

1 Chronicles 19 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

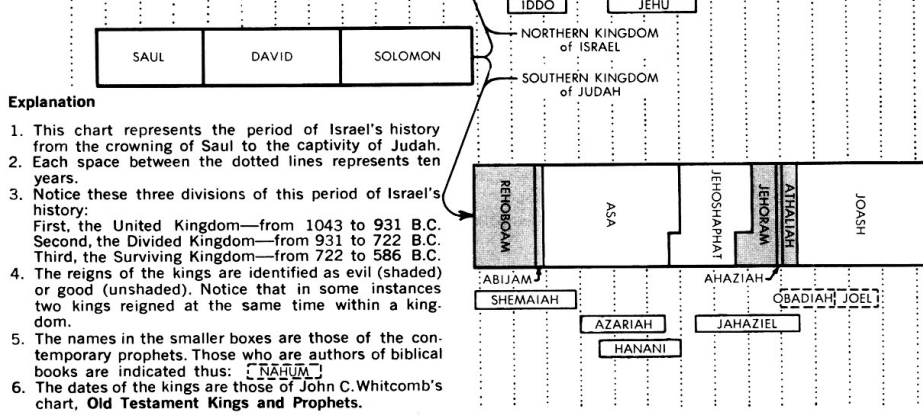
To go directly to that verse

- 1 Chronicles 19:1
- 1 Chronicles 19:2
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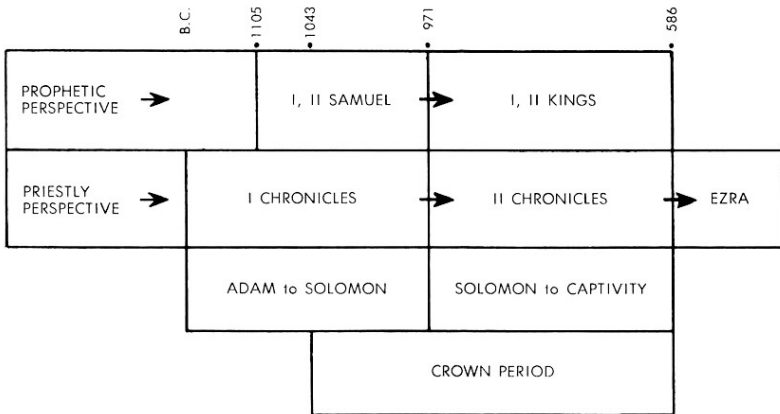
TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19		1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		
<p>Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931 BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that after the division of the Kingdom in 931 BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "Judah" and the Northern Kingdom as "Israel." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.</p>									

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

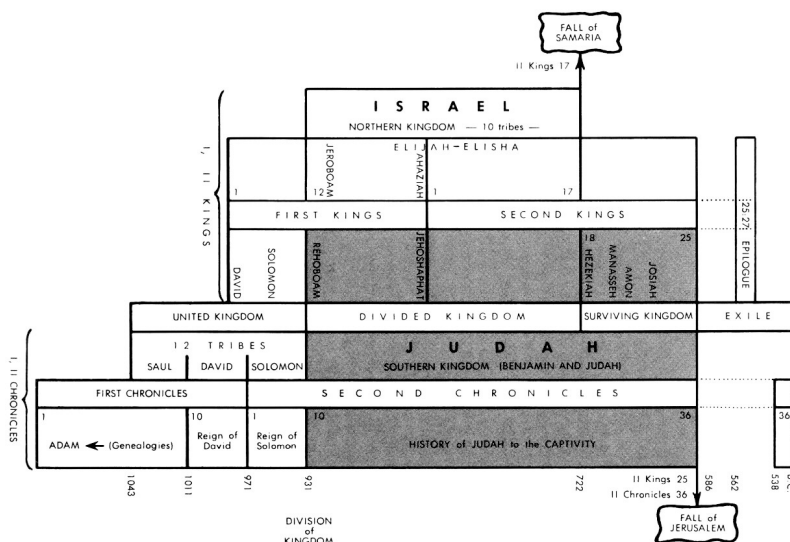
Chart of Kings and Prophets



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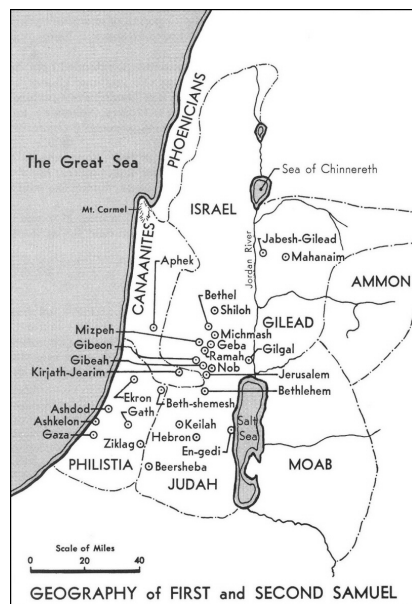


Comparison of 1 Samuel thru 2 Chronicles



FIRST CHRONICLES SUMMARY CHART	
1 Chronicles 1-9:44	1 Chronicles 10:1-39:30
Royal Line of David	Reign of David
12 Tribes of David's Reign	Highlights of David's Reign

Genealogies	History
Ancestry	Activity
1000's of Years	Circa 33 Years



Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel

1 Chronicles 19:1 Now it came about after this, that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon died, and his son became king in his place.

- Nahash: 1Sa 11:1,2 12:12 2Sa 10:1-3

NEW KING OF AMMONITES

This chapter contains the account of David's wars against potential invaders of his territory. It further illustrates the fact that David was a man of war and thus disqualified from building the temple. But once again just as he had been successful in campaigns against the Philistines, Moab, Aram, and Edom, Yahweh also helped him (cf 2Sa 8:6, 14+) and granted him success in his war against Ammon.

August Konkell: When David came to power, he negotiated terms of agreement with Nahash that were successful in maintaining peace. As was the case with treaties, this probably included taxation revenues from the Ammonites. Nahash was succeeded by his son Hanun (2 Sam 10:1; 1 Chron 19:2). The death of a king could trigger instability, as treaties were made between individuals. Even though an heir was appointed before the king's death, the previous agreement could be challenged. David hoped to renew a covenantal agreement (hesed) with the ascension of the new king.

Now it came about after this - After what? If you compare the parallel passages in 2 Samuel, this was after David had shown lovingkindness to Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9, but we cannot be certain if that is what the writer of Chronicles intends since he (surprisingly) does not include the great story of Mephibosheth.

Mark Boda: Chapter 19 begins with the second of three appearances of the phrase wayehi 'akhareken (**some time after this**), which introduces three of the four sections in chapters 18-20 (18:1; 19:1; 20:4; so Japhet 1993:344). Chapters 18 and 19 contain two key contrasts. First, chapter 18 presents David on the offensive, moving out to exert his power, while chapter 19 presents David on the defensive, drawn into war by the arrogant Ammonite and fearful Arameans. Second, while chapter 18 reads more like annals of the exploits of David with shorter descriptions of various battles unrelated to one another, chapter 19 contains a narrative with its own integrity. The original tension is produced by the folly of King Hanun's rebuff of David's sympathy at the death of Hanun's father, the Ammonite king Nahash. This led to a battle between Israel and Ammon that also involved the Arameans.

that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon died, and his son became king in his place Ammon came from one of Lot's daughters (Ge 19:30-38).

