

The CHRONICLES of the KINGS

In the Course of Time

2 Samuel 11:1

March 07, 2026

Our new section begins with the words, "in the course of time," indicating that the events that follow did not happen all at once, but over a period of time.

2nd Samuel 8 and 1st Chronicles 18 mirror each other, recording David's military successes and introducing us to his cabinet:

David defeated the Philistines and the Moabites – they became subject to him and brought him tribute.

David fought Hachadezer, king of Zobah, capturing 1000 chariots, 7000 charioteers and 20,000 foot soldiers. When the Arameans of Damascus made the mistake of coming to the aide of Hachadezer, David struck down 22,000 of them. They became subject to him and brought him tribute.

The gold shields that had belonged to the officers of Hachadezer were brought Jerusalem and David took from the towns of Tebah and Berothai a great quantity of bronze.

So happy was Tou king of Hamath that Hahahezer's entire army had been defeated (Hachadezer had been at war with Tou) that he sent his son Joram with silver, gold and bronze along with a note of congratulations to David.

David took Tou's gift and added it to the growing collection of loot he had dedicated Yahweh from the nations he had subdued: Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Amalekites and Hachadezer.

David became famous after he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt and all the Edomites became subject to him.

Yahweh gave David victory wherever he went and he reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.

Joab was over the army;

Jehoshaphat was recorder;

Zadok and Ahimelech were priests;

Seraiah was secretary;

Benaiah was over the Kerethites and Pelethites;

David's sons were royal advisers.

2nd Samuel 9 is a break in David's military activities. He wonders if there are any surviving members of Saul's family, which made me wonder if Michal was now dead. We never hear from her again after chapter 6 and we don't know how many years elapse between chapters 6 and 9, but it seems strange for David to ask that question if she was still living.

ANYWAY David desired to show kindness to any remaining family of Saul.

An old servant of Saul's, Ziba, was found and he confirmed that there was one relative still alive – Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, who was a cripple.

David brought Mephibosheth to Jerusalem.

He was understandably nervous, but David was thrilled to see him.

“Don’t be afraid,” David said. “I would like to show you kindness because your father was my friend. I am going to restore your family’s land to you and I will give you a permanent place at my table.”

David put Ziba and his family in charge of the land and Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem and ate at David’s table as one of his sons (1st Chronicles does not mention this story).

Now back to war.....

“In the course of time,” Nahash, king of Ammon died. David sent envoys to console the new king, Hanun, but the princes of Ammon suggested to him that David’s men were really there to spy out the land – they were up to no good. Instead of being grateful for David’s consolation, Hanun took David’s servants, shaved ½ their beards and cut off their robes “at the buttocks” then sent them home. The men are understandably humiliated and David sent word for them to go to Jericho until their beards grew back.

When the Ammonites realized that all they had done was poke the Lion, they went looking for allies. They hired 32,000 chariots/charioteers from Aram, Naharaim, Aram Maacah and Zobah – King Maacah joined the fight, bringing his army along (see Psalm 60).

The Ammonites were now mustered and ready for battle.... Israel’s army went to meet them - Joab took the Arameans and Abishai took the Ammonites.

When the Ammonites saw that Arameans were fleeing, they fled too. Joab went back to Jerusalem. However, the Arameans regrouped on the other side of the Jordan River, so David gathered his army and crossed the Jordan. The Arameans fled but not before David killed 7000 (1 Chronicles 19:18) or 700 (2 Samuel 10:18) of their charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers. They made peace with David and were not willing to help the Ammonites anymore.

That brings us to 2 Samuel 11 and 1 Chronicles 20 – they begin the same way, “In the spring, when kings go off to war, David sent Joab and the whole the whole Israelite army out to fight the Ammonites. Israel destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.” However, 1st Chronicles 20 only addresses the military victories that occurred at that time:

After Rabbah was destroyed, the golden crown of her “king” (likely a reference to their god Milcom) – which was set with precious stones and reported to have weighed a talent (75 lbs.) – was placed on David’s head. David took a great deal of plunder and consigned the people of the city to slave labor – this he did in all the Ammonite towns.

“In the course of time” war broke out with the Philistines:

- In one battle Sibbecai killed Sippai, a descendant of the Rephaites
- In another battle Elhanan killed Lahmi, the brother of Goliath.
- In another battle Jonathan, son of David’s brother Shimea, killed an impressively huge man at Gath, who had 6 fingers on each hand and 6 toes on each foot – also descended from Rapha.

Up to this point in the story, David has been a faithful king and Yahweh has given him success and great military victories. Unfortunately, his story is about to change, from one of triumph to one of tragedy and trouble - trouble of his own making....

One night, David was restless – no doubt bored. What is a king supposed to do when his army is away fighting? He decided to take a turn on his palace roof top. Taking in the sights as he moseyed along, he suddenly came to an abrupt stop. As he stared, his pulse began to quicken and a little trickle of sweat ran down his back – there below him, was a beautiful woman taking a bath on her rooftop. Instead of turning around, he lingered:

David: WHO IS THAT?

