

# HISTORY OF THE JEWS

By Josephus

Book Seven

[continues]

## CHAPTER NINE

CONCERNING THE INSURRECTION OF ABSALOM AGAINST DAVID AND CONCERNING AHITHOPHEL AND HUSHAI; AND CONCERNING ZIBA AND SHIMEI; AND HOW AHITHOPHEL HANGED HIMSELF.

NOW Absalom, upon this his success with the king, procured to himself a great many horses, and many chariots, and that in a little time also. He had moreover fifty armor-bearers that were about him; and he came early every day to the king's palace, and spake what was agreeable to such as came for justice and lost their causes, as if that happened for want of good counselors about the king, or perhaps because the judges mistook in that unjust sentence they gave; whereby he gained the goodwill of them all. He told them, that had he but such authority committed to him, he would distribute justice to them in a most equitable manner. When he had made himself so popular among the multitude, he thought he had already the good-

will of the people secured to him; but when four years had passed since his father's reconciliation to him, he came to him, and besought him to give him leave to go to Hebron, and pay a sacrifice to God, because he vowed it to him when he fled out of the country. So when David had granted his request, he went thither, and great multitudes came running together to him, for he had sent to a great number so to do.

Among them came Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counsellor of David's, and two hundred men out of Jerusalem itself, who knew not his intentions, but were sent for as to a sacrifice. So he was appointed king by all of them, which he obtained by this stratagem. As soon as this news was brought to David, and he was informed of what he did not expect from his son, he was affrighted at this his impious and bold undertaking, and wondered that he was so far from remembering how his offense had been so lately forgiven him, that he undertook much worse and more wicked enterprises; first, to deprive him of that kingdom which was given him of God; and secondly, to take away his own father's life. He therefore resolved to fly to the parts beyond Jordan: so he called his most intimate friends together, and communicated to them all that he had heard of his son's madness. He committed himself to God, to judge between them about all their actions; and left the care of his royal palace to his ten concubines, and went away from Jerusalem, being willingly accompanied by the rest of the multitude, who went hastily away with him, and particularly by those six hundred armed men, who had been with him from his first flight in the

days of Saul. But he persuaded Abiathar and Zadok, the high priests, who had determined to go away with him, as also all the Levites, who were with the ark, to stay behind, as hoping that God would deliver him without its removal; but he charged them to let him know privately how all things went on; and he had their sons, Ahimmaz the son of Zadok, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, for faithful ministers in all things; but Ittai the Gittite went out with him whether David would let him or not, for he would have persuaded him to stay, and on that account he appeared the more friendly to him. But as he was ascending the Mount of Olives barefooted, and all his company were in tears, it was told him that Ahithophel was with Absalom, and was of his side. This hearing augmented his grief; and he besought God earnestly to alienate the mind of Absalom from Ahithophel, for he was afraid that he should persuade him to follow his pernicious counsel, for he was a prudent man, and very sharp in seeing what was advantageous. When David was gotten upon the top of the mountain, he took a view of the city; and prayed to God with abundance of tears, as having already lost his kingdom; and here it was that a faithful friend of his, whose name was Hushai, met him. When David saw him with his clothes rent, and having ashes all over his head, and in lamentation for the great change of affairs, he comforted him, and exhorted him to leave off grieving; nay, at length he besought him to go back to Absalom, and appear as one of his party, and to fish out the secretest counsels of his mind, and to contradict the counsels of Ahithophel, for that he could not do him so much good by being with him as he might by being with Absalom. So he was prevailed on by

David, and left him, and came to Jerusalem, whither Absalom himself came also a little while afterward.

When David was gone a little farther, there met him Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, (whom he had sent to take care of the possessions which had been given him, as the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul,) with a couple of asses, loaden with provisions, and desired him to take as much of them as he and his followers stood in need of. And when the king asked him where he had left Mephibosheth, he said he had left him in Jerusalem, expecting to be chosen king in the present confusions, in remembrance of the benefits Saul had conferred upon them. At this the king had great indignation, and gave to Ziba all that he had formerly bestowed on Mephibosheth; for he determined that it was much fitter that he should have them than the other; at which Ziba greatly rejoiced.

When David was at Bahurim, a place so called, there came out a kinsman of Saul's, whose name was Shimei, and threw stones at him, and gave him reproachful words; and as his friends stood about the king and protected him, he persevered still more in his reproaches, and called him a bloody man, and the author of all sorts of mischief. He bade him also go out of the land as, an impure and accursed wretch; and he thanked God for depriving him of his kingdom, and causing him to be punished for what injuries he had done to his master [Saul], and this by the means of his own son. Now when they were all provoked against him, and angry at him; and particularly Abishai, who had a mind

to kill Shimei, David restrained his anger. "Let us not," said he, "bring upon ourselves another fresh misfortune to those we have already, for truly I have not the least regard nor concern for this dog that raves at me: I submit myself to God, by whose permission this man treats me in such a wild manner; nor is it any wonder that I am obliged to undergo these abuses from him, while I experience the like from an impious son of my own; but perhaps God will have some commiseration upon us; if it be his will we shall overcome them." So he went on his way without troubling himself with Shimei, who ran along the other side of the mountain, and threw out his abusive language plentifully. But when David was come to Jordan, he allowed those that were with him to refresh themselves; for they were weary.

But when Absalom, and Ahithophel his counselor, were come to Jerusalem, with all the people, David's friend, Hushai, came to them; and when he had worshipped Absalom, he withal wished that his kingdom might last a long time, and continue for all ages. But when Absalom said to him, "How comes this, that he who was so intimate a friend of my father's, and appeared faithful to him in all things, is not with him now, but hath left him, and is come over to me?" Hushai's answer was very pertinent and prudent; for he said, "We ought to follow God and the multitude of the people; while these, therefore, my lord and master, are with thee, it is fit that I should follow them, for thou hast received the kingdom from God. I will therefore, if thou believest me to be thy friend, show the same fidelity and kindness to thee, which thou knowest I have shown to thy father; nor is

there any reason to be in the least dissatisfied with the present state of affairs, for the kingdom is not transferred into another, but remains still in the same family, by the son's receiving it after his father." This speech persuaded Absalom, who before suspected Hushai. And now he called Ahithophel, and consulted with him what he ought to do: he persuaded him to go in unto his father's concubines; for he said that "by this action the people would believe that thy difference with thy father is irreconcilable, and will thence fight with great alacrity against thy father, for hitherto they are afraid of taking up open enmity against him, out of an expectation that you will be reconciled again." Accordingly, Absalom was prevailed on by this advice, and commanded his servants to pitch him a tent upon the top of the royal palace, in the sight of the multitude; and he went in and lay with his father's concubines. Now this came to pass according to the prediction of Nathan, when he prophesied and signified to him that his son would rise up in rebellion against him.