J.A. Thompson: This section contains the account of David's wars against potential invaders of his territory. It further illustrates the

fact that David was a man of war and thus disqualified from building the temple. Nevertheless, just as he was successful in campaigns against the Philistines, Moab, Aram, and Edom, so also in his war against Ammon he was granted victory and success, enjoying Yahweh's further blessing on his enterprises. The Chronicler devoted considerable space to the Ammonite campaigns. The account is based on 2 Sam 10:1–11:1; 12:26, 30–31 although it omits the disgraceful affair of David's seduction of Bathsheba. We are not able to place the Ammonite campaign into a chronological perspective although it would seem that David had taken care of Moab and Edom before this so as to obviate any attacks on his southern flank. Perhaps also a secure southern flank would give him confidence to undertake his Aramean campaigns. Perhaps Ammon was also well in control before he embarked on his Aramean adventure.

1 Chronicles 19:2 Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the sons of Ammon to Hanun to console him.

- I will show: 1Sa 30:26 2Sa 9:1,7 2Ki 4:13 Es 6:3 Ec 9:15
- the children: Ge 19:37,38 De 23:3-6 Ne 4:3,7 13:1

DAVID'S DESIRE TO DEMONSTRATE HESED

Then David said, "I will show kindness ([hesed](#); Heb "do loyalty") to [Hanun](#) the son of [Nahash](#), because his father showed kindness ([hesed](#)) to me." During David's fugitive period he not only spent time as a Philistine mercenary but also sought out help from Saul's enemy Nahash of Ammon. This explains David's desire to show kindness in the form of consolation. [Hanun](#) means "gracious" or "favored." [Nahash](#) was defeated by Saul earlier (1 Samuel 11:1-15+). To repay **kindness** is a characteristic of a man after God's own heart! And he was extending an olive branch (so to speak) to Ammon.

Andrew Hill: The parallel account of the Ammonite war is found in 2 Samuel 10:1–19. The biblical record yields no account of an event or events resulting in a pact of friendship between David and the Ammonite king Nahash (1 Chron. 19:1–2). Selman has suggested the relationship may be "best explained by their common hostility toward Saul" (cf. 1 Sam. 11:1–2; 14:47). The use of the word "kindness" (Heb. *hesed*) has covenant connotations and may imply some sort of informal treaty between David and Nahash. Hanun's treatment of David's entourage is interpreted as an annulling of the treaty and an act of belligerence threatening war.

So - For this reason. What reason? To demonstrate kindness tangibly to Hanun. David is showing us that ultimately kindness is (like agape love) is an "action verb," not simply an emotional response!

David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the sons of Ammon to Hanun to console him. What David meant for good (console) evil men saw as bad (conflict).

Guzik - Here he showed kindness towards a pagan king because he sympathized with the loss of his father. David wasn't content to *feel* kindness towards Hanun. He *did* something to bring the grieving man comfort.

Kindness ([02617](#)) [hesed/chesed/heced](#) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, 20, Is 54:5, Je 31:32] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's **hesed** His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8 trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21). **Hesed** expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises. **Vine** writes that...In general, one may identify three basic meanings of **hesed**, and these 3 meanings always interact - **strength**, **steadfastness**, and **love**. Any understanding of **hesed** that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness. **Love** by itself easily becomes sentimentalized or universalized apart from the covenant. Yet **strength** or **steadfastness** suggests only the fulfillment of a legal (or similar) obligation. **Hesed** refers primarily to mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between the parties of a relationship (especially Jehovah and Israel). But **hesed** is not only a matter of obligation but is also of generosity. It is not only a matter of loyalty, but also of mercy. **Hesed** implies personal involvement and commitment in a relationship beyond the rule of law.

Bob Utley on [LOVINGKINDNESS \(\[hesed\]\(#\)\)](#). This term *hesed* (BDB 338 I, KB 336 II) has a wide semantic field.

1. Used in connection to human beings

1. kindness to fellow men (e.g., 1 Sam. 20:14; 2 Sam. 16:17; 2 Chr. 24:22; Job 6:14; Ps. 141:5; Pro. 19:22; 20:6)
2. kindness toward the poor and needy (e.g., Micah 6:8)
3. affection of Israel toward YHWH (cf. Jer. 2:2; Hos. 6:4,6)
4. the temporary beauty of a wild flower (cf. Isa. 40:6)

2. Used in connection to God

1. covenant loyalty and love

1. "in redemption from enemies and troubles" (e.g., Gen. 19:19; 39:21; Exod. 15:13; Ps. 31:16; 32:10; 33:18,22; 36:7,10; 42:8; 44:26; 66:20; 85:7; 90:14; 94:18; 107:8,15,21,31; 109:21-22; 143:8,12; Jer. 31:3; Ezra 7:28; 9:9)
2. "in preservation of life from death" (e.g., Job 10:12; Ps. 6:4-5; 86:13)
3. "in quickening of spiritual life" (e.g., Ps. 119:41,76,88,124,149,159)
4. "in redemption from sin" (cf. Ps. 25:7; 51:1; 130:7-8)
5. "in keeping the covenants" (e.g., Deut. 7:9,12; 2 Chr. 6:14; Neh. 1:5; 9:32; Dan. 9:4; Mic. 7:20)

2. describes a divine attribute (e.g., Exod. 34:6; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; Neh. 9:17; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:20; see [SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD, OT](#))

3. kindness of God

1. "abundant" (e.g., Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:5; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jer. 4:2)
2. "great in extent" (e.g., Exod. 20:6; Deut. 5:10; 7:9)
3. "everlasting" (e.g., 1 Chr. 16:34,41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1,2,3,4,29; 136:1-26; 138:8; Jer. 33:11)
4. like a stronghold (e.g., Ps. 59:17)
5. related to God's power (e.g., Ps. 62:11c-12a)

4. deeds of kindness (e.g., 2 Chr. 6:42; Ps. 89:2; Isa. 55:3; 63:7; Lam. 3:22)

This word is translated many ways in English translations. I think the best summary definition would be "God's no-strings-attached covenant loyalty." In this sense, it is parallel to the NT term "love" (*agapaō*). God is faithful and loving because of who He is!

1 Chronicles 19:3 But the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David is honoring your father, in that he has sent comforters to you? Have not his servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"

- but the princes: 1Sa 29:4,9 1Ki 12:8-11
- Thinkest thou that David: Heb. In thine eyes doth David, 1Co 13:5-7
- to search: Ge 42:9-18 Jos 2:1-3 Jdg 1:23,24 18:2,8-10

Related Passage:

1 Chronicles 19:3 But the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David is honoring your father, in that he has sent comforters to you? Have not his servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"

2 Samuel 8:12 from Aram and Moab and the sons of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

But This is a costly term of contrast for the Ammonites. It marks a change of direction, for the kind reception of David's ambassadors of kindness is falsely interpreted with malicious suspicion to signify evil intent in David.

the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David is honoring your father, in that he has sent comforters to you? Have not his servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land - The **princes** would be leading men in Ammon who would naturally be counselors to the king. It is ironic that the king's counselors were questioning the other king's consolders! This is a sad passage because it shows that sometimes fallen men cannot even receive kindness from another and even put an evil spin on what was meant for good! In a fallen world acts of kindness were sometimes used as a cover for treachery and that was the approach Hanun's counselor's took. The foolish counselors put doubt in King Hanun's mind.

