 and he ruled them for seven and a half years.
12 One day Avner left Mahanayim with some of Ish-Boshet's servants and went to Giveon, 13 but Yoav (Joab) (Tseruyah's son, traditionally called 'Yoav' in English) took some of David's servants and went and confronted them at the Giveon pool—one group on each side of the pool. 14 Then Avner said to Yoav, "Let's get some of these young warriors to fight it out in front of us."
"Sounds good to me," said Yoav.
15 So they stood up and counted off twelve representing Benyamin and Sha'ul's (Saul's) son Ish-Boshet and twelve from David's servants. 16 Each of them grabbed his opponent's head and then thrust his sword into his side, so they both fell down dead together. So that place in Giveon was named 'Helkat-Hatsurim' (meaning 'Field of Daggers').
17 That led on to a very intense battle that day, but Avner and the Israeli men were defeated by David's servants. 18 Tseruyah's three sons were there: Yoav, Avishay, and Asahel, (Asahel was a fast runner—like a wild antelope.) 19 and Asahel chased after Avner and wouldn't give up. 20 Avner turned and said, "Is that you, Asahel?"
"Yes, it's me," he answered.
21 "I'm warning you: Stop chasing me and go after someone else instead," Avner called back. But Asahel wouldn't give up 22 so Avner tried again, "Stop chasing me! You'll force me to kill you, then how could I face your brother Yoav?"
23 But Asahel wouldn't give up so Avner thrust

3 **RV 2:2 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 25:42-43.
4 **RV 2:4 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 31:11-13.
5 **RV 2:8 · Note** Also known as Esh-Baal. (See 1 Chronicles 8:33.)

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the butt end of his spear into his stomach and it went right through and came out his back. He fell to the ground and died there, and when the others caught up, they stopped there.

24 But Yoav and Avishay kept going after Avner. As the sun was setting, they came to the Amah hill (east of Giyah, along the road to the wilderness near Giveon) 25 and the Benyamites lined up behind Avner as an coordinated unit there on top of the hill. 26 Avner called out to Yoav, "Are we just going to keep killing each other? Don't you know that the only result can be more bitterness? How long will you go on before you command your people to stop killing their cousins?"

27 "As God lives," Yoav replied, "if you hadn't said that, then surely it would have been morning before they would have pulled back from the chase." 28 So Yoav had a trumpet blown and his men stopped fighting and pursing the Israelis.

29 Then Avner and his men walked all that night through the Yarden (Jordan) river plain, then crossed the river and walked all morning until they got back to Mahanayim.

30 When Yoav had assembled them all and counted them, only Asahel and nineteen others had been killed in the battle, 31 although they had killed 360 of Avner's Benyamite warriors. 32 They retrieved Asahel's body and buried it in his father's tomb in Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem). Then they walked all night and got back to Hevron at first light.

3:1 Nevertheless the war between Sha'ul's (Saul's) and David's followers dragged on and on, but overall, David's side had more wins than the followers of Ish-Boshet.

David's sons · Full kingdom

2 David's wives gave birth to six sons while they were based there in Hevron: Ahinoam (the Yizre'eli) gave birth to Amnon, 3 then Avigayil (the widow of Naval the Karmeli) gave birth to Kilav, and Ma'akah (daughter of King Talmay of Geshur) gave birth to Avshalom (Absalom).

4 The fourth was Adoniyah (son of Hagit), the fifth was Shefatyah (son of Avital), 5 and the sixth was Yitream (son of David's wife Eglah). All six of those sons were born to David in Hevron.

Avner switches over to David · Full kingdom

6 While the war between Sha'ul's (Saul's) son Ish-Boshet and David's supporters continued, Avner was strengthening himself with Sha'ul's supporters. 7 Now Sha'ul had had a slave-wife named Ritspah (daughter of Ayah) and Avner slept with her. So Ish-Boshet demanded, "Why have you slept with my father's slave-wife?" 8 Avner became very angry at this challenge from Ish-Boshet and snapped back, "Do you think I'm Yehudah's (Judah's) dog hiding out over here? Today I've been helping Sha'ul's family: your father, his brothers, and his friends, and I won't let you fall into David's hands. Yet today you bring some charge against me to do with a woman? 9 May God punish me if I don't do for David exactly what Yahweh promised him 10 and help with the transfer of the kingdom away from your family and to establish David's kingdom over both Yehudah and Yisrael (Israel), from Dan down to Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba)."[6] 11 Ish-Boshet didn't say a word back to Avner because he was very scared of him.

12 Then Avner sent messengers to David to tell him, "Who should be king of this country? Let's come to an agreement and then I could join you and help make all of Yisrael turn to you."

13 "Yes, good," David replied. "I'm happy to come to an agreement with you on one condition: you must bring my wife—Sha'ul's daughter, Mikal—if you want to be accepted here."

14 Then David sent messengers to Sha'ul's son Ish-Boshet saying, "Give Mikal back to me. I earnt her as my wife with the foreskins of one-hundred Pelishtim."[7] 15 So Ish-Boshet had her taken from her husband (Layish's son Paltiel), 16 but he walked along behind her,

6 **RV 3:10 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 15:28.

7 **RV 3:14 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 18:27.

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weeping, as far as Bahurim where finally Avner told him to go back home and so he did.

17 Then Avner conferred with the Israeli elders saying, "Previously you were wanting David to be king over you, 18 but now it's time for action. Yahweh has already said, 'I'm going to use my servant David to rescue my people Yisrael from the Pelishtim and all their other enemies.' " 19 Avner also spoke privately with the Benyamites, then he went to Hevron to tell David privately what the Israelis and the Benyamites had agreed to.

20 Then Avner took twenty men and went to David at Hevron, and David put on a feast for all of them. 21 Avner asked David, "My master, the king. Let me get ready and go, and let me encourage all of Yisrael that they'll make an agreement with you so that you will be king over the entire area as you've been wanting." So David sent Avner, and he went in peace.

Yoav murders Avner · Full kingdom

22 Soon afterwards, Yoav (Joab) and some of David's men arrived after a raid and carried in a lot of plunder. (Avner had already left Hevron because David had sent him off and he'd left in peace.) 23 When Yoav and all the fighters with him arrived, he was told that Avner had been there and spoken with the king, then sent away in peace. 24 So Yoav went to the king and demanded, "What have you done? Avner came to you and I can't believe that you'd let him go, but he's definitely not here now. 25 Surely you realise that he only came here to influence you and to find out where you're coming from and going to, and to learn everything that you're doing?"

26 Once Yoav had finished talking to David, he sent messengers to catch up to Avner. They found him at the Sirah cistern and brought him back without David's knowledge. 27 When Avner got back to Hevron, Yoav took him aside at the city gate as if to speak to him privately, then stabbed him in the stomach and he died as vengeance for killing Yoav's brother Asahel. 28 Later when David heard about it, he declared, "I and my kingdom are innocent of Avner's death in Yahweh's eyes. 29 May Yoav's extended family continually suffer from sores or leprosy, and be forced into manual labour or be killed in battle, or run out of food to eat." 30 (That's how Yoav and his brother Avishay murdered Avner because he'd killed their brother Asahel in Giveon during the war.)

Abnir's burial · Full kingdom

31 Then David instructed Yoav (Joab) and all the people with him, "Tear your clothes and put on sackcloth and mourn for Avner." Later at the funeral, King David walked behind the coffin 32 and they buried Avner in Hevron. The king cried loudly at the tomb, and the people also wept. 33 The king sang this song for Avner:

"Avner shouldn't have died as if he was just some drunken fool.

34 He wasn't handcuffed or with his feet in chains.

He fell like someone disturbing a burglar."

And so the people wept even more for him.

35 Many people brought food to David during the day, but he promised, "May God severely punish me if I eat anything before the sun goes down." 36 All the people recognised David's dignity in handling this matter and were pleased with his behaviour, just as they were pleased with everything that the king did, 37 and everyone throughout Yisrael (Israel) knew that the king hadn't ordered for Avner (Ner's son) to be executed. 38 Then the king told his servants, "Don't you all realise that Yisrael lost a leader and a great man today? 39 Although I was anointed as king, I feel tender today. Those sons of Tseruyah are more violent than me. May Yahweh repay evil people appropriately for their actions."

The murder of Ish-Boshet · Full kingdom

4:1 When Sha'ul's (Saul's) son Ish-Boshet heard that Avner had been killed in Hevron, he lost courage and all Yisrael (Israel) was horrified. 2 He had two men who were leaders of raiding parties. They were Rimon's sons Ba'anah and Rekav from Be'erot in the Benyamite region, 3 but the people from Be'erot had fled to Gitayim where they've stayed until now.

4 (Sha'ul's son Yonatan (Jonathan) had a son

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named Mefiboshet. He was five years old when the report about Sha'ul and Yonatan's death came from Yizre'el (Jezreel). Mefiboshet's nanny picked him up to run to safety, but in her hurry he fell and became crippled in his legs.)[8]

5 One day, Ba'anah and Rekav (the sons of Rimon from Be'erot) walked to Ish-Boshet's house, arriving in the middle of the day when he was taking a nap. 6-7 They entered the middle of the house as if getting wheat, then entered the inner room where @Ish-Boshet was on the bed. They struck him in the body, killing him, then they cut off his head. Then Rekav and Ba'anah took the head and escaped, and walked all night through the Aravah. 8 They took Ish-Boshet's head to David at Hevron and told the king, "Look, here's the head of Ish-Boshet, the son of your enemy Sha'ul who tried to kill you. Today Yahweh's given vengeance to my master the king against Sha'ul and his descendants."

9 Then David answered Rekav and his brother Ba'anah (the sons of Rimon from Be'erot), "As Yahweh lives, having delivered my life from every distress, 10 when the messenger came to Tsiklag thinking he was bringing me good news and told me that Sha'ul was dead, I had him seized and executed.[9] 11 Now how much more when wicked men have killed an innocent man on his bed in his own house. Shouldn't I avenge you two for his murder and remove you from the earth?" 12 Then David commanded some of the young men and they killed the two brothers and cut of their hands and feet and hung them[10] beside the Hevron pool, but they took Ish-Boshet's head and buried it there in Hevron in Avner's tomb.

David becomes king of all Yisrael · Full kingdom[11]

5:1 Then the leaders of all of Yisrael's (Israel's) tribes came to David at Hevron and said to him, "Listen, we're all close relations. 2 In the past when Sha'ul (Saul) was our king, you were the one who actually showed leadership of the people. Yahweh has already told you that you will shepherd Yisrael and become our king." 3 So with Yahweh as their witness, all the Israeli elders made a formal agreement with David, and they anointed him as king over all Yisrael. 4 David was thirty years old when he became their king and he reigned for a total of forty years:[12] 5 seven and a half years in Hevron as king of Yehudah (Judah), then thirty-three years in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) as king over all Yisrael and Yehudah.

David captures Yerushalem · Full kingdom

6 The king and his men battled against the Yevusim who lived in and around Yerushalem (Jerusalem),[13] but Yevusim mocked David, "You'll never break in here—even blind and crippled men could keep you out," because they thought that David couldn't get in. 7 But David *did* capture that Tsiyon (Zion) fortress that then became known as David's city.

8 He'd told his men that day, "Anyone wanting to strike the Yevusim should use the water tunnel to reach the lame people and the blind people—the ones who are hated by David." (That's why they say that blind and crippled people shouldn't enter the house.[14])

9 So David lived in that fortress and called it 'David's city'—expanding it on all sides.
10 David continued to grow more powerful because Yahweh, Commander-in-chief God was

8 **RV 4:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 9:3.

9 **RV 4:10 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 1:1-16.