And when Absalom had done what he was advised to by Ahithophel, he desired his advice, in the second place, about the war against his father. Now Ahithophel only asked him to let him have ten thousand chosen men, and he promised he would slay his father, and bring the soldiers back again in safety; and he said that then the kingdom would be firm to him when David was dead [but not otherwise]. Absalom was pleased with this advice, and called for Hushai, David's friend (for so did he style him); and informing him of the opinion of Ahithophel, he asked, further, what was his

opinion concerning that matter. Now he was sensible that if Ahithophel's counsel were followed, David would be in danger of being seized on, and slain; so he attempted to introduce a contrary opinion, and said, Thou art not unacquainted, O king, with the valor of thy father, and of those that are now with him; that he hath made many wars, and hath always come off with victory, though probably he now abides in the camp, for he is very skiliful in stratagems, and in foreseeing the deceitful tricks of his enemies; yet will he leave his own soldiers in the evening, and will either hide himself in some valley, or will place an ambush at some rock; so that when our army joins battle with him, his soldiers will retire for a little while, but will come upon us again, as encouraged by the king's being near them; and in the mean time your father will show himself suddenly in the time of the battle, and will infuse courage into his own people when they are in danger, but bring consternation to thine. Consider, therefore, my advice, and reason upon it, and if thou canst not but acknowledge it to be the best, reject the opinion of Ahithophel. Send to the entire country of the Hebrews, and order them to come and fight with thy father; and do thou thyself take the army, and be thine own general in this war, and do not trust its management to another; then expect to conquer him with ease, when thou overtakest him openly with his few partisans, but hast thyself many ten thousands, who will be desirous to demonstrate to thee their diligence and alacrity. And if thy father shall shut himself up in some city, and bear a siege, we will overthrow that city with machines of war, and by undermining it." When

Hushai had said this, he obtained his point against Ahithophel, for his opinion was preferred by Absalom before the other's: however, it was no other than God who made the counsel of Hushai appear best to the mind of Absalom.

So Hushai made haste to the high priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and told them the opinion of Ahithophel, and his own, and that the resolution was taken to follow this latter advice. He therefore bade them send to David, and tell him of it, and to inform him of the counsels that had been taken; and to desire him further to pass quickly over Jordan, lest his son should change his mind, and make haste to pursue him, and so prevent him, and seize upon him before he be in safety. Now the high priests had their sons concealed in a proper place out of the city, that they might carry news to David of what was transacted. Accordingly, they sent a maid-servant, whom they could trust, to them, to carry the news of Absalom's counsels, and ordered them to signify the same to David with all speed. So they made no excuse nor delay, but taking along with them their fathers' injunctions, because pious and faithful ministers, and judging that quickness and suddenness was the best mark of faithful service, they made haste to meet with David. But certain horsemen saw them when they were two furlongs from the city, and informed Absalom of them, who immediately sent some to take them; but when the sons of the high priest perceived this, they went out of the road, and betook themselves to a certain village; that village was called Bahurim; there they desired a certain woman to hide them, and afford them security. Accordingly she let the

young men down by a rope into a well, and laid fleeces of wool over them; and when those that pursued them came to her, and asked her whether she saw them, she did not deny that she had seen them, for that they staid with her some time, but she said they then went their ways; and she foretold that, however, if they would follow them directly, they would catch them; but when after a long pursuit they could not catch them, they came back again; and when the woman saw those men were returned, and that there was no longer any fear of the young men's being caught by them, she drew them up by the rope, and bade them go on their journey accordingly, they used great diligence in the prosecution of that journey, and came to David, and informed him accurately of all the counsels of Absalom. So he commanded those that were with him to pass over Jordan while it was night, and not to delay at all on that account.

But Ahithophel, on rejection of his advice, got upon his ass, and rode away to his own country, Gilon; and, calling his family together, he told them distinctly what advice he had given Absalom; and since he had not been persuaded by it, he said he would evidently perish, and this in no long time, and that David would overcome him, and return to his kingdom again; so he said it was better that he should take his own life away with freedom and magnanimity, than expose himself to be punished by David, in opposition to whom he had acted entirely for Absalom. When he had discoursed thus to them, he went into the inmost room of his house, and hanged himself; and thus was the death of Ahithophel, who was self-condemned; and when his relations had taken him down from the halter,

they took care of his funeral. Now, as for David, he passed over Jordan, as we have said already, and came to Mahanaim, every fine and very strong city; and all the chief men of the country received him with great pleasure, both out of the shame they had that he should be forced to flee away [from Jerusalem], and out of the respect they bare him while he was in his former prosperity. These were Barzillai the Gileadite, and Siphar the ruler among the Ammonites, and Machir the principal man of Gilead; and these furnished him with plentiful provisions for himself and his followers, insomuch that they wanted no beds nor blankets for them, nor loaves of bread, nor wine; nay, they brought them a great many cattle for slaughter, and afforded them what furniture they wanted for their refreshment when they were weary, and for food, with plenty of other necessaries.

## CHAPTER TEN

### HOW, WHEN ABSALOM WAS BEATEN, HE WAS CAUGHT IN A TREE BY HIS HAIR AND WAS SLAIN

AND this was the state of David and his followers: but Absalom got together a vast army of the Hebrews to oppose his father, and passed therewith over the river Jordan, and sat down not far off Mahanaim, in the country of Gilead. He appointed Amasa to be captain of all his host, instead of Joab his kinsman: his father was Ithra and his mother Abigail: now she and Zeruah, the mother of Joab, were David's sisters. But when David had numbered his followers, and found them to be about four thousand, he resolved not to tarry till Absalom attacked him, but set over his

men captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and divided his army into three parts; the one part he committed to Joab, the next to Abishai, Joab's brother, and the third to Ittai, David's companion and friend, but one that came from the city Gath; and when he was desirous of fighting himself among them, his friends would not let him: and this refusal of theirs was founded upon very wise reasons: "For," said they, "if we be conquered when he is with us, we have lost all good hopes of recovering ourselves; but if we should be beaten in one part of our army, the other parts may retire to him, and may thereby prepare a greater force, while the enemy will naturally suppose that he hath another army with him." So David was pleased with this their advice, and resolved himself to tarry at Mahanaim; and as he sent his friends and commanders to the battle, he desired them to show all possible alacrity and fidelity, and to bear in mind what advantages they had received from him, which, though they had not been very great, yet had they not been quite inconsiderable; and he begged of them to spare the young man Absalom, lest some mischief should befall himself, if he should be killed; and thus did he send out his army to the battle, and wished them victory therein.

Then did Joab put his army in battle-array over against the enemy in the Great Plain, where he had a wood behind him. Absalom also brought his army into the field to oppose him. Upon the joining of the battle, both sides showed great actions with their hands and their boldness; the one side exposing themselves to the greatest hazards, and using their utmost alacrity, that David might

recover his kingdom; and the other being no way deficient, either in doing or suffering, that Absalom might not be deprived of that kingdom, and be brought to punishment by his father for his impudent attempt against him. Those also that were the most numerous were solicitous that they might not be conquered by those few that were with Joab, and with the other commanders, because that would be the greater disgrace to them; while David's soldiers strove greatly to overcome so many ten thousands as the enemy had with them. Now David's men were conquerors, as superior in strength and skill in war; so they followed the others as they fled away through the forests and valleys; some they took prisoners, and many they slew, and more in the flight than in the battle for there fell about twenty thousand that day. But all David's men ran violently upon Absalom, for he was easily known by his beauty and tallness. He was himself also afraid lest his enemies should seize on him, so he got upon the king's mule, and fled; but as he was carried with violence, and noise, and a great motion, as being himself light, he entangled his hair greatly in the large boughs of a knotty tree that spread a great way, and there he hung, after a surprising manner; and as for the beast, it went on farther, and that swiftly, as if his master had been still upon his back; but he, hanging in the air upon the boughs, was taken by his enemies. Now when one of David's soldiers saw this, he informed Joab of it; and when the general said, that if he had shot at and killed Absalom, he would have given him fifty shekels, - he replied, "I would not have killed my master's son if thou wouldst have given me a thousand shekels, especially when he desired that the young man

might be spared in the hearing of us all." But Joab bade him show him where it was that he saw Absalom hang; whereupon he shot him to the heart, and slew him, and Joab's armor-bearers stood round the tree, and pulled down his dead body, and cast it into a great chasm that was out of sight, and laid a heap of stones upon him, till the cavity was filled up, and had both the appearance and the bigness of a grave. Then Joab sounded a retreat, and recalled his own soldiers from pursuing the enemy's army, in order to spare their countrymen.

