

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

### 2 Samuel 9

- 1 Then David asked, "Is anyone still left from the family of Saul, so that I may extend kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan?"
- 2 Now there was a servant from Saul's house named Ziba, so he was summoned to David. The king asked him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "At your service."
- 3 The king asked, "Is there not someone left from Saul's family, that I may extend God's kindness to him?" Ziba said to the king, "One of Jonathan's sons is left; both of his feet are crippled."
- 4 The king asked him, "Where is he?" Ziba told the king, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."
- 5 So King David had him brought from the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.
- 6 When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed low with his face toward the ground. David said, "Mephibosheth?" He replied, "Yes, at your service."
- 7 David said to him, "Don't be afraid, because I will certainly extend kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan your father. You will be a regular guest at my table."
- 8 Then Mephibosheth bowed and said, "Of what importance am I, your servant, that you show regard for a dead dog like me?"
- 9 Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's attendant, and said to him, "Everything that belonged to Saul and to his entire house I hereby give to your master's grandson."
- 10 You will cultivate the land for him—you and your sons and your servants. You will bring its produce and it will be food for your master's grandson to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will be a regular guest at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)
- 11 Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do everything that my lord the king has instructed his servant to do." So Mephibosheth was a regular guest at David's table, just as though he were one of the king's sons.
- 12 Now Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. All the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.
- 13 Mephibosheth was living in Jerusalem, for he was a regular guest at the king's table. But both his feet were crippled.

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

### 2 Samuel 10

- 1 Later the king of the Ammonites died and his son Hanun succeeded him.
- 2 David said, "I will express my loyalty to Hanun son of Nahash just as his father was loyal to me." So David sent his servants with a message expressing sympathy over his father's death. When David's servants entered the land of the Ammonites,
- 3 the Ammonite officials said to their lord Hanun, "Do you really think David is trying to honor your father by sending these messengers to express his sympathy? No, David has sent his servants to you to get information about the city and spy on it so they can overthrow it!"
- 4 So Hanun seized David's servants and shaved off half of each one's beard. He cut the lower part of their robes off so that their buttocks were exposed, and then sent them away.
- 5 Messengers told David what had happened, so he summoned them, for the men were thoroughly humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards have grown again; then you may come back."
- 6a When the Ammonites realized that David was disgusted with them, they sent and hired
- 20,000 foot soldiers from Aram Beth Rehob and Aram Zobah,
- 6c and 12,000 men from Ish-tob.
- 6b in addition to 1,000 men from the king of Maacah

### 1 Chronicles 19

- 1 Later King Nahash of the Ammonites died and his son succeeded him.
- 2 David said, "I will express my loyalty to Hanun son of Nahash, for his father was loyal to me." So David sent messengers to express his sympathy over his father's death. When David's servants entered Ammonite territory to visit Hanun and express the king's sympathy,
- 3 the Ammonite officials said to Hanun, "Do you really think David is trying to honor your father by sending these messengers to express his sympathy? No, his servants have come to you so they can get information and spy out the land!"
- 4 So Hanun seized David's servants and shaved their beards off. He cut off the lower part of their robes so that their buttocks were exposed and then sent them away.
- 5 Messengers came and told David what had happened to the men, so he summoned them, for the men were thoroughly humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow again; then you may come back."
- 6 When the Ammonites realized that David was disgusted with them, Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire chariots and charioteers from Aram Naharaim, Aram Maacah, and Zobah.
- 7 They hired 32,000 chariots, along with the king of Maacah and his army, who came and camped in front of Medeba. The Ammonites also assembled from their cities and marched out to do battle.