10 **RV 4:12 · Note** It's ambiguous in the Hebrew whether the hands and feet were strung up, or the actual bodies.

11 **RV 5:1 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 11:1-9; 14:1-7

12 **RV 5:4-5 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 2:11; 1Ch 3:4; 29:27.

13 **RV 5:6 · Cross-ref.** Josh 15:63; Jdg 1:21.

14 **RV 5:8 · Note** Left ambiguous here because it's not clear from the Hebrew. (Some think 'David's palace' while others go for 'God's temple'.)

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with him.
11 King Hiram from Tsor (Tyre) sent messengers to David, then he sent carpenters and stone-cutters to build a palace for David.
12 David knew that Yahweh had established him as king over all Yisrael (Israel) and that he was prospering the kingdom for the sake of his people the Israelis.
13 After David moved from Hevron to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), he married more wives and took more slave-wives, all of whom produced more sons and daughters for him.
14 The names of his sons who were born in Yerushalem were Shamua, Shovav, Natan (Nathan), Shelomoh (Solomon), 15 Yavehar, Elishua, Nefeg, Yafia, 16 Elishama, Elyada, and Elifelet.

Defeated by David the Pelishtim · Full kingdom[15]

17 When the Pelishtim heard that David had been proclaimed as king over all Yisrael (Israel), their army set off to capture him, but David heard and retreated[16] to the fortress. 18 The Pelishtim moved in and took over the Rafa valley, 19 and David inquired from Yahweh, "Should I attack the Pelishtim? Will you help me defeat them?"
"Yes, attack them," Yahweh replied, "because I'll certainly help you to defeat them."
20 So David attacked and defeated them, and said, "Yahweh broke through my enemies in front of me like breaking a dam." So he called the place 'Ba'al-Peratsim' (which means 'Master of breaking through'). 21 The Pelishtim left their idols there, and David and his men took them away.
22 Then the Pelishtim returned to the Rafa valley and took over it again. 23 Again David inquired from Yahweh who replied, "No, don't go straight in. Move around behind them and then attack them from opposite the trees. 24 Then when you hear a sound in the tops of the trees that sounds like marching, then you'll know that Yahweh has gone ahead to strike the Pelishtim' camp." 25 So David followed Yahweh's instructions they attacked the Pelishtim from Geva all the way to Gezer.

The Box with the agreement is brought to Yerushalem · Full kingdom[17]

6:1 Then David selected thirty thousand Israeli warriors and gathered them together. 2 He led them to Kiryat-Yearim (formerly called Ba'alah) in Yehudah (Judah) to get the box of God (whose name is Commander-in-chief Yahweh) who lives between the two winged creatures on the top of it.[18] 3 They placed the sacred chest on a newly-made cart and started moving it from Avinadav's house which was on a hill.[19] Uza and Ahyo (Avinadav's sons) were leading the cart. 4 They took it from Avinadav's house and Ahyo took the lead in front. 5 David and all the Israelis were celebrating in God's presence with wooden harps and lyres, along with tambourines, shakers, and cymbals.
6 But when they reached Nakon's threshing floor the oxen stumbled so Uza reached out to steady the sacred chest. 7 Yahweh became furious with Uza and killed him right there by the sacred chest because he'd touched it. 8 Now David got angry because of Yahweh's outburst against Uza, and that place has been called Perets-Uza (meaning 'The punishment of Uza') until today. 9 David was afraid of Yahweh that day and asked, "How will Yahweh's box get to Yerushalem (Jerusalem)?" 10 So he decided not to take Yahweh's box there and redirected it instead to the house of Oved-Edom (a Giti). 11 The sacred chest stayed at Oved-Edom's house for three months, and Yahweh blessed him and all

15 **RV 5:17 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 14:8-17
16 **RV 5:17 · Note** The Hebrew says 'descended', but doesn't tell us either from where (probably Yerushalem) or to where (possibly Masada).
17 **RV 6:1 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 13:1-14; 15:25–16:6,43
18 **RV 6:2 · Cross-ref.** Exo 25:22.
19 **RV 6:3 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 7:1-2.

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the household.[20]
12 Someone told King David, "Yahweh has
blessed Oved-Edom's household because of the
sacred chest," so David went and brought God's
Box from Oved-Edom's house to Yerushalem
with much happiness. 13 When the men who
were carrying the sacred chest had walked six
steps, they stopped and David sacrificed a bull
and a fattened calf there. 14 Then David, wear-
ing a linen apron, danced in front of Yahweh,
putting everything into it. 15 David and all the
Israelis brought the sacred chest into
Yerushalem with shouting and trumpet blasts.
16 However, as they were entering the city,
David's wife Mikal (Sha'ul's (Saul's) daughter)
looked out the window and saw King David
leaping and dancing in front of Yahweh, and
she felt only despite for him. 17 They took Yah-
weh's box and placed it in the middle of the
tent that David had erected for it. Then David
offered burnt sacrifices to Yahweh, as well as
peace offerings. 18 When David had finished of-
fering those sacrifices, he blessed the people in
Commander-in-chief Yahweh's name. 19 He
handed out a large bread roll, a cake of pressed
dates, and a cake of pressed raisins to each man
and woman there, then they all returned to
their homes.[21]
20 Then David returned to bless his own
house, but his wife Mikal came out to meet him
complaining, "What disgraceful behaviour for
Yisrael's (Israel's) king today—dancing when he
was wearing so little and exposing himself to
his female servants like some brainless per-
son!"
21 "It was to thank Yahweh," David responded,
"who chose me (rather than your father and
any of his family) by appointing me as leader
over Yahweh's people Yisrael. I was celebrating
in front of Yahweh 22 and I will humiliate and
humble myself even more than that. Yet I will
end up being honoured by those female ser-
vants that you were talking about."
23 After that, Sha'ul's (Saul's) daughter Mikal
never had any more children.

Yahweh's promise to David · Full kingdom[22]

7:1 Then the king moved
into his palace, and Yah-
weh allowed him to have
a time of peace from all his enemies. 2 One day
the king said to the prophet Natan (Nathan),
"Look, I'm here living in a house made of cedar,
but God's box is still there in a tent."
3 "Go and do whatever you consider best,"
Natan replied, "because Yahweh is with you."
4 But that night, Yahweh spoke to Natan, 5 "Go
and tell my servant David that Yahweh says,
'Will you build a house for me to live in? 6 I
haven't lived in a house since I brought the Is-
raelis out of Mitsrayim (Egypt) right up until
now, but rather I was living in a tent as they
moved around. 7 In all those places, I never
once queried the leaders to ask why they never
built a cedar house for me.'
8 "But now you should tell my servant David
that Commander-in-chief Yahweh says, 'I my-
self took you out of the grass field where you
looked after the sheep and goats to become the
leader of my people the Israelis. 9 Everywhere
you've gone, I've been with you and destroyed
your enemies in front of you, and I will make
you famous like all the famous people on the
earth. 10 I will establish a place for the Israelis
and put them there to live, and they won't be
afraid because evil people won't continue to
oppress them like happened in the past
11 when I appointed heroes (traditionally
'judges') over my people Yisrael (Israel). I will
give you peace from all your enemies, and I,
Yahweh, will enable your descendants to rule
after you. 12 when your time on earth comes to
an end and you're laid down with your ances-
tors, I will appoint one of your sons to be king
and I will establish his kingdom.[23] 13 He's the
one who'll build a temple for me, and I will

20 **RV 6:11 · Cross-ref.** 1Ch 26:4-5.
21 **RV 6:19-20 · Cross-ref.** 1Ch 16:43.
22 **RV 7:1 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 17:1-15
23 **RV 7:12 · Cross-ref.** Psa 89:3-4; 132:11; Yhn 7:42; Acts 2:30.

Readers' Version

make his descendents reign forever. 14 I myself will become like a father to him, and he'll become like a son to me.[24] When he disobeys, I'll punish him like fathers punish their sons. 15 But my kindness won't turn away from you like I turned away from Sha'ul (Saul)—the one who I removed ahead of you. 16 Your descendants and your kingdom will remain forever. Your throne will be established forever.' "[25]

David's prayer · Full kingdom[26]

17 So Natan (Nathan) passed all of that onto David, 18 and King David went and sat in front of Yahweh and said, "Who am I, my master Yahweh, and how important is my family that you have brought me to this point? 19 But that was just minor to you, my master Yahweh. You also spoke about the distant future for my descendants. 20 What more can I, David say to you? But my master Yahweh, you yourself know your servant. 21 You've done all these incredible things in order to fulfil what you said and to fulfil your own desires, and then revealed them to your servant. 22 That's why you're incredible, Yahweh my god, and so there's no one like you. There's no god except you—that's what we keep hearing about. 23 What other nation is like your people, Yisrael (Israel)—one nation on the earth that you went to redeem for yourself as a people—rescuing you from Mitsrayim (Egypt) and its gods? You made a reputation for yourself and did amazing and scary things for your nation in front of your people[27] 24 You established us Israelis as your own people forever, and you yourself Yahweh became our God.

25 "And now, Yahweh God, the promise you made concerning your servant and his descendants, and do just as you have spoken and make it come true into the future. 26 May your reputation be good forever, with people saying, 'Commander Yahweh is God over Yisrael,' and the dynasty of your servant David will be established under you, 27 because you, Commander-in-chief Yahweh are Yisrael's god. You have told your servant, 'I will build a dynasty for you.' That's why your servant has found the courage to pray this prayer.

28 "So now, my master Yahweh, you are God, and you do what you say, and you have said these good things concerning your servant. 29 Now, if it pleases you, bless your servant's extended family forever, because you yourself, my master Yahweh, have spoken, and from your blessing, your servant's family will be blessed forever."

David's victories · Full kingdom[28]

8:1 Sometime later, David attacked the Pelishtim and defeated them, and he captured Meteg-Ha'amah from them.

2 Then he defeated the Moavim. David forced them to lie on the ground and used a length of rope to decide their fate—those inside two lengths of the rope were killed, and those inside the third length were spared and so the Moavim became David's servants—bringing him tribute.

3 Then David defeated Tsovah's King Hadadezer (son of Rehov) who had tried to reestablish his authority over the Perat (Euphrates) River. 4 David captured 1,700 horsemen and twenty thousand men on foot. He hamstrung all the chariot horses except for a hundred of them.

5 Then the Arameans came from Damesek (Damascus) to help Tsovah's king Hadadezer but David killed twenty-two thousand of them. 6 David stationed garrisons in Aram (Syria) (in Damesek) and the Arameans became David's servants—bringing him tribute, and Yahweh helped David win wherever he went. 7 David confiscated the gold shields that Hadadezer's servants carried and brought them to

24 RV 7:14 · Cross-ref. Psa 89:26-27; 2Cor 6:18; Heb 1:5.

25 RV 7:16 · Cross-ref. Psa 89:36-37.

26 RV 7:17 · Parallel 1 Chr. 17:16-27

27 RV 7:23 · Cross-ref. Deu 4:34.

28 RV 8:1 · Parallel 1 Chr. 18:1-17

Readers' Version

Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 8 He also brought a large amount of bronze out of Hadadezer's cities of Betah and Berotah.

9 When Hamat's King Toeu heard that David had defeated Hadadezer's entire army, 10 he sent his son Yoram (Joram) to ask for peace for Hamat and to congratulate him for fighting Hadadezer and defeating him because Hadadezer often battled against Toeu. Yoram brought containers with him, made of gold, silver, and bronze. 11 King David dedicated them to Yahweh, along with the silver and gold that he'd taken from all the nations that they'd conquered: 12 from Aram and Moav (Moab), from the Amonim and the Pelishtim, and from Amalek and from the plunder of Tsovah's King Hadadezer (son of Rehov).

