

'Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the Lord. The Lord said, 'There is blood-guilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.² So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to wipe them out in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.)

³ David said to the Gibeonites, 'What shall I do for you? How shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of the Lord?' ⁴ The Gibeonites said to him, 'It is not a matter of silver and gold between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put anyone to death in Israel.' He said, 'What do you say that I should do for you?' ⁵ They said to the king, 'The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel — ⁶ let seven of his sons

be handed over to us, and we will impale them before the Lord at Gibeon on the mountain of the Lord.' The king said, 'I will hand them over.'

⁷ But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the oath of the Lord that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul.⁸ The king took the two sons of Kizrah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Merab daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite;⁹ he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and impaled them on the mountain before the Lord. The seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, and the beginning of the barley harvest.

¹⁰ Then Kizrah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies by day, or the wild

animals by night." When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done,¹² David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the people of Jabesh-Gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them up, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa.¹³ He brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who had been impaled.¹⁴ They buried the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of his father Kish; they did all that the king commanded. After that, God heeded supplications for the land.

¹⁵ The Philistines went to war again with Israel, and David went down together with his servants. They fought against the Philistines, and David grew weary.¹⁶ Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze,

and who was fitted out with new weapons, said he would kill David.¹⁷ But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, 'You shall not go out with us to battle any longer, so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel.'

¹⁸ After this a battle took place with the Philistines, at Gob; then Sibbeccai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of the giants.

¹⁹ Then there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.²⁰ There was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he

²¹ too was descended from the giants.²² When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimri, killed him. These four were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hands of David and

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SUPERINTENDENT'S RETREAT,
LAVENDE ABBEY

his servants,

¹ David spoke to the Lord the words of this song on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. ² He said:

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,

³ my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,

my shield and the horn of my salvation,

my stronghold and my refuge,

My Saviour; you save me from violence.

⁴ I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised,

and I am saved from my enemies.

⁵ For the waves of death encompassed me,

the torrents of perdition assailed me;

⁶ the cords of Sheol entangled me;

the snares of death confronted me.

⁷

In my distress I called upon the Lord;

to my God I called.

From his temple he heard my voice,

and my cry came to his ears.

⁸ Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations of the heavens trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.

⁹ Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.

¹⁰ He bowed the heavens, and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.

¹¹ He rode on a cherub, and flew;
he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness around him a canopy,
thick clouds, a gathering of water.

¹³ Out of the brightness before him
Coals of flame fire flamed forth.

¹⁴ The Lord thundered from heaven;
the Most High uttered his voice.

¹⁵ He sent out arrows, and scattered them
- lightning, and routed them.

¹⁶ Then the foundations of the sea were seen,
the foundations of the world were (ai) bare
at the rebuke of the Lord,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

¹⁷ He reached down on high, he took me,
he drew me out of mighty waters.

¹⁸ He delivered me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me;

¹⁹ for they were too mighty for me.

²⁰ They came upon me in the day of my calamity,
but the Lord was my stay.

²¹ He brought me out into a broad place;
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

²² The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness,
according to the cleanness of my hands
he recompensed me.

²³ For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23

For all his ordinances were before me,

and from his statutes I did not turn aside.

24

I was blameless before him,

and I kept myself from guilt.

25

Therefore the Lord has recompensed me
according to my righteousness,

according to my cleanness in his sight.

26

With the loyal you show yourself loyal;

with the blameless you show yourself blameless;

27

with the pure you show yourself pure,

and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.

28

You deliver a humble people,

but your eyes are upon the haughty & bring them down.

29

Indeed, you are my lamp, O Lord,

the Lord lightens my darkness.

30

By you I can crush a troop,

and by my God I can leap over a wall.

31

This God - his way is perfect;

the promise of the Lord proves true;

he is a shield for all who take refuge in him,

³² For who is God, but the Lord?

And who is a rock, except our God?

³³ The God who has girded me with strength
has opened wide my path.