Now Absalom had erected for himself a marble pillar in the king's dale, two furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which he named Absalom's Hand, saying, that if his children were killed, his name would remain by that pillar; for he had three sons and one daughter, named Tamar, as we said before, who when she was married to David's grandson, Rehoboam, bare a son, Abijah by name, who succeeded his father in the kingdom; but of these we shall speak in a part of our history which will be more proper. After the death of Absalom, they returned every one to their own homes respectively.

But now Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok the high priest, went to Joab, and desired he would permit him to go and tell David of this victory, and to bring him the good news that God had afforded his assistance and his providence to him. However, he did not grant his request, but said to him, "Wilt thou, who hast always been the messenger of good news, now go and acquaint the king that his son is dead?" So he desired him to desist. He then called Cushi, and committed the business to him, that he

should tell the king what he had seen. But when Ahimaaz again desired him to let him go as a messenger, and assured him that he would only relate what concerned the victory, but not concerning the death of Absalom, he gave him leave to go to David. Now he took a nearer road than the former did, for nobody knew it but himself, and he came before Cushì. Now as David was sitting between the gates, and waiting to see when somebody would come to him from the battle, and tell him how it went, one of the watchmen saw Ahimaaz running, and before he could discern who he was, he told David that he saw somebody coming to him, who said he was a good messenger. A little while after, he informed him that another messenger followed him; whereupon the king said that he also was a good messenger: but when the watchman saw Ahimaaz, and that he was already very near, he gave the king notice that it was the son of Zadok the high priest who came running. So David was very glad, and said he was a messenger of good tidings, and brought him some such news from the battle as he desired to hear.

While the king was saying thus, Ahimaaz appeared, and worshipped the king. And when the king inquired of him about the battle, he said he brought him the good news of victory and dominion. And when he inquired what he had to say concerning his son, he said that he came away on the sudden as soon as the enemy was defeated, but that he heard a great noise of those that pursued Absalom, and that he could learn no more, because of the haste he made when Joab sent him to inform him of the victory. But when Cushì was come, and had worshipped him, and informed him of the victory,

he asked him about his son, who replied, "May the like misfortune befall thine enemies as hath befallen Absalom." That word did not permit either himself or his soldiers to rejoice for the victory, though it was a very great one; but David went up to the highest part of the city, and wept for his son, and beat his breast, tearing [the hair of] his head, tormenting himself all manner of ways, and crying out, "O my son! I wish that I had died myself, and ended my days with thee!" for he was of a tender natural affection, and had extraordinary compassion for this son in particular. But when the army and Joab heard that the king mourned for his son, they were ashamed to enter the city in the habit of conquerors, but they all came in as cast down, and in tears, as if they had been beaten. Now while the king covered himself, and grievously lamented his son, Joab went in to him, and comforted him, and said, "O my lord the king, thou art not aware that thou layest a blot on thyself by what thou now doest; for thou seemest to hate those that love thee, and undergo dangers for thee nay, to hate thyself and thy family, and to love those that are thy bitter enemies, and to desire the company of those that are no more, and who have been justly slain; for had Absalom gotten the victory, and firmly settled himself in the kingdom, there had been none of us left alive, but all of us, beginning with thyself and thy children, had miserably perished, while our enemies had not wept for his, but rejoiced over us, and punished even those that pitied us in our misfortunes; and thou art not ashamed to do this in the case of one that has been thy bitter enemy, who, while he was thine own son hath proved so wicked to thee. Leave off, therefore, thy

unreasonable grief, and come abroad and be seen of thy soldiers, and return them thanks for the alacrity they showed in the fight; for I myself will this day persuade the people to leave thee, and to give the kingdom to another, if thou continuest to do thus; and then I shall make thee to grieve bitterly and in earnest." Upon Joab's speaking thus to him, he made the king leave off his sorrow, and brought him to the consideration of his affairs. So David changed his habit, and exposed himself in a manner fit to be seen by the multitude, and sat at the gates; whereupon all the people heard of it, and ran together to him, and saluted him. And this was the present state of David's affairs.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

HOW DAVID, WHEN HE HAD RECOVERED HIS KINGDOM, WAS RECONCILED TO SHIMEI, AND TO ZIBA; AND SHOWED A GREAT AFFECTION TO BARZILLAI; AND HOW, UPON THE RISE OF A SEDITION, HE MADE AMASA CAPTAIN OF HIS HOST, IN ORDER TO PURSUE SEBA; WHICH AMASA WAS SLAIN BY JOAB.

NOW those Hebrews that had been With Absalom, and had retired out of the battle, when they were all returned home, sent messengers to every city to put them in mind of what benefits David had bestowed upon them, and of that liberty which he had procured them, by delivering them from many and great wars. But they complained, that whereas they had ejected him out of his kingdom, and committed it to another governor, which other governor, whom they had set up, was already dead, they did not now beseech David to leave off his

anger at them, and to become friends with them, and, as he used to do, to resume the care of their affairs, and take the kingdom again. This was often told to David. And, this notwithstanding, David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the high priests, that they should speak to the rulers of the tribe of Judah after the manner following: That it would be a reproach upon them to permit the other tribes to choose David for their king before their tribe, "and this," said he, "while you are akin to him, and of the same common blood." He commanded them also to say the same to Amasa the captain of their forces, That whereas he was his sister's son, he had not persuaded the multitude to restore the kingdom to David; that he might expect from him not only a reconciliation, for that was already granted, but that supreme command of the army also which Absalom had bestowed upon him. Accordingly the high priests, when they had discoursed with the rulers of the tribe, and said what the king had ordered them, persuaded Amasa to undertake the care of his affairs. So he persuaded that tribe to send immediately ambassadors to him, to beseech him to return to his own kingdom. The same did all the Israelites, at the like persuasion of Amasa.

When the ambassadors came to him, he came to Jerusalem; and the tribe of Judah was the first that came to meet the king at the river Jordan. And Shimei, the son of Gera, came with a thousand men, which he brought with him out of the tribe of Benjamin; and Ziba, the freed-man of Saul, with his sons, fifteen in number, and with his twenty servants. All these, as well as the tribe of Judah, laid a bridge [of boats] over the river, that the king, and those that were with him, might

with ease pass over it. Now as soon as he was come to Jordan, the tribe of Judah saluted him. Shimei also came upon the bridge, and took hold of his feet, and prayed him to forgive him what he had offended, and not to be too bitter against him, nor to think fit to make him the first example of severity under his new authority; but to consider that he had repented of his failure of duty, and had taken care to come first of all to him. While he was thus entreating the king, and moving him to compassion, Abishai, Joab's brother, said, "And shall not this man die for this, that he hath cursed that king whom God hath appointed to reign over us?" But David turned himself to him, and said, "Will you never leave off, ye sons of Zeruah? Do not you, I pray, raise new troubles and seditions among us, now the former are over; for I would not have you ignorant that I this day begin my reign, and therefore swear to remit to all offenders their punishments, and not to animadvert on any one that has sinned. Be thou, therefore," said he, "O Shimei, of good courage, and do not at all fear being put to death." So he worshipped him, and went on before him.