13 Then David made more of a name for himself when he returned from defeating eighteen thousand Arameans in the Salt Valley.[29] 14 He stationed garrisons throughout Edom and made the people his servants, and Yahweh protected David wherever they fought.

15 So David reigned over all Yisrael (Israel) and led all his people with justice and integrity. 16 Tseruyah's son Yoav (Joab) was the army commander and Ahilud's son Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) was the secretary. 17 The priests were Ahituv's son Tsadok and Evyatar's son Ahimelek, and Serayah was secretary. 18 Yehoyada's son Benayah supervised the Keretim and the Peletim (David's bodyguard), and David's sons were his administrators.

David assists Mefiboshet · Full kingdom

9:1 One day David asked, "Is there still anyone remaining from Sha'ul's (Saul's) extended family because I'd like to show kindness to them for Yonatan's (Jonathan's) sake?"[30]

2 Now there was a servant in Sha'ul household named Tsiva and he was summoned to David, and the king asked him, "Are you Tsiva?"

"Yes, I'm your servant," he replied.

3 "Is there anyone from Sha'ul's family who's still alive?" the king asked. "If so, I'd like to show God's kindness to them."

"Yes, There's still one of Yonatan's sons alive," Tsiva told the king. "He's crippled in both legs."[31]

4 "Where is he?" the king asked.

"Actually," Tsiva told the king, "he's at Makir's house—the son of Amiyel in Lo-Devar." 5 So King David sent messengers to Lo-Devar to have him brought to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

6 Then Yonatan's son Mefiboshet came to David and fell onto his knees and bowed his face down to the ground, and David said, Mefiboshet."

"I'm your servant," he replied.

7 Then David told him, "Don't be afraid, because I'll certainly show you kindness for the sake of your father Yonatan. I'll restore all the pastureland that belonged to your grandfather Sha'ul (Saul), and you yourself are invited to always eat at my table."

8 Mefiboshet bowed low and asked, "Your servant's nothing more than a dead dog. Why would you care about me?"

9 Then the king summoned Sha'ul's servant Tsiva and told him, "I've given everything that belonged to Sha'ul and to all his household to your master. 10 You and your fifteen sons and your twenty servants must work the land for him and harvest the produce to support your master's grandson, but he will eat with me at my house."

11 "Yes, my master the king," Tsiva responded. "Your servant will do everything you've commanded."

So from then on, Mefiboshet always ate at the king's table as if he was one of the king's sons. 12 Mefiboshet had a young son named Mika. All Tsiva's household became Mefiboshet's servants, 13 but Mefiboshet (who was crippled in both legs) lived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) because he had a permanent invitation to eat

29 **RV 8:13 · Cross-ref.** Psa 60 header.

30 **RV 9:1 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 20:15-17.

31 **RV 9:3 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 4:4.

Readers' Version

with the king.

Yisrael defeats the Amonim and the Arameans · Full kingdom[32]

10:1 Some time later, the Amoni king died, and his son Hanun replace him as king. 2 "I'll be kind to Nahash's son Hanun," David said, "just like his father was kind to me." So he sent servants to Hanun to convey his condolences.

When they arrived in the Amon region, 3 the Amoni commanders said to their master Hanun, "Do you think that David really sent condolences to honour your late father? Isn't it more likely because he wanted them to spy on us, and to explore the city so he could more easily conquer it?"

4 So Hanun seized David's servants and had half of their beards shaved off and their robes cut in half all the way up to their buttocks, then he sent them off. 5 They sent messengers ahead to tell David because they were very humiliated, and the king told them to stay in Yeriho (Jericho) before returning when their beards grew back.

6 Then the Amoni leaders realised that they'd now caused David to despise them, so they hired twenty thousand Aramean (or Arami (Syrian)) mercenaries from Beyt-Rehov and Tsovah, and another one thousand from Ma'akah and twelve thousand from Tov. 7 When David heard that, he sent Yoav (Joab) in with the entire army. 8 The Amonim came out the city gate and organised themselves for battle at the entrance, while their hired mercenaries stood apart out in the countryside.

9 When Yoav saw that he was disadvantaged with enemy lines both in front and behind, he selected certain Israeli warriors and placed them to battle the Aramean mercenaries, 10 leaving the others to face the Amonim under the command of his brother Avishay, 11 telling him, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you come and rescue us, but if the Amonim are too strong for you, then I'll come and rescue you. 12 Be strong and courageous for the sake of our people and our god's cities, and Yahweh will do whatever he considers right."

13 So Yoav and his men advanced to attack the Aramean mercenaries but they fled away from them. 14 When the Amonim saw the Arameans running away, they started retreating from Avishay and went back into the city, so Yoav withdrew from attacking the Amonim and returned to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

15 When the Arameans realised that they'd been defeated by Yisrael (Israel), they assembled all their warriors together again. 16 King Hadadezer (from Tsovah) called for Aramean warriors from beyond the Perat (Euphrates) River and they came to Heylam. Shovak was Hadadezer's army commander. 17 When David heard that, he assembled all the Israeli warriors and they crossed the Yarden (Jordan) going towards Heylam. The Arameans came out to meet David and the two sides fought each other. 18 But again the Arameans fled from the Israelis, and David killed seven hundred Aramean charioteers and forty thousand cavalry, and their commander Shovak was struck and died there also. 19 Then all the kings associated with Hadadezer realised they couldn't defeat Yisrael, so they made peace with the Israelis and served them, and so the Arameans were afraid to try to rescue the Amonim again.

David takes Uriyah's wife · Full kingdom

11:1 The next spring (when kings usually go to war), David sent Yoav (Joab) and his officials and all the Israeli warriors, and they defeated the Amonim and besieged Rabah.

But David stayed in Yerushalem (Jerusalem),[33] 2 and early one evening he got up from a nap and walked around the palace roof area. From there he saw a woman bathing, and she was very good-looking. 3 David sent a messenger to find out who she was, and was told, "That's Eliam's daughter Bat-Sheva (Bathsheba)—Uriyah the Hiti's wife." 4 Then he sent messengers to get her, and she came and he slept with her. (She had been purifying her-

32 **RV 10:1 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 19:1-19

33 **RV 11:1 · Cross-ref.** 1Ch 20:1.

Readers' Version

self after the completion of her menstrual period.) Then she returned to her house.
5 After some time, the woman realised that she was pregnant, and so she informed David.
6 David sent to Yoav, "Send Uriyah the Hiti here to me." So Yoav sent Uriyah to David. 7 When he arrived, David asked him about how Yoav and his men were doing, and how the battle was going, 8 then he told him, "Go to your house and relax." So Uriyah left the palace and the king sent a gift to be delivered to his house.
9 But Uriyah didn't go home—instead he slept at the palace entrance with all the king's servants, 10 The next day, David was informed that Uriyah didn't go home to his house, so he asked him, "Didn't you just get back from a long journey? Why didn't you go home?"
11 "The sacred chest and the warriors from Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah) are living in tents," Uriyah replied. "And my master, Yoav, and my master's servants are camping out in the open. So I couldn't just go to my house to eat and to drink and to sleep with my wife. By your life and by the life of your spirit, I couldn't do that."
12 "Well, stay here today also," David told him, "and tomorrow I'll send you back." So Uriyah stayed in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) that day and the following day, 13 and David summoned him over, and they ate and drank together, and David got him drunk. But even then, Uriyah didn't go back to his house, but when he left in the evening he went back to sleep in the dorm with his master's servants.
14 The next morning, David wrote a note to Yoav and told Uriyah to deliver it. 15 He'd written, "Place Uriyah in the front where the fighting is strongest, then fall back from behind him so that he'll be struck and die." 16 So as Yoav was surrounding the city, he placed Uriyah where he knew the strongest enemy warriors would be fighting. 17 The warriors from the city came out and fought against Yoav's men, and some of David's servants were killed and so was Uriyah.
18 Then Yoav sent a messenger to David to give him a full account of the battle. 19 He told the messenger, "Once you've finished telling all the details of the battle to the king, 20 if he gets angry and asks, 'Why did you all go so close in to the city to fight? Didn't you know that they'd shoot down from the wall? 21 Wasn't Yerubeshet's son Avimelek killed by a woman in Tevets when she threw a millstone down from the wall?[34] Why did you approach the wall?' Then you should say, 'Your servant Uriyah the Hiti is also dead.' "
22 So the messenger left and went and told David everything that Yoav had told him, 23 saying, "Their men gained ground and came out against us in the countryside, but we forced them back to their city gate. 24 Then their archers were shooting at your men from the top of the wall and some of your men were killed, including your servant Uriyah the Hiti."
25 David sent the messenger back to encourage Yoav, "Don't let yourself be upset by what happened because no one knows who might die in a battle. Reinforce your battle against the city and tear it down."
26 When Uriyah's wife Bat-Sheva (Bathsheba) heard that her husband had been killed, she mourned for him. 27 When her time of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace. She became a wife to him and bore a son for him, but Yahweh was unhappy about what David had done.

Natan brings rebuke to David · Full kingdom

12:1 So Yahweh sent Natan (Nathan) to David[35] to tell him, "Once there was a rich man and a poor man living in the same city. 2 The rich man had a large number of flocks and herds, 3 but the poor man only had one little female lamb that he'd bought. It grew up with him and his sons, and would eat his left-overs and drink from his cup and lay down in his lap—it was like a daughter to him.
4 One day the rich man had a visitor, but in-

34 **RV 11:21 · Cross-ref.** Jdg 9:53.
35 **RV 12:1 · Cross-ref.** Psa 51 header.

Readers' Version

stead of taking one of his own animals for a meal, he killed the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the meal for his guest."

5 David got very angry listening to that and told Natan, "By the life of Yahweh, the man that did that definitely deserves to be put to death! 6 He must pay back four lambs for doing that and for having no pity on that poor man."

7 Then Natan said to David, "You are that rich man. Yahweh, the god of Yisrael (Israel), says to you: 'I myself anointed you as king over Yisrael, and I myself kept you safe from Sha'ul (Saul). 8 I gave you the house that belonged to your master, as well as his wives. I made you king over both Yisrael and Yehudah (Judah). And if that wasn't enough, I've given you more and more. 9 So why have you despised my commands by doing what you knew was evil? You had Uriyah the Hiti killed with an Amoni sword and you took his wife for yourself. 10 So now, because you despised me and took Uriyah's wife as your own, war and violence will never go away from you and your descendants. 11 I will cause a disaster to hit you from within your own household—I'll take your wives and give them to a family member right in front of your eyes, and he will let everyone know that he's sleeping with your wives.[36] 12 You did what you did in secret, but I myself will do all this in public before all Yisrael.' "

13 "Yes, I've sinned against Yahweh," David responded to Natan.

"Yahweh has taken away your sin," Natan replied. "You won't die. 14 Nevertheless, because you have utterly disrespected Yahweh in this matter, also your new son is certainly going to die." 15 Then Natan went home.

David's son dies · Full kingdom

Then Yahweh caused the baby (that Uriyah's wife had given birth to) to get sick. 16 David pleaded with Yahweh for the boy's sake, and he fasted, and he spent the entire night lying down on the ground. 17 The influential members of his household got beside him to try to get him up from the ground, but he wouldn't budge, and he wouldn't eat anything they brought. 18 Then on the seventh day, the baby died, but David's servants were afraid to tell him because after seeing his response when the child was sick, they were afraid of what he might do to himself when he found out that his son had died.

19 However, when David noticed his servants whispering together, he realised that the baby must have died, and he asked them, "Did the baby die?"

"Yes," they answered, "he passed away."