THOUGHT - How you think determines how you act. Be careful from whom you seek counsel! Unwise thoughts they put in your mind can result in foolish acts!

[David Guzik](#) quips that "It is common for liars to suspect others of lying."

NET Note - Heb "Is it not to explore and to overturn and to spy out the land (that) his servants have come to you?" The Hebrew term לַהֲפֹךְ (lahafakh, "to overturn") seems misplaced in the sequence. Some emend the form to לַחְפֹּר (lakhpor, "to spy out"). The sequence of three infinitives may be a conflation of alternative readings.

1 Chronicles 19:4 So Hanun took David's servants and shaved them and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away.

- **took David's:** Ps 35:12 109:4,5
- **shaved them:** Lev 19:27 Isa 15:2 Jer 41:5 48:37
- **and cut:** Isa 20:4 47:2,3
- **sent them:** 2Sa 10:4,5 2Ch 36:16 Mk 12:4 Lu 20:10,11

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 10:4 So Hanun took David's servants and shaved off half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away.

Leviticus 19:27 'You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard.

Isaiah 20:4 so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, **naked and barefoot with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.**

HANUN'S COSTLY HUMILIATION

So Hanun took David's servants and shaved them and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away. - Hebrew literally - "and he cut their robes in the middle unto their buttocks." How embarrassing! It is notable that even today in the middle east to shave off a person's beard is regarded as a great indignity and insult. It is meant to humiliate the person who is shorn! This shaving by Hanun would end up costing him far more than he could have imagined! Sin makes fools out of all of us and Hanun certainly played the fool in listening to his unwise (foolish) counselors!

THOUGHT - Let me repeat it as this principle is so important - Be careful who you make your closest counselors! We see this principle play out in 2 Samuel 13:3-5+ (Amnon's "friend" Jonadab) setting in motion a string of tragic consequences in David's family!

Walton - Beards were a symbol of virility (compare the Assyrian king Shamshi Adad's taunting of his son Yasmah-Addu, saying "Are you not a man—have you no beard?" in the Mari letters). The physical message conveyed by Hanun's act is that Israel would be deprived of its strength and thrown into mourning, with garments torn and heads and beards shaved (see Is 15:2). As representatives of the king, these ambassadors were personally embarrassed by their treatment. However, by extension, David was also shamed, and thus he kept them from public view until the "damage" was no longer visible. (See page 336 in [IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament](#))

Pulpit Commentary: To shave them was an affront to their customs, dignity, and religion: to shave them half added mockery; and to cut off half their garments completed the tale of ignominious and contemptuous insult (... Isaiah 20:4). The beard was held almost in reverence by Easterns.

Mark Boda: As Isaiah 7:20 shows, this shaving probably included all forms of hair on the men's bodies from head to toe; it was a form of official humiliation. By cutting their garments in half, they revealed their private areas, another form of shame (see Isa 47:2-3).

Believer's Study Bible - The shameful treatment of David's envoys by Hanun may represent an act of revenge for Saul's victory over the Ammonites in the days of Hanun's father Nahash (cf. 1Sa 11:1-10). More likely, Hanun was trying to provoke an occasion for war early in David's reign, when he thought his chances of success were better.

Brian Bell - Their beard was the badge of the dignity of manhood. Thus to tamper with a man's beard was the greatest insult....This was a declaration of war!...Years later Solomon's son Rehoboam would make a similar mistake & follow unwise counsel. See 1 Kings 12:6-14.

Bergen - Except for the performance of certain religious rituals (cf. Lev 14:9; Num 6:18; Ezek 5:1) or to express profound emotional distress (cf. Ezra 9:3), Israelite men always wore beards. To remove an Israelite male's beard forcibly was to force him to violate the Torah (cf. Lev 19:27) and to show contempt for him personally (cf. Isa 50:6). Likewise, the removal of the extremities of a garment made that garment unacceptable by Torah standards (cf. Num 15:38; Deut 22:12) and had the effect of symbolically desecrating the law itself (cf. Num 15:39). Of course, the Ammonites' actions also dishonored the Israelite men by forcibly exposing their genitals to public view, a humiliating experience to men of that culture.

(Borrow [1 & 2 Samuel - New American Commentary](#))

David Guzik - In that culture, many men would rather die than have their beards shaved off. This was because a clean-shaven face was the mark of a slave and free men wore beards. To insult the ambassador is to insult the king. It was just as if they had done this to David himself. The same principle is true with King Jesus and His ambassadors. Jesus reminded His disciples: *If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.* (John 15:18)

Keil and Delitzsch "With the value universally set upon the beard by the Hebrews and other Oriental nations, as being man's greatest ornament, the cutting off of one-half of it was the greatest insult that could have been offered to the ambassadors, and through them to David their king."

Adam Clarke - The *beard* is held in high respect in the East: the possessor considers it his greatest ornament; often swears by it; and, in matters of great importance, *pledges* it. Nothing can be more secure than a pledge of this kind; its owner will redeem it at the hazard of his life.

Cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips is a bit too soft of a translation. The **NET** is more accurate = "He cut the lower part of their robes off so that their buttocks were exposed." As Adam Clarke says the pagans did this so that "That the shame of their nakedness might appear, and especially that of their circumcision, so derided by the heathen."

Walton - Hanun's treatment of David's men. David's messengers have half their beards shaved (symbolically emasculating them and by extension David) and "their garments [were cut] in the middle at their hips," leaving them naked like slaves or captives (see Is 20:4). These men were ambassadors and as such were entitled to both respect and diplomatic immunity. What may seem like a "prank" was in fact a direct challenge to David's power and authority, and precipitated a war between the two nations. David could not allow such an obvious "rape" or symbolic castration of his representatives to go unavenged. A review of Assyrian royal annals (Sargon II, Sennacherib and Ashurbanipal) contains justifications for a declaration of war based on a violation of a sworn agreement or the physical challenging of Assyrian authority. Although the annals are not as graphic as this example, they also serve as a "dropping of the gauntlet" in political terms. (See page 335 in [IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament](#))

TSK - The beard is held in high respect and greatly valued in the East: the possessor considers it as his greatest ornament; often swears by it; and, in matters of great importance, pledges it; and nothing can be more secure than such a pledge; for its owner will redeem it at the hazard of his life. The beard was never cut off but in mourning, or as a sign of slavery. It is customary to shave the Ottoman princes, as a mark of their subjection to the reigning emperor. The beard is a mark of authority and liberty among the Mohammedans. The Persians who clip the beard, and shave above the jaw, are reputed heretics. They who serve in the {seraglios} have their beards shaven, as a sign of servitude; nor do they suffer them to grow till the sultan has set them at liberty. Among the Arabians, it is more infamous for anyone to appear with his beard cut off, than among us to be publicly whipped or branded; and many would prefer death to such a punishment.