Mephibosheth also, Saul's grandson, met David, clothed in a sordid garment, and having his hair thick and neglected; for after David was fled away, he was in such grief that he had not polled his head, nor had he washed his clothes, as dooming himself to undergo such hardships upon occasion of the change-of the king's affairs. Now he had been unjustly calumniated to the king by Ziba, his steward. When he had saluted the king, and worshipped him, the king began to ask him why he did not go out of Jerusalem with him, and

accompany him during his flight. He replied, that this piece of injustice was owing to Ziba; because, when he was ordered to get things ready for his going out with him, he took no care of it, but regarded him no more than if he had been a slave; "and, indeed, had I had my feet sound and strong, I had not deserted thee, for I could then have made use of them in my flight: but this is not all the injury that Ziba has done me, as to my duty to thee, my lord and master, but he hath calumniated me besides, and told lies about me of his own invention; but I know thy mind will not admit of such calumnies, but is righteously disposed, and a lover of truth, which it is also the will of God should prevail. For when thou wast in the greatest danger of suffering by my grandfather, and when, on that account, our whole family might justly have been destroyed, thou wast moderate and merciful, and didst then especially forget all those injuries, when, if thou hadst remembered them, thou hadst the power of punishing us for them; but thou hast judged me to be thy friend, and hast set me every day at thine own table; nor have I wanted any thing which one of thine own kinsmen, of greatest esteem with thee, could have expected." When he had said this, David resolved neither to punish Mephibosheth, nor to condemn Ziba, as having belied his master; but said to him, that as he had [before] granted all his estate to Ziba, because he did not come along with him, so he [now] promised to forgive him, and ordered that the one half of his estate should be restored to him. Whereupon Mephibosheth said, "Nay, let Ziba take all; it suffices me that thou hast recovered thy kingdom."

But David desired Barzillai the Gileadite, that great and good man, and one that had made a plentiful provision for him at Mahanaim, and had conducted him as far as Jordan, to accompany him to Jerusalem, for he promised to treat him in his old age with all manner of respect - to take care of him, and provide for him. But Barzillai was so desirous to live at home, that he entreated him to excuse him from attendance on him; and said that his age was too great to enjoy the pleasures [of a court,] since he was fourscore years old, and was therefore making provision for his death and burial: so he desired him to gratify him in this request, and dismiss him; for he had no relish of his meat, or his drink, by reason of his age; and that his ears were too much shut up to hear the sound of pipes, or the melody of other musical instruments, such as all those that live with kings delight in. When he entreated for this so earnestly, the king said, "I dismiss thee, but thou shalt grant me thy son Chimham, and upon him I will bestow all sorts of good things." So Barzillai left his son with him, and worshipped the king, and wished him a prosperous conclusion of all his affairs according to his own mind, and then returned home; but David came to Gilgal, having about him half the people [of Israel], and the [whole] tribe of Judah.

Now the principal men of the country came to Gilgal to him with a great multitude, and complained of the tribe of Judah, that they had come to him in a private manner; whereas they ought all conjointly, and with one and the same intention, to have given him the meeting. But the rulers of the tribe of Judah desired them not to

be displeased, if they had been prevented by them; for, said they, "We are David's kinsmen, and on that account we the rather took care of him, and loved him, and so came first to him;" yet had they not, by their early coming, received any gifts from him, which might give them who came last any uneasiness. When the rulers of the tribe of Judah had said this, the rulers of the other tribes were not quiet, but said further, "O brethren, we cannot but wonder at you when you call the king your kinsman alone, whereas he that hath received from God the power over all of us in common ought to be esteemed a kinsman to us all; for which reason the whole people have eleven parts in him, and you but one part we are also elder than you; wherefore you have not done justly in coming to the king in this private and concealed manner."

While these rulers were thus disputing one with another, a certain wicked man, who took a pleasure in seditious practices, (his name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, of the tribe of Benjamin,) stood up in the midst of the multitude, and cried aloud, and spake thus to them: "We have no part in David, nor inheritance in the son of Jesse." And when he had used those words, he blew with a trumpet, and declared war against the king; and they all left David, and followed him; the tribe of Judah alone staid with him, and settled him in his royal palace at Jerusalem. But as for his concubines, with whom Absalom his son had accompanied, truly he removed them to another house, and ordered those that had the care of them to make a plentiful provision for them, but he came not near them any more. He also appointed

Amass for the captain of his forces, and gave him the same high office which Joab before had; and he commanded him to gather together, out of the tribe of Judah, as great an army as he could, and come to him within three days, that he might deliver to him his entire army, and might send him to fight against [Sheba] the son of Bichri. Now while Amass was gone out, and made some delay in gathering the army together, and so was not yet returned, on the third day the king said to Joab, "It is not fit we should make any delay in this affair of Sheba, lest he get a numerous army about him, and be the occasion of greater mischief, and hurt our affairs more than did Absalom himself; do not thou therefore wait any longer, but take such forces as thou hast at hand, and that [old] body of six hundred men, and thy brother Abishai, with thee, and pursue after our enemy, and endeavor to fight him wheresoever thou canst overtake him. Make haste to prevent him, lest he seize upon some fenced cities, and cause us great labor and pains before we take him."

So Joab resolved to make no delay, but taking with him his brother, and those six hundred men, and giving orders that the rest of the army which was at Jerusalem should follow him, he marched with great speed against Sheba; and when he was come to Gibeon, which is a village forty furlongs distant from Jerusalem, Amasa brought a great army with him, and met Joab. Now Joab was girded with a sword, and his breastplate on; and when Amasa came near him to salute him, he took particular care that his sword should fall out, as it were, of its own accord: so he took it up from the ground, and while he approached Amasa, who was then near him,

as though he would kiss him, he took hold of Amasa's beard with his other hand, and he smote him in his belly when he did not foresee it, and slew him. This impious and altogether profane action Joab did to a good young man, and his kinsman, and one that had done him no injury, and this out of jealousy that he would obtain the chief command of the army, and be in equal dignity with himself about the king; and for the same cause it was that he killed Abner. But as to that former wicked action, the death of his brother Asahel, which he seemed to revenge, afforded him a decent pretense, and made that crime a pardonable one; but in this murder of Amasa there was no such covering for it. Now when Joab had killed this general, he pursued after Sheba, having left a man with the dead body, who was ordered to proclaim aloud to the army, that Amasa was justly slain, and deservedly punished. "But," said he, "if you be for the king, follow Joab his general, and Abishai, Joab's brother:" but because the body lay on the road, and all the multitude came running to it, and, as is usual with the multitude, stood wondering a great while at it, he that guarded it removed it thence, and carried it to a certain place that was very remote from the road, and there laid it, and covered it with his garment. When this was done, all the people followed Joab. Now as he pursued Sheba through all the country of Israel, one told him that he was in a strong city, called Abelbeth-maachah. Hereupon Joab went thither, and set about it with his army, and cast up a bank round it, and ordered his soldiers to undermine the walls, and to overthrow them; and since the people in the city did not admit him, he was greatly displeased at them.