20 Then David got up from the ground and washed, and he rubbed lotions on and changed his clothes, then he entered Yahweh's tent and worshipped him. Then he went back home and asked for food to be served, and he ate.

21 His servants queried him, "We don't understand what just happened: when the baby was alive you fasted and wept, but yet when he dies, you get up and have a meal?"

22 "While the child was still alive," David replied, "I fasted and I wept, because I thought, 'Who knows? Yahweh might be gracious to me and let him live.' 23 But now that he's dead, there's no more reason to fast—I can't bring him back again. One day I'll go to him, but he'll never come back here to me." 24 Then David comforted his wife Bat-Sheva (Bathsheba).

The birth of Shelomoh · Full kingdom

Then David went to Bat-Sheva (Bathsheba) and slept with her, and in due course she gave birth to a son. David he named him Shelomoh (Solomon), and Yahweh loved that boy 25 and sent the prophet Natan (Nathan) to name him Yedideyah[37] (which means 'loved by Yahweh') for Yahweh's sake.

David captures Rabah · Full kingdom[38]

26 Then Yoav (Joab) fought the Amonim at Rabah and captured their palace, 27 then he sent messengers to David to

36 **RV 12:11-12 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 16:22.

37 **RV 12:25 · Note** That name didn't seem to stick because this is the only mention of it in the Bible.

38 **RV 12:26 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 20:1-3

Readers' Version

tell him, "I've fought against Rabah and I've overthrown the city's water supply. 28 So now, gather the rest of our fighters and lay siege to the city and capture it. Otherwise I'll do it and then it'll be named after me. 29 So David gathered all his warriors and went to Rabah, where he attacked the city and captured it. 30 He took the king's crown off his head (it was gold and weighed around 30kg), and it was placed on his head. A lot of other plunder was also taken from the city. 31 The inhabitants of Rabah were brought out and assigned to work at the brick kiln with saws, iron picks, and axes. (He did that to all the Amoni cities.) Then David and all his people returned to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

Amnon rapes Tamar
· Full kingdom

13:1 Some time afterwards, David's son Amnon fell in love with his beautiful half-sister Tamar (Avshalom's (Absalom's) sister), 2 and he made himself frustrated, always thinking about her because she was a virgin. However, he couldn't do anything with her. 3 But Amnon had a very shrewd friend called Yonadav (son of David's brother Shimeah) 4 and Yonadav asked him, "Hey, you're a son of the king, so tell me why you're always so unhappy?"

"I'm in love with my brother Avshalom's sister Tamar," Amnon replied.

5 "Go to bed and pretend to be sick," Yonadav suggested. "Then when your father comes to see you, ask him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come to look after my food. She can cook it here and serve it to me.' " 6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick, and when the king came to see him, Amnon asked him, "Please, let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of bread rolls while I'm watching, and then she can serve them to me."

7 So David sent a message to Tamar to ask her to go to her brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him. 8 So Tamar went to her half-brother Amnon's house where he was lying down. She took some dough and kneaded it into breadrolls and baked them. 9 Then she took the tray over to him, but he refused to eat, saying, "Send everyone else out of here," so they all left. 10 Then Amnon told Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom so that you can serve it to me." So Tamar took the breadrolls that she'd made, and took them to Amnon in the bedroom. 11 But when she got close enough to him, he grabbed her and insisted, "Come and lie down with me, my sister."

12 "No, my brother," she told him, "don't humiliate me because we Israelis don't do that. Don't do this disgraceful thing. 13 Where could I hide my shame? And you—you'd be considered a godless fool in Yisrael (Israel). Just speak to the king because he'd give me to you to marry." 14 But he didn't want her advice, and being stronger than her, he humiliated her by forcing her down and raping her.

15 Instantly, Amnon hated her with terrible hatred—a much greater hatred than the love with which he'd loved her, and he told her to get up and get out.

16 "No, no." she responded. "Sending me away would be even worse than what you just did to me."

But he refused to listen to her 17 and called his personal servant. He told him to take the woman away and send her outside and then lock the door behind her. 18 (She was wearing the kind of long robe that the virgin daughters of the king wore as an outer garment.)

So the servant pushed her outside and locked the door behind her. 19 Then Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and wailed as she walked home.[39] 20 Her brother Avshalom (Absalom) asked her, "Did your half-brother Amnon mess with you? But now, my sister, don't tell anyone since he's your brother and don't let it upset you." So Tamar lived in a state of desolation in her brother Avshalom's house.

21 When King David heard about all that, he got very angry. 22 Also, Avshalom said nothing

39 **RV 13:19 · Note** The ashes, tearing of clothes, putting hand on head, and wailing, were all cultural signs of mourning and distress.

Readers' Version

to Amnon (either good or bad) because he hated him for humiliating his sister Tamar.

Avshalom kills Amnon · Full kingdom

23 Two years passed, then Avshalom's (Absalom's) shearers were in Ba'al-Hatsor (near Efrayim (Ephraim)) and Avshalom invited all the king's sons.
24 Avshalom went to the king and asked him, "Listen, please, the shearers are working for your servant. Please, let the king and his servants come with your servant."
25 "No, my son," the king replied. "There's too many of us—it would be too expensive for you." Avshalom he urged him, but he wouldn't go, however he did bless him.
26 "But if you don't come," Avshalom insisted, "please let my brother Amnon come with us."
"Why should *he* go with you?" the king asked.
27 But Avshalom insisted, so the king agreed to send Amnon and his other sons. 28 Then Avshalom prepared his young men, "Listen now, when Amnon gets a bit drunk from the wine and I tell you all, 'Strike Amnon!' then you'll kill him. You all don't need to be afraid because I myself am the one commanding you. Be courageous warriors." 29 At the right time, Avshalom's servants did to Amnon what Avshalom commanded them. All the rest of the king's sons jumped up and onto their mules and fled away.
30 While they were still on the way, David heard the news that Avshalom had struck all of his sons and killed them, and none were left alive. 31 The king stood up and tore his clothes, then he laid down on the ground. Meanwhile, all his servants there were tearing their clothes. 32 Then Yonadav (David's brother Shimeah's son) spoke up, "My master, don't imagine that all those young men, the king's sons, have been murdered. I suspect that only Amnon is dead, because Avshalom has been determined to do this ever since his sister Tamar was humiliated. 33 So my master, don't believe the report that all your sons are dead. It's probably only Amnon who's dead.
34 Meanwhile, Avshalom had fled.
Suddenly the watchman turned and saw, wow, many people coming around the hill along the road behind him. 35 "Look," Yonadav told the king. "The king's sons are coming! It's just what I said." 36 He'd hardly finished speaking when, wow, the king's sons came in. Then they all cried loudly, and the king and his servants joined them in their wailing.
37 But Avshalom had fled, and he went to Geshur to stay with King Amihud's son, Talmay.[40] But David mourned for his son every day. 38 After Avshalom fled to Geshur, he stayed there for three years. 39 By then, King David was no longer grieving over Amnon's death and longed to go to see Avshalom.

Avshalom returns to Yerushalem · Full kingdom

14:1 Now Yoav (Joab) (Tseruyah's son) realised that the king missed Avshalom (Absalom), 2 so he sent for a wise woman from Tekoa and told her, "Now, please put on mourning clothes and don't put on any make-up. Act like a woman who has been mourning for the dead for several days, 3 and go to the king and give him this message." Then Yoav told her what to say to the king.
4 So the Tekoei woman went to the king and fell onto her knees with his face down to the ground, saying, "Your majesty, help me."
5 "What's the matter?" the king asked.
"Alas, I'm a widow," she replied. "My husband has died. 6 Your female servant had two sons, and the two of them fought each other out in the countryside. There wasn't anyone there who could stop them, and then one son struck the other and killed him. 7 Now listen, the entire clan has turned against your female servant and demanded, 'Give us the one who killed his brother, and we'll kill him in exchange for the life of the brother that he killed. Also, it would mean that this evil thing couldn't be passed on.' But that would leave me with no descendants to continue my husband's name."
8 "Go home," the king told the woman, "and I'll make a decision about what to do."

40 **RV 13:37 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 3:3.

Readers' Version

9 But the Tekoei woman continued, "The
blame,[41] my master the king, will be on me and
my extended family, but the king and his
throne will be innocent."
10 "Anyone who speaks against you," said the
king, "bring them to me, and then they won't
trouble you any more."
11 "Please," she insisted, "may the king ask
your god Yahweh to prevent the avenger of
blood from increasing the tragedy, so my son
won't be destroyed."
"As surely as Yahweh lives," he vowed, "not a
hair from your son's head will fall to the
ground."
12 Then the woman said, "Please, let your fe-
male servant ask my master the king a ques-
tion."
"Speak," he replied.
13 So the woman asked, "Why have you acted
like this against God's people? When the king
says that to me, isn't he convicting himself
since he hasn't brought back *his own* banished
son? 14 It's certain that we'll all die. Water
that's spilt on the ground can't be gathered to-
gether again but God's not like that. Rather
than taking away life, he devises plans so that
the one who was banished can be gathered
back in. 15 The reason that I've come now to tell
this to the king my master, is because the peo-
ple have frightened me. So your servant said to
herself, 'I will speak, please, to the king. Per-
haps the king will honour the request of his fe-
male servant. 16 Maybe the king will listen in
order to save his female servant from the man
who's cutting me and my son together off from
the inheritance given by God.' 17 And your fe-
male servant thought, 'Please, let the word of
my master the king become my assurance, be-
cause my master the king is like God's messen-
ger when it comes to understanding good and
evil.[42] And may Yahweh your god be with
you.' "
18 "Hang on," the king told the woman. "I
want you to answer this question honestly."
"Please, let my master the king speak." she re-
sponded.
19 "Did Yoav (Joab) perhaps have anything to
do with all this?" he asked.
The woman answered, "By the life of your
spirit, my master the king, there's no avoiding
anything that my master the king has said. Yes,
your servant Yoav—he himself commanded me,
and he himself told your female servant what I
should say. 20 Your servant Yoav set this up to
try to remedy the situation. But my master is
wise like the wisdom of one of God's messen-
gers to know everything that's going on here
on earth."
21 Then the king summoned Yoav and told
him, "All right then, I'll sort this out. Now go
and bring back the young man Avshalom (Absa-
lom)."
22 Yoav fell onto his knees and bowed his face
to the ground, and blessed the king, then he
said, "Today, your servant knows that I have
found favour in your eyes, my master the king,
since the king is going to do what his servant
asked." 23 Then Yoav got up and went to Geshur
to get Avshalom and bring him back to
Yerushalem (Jerusalem), 24 but the king said,
"He can go around to his house, but he's to stay
right away from me." So Avshalom lived in his
own house, but wasn't allowed into the palace.

Avshalom and David reconcile · Full kingdom

25 Now Avshalom (Absalom) was admired as
the most handsome man in all Yisrael (Israel)—from the top of his head
to the bottom of his feet, you wouldn't be able
to find a blemish on his skin. 26 He had his hair
cut once a year when it got too heavy on him,
and when the hair was weighed using standard
weights, it would be over two kilograms.
27 Avshalom had three sons and a daughter
named Tamar—a very attractive woman.
28 Avshalom lived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem)
for two years without ever getting to see the
king, 29 so he sent a message to Yoav (Joab)
about getting an invitation to see the king, but

41 **RV 14:9 · Note** Presumably for not putting the murderer to death.
42 **RV 14:17 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 19:27.

Readers' Version

Yoav wouldn't come to him. He sent another message, but Yoav still wouldn't come, 30 so he instructed his servants, "Listen, Yoav's piece of land with a barley crop is nearby. Go and set fire to it." So Avshalom's servants burnt Yoav's barley.[43]

31 Then Yoav went to Avshalom's house and demanded, "Why did your servants destroy my barley crop?"

32 "Listen, I tried to contact you," Avshalom replied. "I asked you to come here so that I could send you to the king to ask what the point was of bringing me here from Geshur if I can't see him—I might as well have stayed back there. So now, help me to get invited to see the king, and then if I'm considered guilty of a crime, then let him kill me."