³⁴ He made my feet like the feet of deer,
and set me secure on the heights.

³⁵ He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

³⁶ You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your help has made me great.

³⁷ You have made me stride freely,
and my feet do not slip;

³⁸ I pursued my enemies and destroyed them,
and did not turn back until they were consumed.

³⁹ I consumed them; I struck them down, so that they did
not rise;

⁴⁰ They fell under my feet.

For you girded me with strength for the battle;

- 41 you made my assailants sink under me.
41 You made my enemies turn their backs to me,
those who hated me, and I destroyed them.
42 They looked, but there was no one to save them;
they cried to the Lord, but he did not answer them.
43 I beat them fine like dust of the earth,
I crushed them and stamped them down like the
mire of the streets.
- 44 You delivered me from strife with the peoples;
you kept me as the head of the nations;
peoples whom I had not known served me.
45 Foreigners came bringing to me;
as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.
46 Foreigners lost heart,
and came trembling out of their strongholds.
- 47 The Lord lives! Blessed be my rock,
and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation,

⁴⁸ the God who gave me vengeance

and brought down peoples under me,

⁴⁹ Who brought me out from my enemies;
you exalted me above my adversaries,
you delivered me from the violent.

⁵⁰ For this I will extol you, O Lord, among the nations,

and sing praises to your name.

⁵¹ He is a tower of salvation for his King,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his descendants for ever.

1. Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse,

The oracle of the man whom God exalted

The anointed of the God of Jacob

The favourite of the Strong one of Israel:

2 The spirit of the Lord speaks through me,

his word is upon my tongue,

3 The God of Israel has spoken,

the Rock of Israel has said to me:

One who rules other people justly,

ruling in the fear of God,

* is like the light of the morning,

like the sun rising on a cloudless

morning, gleaming from the rain

on a grassy land.

5

Is not my house like this with God?

For he has made with me an everlasting

covenant, ordered in all things and secure.

Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?

v But the godless are like thorns that are
trown away; for they cannot be picked
up with the hand;

to touch them one uses an iron bar
or the shaft of a spear.

And they are entirely consumed in fire
on the spot.

8 These are the names of the warriors
whom David had: Toshebbashebeth a
Tethermonite; he was chief of the Three;
he wielded his spear against eight
hundred whom he killed at one time.

9 Next to him among the warriors was
Elazar son of Dodo son of Avoni.

He was with David when they defied
the Philistines who were gathered there
for battle. The Israelites withdrew,["] but
he stood his ground.

10

He struck down the Philistines until his own
grew heavy, though his hand clung to the
sword. The hand brought about a great victory
that day, then the people came back to him
but only to strip the dead.

"Next to him was Shammah son of Agee,
the Hararite. The Philistines gathered
together at Lehi, where there was a plot
of ground full of lentils; and the army
fled from the Philistines.¹² But he took
his stand in the middle of the plot and
defended it, and killed the Philistines;
and the hand brought a great victory.

¹³ Towards the beginning of harvest
three of the thirty chiefs went down
to join David at the cave of Adullam,
while a band of Philistines was
encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

¹⁴ David was then in the stronghold;
and the garrison of the Philistines was

then at Bethlehem.¹⁵ David said longingly,

"O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" ¹⁶ Then the three warriors broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate; and brought it to David. But he would not drink it; he poured it out to the Lord, ¹⁷ for he said, "The Lord forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it.

The three warriors did these things.

¹⁸ Now Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was the chief of the thirty. With his spear he fought against three hundred men and killed them, and won a name beside the three.

¹⁹ He was the most renowned of the thirty.

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(cont'd)

and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Thre^e.

²⁰ Benaiān son of Jēnaiād was a valiant warrior from Kabzeel; a deer of great deeds. He struck down two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen.²¹ And he killed an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiān went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

²² Such were the things Benaiān son of Jēnaiād did, and won a name beside the three warriors. He was known among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Thre^e. And David put him in charge of his body guard.