Now there was a woman of small account, and yet both wise and intelligent, who seeing her native city lying at the last extremity, ascended upon the wall, and, by means of the armed men, called for Joab; and when he came to her, she began to say, That "God ordained kings and generals of armies, that they might cut off the enemies of the Hebrews, and introduce a universal peace among them; but thou art endeavoring to overthrow and depopulate a metropolis of the Israelites, which hath been guilty of no offense." But he replied, "God continue to be merciful unto me: I am disposed to avoid killing any one of the people, much less would I destroy such a city as this; and if they will deliver me up Sheba, the son of Bichri, who hath rebelled against the king, I will leave off the siege, and withdraw the army from the place." Now as soon as the woman heard what Joab said, she desired him to intermit the siege for a little while, for that he should have the head of his enemy thrown out to him presently. So she went down to the citizens, and said to them, "Will you be so wicked as to perish miserably, with your children and wives, for the sake of a vile fellow, and one whom nobody knows who he is? And will you have him for your king instead of David, who hath been so great a benefactor to you, and oppose your city alone to such a mighty and strong army?" So she prevailed with them, and they cut off the head of Sheba, and threw it into Joab's army. When this was done, the king's general sounded a retreat, and raised the siege. And when he was come to Jerusalem, he was again appointed to be general of all the people. The king also constituted Benaiah captain of the

guards, and of the six hundred men. He also set Adoram over the tribute, and Sabathes and Achilauus over the records. He made Sheva the scribe, and appointed Zadok and Abiathar the high priests.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

HOW THE HEBREWS WERE DELIVERED FROM A FAMINE WHEN THE GIBEONITES HAD CAUSED PUNISHMENT TO BE INFLICTED FOR THOSE OF THEM THAT HAD BEEN SLAIN: AS ALSO, WHAT GREAT ACTIONS WERE PERFORMED AGAINST THE PHILISTINES BY DAVID, AND THE MEN OF VALOR ABOUT HIM.

AFTER this, when the country was greatly afflicted with a famine, David besought God to have mercy on the people, and to discover to him what was the cause of it, and how a remedy might be found for that distemper. And when the prophets answered, that God would have the Gibeonites avenged whom Saul the king was so wicked as to betray to slaughter, and had not observed the oath which Joshua the general and the senate had sworn to them: If, therefore, said God, the king would permit such vengeance to be taken for those that were slain as the Gibeonites should desire, he promised that he would be reconciled to them, and free the multitude from their miseries. As soon therefore as the king understood that this it was which God sought, he sent for the Gibeonites, and asked them what it was they should have; and when they desired to have seven sons of Saul delivered to them to be punished, he delivered them up, but spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan. So when the Gibeonites had received the men, they punished them as they pleased; upon which God began to send

rain, and to recover the earth to bring forth its fruits as usual, and to free it from the foregoing drought, so that the country of the Hebrews flourished again. A little afterward the king made war against the Philistines; and when he had joined battle with them, and put them to flight, he was left alone, as he was in pursuit of them; and when he was quite tired down, he was seen by one of the enemy, his name was Achmon, the son of Araph, he was one of the sons of the giants. He had a spear, the handle of which weighed three hundred shekels, and a breastplate of chain-work, and a sword. He turned back, and ran violently to slay [David] their enemy's king, for he was quite tired out with labor; but Abishai, Joab's brother, appeared on the sudden, and protected the king with his shield, as he lay down, and slew the enemy. Now the multitude were very uneasy at these dangers of the king, and that he was very near to be slain; and the rulers made him swear that he would no more go out with them to battle, lest he should come to some great misfortune by his courage and boldness, and thereby deprive the people of the benefits they now enjoyed by his means, and of those that they might hereafter enjoy by his living a long time among them.

When the king heard that the Philistines were gathered together at the city Gazara, he sent an army against them, when Sibbechai the Hittite, one of David's most courageous men, behaved himself so as to deserve great commendation, for he slew many of those that bragged they were the posterity of the giants, and vaunted themselves highly on that account, and thereby was the occasion of victory to the Hebrews. After which defeat, the

Philistines made war again; and when David had sent an army against them, Nephthali his kinsman fought in a single combat with the stoutest of all the Philistines, and slew him, and put the rest to flight. Many of them also were slain in the fight. Now a little while after this, the Philistines pitched their camp at a city which lay not far off the bounds of the country of the Hebrews. They had a man who was six cubits tall, and had on each of his feet and hands one more toe and finger than men naturally have. Now the person who was sent against them by David out of his army was Jonathan, the son of Shimea, who fought this man in a single combat, and slew him; and as he was the person who gave the turn to the battle, he gained the greatest reputation for courage therein. This man also vaunted himself to be of the sons of the giants. But after this fight the Philistines made war no more against the Israelites.

And now David being freed from wars and dangers, and enjoying for the future a profound peace, composed songs and hymns to God of several sorts of metre; some of those which he made were trimeters, and some were pentameters. He also made instruments of music, and taught the Levites to sing hymns to God, both on that called the sabbath day, and on other festivals. Now the construction of the instruments was thus: The viol was an instrument of ten strings, it was played upon with a bow; the psaltery had twelve musical notes, and was played upon by the fingers; the cymbals were broad and large instruments, and were made of brass. And so much shall suffice to be spoken by us about these instruments, that the readers may

not be wholly unacquainted with their nature.

Now all the men that were about David were men of courage. Those that were most illustrious and famous of them for their actions were thirty-eight; of five of whom I will only relate the performances, for these will suffice to make manifest the virtues of the others also; for these were powerful enough to subdue countries, and conquer great nations. First, therefore, was Jessai, the son of Achimaas, who frequently leaped upon the troops of the enemy, and did not leave off fighting till he overthrew nine hundred of them. After him was Eleazar, the son of Dodo, who was with the king at Arasam. This man, when once the Israelites were under a consternation at the multitude of the Philistines, and were running away, stood alone, and fell upon the enemy, and slew many of them, till his sword clung to his band by the blood he had shed, and till the Israelites, seeing the Philistines retire by his means, came down from the mountains and pursued them, and at that time won a surprising and a famous victory, while Eleazar slew the men, and the multitude followed and spoiled their dead bodies. The third was Sheba, the son of Ilus. Now this man, when, in the wars against the Philistines, they pitched their camp at a place called Lehi, and when the Hebrews were again afraid of their army, and did not stay, he stood still alone, as an army and a body of men; and some of them he overthrew, and some who were not able to abide his strength and force he pursued. These are the works of the hands, and of fighting, which these three performed. Now at the time when the king was once at Jerusalem, and the army of

the Philistines came upon him to fight him, David went up to the top of the citadel, as we have already said, to inquire of God concerning the battle, while the enemy's camp lay in the valley that extends to the city Bethlehem, which is twenty furlongs distant from Jerusalem. Now David said to his companions, "We have excellent water in my own city, especially that which is in the pit near the gate," wondering if any one would bring him some of it to drink; but he said that he would rather have it than a great deal of money. When these three men heard what he said, they ran away immediately, and burst through the midst of their enemy's camp, and came to Bethlehem; and when they had drawn the water, they returned again through the enemy's camp to the king, insomuch that the Philistines were so surprised at their boldness and alacrity, that they were quiet, and did nothing against them, as if they despised their small number. But when the water was brought to the king, he would not drink it, saying, that it was brought by the danger and the blood of men, and that it was not proper on that account to drink it. But he poured it out to God, and gave him thanks for the salvation of the men. Next to these was Abishai, Joab's brother; for he in one day slew six hundred. The fifth of these was Benaiah, by lineage a priest; for being challenged by [two] eminent men in the country of Moab, he overcame them by his valor, Moreover, there was a man, by nation an Egyptian, who was of a vast bulk, and challenged him, yet did he, when he was unarmed, kill him with his own spear, which he threw at him; for he caught him by force, and took away his weapons while he was alive and fighting, and slew him with his own weapons. One may also

add this to the forementioned actions of the same man, either as the principal of them in alacrity, or as resembling the rest. When God sent a snow, there was a lion who slipped and fell into a certain pit, and because the pit's mouth was narrow it was evident he would perish, being enclosed with the snow; so when he saw no way to get out and save himself, he roared. When Benaiah heard the wild beast, he went towards him, and coming at the noise he made, he went down into the mouth of the pit and smote him, as he struggled, with a stake that lay there, and immediately slew him. The other thirty-three were like these in valor also.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THAT WHEN DAVID HAD NUMBERED THE PEOPLE, THEY WERE PUNISHED; AND HOW THE DIVINE COMPASSION RESTRAINED THAT PUNISHMENT.