33 So Yoav went and informed the king, and he called for Avshalom. When he entered, he knelt and bowed his face to the ground in front of the king, and then the king kissed him.

Avshalom plans his rebellion · Full kingdom

15:1 Sometime after all that, Avshalom (Absalom) acquired a chariot and horses and hired fifty men to run ahead of him. 2 He would get up early and stand on the side of the road going in and out of the city. Every time that someone came into the city to take a dispute to be settled by the king, Avshalom would ask them where they were from, and they'd reply with their city and tribe, 3 then he'd say, "Listen, No doubt what you're saying is sensible and right, but the king hasn't appointed anyone to listen to people from your area." 4 Then Avshalom would add, "If I was appointed as judge, then every person with a dispute or case could come to me and obtain justice." 5 Whenever anyone approached him to bow respectfully to him, he would put out his hand and embrace them and kiss them.

6 Avshalom acted that way towards every Israeli who came for a dispute to be settled by the king, and in doing that he stole the hearts of the Israeli people.

7 Four[44] years later, Avshalom begged the king, "Please, release me to go and fulfill the vow that I made to Yahweh in Hevron, 8 because when I was living in Geshur (in Aram (Syria)) I promised Yahweh that if he brought me back to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), then I'd worship him in Hevron."

9 "Go in peace," the king responded, so Avshalom left for Hevron. 10 From there, he sent sleeper groups into all areas of Yisrael (Israel), telling them, "When you all hear the trumpet blasts, then shout, 'Avshalom has become king from Hevron!' " 11 Avshalom had invited two hundred men from Yerushalem to go with him to Hevron, but they were innocent and didn't know what was about to happen.

12 Then while he was offering sacrifices, Avshalom also sent for David's adviser Ahitofel from Giloh. By now the conspiracy was strengthening, and Avshalom was becoming popular with more and more people.

The fleeing of David · Full kingdom

13 Eventually, someone went and told David, "The loyalty of the Israeli people is turning towards Avshalom (Absalom)."

14 So David told his servants, "Pack up quickly and let's get out of here, or else we won't be able to escape from Avshalom. Be fast in case he's heading here soon and overtakes us. That would be a massacre and the whole city would die from their swords."

15 "Your servants here will do everything you tell us," they replied to the king. 16 So the king left ten of his slave-wives to look after the palace, but he left with all his family.

17 So the king departed with all his people, and they stopped at the last house. 18 Then all his servants passed beside him to go ahead, along with his bodyguards (the Kereti and the Peletim) and six hundred Gitim (from Gat).

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43 RV 14:30 · Note TC: The Septuagint translation adds the following words here: "And Avshalom's servants burnt them up. Then Yoav's servants came to him, tearing their garments. They said..."

44 RV 15:7 · Note The Hebrew says forty years, but this is interpreted here as a scribal error. (David's entire reign was only forty years, see 1 Kings 2:11.)

Readers' Version

19 Then the king said to Itay the Giti, "You don't
have to come with us. You're a foreigner and an
exile from your place, so you could go back and
stay with the new king. 20 You haven't been
here long, and we don't even know where we're
going. I certainly need to leave but you can re-
turn with your relatives. May Yahweh show
kindness and faithfulness to you all."
21 "As Yahweh lives, and as my master the
king lives," Itay answered the king, "wherever
my master the king goes, your servant will cer-
tainly be there also, whether it means life or
death."
22 "Okay, go ahead then," David told Itay. So
Itay and all his men and their families went
with David. 23 All the people along the road
cried when they saw them walking by. The king
and all the others crossed the Kidron riverbed
and went up the hill toward the wilderness.
24 What a sight! Even Tsadok and all the
Levites with him were carrying the box with
God's agreement in it, and when they put it
down again, the priest Evyatar caught up to
them and waited until all the people had fin-
ished exiting the city. 25 But the king told
Tsadok, "Take the sacred chest back into the
city. If Yahweh favours me, then he'll help me
return, and he'll let me see it and his place of
residence again. 26 But if Yahweh says that he
isn't pleased with me, then he'll do to me what-
ever he thinks best. 27 Aren't you a prophet?
Return to the city in peace, along with your son
Ahima'ats and Evyatar's son Yonatan
(Jonathan). 28 Listen, I'll wait at the fords in the
wilderness until I get your message." 29 So
Tsadok and Evyatar carried the sacred chest
back to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), then they re-
mained there.
30 As David was going up the Mt. of Olives, he
was walking barefoot with his head covered. He
was weeping as were the people with
him—they too had their heads covered and
were weeping. 31 David knew that Ahitofel was
among the people conspiring with Avshalom
(Absalom), so he prayed, "Please, Yahweh,
make Ahitofel give foolish advice."
32 When David reached the summit (where
people frequently worship God), Hushay (the
Arki) met him there. He had torn his clothes
and put dirt on his head. 33 David told him, "If
you come with me, you'll be a burden to me,
34 but if you return to the city and tell
Avshalom, 'I'm your servant, my king. I was
your father's servant in the past, but now I'll be
your servant,' then you'll be able to oppose
Ahitofel's counsel for me. 35 The priests Tsadok
and Evyatar are already there, so tell them ev-
erything you hear in the palace. 36 Also
Tsadok's son Ahima'ats and Evyatar's son
Yonatan (Jonathan) are there. Tell them every-
thing you hear, then send them to report it to
me.
37 So David's friend Hushay slipped back into
Yerushalem (Jerusalem) just as Avshalom was
entering the city.

Dishonest Tsiva helps David · Full kingdom

16:1 David hadn't gone
far past the summit
when, wow, he was meet
by Mefiboshet's servant Tsiva[45] with a pair of
saddled donkeys loaded with two hundred
bread rolls, one hundred cakes of raisins, one
hundred pieces of fresh fruit, and a leather
container of wine. 2 "What's all that?" the king
asked.
"The donkeys are for the king's family to
ride," Tsiva answered, "and the bread and fruits
are for the young men to eat, and the wine is
for the people to drink who feel faint in the
wilderness."
3 "So where's your master's grandson Mefi-
boshet?" asked the king.
Ha, he stayed in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) be-
cause he thought that the Israelis might give
back control of his grandfather's kingdom,"
Tsiva lied.[46]
4 "Well then," the king told Tsiva, "everything
that belonged to Mefiboshet now belongs to
you."

45 **RV 16:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 9:9-10.
46 **RV 16:3 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 19:25-27.

Readers' Version

"I'm honoured," Tsiva responded, "that I've found favour in the eyes of my master the king."

Shimei curses David · Full kingdom

5 When King David got to Bahurim, wow, a man from Sha'ul's (Saul's) extended family came out. He was Gera's son Shimei, and he came out and cursed David. 6 Then he threw stones at David and all his servants, and all the people and warriors on both sides of the king. 7 "Go away, go away, you worthless man of much bloodshed!" Shimei yelled. 8 "Now Yahweh's returning to you all the blood of Sha'ul's household. You took over as king in his place, but Yahweh's giving the kingdom into the hand of your son Avshalom (Absalom). Look at you, you're evil because you're a man of much bloodshed."

9 The Tseruyah's son Avishay asked the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my master the king? Please, let me cross over and lop off his head."

10 "What does it matter to me, or to you two sons of Tseruyah?" the king replied. "He's cursing because Yahweh told him to curse me, so who has any right to ask him why he's saying it?" 11 Then David told Avishay and all his servants, "Look, my own biological son is trying to kill me. Now on top of that, this Benyamite. Leave him and let him curse, because Yahweh told him to. 12 Perhaps Yahweh will see my suffering and return good on me, instead of this cursing today." 13 As David and his men continued along the road, Shimei walked along the hillside beside him—walking and cursing, and throwing stones and dirt at him. 14 Later, the king and all the people with him arrived,[47] and feeling very tired, they rested.

The conflicting advice of Hushay and Ahitofel · Full kingdom

15 Meanwhile, Avshalom (Absalom) and all his followers arrived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), and Ahitofel was among them. 16 When David's friend Hushay (the Arki) came to Avshalom, he greeted him, "May the king live. May the king live."

17 "Is that how you show kindness to your friend David?" Avshalom responded. "Why didn't you go with him?"

18 "No," Hushay replied. "I'll serve whoever Yahweh and these people and all the men of Yisrael (Israel) have chosen. So I'll stay with you. 19 Besides that, who should I serve? Why shouldn't I serve my master's son? Just as I've served your father, similarly, I'll serve you."

20 Then Avshalom turned to Ahitofel, "Give us advice. What should we do next?"

21 "Go to your father's slave-wives that he left to guard the house," Ahitofel replied. "Lie with them then all Yisrael will hear that you've made your father stink, and then everyone with you will be encouraged." 22 So they set up a tent for Avshalom on the palace roof and he had sex with his father's slave-wives where everyone would know what was going on.[48]

23 In those days, Ahitofel's advice was just as good as inquiring directly from God, so David in the past, and now Avshalom, accepted what he said.

Hushay argues against Ahitofel's advice · Full kingdom

17:1 Then Ahitofel asked Avshalom (Absalom), "Please, let me choose twelve thousand men, then let me go and pursue after David tonight. 2 I'll attack him while they're tired and lacking energy. Once I panic them, all the people with him will flee and I'll be able to strike the king by himself. 3 Then I'll bring all the people back to you, like a reunion. You'll have the man you're wanting, and all the people will be in peace." 4 That seemed very sensible to Avshalom and all the Israeli elders.

5 But Avshalom insisted, "Now, call Hushay the Arki as well, and let's also listen to his suggestions." 6 So when Hushay arrived, Avshalom asked him, "Ahitofel has suggested so and so. Should we do what he said? If not, what would you recommend?"

47 **RV 16:14 · Note** Probably at the fords mentioned in 15:28.

48 **RV 16:22 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 12:11-12.

Readers' Version

7 "This time, Ahitofel's suggestion isn't such
good advice," Hushay replied. 8 You yourself
know your father and his men—and do remem-
ber that they're powerful warriors—they're still
furious like a bear in the countryside that's
been robbed of its cubs. And your father is an
experienced man of war, and he won't spend
the night there with the people. 9 Listen, he's
probably already hiding in a cavern or some
other place. Also, if some of your men were
killed early in the fighting, then the rumour
would go around that Avshalom's already lost
many men. 10 Then even your bravest warriors
might lose heart, because all Yisrael (Israel)
knows that your father is a powerful warrior,
and also that the men with him are very expe-
rienced. 11 So this is what I suggest: Call war-
riors from all Yisrael—from Dan in the far
north to Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba) in the far
south. They'll be as numerous as sand grains on
the beach and you personally will be able to
lead them into battle. 12 Then we'll be able to
find him wherever he is, and attack him like
dew blankets the entire area, and neither him
nor any of the men with him will survive, not
even one. 13 If he escaped into some city, we'd
all bring ropes to that city and drag the stones
into the valley until even a pebble couldn't be
found there."

14 Avshalom and all the Israeli elders agreed
that Hushay's advice was better than Ahitofel's.
(Yahweh had influenced them to reject
Ahitofel's good advice so he could bring disas-
ter onto Avshalom.)

The warning to David to flee · Full kingdom

15 Then Hushay told the
two priests Tsadok and
Evyatar what Ahitofel
had suggested to Avshalom (Absalom) and the
Israeli elders and what he'd countered it with.
16 Then he told them, "Get that message to
David quickly. Tell him not to overnight at the
fords in the wilderness, but to cross over other-
wise he'll be killed along with everyone else
with him."