²⁴ Among the thirty were Asanel the son of Joab,
Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem, Shammah of
²⁵ Harod; Elzeso of Harod, ²⁶ Helez the Hararite; ²⁷ Ira
son of Ikkesh of Tekoa; ²⁸ Abiezer of Anathoth,
Mesunai the Hushathite; ²⁹ Zalmon the
Anotite; Uzziel of Kethorah, ³⁰ Hephol son
of Baanah of Kethorah; Ittai son of Ribai
of Gibeah of the Benjaminites; ³¹ Benaiah
of Raphah; Pitruah; Haddai of the
torrents of Gaash; ³² Abi-albon the Arbaitite;
Azmaveth of Bahurim; ³³ Elkanah of Shaalbon;
the sons of Jashan: Jonathan ³⁴ son of
Shammah the Hararite; Autan son of
Sharar the Hararite; Elihelet son of
Anasbai of Maacah; Elzam son of
Anthonophel the Gilonite; ³⁵ Hezro of Carmel;
Pearai the Arelite; ³⁶ Igal son of Nathan of Zobah;
Bani the Gadite; ³⁷ Zelets the Ammonite;
Elanai of Beeroth the armful bearer of Joab son of
Zeruiah; ³⁸ Ioa the Idrite, Gads the Idrite
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2 Samuel 23

17

Superintendent's
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39 Uriah the Hittite - thirty seven in all

24.1 Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He incited David against them, saying, 'Go, count the people of Israel and Judah.' 2 So the King said to Joab and the commanders of the army, who were with Him, "Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and take a census of the people, so that I may know how many there are.' 3 But Joab said to the King, "May the Lord your God increase the number of the people a hundredfold, while the eyes of my lord the King can see it! But why does my lord the King want to do this?" 4 But the King's word prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the King.

to take a census of the people of Israel.
5 They crossed the Jordan, and began from Aroer and from the city that is in the middle of the valley, towards Gad and on to Jazer.

6 Then they came to Gilead, and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites; and they came to Dan, and from Dan they went round to Sidon, 7 and came to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites; and they went out to the Negeb of Judah at Beer-Sheba.

8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. 9 Joab reported to the King the number of those who had been recorded: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand

soldiers able to draw the sword, and those of Judah were five hundred thousand.

10. But afterwards, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly."

11 When David rose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying 12 "Go and say to David: Thus says the Lord: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, and I will do it to you!" 13 So Gad came to David and told him; he asked him, "Shall three years of famine come to you on your land? Or will

You flee for three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me.' 14 Then David said to Gad, 'I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands.' 15 So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from that morning until the appointed time; and seventy thousand ^{of the} people died, from Dan to Beer-sheba. 16 But when the angel stretched out his hand towards Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented concerning the evil, and said to the Angel who was bringing destruction

among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand! The angel of the Lord was then by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 17 Then David saw the angel who was destroying the people, he said to the Lord, 'I alone have sinned, and I alone have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house.'

18 That day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up and erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite." 19 Following Gad's instructions, David went up as the Lord had commanded. 20 When Araunah looked down, he saw the king

and his servants coming towards him; and Araunah went out and prostrated himself before the King with his face to the ground. 21 Araunah said "Why has my lord the King come to his servant?" David said, "To buy the threshing-floor from you in order to build an altar to the LORD, so that the plague may be averted from the people." 22 Then Araunah said to David, "Let my Lord the King take and offer up what seems good to him; here are the oxen for the burnt-offering, and the threshing-sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. 23 All this, O King, Araunah gives to the King." And Araunah said to the king, "May the Lord your God respond favourably to you."

24 But the King said to Aranah,
'No, but I will buy them from
you for a price; I will not offer
burnt-offering to the LORD my
God that cost me nothing' So
David bought the threshing-floor
and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 David built there an altar
to the LORD; and offered burnt-
offerings and offerings of well-
being. So the LORD answered
his supplication for the land,
and the plague was averted from
Israel.