NOW king David was desirous to know how many ten thousands there were of the people, but forgot the commands of Moses, who told them beforehand, that if the multitude were numbered, they should pay half a shekel to God for every head. Accordingly the king commanded Joab, the captain of his host, to go and number the whole multitude; but when he said there was no necessity for such a numeration, he was not persuaded [to countermand it], but he enjoined him to make no delay, but to go about the numbering of the Hebrews immediately. So Joab took with him the heads of the tribes, and the scribes, and went over the country of the Israelites, and took notice how numerous the multitude were, and returned to Jerusalem to the king, after nine

months and twenty days; and he gave in to the king the number of the people, without the tribe of Benjamin, for he had not yet numbered that tribe, no more than the tribe of Levi, for the king repented of his having sinned against God. Now the number of the rest of the Israelites was nine hundred thousand men, who were able to bear arms and go to war; but the tribe of Judah, by itself, was four hundred thousand men.

Now when the prophets had signified to David that God was angry at him, he began to entreat him, and to desire he would be merciful to him, and forgive his sin. But God sent Nathan the prophet to him, to propose to him the election of three things, that he might choose which he liked best: Whether he would have famine come upon the country for seven years, or would have a war, and be subdued three months by his enemies? or, whether God should send a pestilence and a distemper upon the Hebrews for three days? But as he was fallen to a fatal choice of great miseries, he was in trouble, and sorely confounded; and when the prophet had said that he must of necessity make his choice, and had ordered him to answer quickly, that he might declare what he had chosen to God, the king reasoned with himself, that in case he should ask for famine, he would appear to do it for others, and without danger to himself, since he had a great deal of corn hoarded up, but to the harm of others; that in case he should choose to be overcome [by his enemies] for three months, he would appear to have chosen war, because he had valiant men about him, and strong holds, and that therefore he feared nothing therefrom: so he chose that affliction which is common to kings and to

their subjects, and in which the fear was equal on all sides; and said this beforehand, that it was much better to fall into the hands of God, than into those of his enemies.

When the prophet had heard this, he declared it to God; who thereupon sent a pestilence and a mortality upon the Hebrews; nor did they die after one and the same manner, nor so that it was easy to know what the distemper was. Now the miserable disease was one indeed, but it carried them off by ten thousand causes and occasions, which those that were afflicted could not understand; for one died upon the neck of another, and the terrible malady seized them before they were aware, and brought them to their end suddenly, some giving up the ghost immediately with very great pains and bitter grief, and some were worn away by their distempers, and had nothing remaining to be buried, but as soon as ever they fell were entirely macerated; some were choked, and greatly lamented their case, as being also stricken with a sudden darkness; some there were who, as they were burying a relation, fell down dead, without finishing the rites of the funeral. Now there perished of this disease, which began with the morning, and lasted till the hour of dinner, seventy thousand. Nay, the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem, as sending this terrible judgment upon it. But David had put on sackcloth, and lay upon the ground, entreating God, and begging that the distemper might now cease, and that he would be satisfied with those that had already perished. And when the king looked up into the air, and saw the angel carried along thereby into Jerusalem, with his sword drawn, he said to

God, that he might justly be punished, who was their shepherd, but that the sheep ought to be preserved, as not having sinned at all; and he implored God that he would send his wrath upon him, and upon all his family, but spare the people.

When God heard his supplication, he caused the pestilence to cease, and sent Gad the prophet to him, and commanded him to go up immediately to the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and build an altar there to God, and offer sacrifices. When David heard that, he did not neglect his duty, but made haste to the place appointed him. Now Araunah was thrashing wheat; and when he saw the king and all his servants coming to him, he ran before, and came to him and worshipped him: he was by his lineage a Jebusite, but a particular friend of David's; and for that cause it was that, when he overthrew the city, he did him no harm, as we informed the reader a little before. Now Araunah inquired, "Wherefore is my lord come to his servant?" He answered, to buy of him the thrashing-floor, that he might therein build an altar to God, and offer a sacrifice. He replied, that he freely gave him both the thrashing-floor and the ploughs and the oxen for a burnt-offering; and he besought God graciously to accept his sacrifice. But the king made answer, that he took his generosity and magnanimity loudly, and accepted his good-will, but he desired him to take the price of them all, for that it was not just to offer a sacrifice that cost nothing. And when Araunah said he would do as he pleased, he bought the thrashing-floor of him for fifty shekels. And when he had built an altar, he performed Divine

service, and brought a burnt-offering, and offered peace-offerings also. With these God was pacified, and became gracious to them again. Now it happened that Abraham came and offered his son Isaac for a burnt-offering at that very place; and when the youth was ready to have his throat cut, a ram appeared on a sudden, standing by the altar, which Abraham sacrificed in the stead of his son, as we have before related. Now when king David saw that God had heard his prayer, and had graciously accepted of his sacrifice, he resolved to call that entire place The Altar of all the People, and to build a temple to God there; which words he uttered very appositely to what was to be done afterward; for God sent the prophet to him, and told him that there should his son build him an altar, that son who was to take the kingdom after him.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THAT DAVID MADE GREAT PREPARATIONS FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD; AND THAT, UPON ADONIJAH'S ATTEMPT TO GAIN THE KINGDOM, HE APPOINTED SOLOMON TO REIGN.

AFTER the delivery of this prophecy, the king commanded the strangers to be numbered; and they were found to be one hundred and eighty thousand; of these he appointed fourscore thousand to be hewers of stone, and the rest of the multitude to carry the stones, and of them he set over the workmen three thousand and five hundred. He also prepared a great quantity of iron and brass for the work, with many (and those exceeding large) cedar trees; the Tyrians and Sidonians sending them to him, for he had sent to them for a supply

of those trees. And he told his friends that these things were now prepared, that he might leave materials ready for the building of the temple to his son, who was to reign after him, and that he might not have them to seek then, when he was very young, and by reason of his age unskillful in such matters, but might have them lying by him, and so might the more readily complete the work.

So David called his son Solomon, and charged him, when he had received the kingdom, to build a temple to God, and said, “!I was willing to build God a temple myself, but he prohibited me, because I was polluted with blood and wars; but he hath foretold that Solomon, my youngest son, should build him a temple, and should be called by that name; over whom he hath promised to take the like care as a father takes over his son; and that he would make the country of the Hebrews happy under him, and that, not only in other respects, but by giving it peace and freedom from wars, and from internal seditions, which are the greatest of all blessings. Since, therefore,” says he, “thou wast ordained king by God himself before thou wast born, endeavor to render thyself worthy of this his providence, as in other instances, so particularly in being religious, and righteous, and courageous. Keep thou also his commands and his laws, which he hath given us by Moses, and do not permit others to break them. Be zealous also to dedicate to God a temple, which he hath chosen to be built under thy reign; nor be thou aftrighted by the vastness of the work, nor set about it timorously, for I will make all things ready before I die: and take notice, that there are already ten thousand talents of gold, and a

hundred thousand talents of silver collected together. I have also laid together brass and iron without number, and an immense quantity of timber and of stones. Moreover, thou hast many ten thousand stone-cutters and carpenters; and if thou shalt want any thing further, do thou add somewhat of thine own. Wherefore, if thou performest this work, thou wilt be acceptable to God, and have him for thy patron." David also further exhorted the rulers of the people to assist his son in this building, and to attend to the Divine service, when they should be free from all their misfortunes, for that they by this means should enjoy, instead of them, peace and a happy settlement, with which blessings God rewards such men as are religious and righteous. He also gave orders, that when the temple should be once built, they should put the ark therein, with the holy vessels; and he assured them that they ought to have had a temple long ago, if their fathers had not been negligent of God's commands, who had given it in charge, that when they had got the possession of this land, they should build him a temple. Thus did David discourse to the governors, and to his son.