1 Chronicles 19:5 Then certain persons went and told David about the men. And he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards grow, and then return."

- and told David: Mt 18:31
- at Jericho: Jos 6:24-26 1Ki 16:34
- your beards: Jdg 16:22

DAVID'S MEN GIVEN LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN JERICHO

Then certain persons went and told David about the men. And he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards grow, and then return - David did not bring them back to the palace in their humiliated condition but showed compassion and concern for their personal dignity and honor by allowing them to wait in an out of the way city before returning to Jerusalem. This is another mark of a man after God's own heart!

Utley on why Jericho - It is one of the most ancient cities in all the ANE. It was rebuilt and destroyed many times. It was not a large city during this period and it was on the border of Israel and Ammon, but on the western side of Jordan. It was a good, quiet, insignificant place for these men to regrow their beards.

1 Chronicles 19:6 When the sons of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the sons of Ammon sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from Mesopotamia, from Aram-maacah and from Zobah.

- had made: Lu 10:16 1Th 4:8
- odious: Heb. to stink, Ge 34:30 Ex 5:21 1Sa 13:4 27:12 Ps 14:3 *margins
- a thousand: 2Ch 16:2,3 25:6 27:5 Ps 46:9
- Syriamaachah: 2Sa 10:6
- Zobah: 2Ch 18:3,5,9 1Sa 14:47 2Sa 8:3 1Ki 11:23,24

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 8:3; 5; 12 (DAVID HAD PREVIOUSLY DEFEATED THE ARAMEANS AND ZOBAB) Then David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River....5 When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 Arameans.

2 Samuel 10:6 Now when the sons of Ammon saw that they had become odious to David, the sons of Ammon sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob with 12,000 men.

Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global

AMMON FEARFUL AND HIRES MERCENARIES

When the sons of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious ([baash](#); Lxx - [Kataischuno](#) - put to shame, dishonored, disfigured) **to David, Hanun and the sons of Ammon sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots** ([rekeb](#)) **and horsemen from Mesopotamia, from Aram-maacah and from Zobah.** - Note on the Map above the location of Ammon, which is the center of the conflict and is located just east of the City of David (Jerusalem). Then note to the north of Ammon are the states of Syria (aka Arameans) and north to them Zobah, nations from which Ammon hired mercenaries paying "**1,000 talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen.**" (1Ch 19:6).

NET Note - on **talents** - The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (kikar, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the Ammonites hired chariots and charioteers for about **33.7 tons (30,600 kg) of silver.**

Wikipedia tells us a talent was the weight of a man (or roughly 50 kg) in gold. It also states that 6000 talents, which is the bribe paid by king Auletes of Egypt to become king of Egypt to Julius Caesar, was worth \$8,400,699,422.80 today. So **1000 talents** would be **well over a billion dollars** today. Ammon was willing to pay a high price, but money would not save them, for God was with David's forces!

One is reminded of David's words in Ps 20:7[±]

"Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God." (Amen and amen)

Bob Utley on **become odious** - This VERB (Niphal PERFECT) denotes a bad smell from something rotting (i.e., Qal, Exod. 7:18,21; 8:10; 16:20; Isa. 50:2). The Niphal is also used in (1) Israel odious to the Philistines (2) Ammonites to David (3) Absalom to David What they did to David's representatives would elicit a military response.

Martin Selman: The Ammonites realized that they had literally 'made themselves stink' (v. 6), a word used for decaying animal or vegetable matter (e.g. Exod. 7:18, 8:10; 16:20; Isa. 50:2) and applied metaphorically where relationships had totally collapsed (e.g.

Gen 34:30; 1 Sam. 27:12; 2 Sam. 16:21).

Bob Utley on **hired** - Ammon tried to bolster their military with mercenaries (Josephus, Antiq. 7.1.1, says he sent one thousand talents). (1) Syrians from the city of Beth-rehob (2) Syrians from the city of Zobah, from both #1 and #2 about 20,000 foot soldiers (3) from Maacah (Syrian Kingdom south of Mt. Hermon, but in the trans-Jordan, east, 1,000 men. Remember, "thousand" has a wide semantic field. It can refer to a military unit. [THOUSAND \(eleph\)](#)

Walton - coalition. Very often small states or kingdoms would ally together against a common enemy. In this case, Ammon, feeling the need to strengthen its position against David, enlisted the help of the Arameans. Twenty divisions of troops came from Beth Rehob on the border between Syria and Israel (in the vicinity of the Huleh Valley near Tel Dan—see Jdg 18:28), and from Zobah in the northern Beqa Valley. The former city is also mentioned in Egyptian records from the time of Thutmose III. See the comment on 2 Samuel 8:3 for other conflicts between Israel and the Aramean king Hadadezer. Maacah also lies southeast of Beth Rehob, south of Mount Hermon and east of the Jordan. The last group of soldiers (twelve divisions) come from Tob (et-Tayibeh, twelve miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee in Gilead). The list of allies thus names the regions from north to south, covering the territory from the Orontes to the territory of Ammon. (See page 336 in [IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament](#))

Odious (grow foul, stink)([0887](#)) **baash** means to have a bad smell or to stink. To be repulsive. It denotes a bad physical smell (blood in the Nile - Ex 7:21) or odor of spoiled manna (Ex 16:20). In a figurative sense, it speaks of a person who becomes strongly revolting to another, a metaphorical "stench in the nostrils."

Louis Goldberg - When Moses struck the water of the Nile, the fish died and the river became foul (Ex 7:18, 21). After the plague of the frogs, the land was foul (stank). When some tried to save their allotted share of manna, it bred worms and emitted a stink (Ex 16:20). But the double portion gathered on the sixth day did not become foul (Exodus 16:24). This term, stink, is also used by the Hebrew foremen of the Israelite slave force who complained to Moses and Aaron that they had made Israel's savour odious in Pharaoh's presence (Ex 5:21). Other usages for stink or foul: David cried out because his wounds were foul and festering on account of his folly (Ps 38:5). Jacob exclaimed to Levi and Simeon that their actions caused him to be odious to the people of Canaan with drastic consequences (Ge 34:30). Qohelet says that dead flies ferment and make perfumed oil stink (Eccl 10:1). The idea of abhorrence is seen in David's decision to fight for the Philistines. They thought that David had made himself odious to the Israelites (1 Sa 27:12). The affair of Absalom and his father's concubines was calculated to make Absalom abhorrent to David and to bring about misunderstanding between father and son (2 Sa 16:21). Other shades of meaning are seen in the actions of wicked men who are loathsome (or act disgustingly, Pr 13:5). Thus this word either describes objects that have a foul odor, bad relationships between people creating abhorrence, and the general principle that evil deeds are so rotten that they have a bad smell in God's nostrils. (See [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

Baash - acts disgustingly(1), became foul(3), become foul(2), become odious(2), grow foul(1), made(1), made themselves odious(1), made yourself odious(1), making me odious(1), odious*(1), stink(2), surely made(1), surely made himself odious(1). Ge 34:30; Ex 5:21; Ex 7:18; Ex 7:21; Ex 8:14; Ex 16:20; Ex 16:24; 1 Sa 13:4; 1 Sa 27:12; 2 Sa 10:6; 2 Sa 16:21; 1 Chr. 19:6; Ps 38:5; Pr 13:5; Eccl 10:1; Isa 50:2

Chariots (upper millstone) ([07393](#))(**rekeb** from **rakab** = to mount and ride) charito or a group of chariots, that is, used collectively of an entire force of "military chariotry" (Ex 14:7) **Vine** says "This use of rekeb might well be rendered "chariot-units" (the chariot, a driver, an offensive and a defensive man)." Note the root word is **rakab** meaning to ride so the **upper millstone** *rides* as it were or moves over the fixed nether stone. Interesting derivation! See [Wikipedia](#)

1 Chronicles 19:7 So they hired for themselves 32,000 chariots, and the king of Maacah and his people, who came and camped before Medeba. And the sons of Ammon gathered together from their cities and came to battle.

