

David's Kindness Toward Mephibosheth (c. 998 BC)

2 Samuel 9

1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?
 2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name *was* Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant *is he*.
 3 And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is* lame on *his* feet.
 4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.
 5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.
 6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!
 7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.
 8 And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am*?
 9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.
 10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.
 11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.
 12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name *was* Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants unto Mephibosheth.
 13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

Hanun of Ammon Provokes a War (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 10

1 Chronicles 19

10:1 And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.
 2 Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.
 3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David *rather* sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?
 4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, *even* to their buttocks, and sent them away.
 5 When they told *it* unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.
 6a And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired

 the Syrians of Bethrehob, and the Syrians of Zoba,

1 Now it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.
 2 And David said, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him.
 3 But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?
 4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away.
 5 Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.
 6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syriamaachah, and out of Zoba.

<p>twenty thousand footmen, 6c and of Ishtob twelve thousand men. 6b and of king Maacah a thousand men,</p> <p>7 And when David heard of <i>it</i>, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. 8 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ishtob, and Maacah, <i>were</i> by themselves in the field. 9 When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice <i>men</i> of Israel, and put <i>them</i> in array against the Syrians: 10 And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put <i>them</i> in array against the children of Ammon. 11 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. 12 Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good. 13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that <i>were</i> with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. 14 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem. 15 And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together. 16 And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that <i>were</i> beyond the river: and they came to Helam; and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer <i>went</i> before them. 17 And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam.</p> <p>And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. 18 And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew <i>the men</i> of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there. 19 And when all the kings <i>that were</i> servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.</p>	<p>7 So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle. 8 And when David heard <i>of it</i>, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. 9 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the city: and the kings that were come <i>were</i> by themselves in the field. 10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the choice of Israel, and put <i>them</i> in array against the Syrians. 11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abishai his brother, and they set <i>themselves</i> in array against the children of Ammon. 12 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee. 13 Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do <i>that which is</i> good in his sight. 14 So Joab and the people that <i>were</i> with him drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and they fled before him. 15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem. 16 And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that <i>were</i> beyond the river: and Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer <i>went</i> before them. 17 And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set <i>the battle</i> in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him. 18 But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew <i>of the Syrians</i> seven thousand <i>men which fought in</i> chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host. 19 And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.</p>
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The Siege of Rabbah in Ammon (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:1	1 Chronicles 20:1a
<p>1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth <i>to battle</i>, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah.</p>	<p>1a And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out <i>to battle</i>, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah.</p>

But David tarried still at Jerusalem.	But David tarried at Jerusalem.
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David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba and Murders Uriah the Hittite (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:2–27

2 And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I *am* with child.

6 And David sent to Joab, *saying*, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess *of meat* from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? *as* thou livest, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*.

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,

20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and *some* of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.

Chronological Notes

- 1) David's kindness toward Mephibosheth is best placed early in his reign over Israel, since David's war with Saul's house was finally at an end and he had loved Jonathan dearly. The comment in 2 Samuel 21:7 points to 2 Samuel 9 happening before the famine, since in 2 Samuel 9:1, David is unaware of the existence of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (how could he spare someone he didn't know was alive?).

- 2) I placed 2 Samuel 9–12 prior to 2 Samuel 8 (and 2 Samuel 7, cf. 7:1). This is due to the fact that Hanun’s disrespect to David’s ambassadors make the most sense when placed early in David’s reign—prior to him defeating the surrounding nations and becoming powerful (2 Sam 8).¹ In addition, Hanun was the son of Nahash who attacked Jabesh Gilead at the beginning of Saul’s reign. If Hanun’s disrespect to David occurred in the chronological sequence given in 2 Samuel 5–24, then Nahash would have had to reign for almost 80 years.² Youngblood comments, “It is probably best, however, to understand 8:3–12 as a record of battles that occurred after the campaigns reported in chapters 10–12.”³ Anderson comments, “If anything, David’s defeat of Hadadezer and its sequel in 8:3–12 may have been the final episode in a more prolonged hostilities, and therefore after the events narrated in 10:6–19.”⁴

¹ Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, 117–118; cf. also Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 244.

² Note that this perspective on Nahash’s reign assumes that Hiram of Tyre built David’s palace at the *end* of David’s reign (2 Sam 5). Most scholars (but not all; cf. Alberto R. Green’s article “David’s Relations with Hiram”) view Hiram’s interaction with David as having to take place late in David’s reign due to the Tyrian king list (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.116–26; cf. Merrill’s 1989 article “The ‘Accession Year’ and Davidic Chronology”).

³ Ronald F. Youngblood, “1, 2 Samuel,” *EBC*, Rev. Ed., 402.

⁴ A. A. Anderson, “2 Samuel,” *WBC*, 130–31.