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| <p>7 When David heard the news, he sent Joab and the entire army to meet them.</p> <p>8 The Ammonites marched out and were deployed for battle at the entrance of the city gate, while the men from Aram Zobah, Rehob, Ish-tob, and Maacah were by themselves in the field.</p> <p>9 When Joab saw that the battle would be fought on two fronts, he chose some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans.</p> <p>10 He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the army and they were deployed against the Ammonites.</p> <p>11 Joab said, "If the Arameans start to overpower me, you come to my rescue. If the Ammonites start to overpower you, I will come to your rescue.</p> <p>12 Be strong! Let's fight bravely for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! The LORD will do what he decides is best!"</p> <p>13 So Joab and his men marched out to do battle with the Arameans, and they fled before him.</p> <p>14 When the Ammonites saw the Arameans flee, they fled before his brother Abishai and went into the city. Joab withdrew from fighting the Ammonites and returned to Jerusalem.</p> <p>15 When the Arameans realized that they had been defeated by Israel, they consolidated their forces.</p> <p>16 Then Hadadezer sent for Arameans from beyond the Euphrates River, and they came to Helam. Shobach, the general in command of Hadadezer's army, led them.</p> <p>17 When David was informed, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan River, and came to Helam. The Arameans deployed their forces against David and fought with him.</p> <p>18 The Arameans fled before Israel. David killed 700 Aramean charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers. He also struck down Shobach, the general in command of the army, who died there.</p> <p>19 When all the kings who were subject to Hadadezer saw they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subjects of Israel. The Arameans were no longer willing to help the Ammonites.</p> | <p>8 When David heard the news, he sent Joab and the entire army to meet them.</p> <p>9 The Ammonites marched out and were deployed for battle at the entrance to the city, while the kings who had come were by themselves in the field.</p> <p>10 When Joab saw that the battle would be fought on two fronts, he chose some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans.</p> <p>11 He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the army and they were deployed against the Ammonites.</p> <p>12 Joab said, "If the Arameans start to overpower me, you come to my rescue. If the Ammonites start to overpower you, I will come to your rescue.</p> <p>13 Be strong! Let's fight bravely for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! The LORD will do what he decides is best!"</p> <p>14 So Joab and his men marched toward the Arameans to do battle, and they fled before him.</p> <p>15 When the Ammonites saw the Arameans flee, they fled before Joab's brother Abishai and withdrew into the city. Joab went back to Jerusalem.</p> <p>16 When the Arameans realized they had been defeated by Israel, they sent for reinforcements from beyond the Euphrates River, led by Shophach the commanding general of Hadadezer's army.</p> <p>17 When David was informed, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan River, and marched against them. David deployed his army against the Arameans for battle and they fought against him.</p> <p>18 The Arameans fled before Israel. David killed 7,000 Aramean charioteers and 40,000 infantrymen; he also killed Shophach the commanding general.</p> <p>19 When Hadadezer's subjects saw they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his subjects. The Arameans were 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   |
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| <p>1 In the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, David sent out Joab with his officers and the entire Israelite army. They defeated the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem.</p> | <p>1a In the spring, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, Joab led the army into battle and devastated the land of the Ammonites. He went and besieged Rabbah, while David stayed in Jerusalem.</p> |

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

2 Samuel 11:2–27

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| <p>2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. Now this woman was very attractive.</p> <p>3 So David sent someone to inquire about the woman. The messenger said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"</p> |
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4 David sent some messengers to get her. She came to him and he had sexual relations with her. (Now at that time she was in the process of purifying herself from her menstrual uncleanness.) Then she returned to her home.

5 The woman conceived and then sent word to David saying, "I'm pregnant."

6 So David sent a message to Joab that said, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked about how Joab and the army were doing and how the campaign was going.

8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your home and relax." When Uriah left the palace, the king sent a gift to him.

9 But Uriah stayed at the door of the palace with all the servants of his lord. He did not go down to his house.

10 So they informed David, "Uriah has not gone down to his house." So David said to Uriah, "Haven't you just arrived from a journey? Why haven't you gone down to your house?"

11 Uriah replied to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah reside in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and my LORD's soldiers are camping in the open field. Should I go to my house to eat and drink and have marital relations with my wife? As surely as you are alive, I will not do this thing!"

12 So David said to Uriah, "Stay here another day. Tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem both that day and the following one.

13 Then David summoned him. He ate and drank with him, and got him drunk. But in the evening he went out to sleep on his bed with the servants of his lord; he did not go down to his own house.

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

15 In the letter he wrote: "Station Uriah in the thick of the battle and then withdraw from him so he will be cut down and killed."

16 So as Joab kept watch on the city, he stationed Uriah at the place where he knew the best enemy soldiers were.

17 When the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, some of David's soldiers fell in battle. Uriah the Hittite also died.

18 Then Joab sent a full battle report to David.

19 He instructed the messenger as follows: "When you finish giving the battle report to the king,

20 if the king becomes angry and asks you, 'Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Didn't you realize they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn't a woman throw an upper millstone down on him from the wall so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go so close to the wall?' just say to him, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.'"

22 So the messenger departed. When he arrived, he informed David of all the news that Joab had sent with him.

23 The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and attacked us in the field. But we forced them to retreat all the way to the door of the city gate.

24 Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall and some of the king's soldiers died. Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead."

25 David said to the messenger, "Tell Joab, 'Don't let this thing upset you. There is no way to anticipate whom the sword will cut down. Press the battle against the city and conquer it.' Encourage him with these words."

26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for him.

27 When the time of mourning passed, David had her brought to his palace. She became his wife and she bore him a son. But what David had done upset the LORD.

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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).<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> Youngblood comments, "It is probably best, however, to understand 8:3–12 as a record of

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

<sup>2</sup> 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

battles that occurred after the campaigns reported in chapters 10–12.”<sup>3</sup> 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.”<sup>4</sup>

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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”).

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

<sup>4</sup> A. A. Anderson, “2 Samuel,” *WBC*, 130–31.