17 Their sons Yonatan (Jonathan) and
Ahima'ats were waiting at Eyn-Rogel where a
female servant would come and pass the mes-
sage onto them, because it wouldn't be safe for
them to be seen entering the city. Then they
themselves would go and inform King David.
18 But a young man saw them and informed
Avshalom, but meanwhile the two of them
went quickly and got to the house of a man in
Bahurim where they went down into the well
in his courtyard. 19 The woman there stretched
a covering over the top of the well, and then
spread grain over it to dry, so it wasn't obvious.
20 Some of Avshalom's servants arrived at the
house and asked the woman, "Where's
Ahima'ats and Yonatan?"

"They crossed over the creek," she replied.

So they continued searching for them, but
gave up after a while and returned to
Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

21 After they'd gone, the two men climbed out
of the well, and went on and informed King
David, "Pack up and quickly cross over the
river, because Ahitofel suggested attacking you
all immediately." 22 So David and everyone with
him moved on and crossed the Yarden (Jordan)
in the night, and by dawn there were all across.

23 When Ahitofel saw that his advice hadn't
been taken, he saddled his donkey and rode to
his city. He gave instructions to his household,
then he hanged himself. His body was buried in
his father's tomb.

24 Meanwhile, David arrived at Mahanayim,
but Avshalom and all his men had crossed over
the Yarden. 25 As the replacement for Yoav
(Joab) as army commander, Avshalom had ap-
pointed Amasa. (He was Yeter's son, and his
mother was Nahash's daughter Avigayil who
was the sister of Yoav's mother Tseruyah.)
26 Avshalom and his men camped in the Gilead
region.

27 While David was in Mahanayim, Shovi (Na-
hash's son from Rabah), Makir (Amiyel's son
from Lo-Devar), and Barzilay (the Giladi from
Roglim) 28 brought bedding and basins, clay
pots, wheat and barley, flour and roasted grain,
beans and lentils, 29 honey and yogurt, sheep
and cheese for David and the people with him
to eat because they knew that they'd be hungry
and tired and thirsty there in the wilderness.

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Avshalom's defeat and death · Full kingdom

18:1 David divided his warriors into units and appointed commanders of hundreds and of thousands. 2 He sent them out in three groups under Yoav (Joab), Avishay (son of Yoav's brother Tseruyah) and Itay (the Giti), then promised that he'd also join them in battle.

3 But the people complained, "No, don't go out, because if we have to flee, they won't be worried about us. Even if half of us die, they won't be worried about us, because you count more to them than ten thousand of us. So it's better that you stay to help us from the city."

4 "I'll do whatever seems best to you," the king responded. So the king stayed beside the city gate while the men went out by their hundreds and thousands. 5 Then he commanded Yoav and Avishay and Itay, "For my sake, don't harm my son Avshalom (Absalom)." All the people heard the king give this command about Avshalom to all the leaders.

6 So David's people went out to the countryside to meet the rest of Yisrael (Israel). The battle was in the Efrayim (Ephraim) forest 7 and David's men defeated the rest—twenty thousand men died that day, 8 but as the battle had spread over the entire area, the forest killed more people that day than the sword.

9 Avshalom happened to meet some of David's men. He was riding his mule, and when it darted under the think branches of a large terebinth tree, his head got caught in the branches and he was left hanging in the air as the mule kept going. 10 Someone noticed him and informed Yoav that he'd seen Avshalom hanging in a tree.

11 "What!. You saw him but didn't strike him down?" Yoav challenged. "I would have given you ten silver coins and a leather belt."

12 "Even if you'd placed one thousand silver coins in my hands," he replied, "I wouldn't have harmed the king's son, because we heard the king's command with our own ears about looking out for Avshalom. 13 Even if I'd ignored my good sense, the king would have found out about it, then even you wouldn't have stood up for me."

14 "I'm not going to waste time arguing with you," Yoav responded, then he took three spears and went and thrust them into Avshalom's abdomen while he was still alive and dangling from the tree. 15 Then ten young men who carried Yoav's weapons surrounded Avshalom and finished him off.

16 Then Yoav blew the trumpet to signal the end of the fighting and the people returned from chasing Avshalom's men. 17 They took Avshalom's body and threw it into a large pit in the forest and covered it with a large pile of stones. Meanwhile his men fled back to their homes.

18 During his lifetime, Avshalom had setup a pillar in the King's Valley because he had no sons to preserve his name. He put his name on the pillar and it's known as 'Avshalom's hand' to this day.

David learns about Avshalom's death · Full kingdom

19 Then Tsadok's son Ahima'ats requested, "Please, let me run and let me take the news to the king, because Yahweh has rescued him from his enemies."

20 "No, not today," Yoav (Joab) replied. "Some other time I'll allow you to take some news, but not today because the king's son is dead."

21 Then Yoav instructed a Kushi man, "Go and tell the king what you saw.". The man bowed to Yoav and ran off.

22 But Ahima'ats begged Yoav again, "Regardless of what might happen, please, let me also run myself after the Kushi."

"Why would you do that, my boy?" Yoav asked. "There won't be any reward for bad news."

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

"Okay then, run," Yoav told him. So Ahima'ats took a different route through the Yarden (Jordan) valley and arrived before the Kushi.

24 Now David was sitting between the outer and inner gates. When the watchman had gone over the gate roof to the wall, he looked out and saw, wow, a man was running towards them alone. 25 The watchman called down and informed the king, and the king said, "If he's

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alone, he'll be bringing news."

As the runner got closer, 26 the watchman looked and saw another man running. He called down to the gatekeeper and said, "Look, there's another man running alone."

"He'll also be bringing news," said the king.

27 "The gait of the first runner is like that of Tsadok's son Ahima'ats," the watchman said.

"He's a good man and he'll be bringing good news," said the king.

28 Then Ahima'ats called ahead to the king, "Peace!" And he knelt down with his face to the ground and said, "Blessed be Yahweh your god, who's stopped the men who acted against my master the king."

29 "Is the young man Avshalom (Absalom) all right?" the king asked.

"When Yoav (Joab) sent me, your servant," Ahima'ats answered, "I noticed a big commotion, but I don't know what it was about."

30 "Go and stand over there," the king ordered, so he stepped aside and stood there.

31 Then, wow, the Kushi man arrived and said, "May my master the king receive the good news, because Yahweh has rescued you today from all those who rose up against you."

32 "Is the young man Avshalom all right?" the king asked him.

The man replied, "May the enemies of my master the king and all those who rose up against you for evil, be like that young man is."

33 Then the king started trembling, and he went up to the room over the gate, and started weeping, saying, "Oh my son Avshalom, my son. Oh my son Avshalom, I wish I'd died instead of you."

Yoav scolds David · Full kingdom

19:1 Soon Yoav (Joab) was told that the king was weeping and mourning over Avshalom's (Absalom's) death, 2 and so the victory of that day became mourning for all the people, because they'd heard that the king was grieving for his son. 3 The people started quietly heading back into the city, like people would do when they're ashamed of having to *flee* from a battle. 4 But the king covered his face and kept crying out loudly, "Oh my son Avshalom. Oh Avshalom, my son, my son."

5 Then Yoav went to the house where the king was and said, "Today you've made your followers feel ashamed—the ones who saved your life today and the lives of your sons and daughters, and the lives of your wives and your slave-wives. 6 By loving those who hate you and hating those who love you, you've effectively declared today that your officers and men mean nothing to you. It seems to us that if Avshalom was still alive today and we were all dead, then it would have all been okay to you. 7 So get up now and go and speak sincerely to your servants, because as Yahweh lives, if you don't then you won't have a single warrior still with you by the end of the night, and that would result in more trouble for you than anything else that's happened to you since you were just a lad." 8 So the king got up and went and sat at the city gate , and the news quickly got around and all the people came to support the king.

David returns to Yerushalem · Full kingdom

But Avshalom's (Absalom's) warriors had all returned to their homes 9 and over time, people all across Yisrael (Israel) began to quarrel and say, "The king rescued us from the plans of our enemies including the Pelishtim, but now he's left Yisrael and fled away from Avshalom. 10 We anointed Avshalom to be over us, but he died in the battle. So why aren't we doing something about returning David as king?"

11 So King David sent the two priests Tsadok and Evyatar to the leaders of Yehudah (Judah) to ask, "Why are you the last group to return the king to the palace since the king has heard that the rest of Yisrael want it? 12 Tell them, 'You're all my relatives—my own flesh and blood, so why would you be the last to support me again?' " 13 And tell Amasa, 'Aren't you my own flesh and bone? May God make me suffer if you don't become my army commander from now on, to replace Yoav (Joab).' " 14 In that way, David united all the people of Yehudah and they notified the king, "We all want you and all your servants to return here."

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15 So the king headed back and reached the
Yarden (Jordan) River, and men from Yehudah
went to Gilgal to meet the king and help him
across.
16 Shimei (son of Gera the Benyamite from
Bahurim)[49] hurried down with the Yehudah
men to meet King David. 17 A thousand
Benyamite men came with him, as well as Tsiva
(formerly Sha'ul's (Saul's) servant) and fifteen
of his sons and twenty of his servants, and they
hurried to the Yarden to meet the king. 18 They
crossed the ford to help bring the king's house-
hold back across and anything else the king
wanted.

David's mercy to Shimei · Full kingdom

Shimei (Gera's son) fell
onto his knees in front of
the king when he crossed
the Yarden (Jordan) 19 and begged the king,
"May my master not consider me guilty, and
don't keep thinking about the terrible thing
your servant dig on the day that my master the
king left Yerushalem (Jerusalem)—don't brood
over it 20 because your servant knows that I
myself have sinned, and look, I have come to-
day, first of all the Yosef's (Joseph's) clans to
come down to meet my master, the king."
21 But Avishay (Tseruyah's son) answered in-
stead, "Rather than that, shouldn't Shimei be
killed because he cursed Yahweh's anointed
one?"
22 "You sons of Tseruyah!" David responded.
"Who asked you two to accuse others to me to-
day? Should today be a time to kill other Is-
raelis? Actually, I think it might be *me* who's
Yisrael's (Israel's) king?" 23 Then the king
promised Shimei, "You won't die for that."

David's mercy to Mefiboshet · Full kingdom

24 Then Sha'ul's (Saul's)
grandson Mefiboshet[50]
came down to meet the
king. He hadn't shaved or washed his feet, and
he hadn't washed his clothes since the king had
left Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 25 He came from
Yerushalem down to the Yarden (Jordan) to
meet the king who asked him, "Why didn't you
not come with me, Mefiboshet?"
26 "My master the king," Mefiboshet replied,
"my servant deceived me. I, your servant, had
said to get my donkey saddled so I could ride it
and go with you, because as you know, your
servant is lame. 27 Then my servant lied to you
about me. But my master the king is like God's
messenger, so do whatever you consider to be
appropriate. 28 All my grandfather's household
expected that we'd be executed, yet to placed
me, your servant, among those who eat at your
table, so I don't have the right to request any-
thing further from the king."
29 "Say no more," said the king. "That land
will be divided for you and Tsiva."
30 Actually, let him take everything," Mefi-
boshet responded. "since my master the king
has been able to return safely."