- hired: 1Ch 18:4 Ex 14:9 Jdg 4:3 1Sa 13:5 2Ch 14:9 Ps 20:7-9
- the king of Maachah: This variation exists only in the translation, the original being the same in both places, {melech maachah,} "the king of Maachah." 2Sa 10:6, king Maachah
- Medeba: Nu 21:30 Jos 13:9 Isa 15:2

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 10:6 Now when the sons of Ammon saw that they had become odious to David, the sons of Ammon sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of

Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob with 12,000 men.

So they hired for themselves 32,000 chariots - Thirty-two thousand soldiers, exclusive of the thousand sent by the Maachah, are mentioned in the parallel passage (2 Sa 10:6;) but of **chariots** or cavalry there is no mention; and the number of **chariots** stated here is prodigious, and beyond all credibility. But as the word {[rekeb](#)} denotes not only a chariot, but a rider, (see Isa 21:7 - riders = [rekeb](#)) it ought most probably to be rendered here, in a collective sense, cavalry; and then the number of troops will exactly agree with the passage in Samuel. It is probable that they were a kind of auxiliary troops who were usually mounted on horses, or in chariots, but who occasionally served as foot-soldiers.

and the king of Maacah and his people, who came and camped before Medeba. And the sons of Ammon gathered together from their cities and came to battle - Maacah (means oppression) and was the name of a small Syrian kingdom near Geshur, east of the Hauran, the district of Batanea (Josh. 13:13; 2 Sam. 10:6,8; 1 Chr. 19:7).

ISBE - Maacah - ma'-a-ka (ma`akhah; Septuagint: Codex Vaticanus Mocha; Codex Alexandrinus Maacha): A small Syrian kingdom adjoining that of Geshur on the western border of Bashan, the inhabitants of which are called Maachathites (the Revised Version (British and American) "Maacathites"), whose territory was taken by Jair (Dt 3:14; Josh 12:5). The border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites and all Mt. Hermon were given to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Josh 13:11). The inhabitants of these kingdoms, however, were not driven out by Israel (Josh 13:13), and at a later day the children of Ammon hired mercenaries from Maacah for their encounter with David. The armies met near Medeba when the "Syrians" from Maacah found themselves opposed to Joab. That famous captain completely routed them (2 Sam 10:6 ff the Septuagint has "Amalek"). In 1 Ch 19:6 it is called Aram-maacah, Syria-maacah (the King James Version); and in 1 Ch 2:23 "Aram" appears instead of "Maacah."

It evidently lay between Geshur on the South and Hermon on the North, being probably bounded by Jordan on the West, although no certain indication of boundaries is now possible. They would thus be hemmed in by Israel, which accounts for `Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel" (Josh 13:13). It is possible that Abel-beth-maacah may have been a colony founded by men from Maacah.

1 Chronicles 19:8 When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army, the mighty men.

- Joab: 1Ch 11:6,10-47 2Sa 23:8-39

DAVID RETALIATES WITH FORCE

When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army, the mighty men. This is the first time David's **mighty men** were actually referred to as the **army**. Notice that David sent Joab his commander but did not go into the battle himself. Was this a pattern that would soon set him up for his greatest failure (2Sa 11:1)? Perhaps.

Guzik comments "It's important to understand that David was nothing without his mighty men, and they were nothing without him. He was their leader, but a leader is nothing without followers – and David had an **army of the mighty men** to follow him. These men didn't necessarily *start* as mighty men; many were the distressed, indebted, and discontented people who followed David at Adullam Cave (1 Samuel 22:1-2+) (**ED**: THIS IS ANOTHER MARKER OF DAVID A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART WHO COULD TAKE DISCARDS AND MAKE THEM INTO MIGHTY MEN!). One of these mighty men was Adino the Eznite – famous for killing 800 men at one time (2 Samuel 23:8). Another was Jashobeam who killed 300 men at one time (1 Chronicles 11:11). Another was Benaiah who killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day and killed a huge Egyptian warrior with his own spear (1 Chronicles 11:22-23).

1 Chronicles 19:9 The sons of Ammon came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the field.

- put the battle: 1Sa 17:2 2Sa 18:4 2Ch 13:3 14:10 Isa 28:6 Jer 50:42 Joe 2:5
- the kings: 2Sa 10:8 1Ki 20:1,24

THE ENEMY FORCES SURROUND ISRAELITES

The sons of Ammon came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city,- this was at the city of Medeba, a city upon the borders of the Ammonites, and in their possession and about 20 miles SW of Amman (present capital of Jordan). They intended to trap David's armies with a two-flank attack and pin his army between the Ammonites on one side and their allies on the other.

and the kings who had come were by themselves in the field- The parallel passage says "**while the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the field.**" (2Sa 10:8) - While the specific location of the forces in the field is not described, from the context it is clearly meant to set a surprise trap and enclose David's forces from the front and the rear.

Bell - Joab faced 2 armies who were using the famed military maneuver called The Pincer Movement. [Pincer: like pliers or lobster claw. 1 coming from the north, the other from the south]

Morgan - It is interesting to observe that in his arrangements he made no allowance for the possibility of ultimate defeat in his conflict with Ammon.... It does not seem to have occurred to him that the combination might have been too much for both of them."

1 Chronicles 19:10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him in front and in the rear, he selected from all the choice men of Israel and they arrayed themselves against the Arameans.

NET 1 Chronicles 19:10 When Joab saw that the battle would be fought on two fronts, he chose some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans.

CSB 1 Chronicles 19:10 When Joab saw that there was a battle line in front of him and another behind him, he chose some men out of all the elite troops of Israel and lined up in battle formation to engage the Arameans.

ESV 1 Chronicles 19:10 When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them against the Syrians.

NIV 1 Chronicles 19:10 Joab saw that there were battle lines in front of him and behind him; so he selected some of the best troops in Israel and deployed them against the Arameans.

NLT 1 Chronicles 19:10 When Joab saw that he would have to fight on both the front and the rear, he chose some of Israel's elite troops and placed them under his personal command to fight the Arameans in the fields.

