

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

2 Samuel 9

1 Then David said, "Is there still anyone who *is* left for the house of Saul that I may show loyal love to him for the sake of Jonathan?"

2 Now Saul's household had a servant whose name *was* Ziba, so they summoned him to David, and the king asked him, "Are you Ziba?" He said, "At your service!"

3 Then the king said, "But *is* there still anyone of Saul's household that I may show the loyal love of God with him?" And Ziba said to the king, "There *is* still a son of Jonathan *who is* lame in the feet."

4 The king said to him, "Where *is* he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He *is* here in the house of Makir the son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

5 So King David sent and brought him from the house of Makir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar.

6 So Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David. And he fell on his face and did obeisance. David said, "Mephibosheth," and he said, "I am ready to serve you."

7 Then David said to him, "Don't be afraid, for I will certainly show loyal love to you for the sake of Jonathan your father, and I will restore to you all the lands of Saul your father. And you shall always eat food at my table."

8 Then he did obeisance and said, "What *is* your servant that you have paid attention to the dead dog like me?"

9 David summoned Ziba the servant of Saul and said to him, "All that *was* Saul's and all his household I have given to the son of your master.

10 You shall till the land for him, you and your sons and your servants; you shall bring *in the produce* and it shall be food for the son of your master that he may eat. But Mephibosheth the son of your master may always eat food at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.)

11 Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my master the king commands his servant, so your servant will do." So Mephibosheth *was* eating at his table as one of the sons of the king.

12 Now Mephibosheth had a young son whose name *was* Micah, and all of the dwelling of the household of Ziba *became* servants for Mephibosheth.

13 And Mephibosheth *was* living in Jerusalem, because he *was* continually eating at the table of the king, *even though* he *was* lame in both of his feet.

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

2 Samuel 10

10:1 Afterwards the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun ruled in his place.

2 David said, "I will show loyal love with Hanun, the son of Nahash, as his father showed loyal love with me." So David sent to console him concerning his father, by the hand of his servants. And the servants of David came to the land of the Ammonites.

3 But the commanders of the Ammonites said to Hanun their master, "In your opinion, *is* David honoring your father because he has sent condolences to you? *Is* it not in order to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it *that* David sent his servants to you?"

4 Then Hanun took the servants of David, and he shaved off half of their beards and cut their garments off in the middle up to their buttocks, then sent them away.

5 When they told David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Remain in Jericho until your beards have grown, and then you can return."

6 When the Ammonites saw that they had become odious to David, the Ammonites sent *word* and hired Aram Beth-Rehob and Aram-Zobah, twenty thousand infantry; 6c and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men. 6b and *they also hired* the king of Maacah, a thousand men,

1 Chronicles 19

19:1 And it happened *that* after this Nahash the king of the Ammonites died, and his son reigned in his place.

2 And David said, "I will deal kindly with Hanun the son of Nahash because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. And the servants of David came to the land of the Ammonites, to Hanun, to comfort him.

3 But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun, "Do you think because David sent comforters to you *that* David honors your father? Is it not for the purpose of exploring *so as* to overthrow and spy out the land that his servants have come to you?"

4 So Hanun took the servants of David and shaved them and cut off their garments at the middle, up to the buttocks, and sent them away.

5 And they went and told David concerning the men, and he inquired of them, for the men were very disgraced. And the king said, "Dwell in Jericho until your beards grow out; then return."

6 And when the Ammonites saw that they made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent one thousand talents of silver to hire for themselves horses and chariots from Aram-Naharaim, Aram-Maacah, and Zobah.

7 And they hired for themselves thirty-two thousand chariots and the king of Maacah and his people, and they came and encamped before Medeba. And the Ammonites were gathered from their cities