David was now in years, and his body, by length of time, was become cold, and benumbed, insomuch that he could get no heat by covering himself with many clothes; and when the physicians came together, they agreed to this advice, that a beautiful virgin, chosen out of the whole country, should sleep by the king's side, and that this damsel would communicate heat to him, and be a remedy against his numbness. Now there was found in the city one woman, of a superior beauty to all

other women, (her name was Abishag,) who, sleeping with the king, did no more than communicate warmth to him, for he was so old that he could not know her as a husband knows his wife. But of this woman we shall speak more presently.

Now the fourth son of David was a beautiful young man, and tall, born to him of Haggith his wife. He was named Adonijah, and was in his disposition like to Absalom; and exalted himself as hoping to be king, and told his friends that he ought to take the government upon him. He also prepared many chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. When his father saw this, he did not reprove him, nor restrain him from his purpose, nor did he go so far as to ask wherefore he did so. Now Adonijah had for his assistants Joab the captain of the army, and Abiathar the high priest; and the only persons that opposed him were Zadok the high priest, and the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah, who was captain of the guards, and Shimei, David's friend, with all the other most mighty men. Now Adonijah had prepared a supper out of the city, near the fountain that was in the king's paradise, and had invited all his brethren except Solomon, and had taken with him Joab the captain of the army, and: Abiathar, and the rulers of the tribe of Judah, but had not invited to this feast either Zadok the high priest, or Nathan the prophet, or Benaiah the captain of the guards, nor any of those of the contrary party. This matter was told by Nathan the prophet to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, that Adonijah was king, and that David knew nothing of it; and he advised her to save herself and her son Solomon, and to go by herself to David, and say to him, that he had

indeed sworn that Solomon should reign after him, but that in the mean time Adonijah had already taken the kingdom. He said that he, the prophet himself, would come after her, and when she had spoken thus to the king, would confirm what she had said. Accordingly Bathsheba agreed with Nathan, and went in to the king and worshipped him, and when she had desired leave to speak with him, she told him all things in the manner that Nathan had suggested to her; and related what a supper Adonijah had made, and who they were whom he had invited; Abiathar the and Joab the general, and David's sons, excepting Solomon and his intimate friends. She also said that all the people had their eyes upon him, to know whom he would choose for their king. She desired him also to consider how, after his departure, Adonijah, if he were king, would slay her and her son Solomon.

Now, as Bathsheba was speaking, the keeper of the king's chambers told him that Nathan desired to see him. And when the king had commanded that he should be admitted, he came in, and asked him whether he had ordained Adonijah to be king, and delivered the government to him, or not; for that he had made a splendid supper, and invited all his sons, except Solomon; as also that he had invited Joab, the captain of his host, [and Abiathar the high priest,] who are feasting with applauses, and many joyful sounds of instruments, and wish that his kingdom may last for ever; but he hath not invited me, nor Zadok the high priest, nor Benaiah the captain of the guards; and it is but fit that all should know whether this be done by thy approbation or not. When Nathan had said thus, the king commanded that they should call Bathsheba to

him, for she had gone out of the room when the prophet came. And when Bathsheba was come, David said, "I swear by Almighty God, that thy son Solomon shall certainly be king, as I formerly swore; and that he shall sit upon my throne, and that this very day also." So Bathsheba worshipped him, and wished him a long life; and the king sent for Zadok the high priest, and Benaiah the captain of the guards; and when they were come, he ordered them to take with them Nathan the prophet, and all the armed men about the palace, and to set his son Solomon upon the king's mule, and to carry him out of the city to the fountain called Gihon, and to anoint him there with the holy oil, and to make him king. This he charged Zadok the high priest, and Nathan the prophet, to do, and commanded them to follow Solomon through the midst of the city, and to sound the trumpets, and wish aloud that Solomon the king may sit upon the royal throne for ever, that so all the people may know that he is ordained king by his father. He also gave Solomon a charge concerning his government, to rule the whole nation of the Hebrews, and particularly the tribe of Judah, religiously and righteously. And when Benaiah had prayed to God to be favorable to Solomon, without any delay they set Solomon upon the mule, and brought him out of the city to the fountain, and anointed him with oil, and brought him into the city again, with acclamations and wishes that his kingdom might continue a long time: and when they had introduced him into the king's house, they set him upon the throne; whereupon all the people betook themselves to make merry, and to celebrate a festival, dancing and delighting themselves with musical pipes, till both the earth and the air echoed with the

multitude of the instruments of music.

Now when Adonijah and his guests perceived this noise, they were in disorder; and Joab the captain of the host said he was not pleased with these echoes, and the sound of these trumpets. And when supper was set before them, nobody tasted of it, but they were all very thoughtful what would be the matter. Then Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the high priest, came running to them; and when Adonijah saw the young man gladly, and said to him that he was a good messenger, he declared to them the whole matter about Solomon, and the determination of king David: hereupon both Adonijah and all the guests rose hastily from the feast, and every one fled to their own homes. Adonijah also, as afraid of the king for what he had done, became a supplicant to God, and took hold of the horns of the altar, which were prominent. It was also told Solomon that he had so done; and that he desired to receive assurances from him that he would not remember the injury he had done, and not inflict any severe punishment for it. Solomon answered very mildly and prudently, that he forgave him this his offense; but said withal, that if he were found out in any attempt for new innovations, that he would be the author of his own punishment. So he sent to him, and raised him up from the place of his supplication. And when he was come to the king, and had worshipped him, the king bid him go away to his own house, and have no suspicion of any harm; and desired him to show himself a worthy man, as what would tend to his own advantage.

But David, being desirous of ordaining his son

king of all the people, called together their rulers to Jerusalem, with the priests and the Levites; and having first numbered the Levites, he found them to be thirty-eight thousand, from thirty years old to fifty; out of which he appointed twenty-three thousand to take care of the building of the temple, and out of the same, six thousand to be judges of the people and scribes, four thousand for porters to the house of God, and as many for singers, to sing to the instruments which David had prepared, as we have said already. He divided them also into courses: and when he had separated the priests from them, he found of these priests twenty-four courses, sixteen of the house of Eleazar, and eight of that of Ithamar; and he ordained that one course should minister to God eight days, from sabbath to sabbath. And thus were the courses distributed by lot, in the presence of David, and Zadok and Abiathar the high priests, and of all the rulers; and that course which came up first was written down as the first, and accordingly the second, and so on to the twenty-fourth; and this partition hath remained to this day. He also made twenty-four parts of the tribe of Levi; and when they cast lots, they came up in the same manner for their courses of eight days. He also honored the posterity of Moses, and made them the keepers of the treasures of God, and of the donations which the kings dedicated. He also ordained that all the tribe of Levi, as well as the priests, should serve God night and day, as Moses had enjoined them.