- **when Joab:** 2Sa 10:9-14
- **set against:** Jos 8:22 Jdg 20:42,43

JOAB FACES THE ARAMEANS IN FIELD

Now when Joab saw that the battle (Heb. face of the battle) **was set against him in front and in the rear, he selected from all the choice men of Israel and they arrayed themselves against the Arameans** - Joab trapped by enemy forces front and behind. Note he uses wisdom in dividing forces but he leaves it in the hand of the LORD (v13), a good pattern for all of us when we feel the enemy has us essentially surrounded!

NET Note - Hebrew = "and Joab saw that the face of the battle was to him before and behind and he chose from all the best in Israel and arranged to meet Aram."

1 Chronicles 19:11 But the remainder of the people he placed in the hand of Abshai his brother; and they arrayed themselves against the sons of Ammon.

- **Abishai:** Heb. Abshai, 1Ch 11:20 18:12
- **and they set:** 1Ch 19:9

ABISHAI COMMANDS THE SECOND BATTALION

But the remainder of the people he placed in the hand of Abshai his brother; and they arrayed themselves against the sons of Ammon. - Joab is preparing to take the tactic of "divide and conquer" and giving one division into the hands of his brother. Joab was wise because he knew that battle on two fronts would best be won by each of his armies being commanded by different commanders. But as noted he was even wiser to know that ultimately the battle was the LORD'S (v13)!

1 Chronicles 19:12 He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the sons of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you.

- If the Syrians: Ne 4:20 Ec 4:9-12 Ga 6:2 Php 1:27,28

WE WILL BE READY TO HELP THE ONE IN TROUBLE

He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the sons of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you. - Joab's forces would meet the mercenaries in the field who are seeking to trap him in a two-flank attack. Abishai's forces would attack the Ammonite forces in the city. Joab realized that a smaller force could fight a two-front battle to its own advantage if both commanders kept their heads and supplied reinforcements to the other front as needed.

Ron Daniel: This was an inspired plan. Each army was outnumbered, and would be forced to rely upon God for the victory. But each was also to keep an eye on his brother, to offer support if it was needed. How similar is this to our lives as Christians? We fight the good fight, and must rely upon God to win. However, there are times when we are being defeated, and need a brother to come and offer his support. There are other times when we see a brother beginning to stumble and be defeated. It is our obligation to step in and raise him up again, so that the battle will be won.

1 Chronicles 19:13 "Be strong, and let us show ourselves courageous for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what is good in His sight."

KJV 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight.

NET 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be strong! Let's fight bravely for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! The LORD will do what he decides is best!"

CSB 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be strong! We must prove ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God. May the LORD's will be done."

ESV 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be strong, and let us use our strength for our people and for the cities of our God, and may the LORD do what seems good to him."

NIV 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be strong and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. The LORD will do what is good in his sight."

NLT 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be courageous! Let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. May the LORD's will be done."

NRS 1 Chronicles 19:13 Be strong, and let us be courageous for our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him."

- **Be strong** : De 31:6,7 Jos 1:7 10:25 1Sa 4:9 14:6-12 17:32 2Sa 10:12 Ezr 10:4 Ne 4:14 Ps 27:14 1Co 16:13
- **et us show ourselves courageous**: In Samuel, "let us play the men;" but the original is the same in both places, {nithchazzak}.
- let the Lord: Jdg 10:15 1Sa 3:18 2Sa 15:26 16:10,11 Job 1:22

JOAB'S KEY TO VICTORY COMMIT THE OUTCOME TO YAHWEH

Be strong ([chazaq](#); Lxx - [enischuo](#) = recover from loss of strength),, **and let us show ourselves courageous** ([chazaq](#); Lxx -

[andrizo](#) - see 1Co 16:13 [below](#)) **for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God**;- Hebrew literally = “and the LORD will do what is good in his eyes.” Notice the oft repeated “mysterious” (but very real) juxtaposition of Joab and Abishai doing their part (man’s responsibility) while at the same time trusting in Yahweh’s goodness (God’s sovereignty).

Frederick Mabie Joab’s words to his military leaders are reminiscent of the words spoken to Joshua as the Israelites prepared to enter the Promised Land (cf. Dt 31:7–8; Jos 1:5–9). To be strong, biblically speaking, is to be immovably committed to obedience and trust in God. Moreover, Joab reminds his warriors that their efforts ultimately protect their kin and people back home (“our people”) as well as God’s ultimate ownership of the land and cities (cf. Lev 25:23), especially Jerusalem (cf. Ps 48; cf. Selman, 195). Finally, note that Joab’s exhortation is rooted in the notion of God’s sovereign rule and ultimate goodness (“The LORD will do what is good in his sight”). While the Ammonites and Arameans retreat, two more series of battles (vv.16–19 and 1Ch 20:1–3) will be needed before the Ammonites are completely subdued.

and may the LORD do what is good in His sight NET= “The LORD will do what he decides is best!” **CSB** = “May the LORD’s will be done.” **ESV** “may the LORD do what seems good to him.” **NIV** The LORD will do what is good in his sight.” This is trusting in Jehovah and His will for this battle. Joab is leaving it in the hands of Yahweh! Most of these modern translations make Joab’s words a prayer for the LORD’S will to be done. The NIV sees it as a declarative statement. Both translations show Joab’s trust is in the LORD. Of course the fact that they are fighting for **the cities of our God** would certainly support that the good the LORD would do would be to support those fighting for His cities and His people Israel and not to support those who are fighting against them. One is reminded of Paul’s wonderful words “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?” (Ro 8:31+).

Andrew Hill: Joab concludes his precombat exhortation with a prayer, committing the outcome of the battle to the sovereignty and goodness of God (19:13b). Expressions of such trust in the providence of Yahweh are an important feature of the Chronicler’s theology of hope for post-exilic Judah (**ED: REMEMBER CHRONICLES WAS WRITTEN AFTER THE EXILE IN BABYLON TO ENCOURAGE THE RETURNING EXILES**)(cf. 2 Chron. 19:11; 20:15; 32:7–8).

Utley makes a good point - This passage shows the sense of national duty felt by the Israeli soldiers (**for the sake of our people**), but also the deep conviction that YHWH was with them (and He needed to be, since the Israelite army was vastly outnumbered). He was the key to victory in battle. However, this theological worldview (cf. 1Sa 3:18; 2Ch 19:11; 1Ch 32:7-8) did not keep them from strategizing (vv. 9-11). Somehow in the mystery of life both parts are important.

David Guzik on **Be strong, and let us show ourselves courageous** - Courage and strength are not matters of feeling and circumstance. They are matters of choice, especially when God makes His strength available to us. We can *be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might* (Ephesians 6:10).

THOUGHT - Paul gives the saints at Corinth and by application all of us a similar exhortation for we are all in warfare against strong (invisible) forces -- 1 Corinthians 16:13-14+ **Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.** (Note there are five [present imperatives](#) all of which require us [to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey.](#)) The verb **act like men** ([andrizo](#)) is the same verb used in the Septuagint for **let us show ourselves courageous.**

David Guzik on **for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God** Joab called them to remember *all they had to lose*. If they lost this battle they would lose both their **people** and their **cities**. This was a battle bigger than themselves, and the army of the mighty men had to remember that.