Servant: *Bathsheba, the wife of one of your mighty warriors, Uriah. You remember your good friend, Uriah, don't you....king?*

Of course David knew who Bathsheba was. Both Uriah and her father, Eliam, were counted among David's mighty men (see 1 Chronicles 11:26a, 41a and 2 Samuel 23:34, 39). **Not only that, but for David to have been able to see her clearly from his rooftop, her house had to have been very close to the palace, meaning high status and a close connection to the king.**

David sent for Bathsheba and slept with her. We need to be clear here. This was not an affair – this was power rape. In the rest of the story, Bathsheba is not held responsible for what happens – David is solely responsible.

Some time went by and one day David got a note in the post.... *"Dear King, I'm pregnant! Sincerely, Bathsheba."*

Uh, Oh!

Must. Cover. Up.

Phase 1 of the cover-up plan -

David sent for Uriah, who was away at war, and told him that because he was such a great guy, he was being rewarded for his service with a trip home to see his wife. Uriah did not go home, but slept at the palace instead... NEWMAN!!!

David: *Why didn't you go home?*

Uriah: *Well, the Ark does not have a permanent home and the army is sleeping in a field somewhere. Under the circumstances, I just didn't think it was right to go and enjoy the pleasures of home.*

David: *Okay, stay a couple more days and then you can return to the war.*

In the meantime, David tried everything – including getting Uriah drunk – to get the man to go home – but failed. Uriah returned to the frontlines not having returned home.

Phase 2 of the cover-up plan -

Before sending Uriah back to the frontlines, David wrote a little note and asked him to give it to Joab: *"Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."*

And so, Uriah, the Hittite, one of David's most loyal and valiant warriors was murder by order of the king.

Cover-up complete - David breathed a sigh of relief and when an appropriate amount of time had gone by, Bathsheba moved into the palace, married David and had a son.

- Ellen White {PP 720.4} – *As time passed on, David's sin toward Bathsheba became known, and suspicion was excited that he had planned the death of Uriah. The Lord was dishonored. He had favored and exalted David, and David's sin misrepresented the character of God and cast reproach upon His name. It tended to lower the standard of godliness in Israel, to lessen in many minds the abhorrence of sin; while those who did not love and fear God were by it emboldened in transgression.*

David begun to believe that he had gotten away with his sin, however, about a year later, Yahweh sent Nathan to tell David a story:

Nathan: *There was a rich man and a poor man. The rich man has many flocks and herds. The poor man had 1 little ewe lamb, which he loved like one of his children. When a visitor arrived at the rich man's home, instead of killing one of his own lambs for dinner, he took the poor man's precious lamb.*

David was the dispenser of justice in Israel and Nathan had masterfully drawn him into the injustice of the rich man's actions – David was incensed. The penalty for theft was 4-fold repayment, but in his anger, David overreacted, "As Yahweh lives, that guy deserves to die!" And by doing so, condemned himself, because both adultery and premeditated murder brought the death penalty (see Leviticus 20:10 and Numbers 35:16-21).

Nathan: *That guy is you and this is what Yahweh says: "I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from Saul and gave you all his possessions. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise My word by doing what is evil in My eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and took his wife to be your own. Therefore, the sword will never depart from your house. Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel."* (my paraphrase)

David: *I have sinned against Yahweh.*

Nathan: *Yahweh has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of Yahweh show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.*

In considering the tragic end to this story, my mind kept coming back to the idea of substitutionary sacrifice. The law stated clearly that David deserved to die, but a substitute took the penalty and David was pardoned and forgiven. It does not feel like a fair exchange....

You and I? We deserve the death penalty (Romans 6:23) yet, in Jesus, a substitute was found who took the penalty, and at the same time granting us pardon and forgiveness.

- **Ellen White {PP 723}:** *It was when David was walking in the counsel of God that he was called a man after God's own heart. When he sinned, this ceased to be true of him until by repentance he returned to the Lord.... Though David repented of his sin and was forgiven and accepted by the Lord, he reaped the baleful harvest of the seed he himself had sown. The judgments upon him and upon his house testify to God's abhorrence of the sin.*

God's providence had preserved David against all the plottings of his enemies, and had been directly exercised to restrain Saul. But David's transgression had changed his relation to God. The Lord could not sanction iniquity. He could not exercise His power to protect David from the results of his sin as he had protected him from the enmity of Saul.

There was a great change in David himself.... His influence was weakened.... His authority in his own household, his claim to respect and obedience from his sons, was weakened.... His evil example exerted its influence upon his sons, and God would not interpose to prevent the result. He would permit things to take their natural course...

Out of his desire for pardon and restoration David prayed one of the most beautiful prayers of repentance ever recorded – Psalm 51:1-17 (LEB):

Be gracious to me, O God, according to your loyal love. According to your abundant mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and from my sin cleanse me. For I myself know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, only you, I have sinned and have done this evil in your eyes, so that you are correct when you speak, you are blameless when you judge. Behold, in iniquity I was born, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts you make me to know wisdom. Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and all my iniquities blot out. Create a clean heart for me, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and with a willing spirit sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation; then my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will proclaim your praise. For you do not delight in sacrifice or I would give it. With a burnt offering you are not pleased. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise....

- **Ellen White {PP 725}:** *David's repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his crime. No desire to escape the judgments threatened, inspired his prayer. But he saw the enormity of his transgression against God; he saw the defilement of his*

soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. David did not in despair give over the struggle. In the promises of God to repentant sinners he saw the evidence of his pardon and acceptance.

2 Samuel 12:24-25 - *Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. Yahweh loved him; and because Yahweh loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.*

Until Next Time.....