After this he parted the entire army into twelve parts, with their leaders [and captains of

hundreds] and commanders. Now every part had twenty-four thousand, which were ordered to wait on Solomon, by thirty days at a time, from the first day till the last, with the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds. He also set rulers over every part, such as he knew to be good and righteous men. He set others also to take charge of the treasures, and of the villages, and of the fields, and of the beasts, whose names I do not think it necessary to mention. When David had ordered all these officers after the manner before mentioned, he called the rulers of the Hebrews, and their heads of tribes, and the officers over the several divisions, and those that were appointed over every work, and every possession; and standing upon a high pulpit, he said to the multitude as follows: "My brethren and my people, I would have you know that I intended to build a house for God, and prepared a large quantity of gold, and a hundred thousand talents of silver; but God prohibited me by the prophet Nathan, because of the wars I had on your account, and because my right hand was polluted with the slaughter of our enemies; but he commanded that my son, who was to succeed me in the kingdom, should build a temple for him. Now therefore, since you know that of the twelve sons whom Jacob our forefather had Judah was appointed to be king, and that I was preferred before my six brethren, and received the government from God, and that none of them were uneasy at it, so do I also desire that my sons be not seditious one against another, now Solomon has received the kingdom, but to bear him cheerfully for their lord, as knowing that God hath chosen him; for it is not a grievous thing to obey even a foreigner as a ruler, if it be God's

will, but it is fit to rejoice when a brother hath obtained that dignity, since the rest partake of it with him. And I pray that the promises of God may be fulfilled; and that this happiness which he hath promised to bestow upon king Solomon, over all the country, may continue therein for all time to come. And these promises O son, will be firm, and come to a happy end, if thou showest thyself to be a religious and a righteous man, and an observer of the laws of thy country; but if not, expect adversity upon thy disobedience to them."

Now when the king had said this, he left off; but gave the description and pattern of the building of the temple in the sight of them all to Solomon: of the foundations and of the chambers, inferior and superior; how many they were to be, and how large in height and in breadth; as also he determined the weight of the golden and silver vessels: moreover, he earnestly excited them with his words to use the utmost alacrity about the work; he exhorted the rulers also, and particularly the tribe of Levi, to assist him, both because of his youth, and because God had chosen him to take care of the building of the temple, and of the government of the kingdom. He also declared to them that the work would be easy, and not very laborious to them, because he had prepared for it many talents of gold, and more of silver, with timber, and a great many carpenters and stone-cutters, and a large quantity of emeralds, and all sorts of precious stones; and he said, that even now he would give of the proper goods of his own dominion two hundred talents, and three hundred other talents of pure gold, for the most holy place, and for the chariot of God, the

cherubim, which are to stand over and cover the ark. Now when David had done speaking, there appeared great alacrity among the rulers, and the priests, and the Levites, who now contributed and made great and splendid promises for a future Contribution; for they undertook to bring of gold five thousand talents, and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and many ten thousand talents of iron; and if any one had a precious stone he brought it, and bequeathed it to be put among the treasures; of which Jachiel, one of the posterity of Moses, had the care.

Upon this occasion all the people rejoiced, as in particular did David, when he saw the zeal and forward ambition of the rulers, and the priests, and of all the rest; and he began to bless God with a loud voice, calling him the Father and Parent of the universe, and the Author of human and divine things, with which he had adorned Solomon, the patron and guardian of the Hebrew nation, and of its happiness, and of that kingdom which he hath given his son. Besides this, he prayed for happiness to all the people; and to Solomon his son, a sound and a righteous mind, and confirmed in all sorts of virtue; and then he commanded the multitude to bless God; upon which they all fell down upon the ground and worshipped him. They also gave thanks to David, on account of all the blessings which they had received ever since he had taken the kingdom. On the next day he presented sacrifices to God, a thousand bullocks, and as many lambs, which they offered for burnt-offerings. They also offered peace-offerings, and slew many ten thousand sacrifices; and the king feasted all day, together with all the people; and

they anointed Solomon a second time with the oil, and appointed him to be king, and Zadok to be the high priest of the whole multitude. And when they had brought Solomon to the royal palace, and had set him upon his father's throne, they were obedient to him from that day.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WHAT CHARGE DAVID GAVE TO HIS SON SOLOMON AT THE APPROACH OF HIS DEATH, AND HOW MANY THINGS HE LEFT HIM FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

A LITTLE afterward David also fell into a distemper, by reason of his age; and perceiving that he was near to death, he called his son Solomon, and discoursed to him thus: "I am now, O my son, going to my grave, and to my fathers, which is the common way which all men that now are, or shall be hereafter, must go; from which way it is no longer possible to return, and to know any thing that is done in this world. On which account I exhort thee, while I am still alive, though already very near to death, in the same manner as I have formerly said in my advice to thee, to be righteous towards thy subjects, and religious towards God, that hath given thee thy kingdom; to observe his commands and his laws, which he hath sent us by Moses; and neither do thou out of favor nor flattery allow any lust or other passion to weigh with thee to disregard them; for if thou transgressest his laws, thou wilt lose the favor of God, and thou wilt turn away his providence from thee in all things; but if thou behave thyself so as it behooves thee, and as I exhort thee, thou wilt preserve our kingdom

to our family, and no other house will bear rule over the Hebrews but we ourselves for all ages. Be thou also mindful of the transgressions of Joab, the captain of the host, who hath slain two generals out of envy, and those righteous and good men, Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether; whose death do thou avenge as shall seem good to thee, since Joab hath been too hard for me, and more potent than myself, and so hath escaped punishment hitherto. I also commit to thee the son of Barzillai the Gileadite, whom, in order to gratify me, thou shalt have in great honor, and take great care of; for we have not done good to him first, but we only repay that debt which we owe to his father for what he did to me in my flight. There is also Shimei the son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin, who, after he had cast many reproaches upon me, when, in my flight, I was going to Mahanaim, met me at Jordan, and received assurances that he should then suffer nothing. Do thou now seek out for some just occasion, and punish him."

When David had given these admonitions to his son about public affairs, and about his friends, and about those whom he knew to deserve punishment, he died, having lived seventy years, and reigned seven years and six months in Hebron over the tribe of Judah, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem over all the country. This man was of an excellent character, and was endowed with all virtues that were desirable in a king, and in one that had the preservation of so many tribes committed to him; for he was a man of valor in a very extraordinary degree, and went readily and first of all into dangers, when he was to fight

for his subjects, as exciting the soldiers to action by his own labors, and fighting for them, and not by commanding them in a despotic way. He was also of very great abilities in understanding, and apprehension of present and future circumstances, when he was to manage any affairs. He was prudent and moderate, and kind to such as were under any calamities; he was righteous and humane, which are good qualities, peculiarly fit for kings; nor was he guilty of any offense in the exercise of so great an authority, but in the business of the wife of Uriah. He also left behind him greater wealth than any other king, either of the Hebrews or, of other nations, ever did.

He was buried by his son Solomon, in Jerusalem, with great magnificence, and with all the other funeral pomp which kings used to be buried with; moreover, he had great and immense wealth buried with him, the vastness of which may be easily conjectured at by what I shall now say; for a thousand and three hundred years afterward Hyrcanus the high priest, when he was besieged by Antiochus, that was called the Pious, the son of Demetrius, and was desirous of giving him money to get him to raise the siege and draw off his army, and having no other method of compassing the money, opened one room of David's sepulcher, and took out three thousand talents, and gave part of that sum to Antiochus; and by this means caused the siege to be raised, as we have informed the reader elsewhere. Nay, after him, and that many years, Herod the king opened another room, and took away a great deal of money, and yet neither of them came at the coffins of the kings themselves, for their bodies were buried under the

earth so artfully, that they did not appear to even those that entered into their monuments. But so much shall suffice us to have said concerning these matters.