Martin Selman has a different take on Joab’s words writing “Joab was not known as a “religious person.” His immoral behavior at some instances indicates this. His pious remarks may have been more intended to install trust in God among his troops than an expression of his own faith. Joab must have realized that people who trusted in a “superior power” are better fighters than those who trust in their own strength. A more modern example is General Patton’s prayer at the invasion of Nazi Germany during WWII. The opening words of his prayer in front of his troops, “Lord, this is Patton speaking ...” have become famous.”

Be strong (Harden, encourage, hold fast, prevail, repair, seize) [02388](#) **chazaq** conveys the basic meaning of to be or become strong, to make strong or strengthen, in the Hiphil to take hold of or seize (“retain His anger” - Mic 7:18+), in the Hithpael to strengthen oneself (to take courage 1 Sa 30:6). To be courageous. To overpower. Chazaq describes strength - severity of a famine (a “strong” famine) (2 Ki 25:3, Jer 52:6), strength of humans to overpower (David and Goliath 1 Sa 17:50, cf 1 Sa 17:35 = seized; Amnon and Tamar = 2 Sa 13:14), in a battle, to capture (2 Chr 8:3), Samson’s last demonstration of supernatural strength he prays “please strengthen me” (Jdg 16:28). Used in the charge “Be strong and courageous” (Josh 1:6, 7, 9,18, Josh 10:25, “be firm” = Josh 23:6; “Be strong and courageous” = Dt 31:6-7, 23). Chazaq used 12 times in Ex 4-14 of hardening Pharaoh’s heart (cf similar use in Josh 11:20). In a great passage in Da 11:32+ we read ““By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength (chazaq) and take action.””

F B Meyer - 2 Samuel 10:12 The Lord do that which seemeth Him good.

Israel was arrayed against overwhelming odds. To human sight it must have appeared very improbable that Joab would be able to hold his own. However, he made the best arrangements he could; exhorted his men to be of good courage and do their utmost; and then piously left the issue to the God of battles.

There are times in all lives when the case seems desperate. How can we meet with ten thousand him who cometh against us with twenty thousand! Heart and flesh fail. What resource is there, then, save in the flight of the lonely man to the only God? It is for God to act, since the help of man is vain.

In your personal straits.— When patience is exhausted; when the last handful is taken from the barrel; when complicated trials meet and hem you in; when the iron gate and the keepers before the door appear to render escape impossible— then look up, God is marching with reinforcements to your aid.

In your work and war for God in the world.— We too often act and speak as if success were to be won by the forces that we may be able to bring into the field, whereas God asks us for nothing more than fidelity and the right disposition of such forces as we can command; He will do all the rest.

In your outlook on the conflict between good and evil.— It is quite true that there appears to be an infinite disparity between the one and the other. But there are other forces in the field than appear. There is another host of which God Himself is captain. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven to thy help."

G Campbell Morgan -Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good. -2 Sam. 10.12

This was the language of the highest patriotism. The difficulties had arisen as the result of another action of David which had been prompted by goodwill. He had sent to comfort Hanun, the new king of Ammon, upon the death of his father. The action had been replied to insultingly, with the result that Israel was forced into war with these children of Ammon, and the Syrians. As the battle was prepared for, Joab uttered these words to his brother Abishai. Observe the elements of patriot-ism as revealed in them. The first matter was personal to those called upon to fight. They were to be of good courage, and to play the men. All the arrangements for the conflict, and its issue, show how these men fulfilled this responsibility. But a deeper note is struck in what follows. They were to do all this for their people and for the cities of their God. There was to be nothing of the passion for personal aggrandisement in what they did. They were to act for the high purposes represented in the people of God, and the cities of God. Personal courage was to be inspired by relative considerations. Then came the deepest note of all. When, in view of the interests of the nation they had done all that was possible, then "Jehovah do what seemeth Him good." Men who thus prepare themselves for high enterprise, and then commit themselves wholly to the will of God are invincible. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

F B Meyer - 1 Chronicles 19:13—Let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God

Those were days in which rough soldiers, like Joab, did not hesitate to speak freely of God to their companions in arms. It is a sorry thing that it is considered a breach of etiquette to mention God's name in polite society. "It is not good form!"

We are reminded in these words of Joab of Cromwell's memorable advice to trust in God and keep the powder dry. David's General felt that the ultimate issue of the battle must be left to God; but that nothing could absolve him and his soldiers from doing their best. They, at least, must make careful dispositions for the fight, and show themselves valiant.

This balance of statement and thought between God's work and ours is an evidence of fine Christian sanity. We must believe that God is the ultimate arbiter, but we must ever speak and act as though the responsibility were entirely on ourselves. To believe that God will do all, and therefore to do nothing, is as bad as to believe that God leaves us to our unaided endeavors. We believe in the strength and sufficiency of God's purpose; but we know that there is a link in the chain of causation which we must supply.

The servant of God who counts most absolutely on the communion and cooperation of the Divine Spirit will be most careful in making all needful disposition for the fight. He will leave no stone unturned to secure the victory, though he knows that the ultimate decision rests with God. The conquests of the cross recorded in the Acts of the Apostles were the result of the united action of the Holy Spirit and the men who were sent forth with the message of the gospel. "We are laborers together with God."

1 Chronicles 19:14 So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to the battle against the Arameans, and they fled before him.

- they fled: 1Ki 20:13,19-21,28-30 2Ch 13:5-16 Jer 46:15,16

ARAMEANS FLED

So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to the battle against the Arameans, and they fled before him- Observe the verbs - **drew near....they fled!** Where is the clashing of swords? This is an amazing passage, for it does not even state that Joab (who surely was outnumbered) even lifted a sword or a spear against the adversary. Once again is this not evidence that God was with David (recall the phrase his **help** - cf 2Sa 8:6, 14+) and with David's armies, so that the battle was the LORD'S? Note that had all of David's army (verse 7 says "Joab and all the army, the mighty men") been annihilated here, the fate of David's reign (which God had promised by covenant would last) would not have endured!

1 Chronicles 19:15 When the sons of Ammon saw that the Arameans fled, they also fled before Abshai his brother and entered the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

- they likewise: Lev 26:7 Ro 8:31

AMMON ALSO FLED ISRAEL

When the sons of Ammon saw that the Arameans fled, they also fled before Abshai his brother and entered the city. Indeed, is not 2 Samuel 10:13-14 not a perfect fulfillment of God's promise in Deuteronomy 28:7+ - "The LORD shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways."

Then Joab came to Jerusalem - The victors return from the battle.

1 Chronicles 19:16 When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the River, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer leading them.

- and drew: Ps 2:1 Isa 8:9 Mic 4:11,12 Zec 14:1-3
- river: that is, Euphrates
- Shophach: 2Sa 10:16, Shobach

THE ARAMEANS ATTEMPT A SECOND TIME TO DEFEAT DAVID

When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the River, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer leading them. Israel's enemies were defeated but not demolished so they regroup in another attempt to defeat David's forces. In this second campaign, Hadadezer enlisted the support of the Arameans beyond the Euphrates.

1 Chronicles 19:17 When it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and came upon them and drew up in formation against them. And when David drew up in battle array against the Arameans, they fought against him.