David's kindness to Barzilay · Full kingdom

31 Barzilay the Giladi[51]
had also come down from
Roglim to help the king
cross the Yarden (Jordan). 32 At eighty, he was
very old, but being very wealthy, he'd provided
food and supplies to the king while he'd stayed
at Mahanayim, 33 so the king told him, "You
cross over with me, and I'll provide for you to
be with me in Yerushalem (Jerusalem)."
34 "How much longer am I likely to live?"
Barzilay pondered. "Would it really be worth
me moving to Yerushalem with the king?
35 Your servant is eighty years old. My mind
isn't the same as it was, and I can't really taste
what I eat or drink. I can barely hear the
sounds of the men and women singing. So why
would your servant become an extra burden to
my master the king?" 36 As a token privilege,
your servant will cross the Yarden with the
king, but why should the king reward me with
that generous reward? 37 Please, let your ser-
vant return, and let me die in my city near the
graves of my parents. But look, here's your ser-
vant Kimham—let him cross over with my mas-

49 **RV 19:16 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 16:5-13.
50 **RV 19:24 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 9:1-13; 16:1-4.
51 **RV 19:31 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 17:27-29.

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ter the king, and do whatever you consider to be appropriate for him."
38 "Kimham can cross over with me," the king said, "and I myself will do for him whatever *you* consider to be appropriate—everything that you choose concerning me, I'll do for you."
39 So all the people crossed the Yarden, and then the king crossed over. The king kissed Barzilay and blessed him, and then Barzilay returned home.

Yehudah and Yisrael disagree · Full kingdom

40 Then the king crossed over to Gilgal, and Kimham crossed over with him. All the people of Yehudah (Judah) brought the king over and also about half of the people of Yisrael (Israel). 41 Then, wow, all the men of Yisrael went to the king and demanded, "Why did our relatives from Yehudah secret you away without inviting us? They took you and your household over the Yarden (Jordan), and all your men as well."
42 All the men of Yehudah answered the men of Yisrael, "Because the king is from our tribe—our close relative. Why should that make you all angry? Do you all think that the king has rewarded us with fancy food or other privileges?"
43 The men of Yisrael answered the men of Yehudah, "Our ten tribes give us ten shares in the king—more than you. So why do you look down on us? Weren't we the first to talk about bringing our king back to Yerushalem (Jerusalem)?"
But what the men of Yehudah said was harsher than what the ten other tribes said.

Sheva rebels against David · Full kingdom

20:1 Now there was a good-for-nothing Benyamite man named Sheva who was Bikri's son, and he blasted on the trumpet, then said,

"We have no interest in David,
and no claim in Yishay's (Jesse's) son.
Go home every man from Yisrael (Israel)."[52]

2 So all the men of Yisrael left David and went with Sheva (Bikri's sons), but the men of Yehudah (Judah) stayed with their king from the Yarden (Jordan) river and uphill to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).
3 When David got back to his Yerushalem palace, the ten slave-wives that he'd left behind to guard the palace,[53] he moved them into a separate house. That place was guarded and he provided for them, but he didn't sleep with them—thus they were locked up until they died living as widows.
4 One day the king told Amasa (his new army commander), "Summon the men of Yehudah to be here in three days, and you be with them."
5 So Amasa went to summon them, but he took longer than the given time. 6 Meanwhile David told Avishay, "Bikri's son Sheva will do more harm to us now than Avshalom (Absalom). Take some of my warriors and chase him down, in case he finds some fortified city to hide in and gets away from us." 7 So Yoav's (Joab's) men and the king's bodyguards and all the best warriors left Yerushalem to hunt Sheva down. 8 When they were approaching the huge rock at Giveon, they met Amasa. Yoav was dressed for battle with a dagger strapped to his waist under his robe. As he stepped forward, he allowed his sword to drop to the ground from his hand.
9 Yoav greeted Amasa, "Is all well with you, my brother?" Then he used his right hand to hold Amasa's beard to kiss him, 10 but Amasa wasn't aware of the dagger that was in Yoav's other hand. Yoav thrust it into his stomach and his intestines poured out on the ground. There was no need to stab him again and Amasa died right there.
Then Yoav and his brother Avishay continued their hunt for Bikri's son Sheva. 11 One of Yoav's young men stood beside Amasa's body and called out, "All those who favour Yoav and are for David, follow Yoav." 12 Amasa's bloody body was in the middle of the road, and when the young man saw that everyone was stopping to look at it, he dragged it off the road onto the grass and threw a cloth over it. 13 After the

52 **RV 20:1 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 12:16; 2Ch 10:16.
53 **RV 20:3 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 16:22.

Readers' Version

body had been removed from the road, all the men followed after Yoav to chase Sheva.
14 Meanwhile Sheva crossed through all the tribal regions of Yisrael (Israel) to Avel-Beyt-Ma'akah where all his relatives gathered together and agreed to back him. 15 Yoav's men arrived and Avel-Beyt-Ma'akah. They heaped a siege ramp up against the city, and also pounded the wall to try to make it collapse.
16 Then a wise woman called out from the city, "Listen, listen, please tell Yoav to come closer so I can speak to him." 17 Yoav went in closer and she asked, "Are you Yoav?"
"I am," he replied.
"Listen to what your servant has to say," she said.
"I'm listening," he answered.
18 Then she told him, "Long ago people used to tell others to come here to Avel to get advice, and they'd do that and then be able to settle the matter. 19 I'm a peaceable and faithful citizen of Yisrael. You're trying to destroy this city and a mother in Yisrael. Why would you wipe out our inheritance from Yahweh?"
20 "Far be it, far be it for me that I would destroy or wipe it out," Yoav replied. 21 That's not what we're here for. We're here for a man from the Efrayim (Ephraim) hills named Sheva, the son of Bikri. He took a stand against the king—against David. Just hand him over to us, and then we'll leave your city."
"Wait," the woman told Yoav. "His head will be thrown over the wall to you." 22 So the woman went to all the people with her wisdom, and they decapitated Sheva, and threw his head down to Yoav. Then he signalled on the trumpet, and his men left the area and went back to their homes, and Yoav returned to the king at Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

David's officials · Full kingdom

23 Now Yoav (Joab) was over the entire Israeli army, and Benayah (Yehoyada's son) was over the kings bodyguards. 24 Adoniram[54] was over the forced labour, and Ahilud's son Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) was the secretary and 25 Sheva was the scribe. Tsadok and Evyatar were the priests, 26 and Ira (the Yairi) was David's priest.

The Givonim' claim on Sha'ul's descendants · Full kingdom

21:1 During David's reign, there was a three-year famine. David inquired from Yahweh who said, "Sha'ul (Saul) and his family have blood on their hands, because he killed the Givonim." 2 (The Givonim were not native Israelis, but were a remnant of the Amorim. The Israelis had promised to protect them,[55] but Sha'ul had attempted to eliminate them in his zeal for the people of Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah).) So the king summoned the Givonim and asked them, 3 "What can I do for all of you? How can I remedy what was done in the past so that you all would bless Yahweh's people?"
4 "We have no claim to gold or silver from Sha'ul or his household," the Givonim replied, "And we don't wish to have anyone in Yisrael put to death."
"Then what are you saying that I can do for you all?" he asked.
5 "That man who crushed us," they replied, "and who intended that we be annihilated from within Yisrael's borders, 6 give us seven of his descendants and we'll hang them before Yahweh in Giveah where Yahweh's chosen king Sha'ul lived.
"Okay, I'll give them to you," the king responded.
7 However, the king spared Yonatan's (Jonathan's) son (and Sha'ul's grandson) Mefiboshet because of the promises that he and Yonatan had made to each other before Yahweh.[56] 8 Instead he took two of the sons (Armoni and Mefiboshet) of Ritspah (Ayah's daughter and one of Sha'ul's slave-wives), as well as five sons of Sha'ul's daughter Mikal, that she'd bore to Adriel (the son of Barzilay, the

54 **RV 20:24 · Note** 'Adoram' is a shortened form of his name.
55 **RV 21:2 · Cross-ref.** Josh 9:3-15.
56 **RV 21:7 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 20:15-17; 2Sam 9:1-7.

Readers' Version

Meholati).[57] 9 He handed them over to the Givonim, and they hung them on a hill before Yahweh, and the seven of them died together. This happened at the beginning of the barley harvest.

10 Then Ayah's daughter Ritspah took sackcloth and she spread it on the rock where the corpses were. She kept the birds away during the day and the animals at night—staying there from the beginning of the harvest until the beginning of the rainy season.

11 David was told what Ritspah had done, 12 and he went and got the bones of Sha'ul and his son Yonatan from the leaders of Yavesh-Gilead, who had stolen them from the square of Beyt-Shean where the Pelishtim had hung them there on the day the Pelishtim had defeated Sha'ul at Gilboa.[58] 13 David took Sha'ul and Yonatan's bones along with the bones of the seven men who'd been hung, 14 and his men buried them in the tomb of Sha'ul's father Kish in Tsela (in the Benyamite region), doing everything that the king had commanded. After that, God answered their prayers for the country.

Battles against Pelishti giants · Full kingdom[59]

15 The Pelishtim started attacking Yisrael (Israel) again, and David and his men went down towards the coast and fought back, but David became exhausted. 16 The Pelishtim had a champion named Yishbi-Benov who was a descendant of giants. He wore new armour and his bronze spear weighed over three kilograms. He intended to kill David 17 but Tseruyah's son Avishay helped David, and he struck the Pelishti and killed him. Then, David's men made a decision, saying, "You won't go out to battle with us anymore because we don't want Yisrael's lamp to be extinguished."[60]

18 Some time after that, there was another battle with the Pelishtim at Gov, and Sibkay (the Hushati) killed Saf who was another descendant of the giants.

19 Then in another battle with the Pelishtim at Gov, Elhanan (son of Ya'are-Oregim, from Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem)) killed Galyat (Goliath) the Giti even though his spear handle was like a weaver's beam.

20 In a different battle in Gat, there was a fierce man there with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot who was also a descendant of the giants, 21 but when he taunted Yisrael, Yonatan (Jonathan) (son of David's brother Shimeah) killed him. 22 Those four men were descendants of the giants in Gat, but they were killed by David and his men.

David's song of praise · Full kingdom[61]

22:1 Then after Yahweh had rescued David from Sha'ul (Saul) and all his enemies, David sang this song for Yahweh,

2 "Yahweh is my rock and my fortress
and the one who rescues me, yes, even me.
3 God of my rock—I find safety in him,
my shield and my powerful saviour,
my high fort and my refuge,
my saviour—you save me from violence.
4 I call out to Yahweh who deserves to be praised.
I was kept safe from my enemies.
5 Death was enveloping me like a wave.
Torrents of worthlessness were overwhelming me.
6 Sheol's ropes tightened around me.
Deadly traps confronted me.
7 In my distress I called to Yahweh,
and to my god I called out.
He listened to my voice from his temple,
and he heard my cry for help.
8 The earth reeled and it shook.
The foundations of the heavens trembled,
and they shook because he became angry.