<p>7 When David heard, he sent Joab and all the army of mighty warriors.</p> <p>8 The Ammonites came out and drew up a battle formation at the entrance of the gate, but Aram-Zobah and Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah <i>were</i> alone in the open field.</p> <p>9 When Joab saw that the battle was to be fought on two fronts, he chose from all <i>the</i> members of the elite troops of Israel and lined them up for battle to meet Aram.</p> <p>10 The rest of the army he placed into the hand of his brother Abishai, who arranged them in battle lines to meet the Ammonites.</p> <p>11 Then he said, “If Aram <i>is</i> stronger than I <i>am</i>, you must become my deliverer; but if the Ammonites <i>are</i> too strong for you, then I will come to rescue you.</p> <p>12 Be strong, and let us strengthen ourselves for the sake of the people and for the sake of the cities of our God. May Yahweh do <i>what is</i> good in his eyes.</p> <p>13 Joab and all the people who <i>were</i> with him moved forward into the battle against Aram, and they fled from before him.</p> <p>14 When the Ammonites saw that Aram had fled, they fled from before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from <i>fighting</i> against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>15 When the Arameans saw that they <i>were</i> defeated before Israel, they gathered themselves together.</p> <p>16 Then Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who <i>were</i> beyond the Euphrates, and they came to Helam. Now Shobach, the commander of the army of Hadadezer, was at their head.</p> <p>17 David <i>was</i> told, so he gathered all Israel and crossed over the Jordan and came to Helam. Aram arranged themselves in battle lines to meet David, and they fought with him.</p> <p>18 And Aram fled before Israel, and David killed from <i>the</i> Arameans seven hundred chariot teams and forty thousand horsemen. He struck down Shobach, the commander of his army, and he died there.</p> <p>19 When all the kings, the servants of Hadadezer, saw that he had been defeated before Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them, and Aram <i>was</i> afraid to help the Ammonites any longer.</p>	<p>and came to the battle.</p> <p>8 And when David heard, he sent Joab and the entire army of mighty warriors.</p> <p>9 And the Ammonites went out and took up positions for battle at the entrance of the city. And the kings who had come <i>were</i> alone in the field.</p> <p>10 When Joab saw that <i>there was</i> a battle line against him at the front and the back, he chose from among the chosen <i>men</i> in Israel and arranged <i>them</i> to meet Aram.</p> <p>11 And the remainder of the people he put in the hand of Abishai his brother, and they were arranged to meet the Ammonites.</p> <p>12 And he said, “If Aram is too strong for me, then you must be a help to me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will help you.</p> <p>13 Be strong! Let us strengthen ourselves on behalf of our people and on behalf of the cities of our God. And may Yahweh do <i>what is</i> good in his eyes.”</p> <p>14 And Joab and the people who <i>were</i> with him drew near before Aram for battle, and they fled before him.</p> <p>15 And when the Ammonites saw that Aram had fled, they also fled before Abishai his brother, and they came to the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>16 And when Aram saw that they were defeated before Israel, they sent messengers and brought out Aram, who <i>was from</i> beyond the Euphrates, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer before them.</p> <p>17 And when it was told to David, he gathered all Israel and crossed the Jordan. And he came to them and was arrayed against them. Then David was arrayed to meet Aram in battle, and they fought with him.</p> <p>18 And Aram fled before Israel. And David killed from Aram <i>the men of</i> seven thousand chariots and forty thousand foot soldiers, and he put to death Shophach the commander of the army.</p> <p>19 And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated before Israel, they made peace with David and became servants to him. So Aram was no longer willing to help the Ammonites.</p>
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The Siege of Rabbah in Ammon (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:1	1 Chronicles 20:1a
<p>11:1 It came about in the spring, at the time kings go out, David sent Joab and his servants with him and all of Israel. They ravaged all of the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah, but David <i>was</i> remaining in Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1a And it happened <i>that</i> in the spring time of year, the time <i>when</i> kings go out <i>to battle</i>, Joab led the troops of the army and destroyed the land of the Ammonites. And he came and besieged Rabbah, but David remained in Jerusalem.</p>

David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba and Murders Uriah the Hittite (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:2–27

2 It happened late one afternoon *that* David got up from his bed and walked about on the roof of the king's house, and he saw a woman bathing on her roof. Now the woman was very beautiful.

3 David sent and inquired about the woman, and *someone* said, "Is this not Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

4 Then David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) And she returned to her house.

5 The woman became pregnant, and she sent and told David, and she said, "I *am* pregnant."

6 So David sent to Joab, "Send Uriah the Hittite to me." So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 Uriah came to him, and David asked how Joab and the army fared and how the war was going.

8 David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." So Uriah went out from the king's house, and a gift from the king went out after him.

9 But Uriah slept *at* the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his master and did not go down to his house.

10 They told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house." David said to Uriah, "Are you not coming from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah *are* living in the booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord *are* camping on the surface of the open field; and I, shall I go to my house to eat and to drink and to sleep with my wife? *By* your life and the life of your soul, I surely will not do this thing."

12 David said to Uriah, "Remain here today, and tomorrow I will send you away." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem on that day and the next.

13 David invited him, and he ate and drank in his presence so that he became drunk, and he went out in the evening to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

14 And it happened in the morning, David wrote a letter to Joab, and he sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 He had written in the letter, "Put Uriah in the front, in the face of the fiercest fighting, then draw back from behind him so that he may be struck down and die."

16 When Joab was besieging the city, he put Uriah toward the place which he knew there were valiant warriors.

17 The men of the city came out and fought with Joab. Some from the army from the servants of David fell; Uriah the Hittite also died.

18 Joab sent and told David all of the news of the battle.

19 He instructed the messenger, saying, "As you are finishing to speak all the news of the battle to the king,

20 if the anger of the king rises and he says to you, 'Why did you go near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from *atop* the wall?

21 Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerub-bosheth, if not a woman who threw an upper millstone on him from *atop* the wall and he died at Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?' Then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite also died.'"

22 Then the messenger left, and he came and told David all that Joab had sent him *to say*.

23 The messenger said to David, "Because the men overpowered us, the men came out to us *in* the field, but we forced them back to the entrance of the gate.

24 The archers shot at your servant from *atop* the wall, and some of the servants of the king died; your servant Uriah the Hittite also died."

25 Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Do not feel badly about this matter; now one and then another the sword will devour. Intensify your attack on the city and overthrow it.'" And he encouraged him.

26 When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband *was* dead, she mourned over her husband.

27 When the mourning *was* over, David sent and brought her to his household, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing which David had done *was* evil in the eyes of Yahweh.

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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.