- upon them: Instead of {alaihem,} "upon them," it is in 2 Sa 10:17 {chelamah,} "to Helam:" the one seems evidently to be a mistake for the other.
- and set: 1Ch 19:9 Isa 22:6,7

Related Passage:

2 Samuel 10:17 Now when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and

came to Helam. And the Arameans arrayed themselves to meet David and fought against him.

DAVID LEADS THE FORCES IN THE SECOND BATTLE

When it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and came upon them (and came to Helam - 2Sa 10:17) and drew up in formation against them. And when David drew up in battle array against the Arameans, they fought against him

1 Chronicles 19:18 The Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed of the Arameans 7,000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers, and put to death Shophach the commander of the army.

- fled before Israel: 1Ch 19:13,14 Ps 18:32 33:16 46:11
- seven thousand: In the parallel passage, "the men of seven hundred chariots;" which difference probably arose from mistaking [Nuwn,] {noon final}, which stands for 700, for [Zayin,] {zayin,} with a dot above, which denotes 7,000, or vice versa: the great similarity of these letters might easily cause the one to be mistaken for the other.
- footmen: If these troops were as we have suppose, a kind of dismounted cavalry, the terms footmen and horsemen might be indifferently applied to them. 2Sa 10:18, horsemen

DAVID'S VICTORY OVER THE ARAMEANS KILLING THEIR GENERAL

The Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed of the Arameans 7,000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers, and put to death Shophach the commander of the army. - The passage has "David killed of the Arameans 7,000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers" so there is almost certainly a copyist's error because the Hebrew characters for "700" and "7000" are very easy to interchange. The discrepancy of 40,000 horsemen (2Sa 10:18) and 40,000 foot soldiers is explained by the fact that the same men could fight either on horseback or on foot, as needed. Shophach (or Shobach, 2Sa 10:16), Hadadezer's general, is killed in battle.

[Utley](#) adds "The Jewish Study Bible (p. 1750) makes the comment that the Chronicler expands the numbers in 2 Samuel 10 to glorify David's victory. The NASB Study Bible (p. 577) says it was a copyist's mistake in Samuel. This shows the two ways of viewing these number differences (i.e., literary or scribal error). See *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, pp. 51-54, 239-240, which supports the numbers in Chronicles. The best book on the number differences involved in the OT historical books is Edwin R. Thiele, [The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings](#)."

Walter Kaiser on [page 195 in Hard Sayings in the Bible](#)- How Many Charioteers?

The Chronicles account says that David killed **seven thousand charioteers**, but 2 Samuel 10:18 gives the number as **seven hundred**. Some claim that this illustrates a tendency for the chronicler to somewhat magnify David's stature and character. Is this an accurate assessment of the habits of the chronicler, or is there some adequate explanation for this discrepancy?

1 Chronicles 18:4-5 is the fullest and best statement of what took place at this encounter. If this is true, the Chronicles figure of seven thousand charioteers, or horsemen, is no doubt the correct figure and the one that lies behind the transcriptional error of seven hundred in 2 Samuel 10:18. Note that some **Septuagintal texts** of 2 Samuel 10:18 agree with Chronicles. Furthermore, the forty thousand "foot soldiers" of Chronicles is the correct reading, not "horsemen" as in Samuel, for the figure matches closely, as a rounded number, the twenty thousand plus twenty-two thousand foot soldiers given in 1 Chronicles 18:4-5. This seems to be the best solution to the problem.

The present Hebrew manuscripts for the books of 1 and 2 Samuel have more transcriptional errors in them than any other book or combination of books in the Old Testament. From the preliminary checks seen in the Dead Sea Scroll manuscripts of Samuel, the Greek translation of the Septuagint appears to reflect a much better Hebrew manuscript. (NOTE: Some preliminary but as yet unpublished reports from the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumran do indicate that at least some readings of the Dead Sea Scroll copies of Samuel are in agreement with readings previously found only in Chronicles. See Frank M. Cross Jr., [The Ancient Library of Qumran](#), rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1961), pp. 188-91, and Ralph W. Klein, [Textual Criticism of the Old Testament](#) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), pp. 42-50.)

Another attempt to resolve this problem suggests that when Samuel talked about the "[men of] chariots" or "[men of the] chariot divisions" (to which the seven hundred presumably belonged), he was speaking of a separate group of personnel from the (seven

thousand) “charioteers,” but no evidence exists to support this distinction.

The discrepancy is a problem of the correct text of Samuel and does not support the thesis that the chronicler had a tendency to magnify numbers in order to glorify David.

1 Chronicles 19:19 So when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and served him. Thus the Arameans were not willing to help the sons of Ammon anymore.

- **the servants:** Ge 14:4,5 Jos 9:9-11 2Sa 10:19 1Ki 20:1,12 Ps 18:39,44 Isa 10:8
- **were not willing:** 1Ch 14:17 Ps 48:3-6

ARAMEANS MAKE PEACE WITH DAVID

So when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and served him. Thus the Arameans were not willing to help the sons of Ammon anymore - Although there is now a chapter break, clearly the Ammonites are not completely defeated, for the parallel account in 2 Samuel 11:1 says "Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah (capital of Ammon). But David stayed at Jerusalem." 2 Samuel 12 tells us David and Israel finally defeated the Ammonites (after David confessed his sin which he had covered up almost 12 months, making the powerful point that when we are in unconfessed sin, we are in danger of suffering defeat by our enemies the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#) and/or we are powerless to defeat them! Confess and repent QUICKLY beloved! Proverbs 28:13+ is very clear stating "He who conceals his transgressions **will not prosper**, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.")

Now Joab fought against [Rabbah](#) of the sons of Ammon and captured the royal city. 27 Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against [Rabbah](#), I have even captured the city of waters. 28 "Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and camp against the city and capture it, or I will capture the city myself and it will be named after me." 29 So David gathered all the people and went to [Rabbah](#), fought against it and captured it. (2 Samuel 12:26-29+)

David Guzik points out that " The chapter ends with unfinished business at [Rabbah](#). The offending Ammonites were still in their city and Joab returned to Jerusalem. In the spring King David sent Joab and the army out again to deal with [Rabbah](#) as he waited in Jerusalem. While he waited comfortably in Jerusalem he fell into sin with Bathsheba. Many know about David's sin with Bathsheba, and how it happened when David waited in Jerusalem when he should have led the battle at [Rabbah](#). 2 Samuel 10 shows that God gave David a warning by showing it was necessary for him to come out against the Syrians. David tried to leave the battle with Joab in 2 Samuel 10, but his army needed him; and God endeavored to show him that by blessing Israel when David did go out to battle. 2 Samuel 10 was God's gracious warning that David sadly wasted.

Walton - served David - It was not uncommon in the ancient Near East for the fortunes of war to lead to political shifts of allegiance. With the defeat of the Aramean army, many of the villages and towns that had formerly sworn allegiance to Hadadezer now offered their support and tribute to David. Parallels to this practice can be found in the Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon as well as in the campaign lists of most of the Assyrian monarchs. It should not be assumed, however, that David was able to take total, structural command of this region of northern Transjordan. Coerced support, won one day in battle, may disappear at the first sign of weakness. (See page 337 in [IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament](#))