57 **RV 21:8 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 18:19.
58 **RV 21:12 · Cross-ref.** 1Sam 31:8-13.
59 **RV 21:15 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 20:4-8
60 **RV 21:17 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 11:36; Psa 132:17.
61 **RV 22:1 · Parallel** Psa. 18

Readers' Version

9 Smoke went up from his nose,
and burning coals and fire from his mouth.
10 He stretched out the heavens,
then he came down and it was dark below him.
11 He rode on a winged creature, and he flew.
Yes, he was seen on the wings of the wind.
12 He placed darkness all around him as a covering—
a collection of dark clouds holding water in them.
13 From the brightness in front of him,
coals of fire burnt.
14 Yahweh thundered from the sky.
The most high God made his voice known.
15 He sent out arrows, and he scattered them.
He sent out lightning, and he confused them.
16 The channels of the sea became visible.
The foundations of the world were uncovered
at Yahweh's rebuke,
from the blast from his nostrils.
17 He reached down from above and picked me up.
He pulled me up out of the surging waters.
18 He rescued me from my powerful enemy—
from the people who hated me—
because they were stronger than me.
19 They confronted me when I was experiencing difficulties,
but Yahweh supported me.
20 He brought me out into a wide area.
He rescued me because he was pleased with me.
21 Yahweh has rewarded me because of my obedience.
He's repaid me because my hands were clean,
22 because I've followed Yahweh's paths,
and I haven't acted wickedly by turning away from my god.
23 I'm aware of all his regulations,
and I haven't turned away from his decrees.
24 I've done nothing that he can accuse me of,
and I've stopped myself when I wanted to disobey.
25 Yahweh rewarded me for my obedience,
because he saw my innocence.
26 With a faithful person, you show yourself faithful.
with a blameless warrior, you prove yourself blameless.
27 With someone who purifies themself, you show yourself pure,
^but you show yourself deceptive to a crooked person.
28 You save afflicted people,
^but you dislike the proud—you bring them down.
29 Because you are my lamp, Yahweh,
and you lighten my darkness.
30 Because by you, I can charge against a troop of warriors.
With my god's help I can leap over a city wall.
31 God's path is perfect.
Yahweh's message is tried and tested.
→He keeps everyone safe who requests his protection.
32 Who could be God other than Yahweh?
And who is a rock apart from our god?
33 This god is my strong fortress,
and he keeps my pathways cleared.
34 The one who makes my feet nimble like a deer,
and places me securely up on the heights.[62]
35 The one who trains me how to win in battle,
and strengthens my arms to pull back a powerful bow.
36 You saved me from death like a shield,
and you helped me become well-known by answering my prayers.
37 You helped me make large strides,
and stopped my feet from slipping.
38 Let me chase down my enemies and destroy them.
Then I won't return until they're all defeated.
39 I will attack them and smash them.
They won't stand again—they'll fall under my feet.
40 You give me extra strength for the war.
You make the people who rebelled against me

62 **RV 22:34 · Cross-ref.** Hab 3:19.

Readers' Version

submit.
41 You make my enemies flee away from me.
You help me destroy the people who hate me.
42 They look, but there's no one to rescue them.
They call out to you, Yahweh, but you don't answer them.
43 I crush them as finely as the dust on the ground.
I trample them like the mud on the streets and flatten them.
44 You rescue me from the arguments of my people.
You help me remain as the head of nations.
People serve me even if I don't even know them.
45 Foreigners are afraid of me.
When they hear me, they obey me.
46 They lose heart,
and come out of their fortresses trembling.
47 Yahweh is alive—may my secure rock be blessed.
May the god of the rock of my salvation be praised.
48 He's the god who avenges me,
and the one who makes the people who rebelled against me submit.
49 He's the one who helps me escape from my enemies.
You hold me up away from the ones who rise up against me.
You rescue me from violent men.
50 Therefore I praise you, Yahweh, among the nations,
and I sing praises about who you are.[63]
51 The one who helps his king to save the people,
and the one who shows loyalty to the one he chose—
to David and to his descendants forever."

David's ending speech · Full kingdom

23:1 These are David's final words:
"The message from Yishay's (Jesse's) son David—
a message from the man who rose through the ranks—
who was selected by Ya'akov's (Jacob's) god—
singer of Yisrael's (Israel's) pleasant songs.
2 Yahweh's spirit spoke through me.
His message came out of my mouth.
3 Yisrael's god spoke to me.
The rock of Yisrael told me.
The one who rules people with justice,
→rules out of his respect for God.
4 He's like the rising sun bringing the morning light—
a cloudless morning.
Glistening after the rain that grows fresh grass from the soil.
5 My household is aligned with God,
because he made a perpetual agreement with me—
all arranged and secured.
He'll make my salvation and every desire grow. ???
6 But evil people are like thorns—
they're all thrown away.
because they injure your hands.
7 Anyone who wants to move them
must use a metal tool or a wooden stick.
They'll be incinerated right there."

David's top warriors · Full kingdom[64]

8 These are the names of David's top warriors:
Yoshev-Bashevet the Tahkemoni was the head of 'The Three'. One time he attacked and killed eight hundred men with his spear.
9 Next after him was **Eleazar**, the son of Ahohi's son Dodo. Once he was among the three powerful warriors with David when they taunted the Pelishtim who were gathered there for battle. The Israeli warriors retreated back up their hill, 10 but Eleazar moved forward and attacked the Pelishtim until his arm became weak, and his hand cramped around his sword. Yahweh achieved a great victory that day, and the other warriors only returned afterwards to plunder the dead.

63 **RV 22:50 · Cross-ref.** Rom 15:9.
64 **RV 23:8 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 11:10-41

Readers' Version

11 Then there was Agge's son **Shama**, the
Harari. The Pelishtim had assembled in formation where there happened to be a field full of
lentils. The Israelis fled from the Pelishtim
12 but Shama remained there in the middle of
the field and killed many Pelishtim. So the field
was saved, and Yahweh achieved a great victory.
13 Once as it was approaching harvest time,
three of 'The Thirty' went to where David had
been staying at Adulam's cave. There was a Pelishti unit camped in the Refaim valley. 14 At the
time, David was in the fortress, and there was
another Pelishti unit in Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem). 15 David was thirsty one day and asked,
"Who'll get me a drink of water from the
Beyt-Lehem well by the gate?" 16 So the three
powerful warriors broke through the Pelishti
camp and got water from the Beyt-Lehem well
near the gate. They carried it back to David, but
he wouldn't drink it—pouring it out instead as
an offering to Yahweh, 17 saying, "Far be it for
me, Yahweh, to drink this—the blood of the
men who risked their lives." So he wasn't willing to drink it.

Those were some of the things done by 'The Three' powerful warriors.

18 Yoav's (Joab's) brother **Avishay** (Tseruyah's
sons) was the head over 'The Three'. Once he
was used his spear to kill three hundred fighters, so he was more famous than 'The Three'.
19 He was more honoured than 'The Three' and
became their leader even though he wasn't one
of 'The Three'.

20 Yehoyada's son **Benayah** from Kavtse'el
was a man of military prowess with many actions to his name. Once he killed 'The Two'
from Moav (Moab), and another time he went
down in a pit on a snowy day and killed the lion
in the pit. 21 He also killed an impressive Mitsri
(Egyptian) warrior with a spear, even though
Benayah only held a staff. First he snatched the
spear from the Mitsri's hand, then he killed
him with his own spear. 22 Those were some of
the things that Benayah did. He became famous
alongside 'The Three'. 23 (He was more honoured than 'The Thirty' but never entered 'The
Three'.) David appointed him over his bodyguard.

24 The following were among 'The Thirty':
Yoav's other brother Asahel,
Dodo's son Elhanan from Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem),
25 Shamah and Elika the Harodim,
26 Helets the Palti,
Ikesh's son Ira the Tekoei,
27 Aviezer the Antoti,
Mevunay the Hushati,
28 Tsalmon the Ahohi,
Maharay the Netofati,
29 Ba'anah's son Helev the Netofati,
Rivay's son Itay from Giveah (in Benyamin),
30 Benayah the Pireatoni,
Hiday from the Ga'ash valleys,
31 Avi-Alvon the Arvati,
Azmavet the Barhumi,
32 Elyahba the Sha'alvoni,
Yashen's sons,
Yonatan (Jonathan),
33 Shamah the Harari,
Sharar's son Ahiam the Harari,
34 Ahasbay's son Elifelet the Ma'akati,
Ahitofel's son Eliam the Giloni,
35 Hetsro the Karmeli,
Pa'aray the Arbi,
36 Natan's (Nathan's) son Yigal from Tsovah,
Bani the Gadi,
37 Tselek the Amoni,
Naharay the Be'eroti who carried the weapons for Tseruyah's son Yoav (Joab),
38 the Yitrim Ira and Garev,
39 and Uriyah the Hiti.
There were thirty-seven of them in total.

David takes a census · Full kingdom[65]

24:1 Then Yahweh was angry against Yisrael (Israel) again and he incited David to cause problems for them by saying, "Go and order a census of Yisrael and Yehudah (Judah)." 2 So the king told Yoav (Joab), the commander of his army, who was with him at

65 **RV 24:1 · Parallel** 1 Chr. 21:1-27

Readers' Version

the time, "Travel throughout all the regions of the Israeli tribes, from Dan (in the far north) down to Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba) (in the far south), and count the people so that I'll know the number of fighting men."

3 "May your god Yahweh multiply the people a hundred times over," Yoav responded, "add may my master the king see that happen, but why would my master the king want to do that?" 4 However, the king insisted, so even though Yoav and the army commanders disagreed, at the king's command they set off to count the Israeli people.

5 They crossed the Yarden (Jordan) river and camped in Aroer, south of the city in the middle of the Gad valley, then proceeded to Yazer. 6 Then they went north to Gilead and the land of Tahtim-Hodshi, before coming to Dan-Yaan and around to Tsidon (Sidon). 7 Then they came to the Tsor (Tyre) fortress and all the cities of the Hivim and the Kena'anim (Canaanites) before going east to Be'er-Sheva in the Negev wilderness (part of Yehudah). 8 So they travelled throughout the land for nine months and twenty days before returning to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 9 Then Yoav reported the census results to the king: 800,000 fighting swordsmen in Yisrael (Israel), and 500,000 in Yehudah.

10 However, David had a guilty conscience after he'd had the people counted and he told Yahweh, "I've disobeyed you badly, but now, Yahweh, please take away the iniquity of your servant because I've been very foolish."

11 When David got up in the morning, Yahweh gave the prophet Gad this message 12 to take to David, "I, Yahweh, am offering you three choices. You decide which one I should carry out against you." 13 Then Gad asked him, "Do you want seven years of famine in your country, or three months of fleeing from your enemies, or three days of deadly disease in your country? Consider those and let me know which option to pass back to the one who sent me."

14 David answered Gad, "This is very distressing, but please let Yahweh be the one to punish me because he's very merciful—don't let other men be the ones."

15 So Yahweh sent a deadly disease to Yisrael (Israel) from the morning and until the time he'd decided. Seventy thousand people died from Dan in the north down to Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba) in the south. 16 When Yahweh's messenger stretched out his hand to destroy Yerushalem (Jerusalem) with the deadly disease, Yahweh relented concerning the disaster and told the messenger who was destroying many people, "Now lower your hand." When he said that, his messenger was near the threshing floor of Aravnah the Yevusi.

17 David had complained to Yahweh when he saw the messenger afflicting the people, saying, "Listen, it's me alone who sinned, and I myself who disobeyed you. But these innocent people—what have they done? Please, just punish only me and my relatives."

David builds an altar

18 Gad came to David that day, and instructed him, "Go to the Yevusi Aravnah's threshing floor and build an altar to Yahweh there." 19 So David went there just as Yahweh had instructed him through Gad's message. 20 When Aravnah looked out and saw the king and his servants approaching, he went out and fell to his knees in front of the king and bowed his face to the ground. 21 "Why would my master the king come to his servant?" Aravnah asked.

"I want to buy your threshing floor to build an altar for Yahweh," David answered. "So that the deadly disease afflicting the people can be stopped."

22 "May my master the king take it," Aravnah responded. "Use it in whatever way you think best. See, you can use the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing instruments and the oxen's equipment for firewood. 23 I give it all to you, the king. May your god Yahweh accept your offering."

24 "No," the king answered. "I'll definitely buy it from you. I couldn't offer something to my god Yahweh that cost me nothing." 25 So David built an altar there to Yahweh, and he instructed for burnt offerings and peace offerings

Readers' Version

to be made. Then Yahweh accepted prayers for the country and the deadly disease afflicting Yisrael (Israel) was stopped.

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